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Notes & Comments

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The virtues of a Cambridge history

On the woeful failure of the new Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century English Literature.

Where are the Greens when you need them? You know: those environmentally sensitive folks who hammer metal spikes into trees in order (so they say) to protect our arboreal friends from the depredations of evil loggers. Never mind that said loggers might be injured or killed trying to harvest such booby-trapped trees—for the Greens, that is only condign punishment for, for, for ... well, you know: for capitalism, for patriarchy, for “speciesism,” etc.

Possibly you suspect that this behavior on the part of the Greens has more to do with making a spectacle of their own presumed virtue than with protecting the environment. That’s what we think. But what we wish to know is, why are they so *selective* in their exhibition of outrage? A logging camp in Maine or the Pacific Northwest gets the full Green treatment: demonstrations, press conferences, sabotage. But what about a major university press whose act ...

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