



Some months ago, the publisher sent me a free copy of a book by Fred Pearce, *Confessions of an Eco-Sinner*. I left it sitting around but didn't plan to read it — the title sounded unpleasantly self-righteous and simultaneously self-flagellating. I finally did leaf through it and ended up reading the whole thing. It's not only a good read but very interesting, and not at all the exercise in eco-piety that I expected. The subtitle, "Tracking Down the Sources of My Stuff," is really much more descriptive. Pearce takes household items and tries to track them back to their exact point of origin — he then visits the specific coffee plantation, textile factory, or cotton field. Looking at a clothing

Good book, bad title

sweatshop in Bangladesh, he is quick to denounce the bad working conditions, but he also tell us about the women from the countryside who regard working there, bad as it is, as an escape from an oppressive village existence and an opportunity for a better life. He also tries to follow what happens to things afterwards — for example, his old computer ends up being recycled in a back street in India. Quite fascinating. Available on [Amazon](#).