

Glancing at the Table of Contents, I felt a certain unease growing when I saw section titles like 'The Revolution is Love' and 'An Affair of the Heart'. For a book about climate change, I was worried that this would be a hippie-style, get-back-to-nature affair that would avoid the brevity of the science and the urgency of the issue. However, as I started to read, I found myself refreshed and heartened, albeit not without the occasional twinge of cynicism, which is most likely the result of my adherence to many of the narratives Eisenstein criticizes.

I've studied and taught environmental ethics and philosophy for many years and believe this book would be a valuable contribution to my course reading lists for students at various undergraduate levels of study, and for those looking to add a different perspective on climate change to their research agenda. Not just for philosophers or environmental studies majors, this book would be helpful for students across disciplines interested in climate change, including media, cultural studies and other humanities and arts courses, especially as it challenges dominant narratives and representations of various aspects of the issue. It is well-researched and supported, while maintaining the clear and focused voice of the author throughout, who demonstrates a breadth of knowledge spanning environmental science, economics and politics. The only surprise to me was that key environmental thinkers, like Arne Naess and other deep ecologists, are not mentioned at all. Some mention of Naess, as his position of self-identification with nature seems to so clearly overlap with what Eisenstein is endorsing, would only strengthen and deepen these claims that we ought to change our way of being in terms of Self and its relation to nature.

The twelve chapters of this book cover a wide range of topics, not all directly related to climate change. This is because for Eisenstein the critical issue related to climate change is our crisis of being, and is based on the "constriction, numbing, and diversion of our capacity to feel empathy and love" (6). The belief systems that underlie our various social and environmental crises are inseparable from the dominant narratives that run through our civilization, with the 'standard narrative' of climate change being problematic because of how the issue is framed (7). Rather than focusing on reducing carbon emissions or implementing carbon taxes, we should instead, according to Eisenstein, focus on creating a language and belief system based on healing nature and ourselves, and that implicitly recognizes the interconnectedness of all life. He borrows the term 'interbeing' from Thich Nhat Hanh to refer to the idea that our individual self is not individual at all, but rather intertwined with all life so that any harm to nature is experienced as harm to oneself. Instead of being myopically focused on the urgency of climate change, we ought to include other social issues like racism and poverty in the same set of considerations, as "...healing on any level contributes to healing on every level" (28).

After examining the views of climate change deniers and skeptics, along with some good

reasons why we might have sympathy for their views given the uncertain nature of climate science and scientific methodology in general, Eisenstein makes what I believe to be his most important point: Even if we are uncertain about where we stand in relation to the climate change narrative and overall debate on its causes and prognosis, we all know that we are in deep trouble. The planet is dying (82). Environmental degradation is obvious and undeniable in our immediate surroundings, and although we may lack agency to directly face the issue on a global scale, we should attend to the protection and restoration of the soil, water and ecosystems on a local level.

Despite the book's title, it only has two sections entirely devoted to climate change. The first lays out problems with the standard narrative on climate change and emphasizes the mistakes and harms posed by the reduction of this problem to just a single cause, namely carbon emissions. The standard defeatist narrative on carbon emissions causes us to feel helpless, overwhelmed, and paralyzed. Eisenstein's solution is to focus on the local. We can heal our ecosystems at the local level, and the positive results will reinforce the associated behaviours. However, what we ought not do, according to Eisenstein, is scare people into action as the dominant narrative does.

Another key point of the book is that we need to recognize what we are losing through destruction of the natural environment. By seeing our losses, such as damaged ecosystems and extinct species, and by fully feeling these losses, we can finally acknowledge and move into grief (138), and only then will we change our everyday actions and routines. On this account, climate change is addressed indirectly through the mobilization of individuals, and by changing our general orientation to climate change and nature.

What is refreshing about the book is the author's open admission that his call for a revolution of love sounds utterly unscientific and romantic. Eisenstein discusses inner conflict and some embarrassment of his seemingly sentimental conclusions about how we ought to address such an urgent issue, and yet Eisenstein maintains that it is only through the direct experience of nature and coming to love it and the earth that we can start to effectively address our environmental problems. Eisenstein further lays out his ideas for healing the various systems of the earth in sections devoted to forms of regeneration of living systems; to challenging dominant notions of 'development', capitalism, money, growth, and debt; and to implementing a new 'ecological economy,' as more fully explained a previous book, *Sacred Economics*. He also provides an analysis of our over-reliance on science, claiming that such an over-reliance is problematic because based on underlying beliefs that the earth is an inanimate object rather than a living being of the Gaia variety. Eisenstein rightfully points out that if we believe that nature is 'dead', then it seems difficult to find reasons to care for her (253).

Charles Eisenstein, *Climate: A New Story* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2018)

The book concludes with suggestions for creating environmental health and planetary healing. A list of principles useful to facilitate local change, the restoration of ecosystems and fairly major economic reforms that do not include carbon taxes or anything that directly addresses climate change is provided. While Eisenstein acknowledges his view can seem idealistic, he does believe real change to be possible on its basis. The book ends by calling on each of us to do what we can, where we can, to bring healing to ourselves, our local ecosystems and our planet (278).

I would have enjoyed seeing more connection to related thinkers and perspectives to draw out and acknowledge the existing conversation on environmental values and climate change, but as it stands this book provides some much-needed passion and honesty about the underlying ideological causes of climate change that need to be addressed beyond the science. Eisenstein has me convinced that we really do need a revolution of love to save our planet, without the need to sacrifice rationality and science.

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