

New Book Announcement

Testimony for Earth

A Worldview to Save the Planet and Ourselves

Bob Harrington with Linda Harrington

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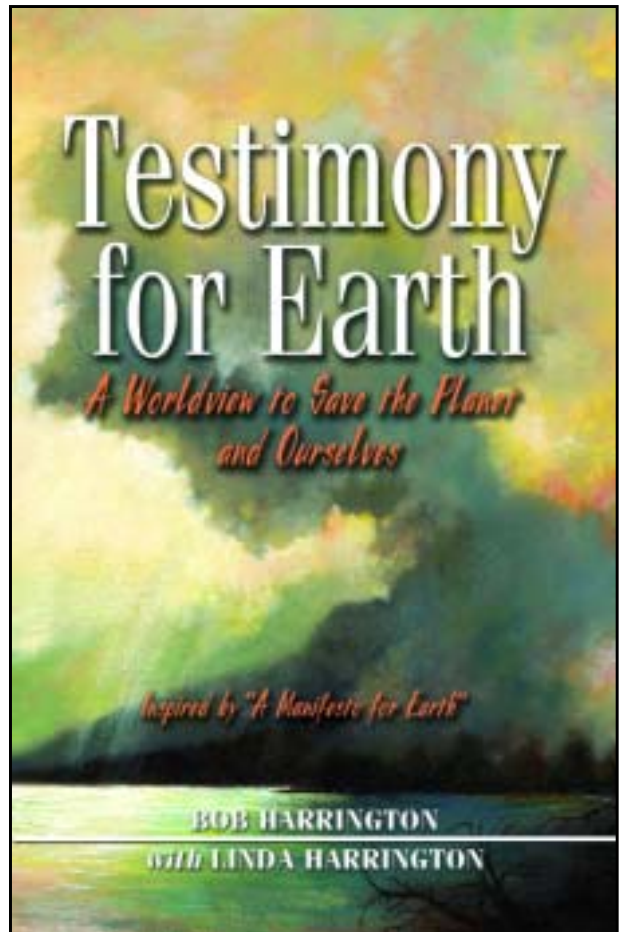
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Testimony for Earth is founded on the six core principles and five action principles of the "Manifesto for Earth" created by two talented Canadian scientists, Drs. Ted Mosquin and Stan Rowe, and published in the January–March 2004 issue of *Biodiversity — Journal of Life on Earth*.

The value of the Manifesto principles is that they offer concepts that can serve as a guide to what we should and should not do to help save the planet and ourselves. *Testimony for Earth* expands upon, illustrates, and gives examples that encourage a more sustainable worldview than is currently held.

Political, economic, and religious principles rest on the erroneous assumption that human beings are the only creatures of importance in the universe. *Testimony for Earth* compels us to realize that all living organisms are Earth beings — earthlings — born and sustained at all stages of life by the health and integrity of Planet Earth. This book makes us look around and realize that all living beings hold their lives by the same thin threads by which we hold our own.

About the authors

Linda and Bob Harrington live with their bullmastiff, Shadow, on a forested acreage at Galena Bay in British Columbia. Bob holds degrees in geology and a master's in education, and is the author of several books and numerous feature articles for newspapers and magazines. His early career in geology led him to the study of ecology as the overall holistic science. He has taught secondary school sciences and university ecology courses, and in 1990 received the British Columbia Environmental Education Award. He served for several years on the editorial committee of the *Journal of the Idaho Academy of Science*, and he was Western Representative for the Canadian Wildlife Federation for five years.



Cover painting and illustrations by Maggie Oliver



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The Third Core Principle

The Earth-centered Worldview is Supported by Natural History

The Web of Life — An Ancient Concept

Consult the *Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*, (ca. 150 AD) and you will read, “Always think of the universe as one living organism, with a single substance and a single soul; and observe how all things are submitted to the single perceptivity of this one whole, all are moved by a single impulse, and all play their part in the causation of every event that happens. Remark the intricacy of the skein, the complexity of the web.”²²

The foregoing quotation would be an excellent topic for analysis in a student essay, (also not a bad exam essay in a teacher education course), and is part of the evolution of human thought. Today such awareness is suppressed by propaganda from our economic leaders. Profit seeking has obliterated concern for the health and sustainability of the web of life, while ecological literacy is trivialized in politics and business.

In an organic evolution course I learned that many animals became extinct because of over-developed specializations. Fossils reveal that the prominent fangs of saber-toothed tigers sometimes grew so long they locked the jaw, and Irish elk with their massive antlers developed curvature of the spine and could barely hold their heads aloft. The professor wryly commented that people are candidates for extinction because our inflated egos exaggerate our intelligence and “we erroneously assume that no creatures other than ourselves are important.” He referred to this attitude as an unconscious form of pre-extinction behavior.

Society still labors under Rene Descartes’ insistence that only humans have souls, and all other living creatures are machines. It may come as a surprise to many people that this idea contradicts the Book of Job (12:8–10) in the *Old Testament*, which refers to “the soul of every living thing,” and also advises, “speak to the Earth, and it shall teach thee.”

It is also interesting to consider the stringent religious outlook held by the Jainist group of Buddhists. They attributed souls and life to not only animals and plants, but also to the four original elements: fire, air, earth and water — a basically ecocentric outlook. The founder of this sect, Vardhamana Mahavira, around 600 BC proposed what might be looked upon as a single commandment: “Do not injure, abuse, oppress, enslave, insult, torture, or kill any creature or living being.”