

EVE DARIAN-SMITH. *GLOBAL BURNING: RISING ANTIDEMOCRACY AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS.* STANFORD: STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS 2022, 230 P. ISBN: 9781503631083

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Global burning: rising antidemocracy and the climate crisis, written by Eve Darian-Smith, addresses contemporary environmental issues and political dynamics through the perspective of the catastrophic wildfires in California, Amazon and Australia. Darian-Smith dives deep into the political, ecological and social aspects of environmental justice and crisis preventions. She calls out governmental powers and companies for being the centre of the issue, abusing their leadership and social influences to promote anti-environmentalism. The fire is seen both as a literal threat to life, but also a metaphor for the damages brought by the growing of far-right government, ultranationalism, and anti-environmentalism. Through breaking down each case of wildfire outbreak, Darian-Smith challenges the human/nature boundary that portrays the environment as disconnected from people and their lives.

Each chapter of Darian-Smith's book is founded on the idea that fire resembles and reveals problems hidden deep in our social systems. She first describes fire as an omen, discussing the future consequences of wildfires in the United States, Australia, and Amazon forests. In chapter two, it is described as a profit, where the government's lack of actions and the promotion of anti-environmental laws are strongly tied to capitalism. Capitalist solutions, such as promises of technological interventions, to the climate crisis, are criticized as justification for the lack of action from our political, economic and social system. In chapter three, fire is seen as a weapon, and the author dives deep into the global rise of authoritarianism and ultra-nationalism. Darian-Smith further breaks down the false illusion of nationalism and sovereignty that governments portray when establishing laws that go against previous measures put in place to protect lands and ecosystems. She criticizes countries for ignoring and violating the Paris Peace Treaty in the name of providing the greater good for the country, where in turn, these violations benefit capitalists and broaden inequalities instead. In this case, the promise of a better country is used to justify actions that destroy the land and risk the lives of the very citizens that environmental laws are protecting.

In chapter four, fire is seen as a type of violence where certain populations of our society are made more vulnerable to harm from fire, and their rights are significantly ignored. The author encourages readers to think beyond the financial consequences of wildfires and natural disasters. The book highlights the 'slow violence' that racial minorities and indigenous population face, such as depression, higher rates of incarceration, shortened lives, and unemployment, due to land loss or heightened vulnerability. The author emphasises the importance of recognizing that culture and identity burn with wildfires as they spread through

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lands filled with memories and spiritual meanings. Yet, the psychological, cultural and spiritual sufferings from these wildfires are ignored by governments, who are instead more interested in economic and technical developments. It is argued that the voluntary ignorance towards these intergenerational consequences further heightens the escalating inequality, such as poverty, we see in our society today. Lastly, in her final chapter, fire is seen as a disruption where our lives, regardless of our backgrounds, will be severely impacted in the future by the ongoing climate crisis. Darian-Smith suggests that rather than waiting for programs rooted in colonialism and structural violence, and racism to address climate concerns, people need to rethink their roles and obligations as citizens of the planet. She mentions some great existing organizations and role models, such as Greta Thunberg, Tokata Iron Eyes, and NGO Global Witness.

Eve Darian-Smith makes powerful points in her book by calling out specific cases, countries, corporations, and politicians to fully engage and inform her readers of the current climate issue. Through the metaphors used to describe fire, she challenges the current trend of downplaying wildfire as merely a 'natural' disaster. She successfully breaks down each of the components and actions behind climate crises, such as the voluntary violation of policies on behalf of corporations and the ignorance and tolerance from government bodies. The examples and arguments made in the book are clear, straightforward, and in-depth. It is a great book for readers of all backgrounds, regardless of their level of knowledge in historical or contemporary climate issues. Readers will walk away from the book with much more knowledge about not just wildfire cases worldwide but also about the power dynamics at play behind environmental issues and climate crises. One recommendation would be to add in some examples of positive corporations and governmental management so readers can gain a better picture of a future to work towards. Overall, I found the book to be very informative and full of innovative insights to view the climate crisis from multi-angle perspectives, and I would highly recommend it for all readers.

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