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Roundtable Review of *The Invention of Ecocide* by David Zierler

Hamblin, Jacob D., ed.

Hamblin, Jacob D. (ed.), Roundtable Review of *The Invention of Ecocide: Agent Orange, Vietnam, and the Scientists Who Changed the Way We Think About the Environment* by David Zierler. *H-Environment Roundtable Reviews* 2, no. 1 (February 2012) www.h-net.org/~environ/roundtables/env-roundtable-2-1.pdf .

In *The Invention of Ecocide*, David Zierler asks a straightforward question: why did the campaign against herbicidal warfare succeed? His book places considerable responsibility on the scientists who invoked the notion of "ecocide"—the destruction of entire ecosystems in Vietnam following the beginning in 1961 of Operation Ranch Hand. As his subtitle suggests, their efforts went further—changing the way we think about the environment. "Ecocide" implied a problem that was much bigger than particular health risks to human beings, and it may even have suggested a challenge of planetary proportions. Yet, despite the employment of a word that invoked such calamity, Zierler notes, these scientists' success may be due to their attempts to stand aloof from both the antiwar movement and the environmental movement.

(Text adapted from Jacob D. Hamblin's introduction to the Roundtable Review.)

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