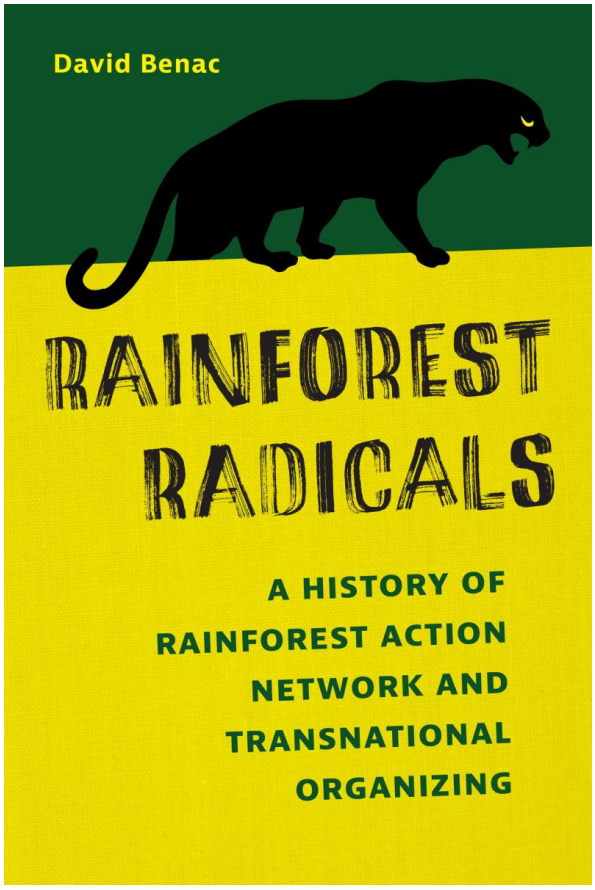
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Rainforest Radicals: A History of Rainforest Action Network and Transnational Organizing

Benac, David

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Rainforest Radicals: A History of Rainforest Action Network and Transnational Organizing. Cover.

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Rainforest Radicals presents the first history of one of the most innovative and successful environmental organizations of the late twentieth century. Rainforest Action Network emerged in 1985, when it took over a fledgling effort to protect rainforests from transnational corporations funding the expansion of tropical cattle ranching. It excelled at using nonviolent, civil disobedience in dramatic campaigns that captured the attention of the public, media, and RAN's corporate adversaries. As a result, two decades later rainforest conservation went from a niche academic topic to a fixture in American popular culture, the rights of Indigenous people had gone from ignored or romanticized to at least considered in discussions of the management of their ancestral homelands, and RAN had scored a series of victories over some of the planet's largest corporations.

In *Rainforest Radicals* David Benac traces the evolution of RAN and radical, transnational grassroots environmentalism through the four campaigns identified at the group's founding: rainforest beef, Hawai'ian rainforests, tropical timber, and multinational development banks. Forty years after RAN's inception, there is much to learn from how it organized people in small towns and large cities across the United States, created alliances that spanned oceans, and inspired a new movement that integrated human rights, Indigenous sovereignty, and environmental protection to challenge multinational corporations, national governments, and neocolonial corporate-led globalism.

(Source: U niversity of Nebraska Press)

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