

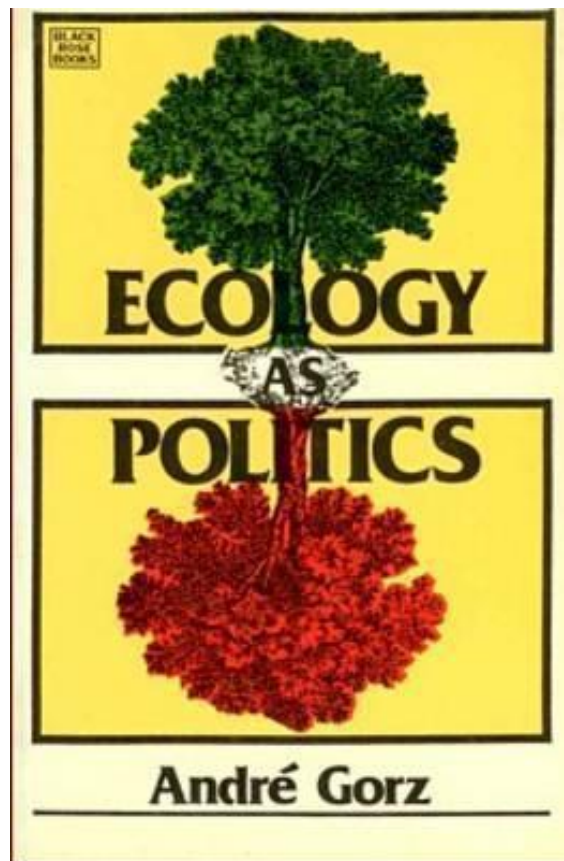
# RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

## *Teaching Note* Ecology as Politics

by Saul Slapikoff

from *Radical Teacher* #23 (1983)



ECOLOGY AS POLITICS. BY ANDRE GORZ (BOSTON: SOUTH END PRESS).

***Ecology as Politics. By Andre Gorz (Boston: South End Press).***

In this exciting and challenging book, Gorz delineates the connections between ecology and politics in an exceptionally penetrating series of essays. Inspired in part by Ivan Illich's *Tools for Conviviality* and *Medical Nemesis*, he concludes that "the only things worthy of each are those which are good for all; the only things worthy of being produced are those which neither privilege nor diminish anyone; it is possible to be happier with less affluence, for in a society without privilege no one will be poor" (Gorz's emphasis). The alternative to his vision of a "no growth" socialism based upon an inversion of the tools of capitalism, he says, is a technofascist world: the ecological crisis permits no other choices but these or complete ecological collapse. "Today," he says, "a lack of realism no longer consists in advocating ... the inversion of growth and the subversion of the prevailing way of life. Lack of realism consists in imagining that economic growth can still bring about increased human welfare, and indeed is still physically possible." If we are to avoid technofascism as well as ecological collapse, the struggles for democratic socialism and for an ecologically sound society must be made one. *Ecology as Politics* helps provide insight into possible strategies and arenas for struggle.

This is a difficult book for many students -- not for its language, but for its daring integration of issues. Students are excited by Gorz's ability to bring together such diverse issues as ecology, politics, labor, imperialism, and health within a single worldview. However, his view so thoroughly challenges deeply held views about the nature of capitalism and of "socialism" as we have come to know them that they are initially stunned. For those students ready to suffer the discomfort along with the excitement of new insights, this is an extraordinarily valuable book.

**Saul Slapikoff** (1931 - 2022) taught biology at Tufts University and also directed its American Studies Department, which he helped establish. He published *Consider and Hear Me: Voices from Palestine and Israel* (Temple University Press, 1992) and later developed as a playwright, working with the Underground Railway Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He served for over four decades on the Editorial Board of *Radical Teacher*.



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