



We're Doomed. Now What?: Dispatches from the Far Side of Hope

Roy Scranton

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An American Orwell for the age of Trump, Roy Scranton faces the unpleasant facts of our day with fierce insight and harrowing honesty. *We're Doomed, Now What?* penetrates to the very heart of our time.

The time we've been thrown into is one of alarming and bewildering change--the breakup of the post-1945 global order, a multispecies mass extinction, and the beginning of the end of civilization as we know it. Not one of us is innocent, not one of us is safe. Now what?

We're Doomed, Now What? addresses the crisis that is our time through a series of brilliant, moving, and original essays on climate change, war, literature, and loss, from one of the most provocative and iconoclastic minds of his generation. Whether writing about sailing through the melting Arctic, preparing for Houston's next big storm, watching *Star Wars*, or going back to the streets of Baghdad he once patrolled as a soldier, Roy Scranton handles his subjects with the same electric, philosophical, demotic touch that he brought to his ground-breaking *New York Times* essay, "Learning How to Die in the Anthropocene."

We're Doomed. Now What?: Dispatches from the Far Side of Hope Details

Date : Published July 17th 2018 by Soho Press

ISBN :

Author : Roy Scranton

Format : Kindle Edition 336 pages

Genre : Writing, Essays, Nonfiction



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From Reader Review We're Doomed. Now What?: Dispatches from the Far Side of Hope for online ebook

David Wineberg says

Roy Scranton is an interesting person. A teenage reprobate, full of angst and protest, he drifted from one low level job to another, eventually coming back to live in his mother's basement. A stint in the army that took him to Iraq both straightened him out and screwed him up. He came back to become a scholar, intensely well read, citing all kinds of obscure references and dropping a lot of names, even just long lists of them, but totally consumed by war. It is all on evidence in *We're Doomed. Now What?*

It begins with a series of perceptive essays on the environment. "We need to learn to let our current civilization die, to accept our mortality and practice humility," he says. He visits Greenland where he finds it is losing about 300 billion tons of ice every year. This alone will raise sea levels more than 20 feet. "We find ourselves less than human, lacking even the dumb instinct for survival we see in the way plants will bend toward the sun."

Those first essays are powerful. But from there, things get confusing. Scranton spends over a hundred pages reliving his army stint in Iraq, and revisits, on behalf of Rolling Stone, to discover how corrupt and messed up their elections are. He then pivots to the Soviet Union and how much it sacrificed in World War II, then to Seymour Hersh's article claiming the Osama Bin Laden trackdown was a fraud. He also draws parallels and connections between police shooting blacks and American wars and warriors. You might notice the book on the environment and climate change has completely disappeared.

So despite the title, this is not a book on the environment. It is a cathartic collection of disparate essays from 2010-2018, demonstrating Scranton's erudition and ability to research. But everything is suffused with soldiering and war. He blames the USA for Iraq and Afghanistan's "ongoing human suffering almost incomprehensible in its meaninglessness. " At times it is profound, but it is often PTSD on display.

David Wineberg

Kate Seader says

I picked up this book mostly for the essays on climate change, but those are not even a third of the book. Instead I was engulfed in a series of essays on war, violence, and the society that perpetuates it as unavoidable in the name of progress. Some parts of essays felt repetitive, unnecessarily elevated, or were literature reviews that I needed to read 7 other pieces to understand. However, I felt as though I have learned a lot through this book. I am glad I read it.

Robin Green says

Was too bad to finish.

KC Snow says

There is a lot of good in this book, it just needed to be written by someone else. Roy Scranton (and most of humanity) is part of the reason why we're doomed. He knows how bad the systems within the machine that is killing our planet. Like eating meat, traveling (air travel specifically), and consumerism all of which he still participates in. So, why should a person read a book about how bad it is and specifically: NOW WHAT? When the author himself can't even sacrifice his personal preferences for the greater good of the planet. It's hard to live outside Capitalism, nearly impossible in the US; but that doesn't mean you just shrug and eat a steak, fly across the country or world for a "story." So I don't expect an author who is infallible, perfection isn't human. However, doing the least amount of harm should be what an author of a book like this should at the minimum be doing and he can't manage. He admits his faults, that's why the book got two stars instead of one.

I look forward to an author that can help guide people (readers) to a life that lives on the edges of our current society not just in protest but an example of how we can live differently and happily while doing less harm to the only planet we have to live on.

Diogenes says

After reading this interview with Scranton from Guernica (<https://www.guernicamag.com/roy-scran...>), I felt a powerful kinship to the author on several levels; however, after reading this collection of "essays" (which feel more like posts from an educated, millennial-ish blog feed soaked in narcissism and sprinkled liberally with nihilism), I had a powerful attraction to this mild ecological diatribe (5 stars), but also felt an equally powerful aversion to its quick descent into a long and boring Iraq War memoir (been there, and done that--3 stars). I had thought this would be more scholarly, but since Scranton likes the reader to know what he is not (including a scholar or philosopher), I guess I shouldn't be too hard on him. He's raking in the bucks as best he can and using his Warholian 15 minutes of notoriety well.

There are better books describing the futility of hope in the Anthropocene, and why. Embrace the nihilism and enjoy what time you have on Gaia. Nothing will save humanity from the grim future it has wrought, but if delusions are your candy, eat them up with mindless glee.

George S. Trevor says

We are!

Made me think back to my days as a Rhetoric major at UC Berkeley. Mr. Scranton's essays are not thought provoking. They are challenging reason itself. Must read again more closely. Need to go back and read again Plato and the rest. Thank you Mr. Scranton.
