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Greed For Gold: The Challenge For Human Ecologists

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ABSTRACT Gold has lured prospectors, investors, and gold bugs, as well as outright thieves, for centuries. Mining for gold brings about distinct challenges for human ecologists, as the greed associated with precious metals may tear apart the social fabric of neighborhoods, communities, and even nations. Although various social science based interventions may ameliorate the human tragedies that unfold, no simple answers exist. Whether considered in the case example and microcosm of Waihi, New Zealand as presented, or in the global realm of international politics and finance, those interested in human ecology must face up to this enormous challenge. How DO we wish to live on this planet, where some are extraordinarily rich, others seek wealth regardless as to consequences, and still, the majority are left far behind?

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