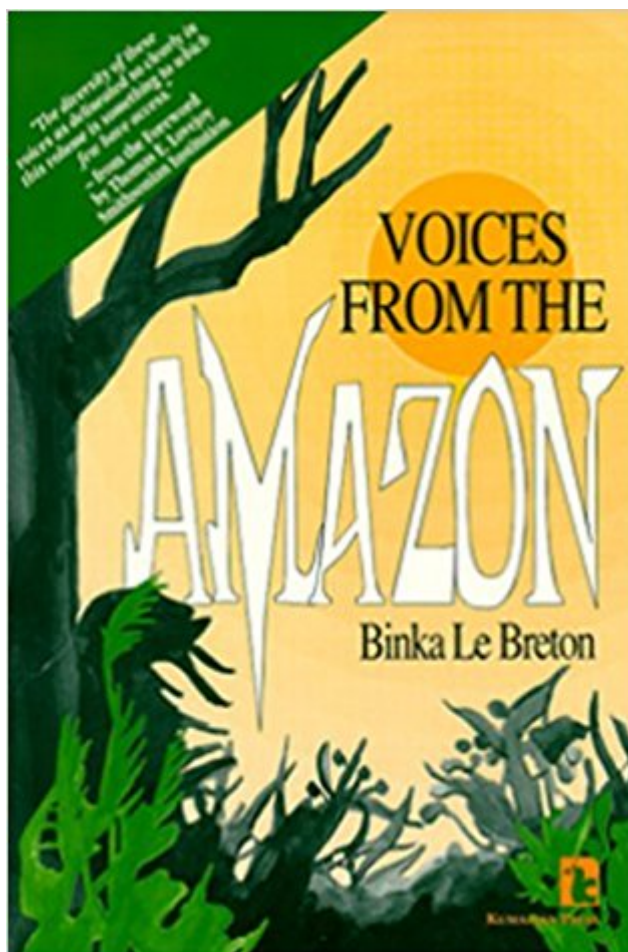


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Voices From The (Kumarian Press Books For A World That Works)



Synopsis

* Stories told by indigenous peoples of the region, including Indians, rubber tappers, miners, loggers, and ranchers* Suggests social and political reforms that could sustain the lives of rain forest dwellers and the planet* Written by an activist who set out by bus, truck, boat, and on foot to live with rich and poor inhabitants of BrazilFollow Le Breton through one of the Earth's last great frontiers--the Brazilian Amazon--and meet the people whose voices have too seldom been heard. Voices from the Amazon reveals the complexity of daily life in remote forest settlements and gritty river towns, uncovering the truth about development in the region.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A concert pianist living in Brazil since 1989, Le Breton took a three-month trip through Brazil's Amazon region, interviewing a diverse group of inhabitants. Though this book lacks insight and power, it serves as a decent overview of the region and its conflicts. Traveling in the state of Rondonia, which had grown from 100,000 people in 1960 to one million in 1990, Le Breton first speaks to representatives of the decimated Indians, who are struggling to acquire autonomy, then to loggers, one of whom declares, "These forests were given to us by God to be used." The caboclos--forest people of mixed blood--are concerned with day-to-day survival, and independent miners, known as garimpeiros, scratch out a living. A state bureaucrat waxes optimistic about planned local development, rich ranchers protest potential land reform, and rubber tappers talk about setting up forest reserves to protect against ranchers clearing land. Le Breton concludes, somewhat wishfully,

that the Brazilian government must reform to preserve the forests, improve infrastructure and invest in environmental education, and that creditor nations should consider debt relief for Brazil. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"Few books tell the plight of the rainforest from the perspective of the indigenous peoples themselves. Le Breton lets the people of the forest tell us their side of the story." ---

This very readable and well researched book explains the daily struggles of the people who actually live in the rainforest: the Indians, the rubber tappers, the loggers, the ranchers, the miners, and the river people. The author traveled across the vast areas to talk with the forest people and hear their stories. This book is very moving because it offers a real insight into the lives of the people that are suffering them most from the destruction of the rainforest. That the forest peoples trusted Ms. Lebreton is wonderful, and the stories they share are truly fascinating. Kudos to LeBreton for making the somewhat dangerous trek across the country of Brazil so that readers could have an accurate and honest view of the problems that plague the area.

This book does a fine job of letting the ordinary men & women of Brazilia speak for themselves. While it does not have the analytical or scholarly depth of some other books on the subject (e.g. Hecht & Cockburn's "Fate of the Forest"), its strength comes from the author's ability to listen to the people she meets. For both the general public & college undergraduates, it is a handy & accessible introduction to issues of environment & development in Latin America. It definitely stimulated discussions in my course on Global Environmental History, & it would work equally well in courses on Modern Latin America.

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