This dissertation traces the origins and development of environmental activism in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, from the late 1950s to 1990, with a central focus on the period from 1970 to 1985, during which the structure of the lasting movement took shape. The crucial events or issues that both produced and molded the movement in Nova Scotia are discussed in detail over three chapters of the dissertation. They include a foray into nuclear energy promotion by the provincial government in the 1970s, a set of controversies over chemical biocide use in industrial forestry from 1975 to 1983, and a fight to prevent uranium mining in the early 1980s. Each campaign brought activists closer to recognizing the differences that divided them. The factor that unites the three central controversies and the many others that join them in this dissertation is the ideological content of their history, specifically the progressive divergence of activist organizations inspired by fundamentally different views of the nature of environmental problems and the potential for their solution within the existing modernist industrial society. It is the tensions between the eco-modernist mainstream and the radical minority that account in large part for the successes and failures of activists in the province, as well as for the nature of their interactions with governments, industries, and fellow activists outside of Nova Scotia. Indeed, the relationship of centres and peripheries -- intraCanadian or intraprovincial -- constitutes a vital theme in explaining the origin of environmentalism as well as its fragmentation. This account of Nova Scotian environmental activism addresses the common reality of environmentalism in Canada. As this research suggests, the country's environmentalism can only be understood, in any era, through the lens of its provincial components and through an analysis that relies on ideological difference as much as the material factors of social movement mobilization.
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