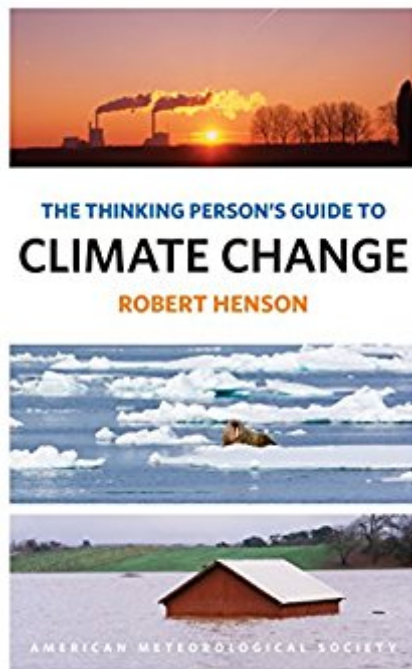


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The Thinking Person's Guide To Climate Change



Synopsis

Everybody can be a thinking person when it comes to climate change, and this book is a perfect roadmap. Start a web search for "climate change" and the first three suggestions are "facts," "news," and "hoax." The Thinking Person's Guide to Climate Change is rooted in the first, up to date on the second, and anything but the last. Produced by one of the most venerable atmospheric science organizations, it is a must-read for anyone looking for the full story on climate change. Using global research and written with nonscientists in mind, the Guide breaks down the issues into straightforward categories: "Symptoms" covers signs such as melting ice and extreme weather, while "Science" lays out what we know and how we figured it out. "Debates" tackles the controversy and politics, while "Solutions" and "Actions" discuss what we can do as individuals and communities to create the best possible future. Full-color illustrations offer explanations of everything from how the greenhouse effect traps heat to which activities in everyday life emit the most carbon. Special-feature boxes zoom in on locations across the globe already experiencing the effects of a shifting climate. The Thinking Person's Guide to Climate Change combines years of data with recent research, including conclusions from the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. This reference provides the most comprehensive, yet accessible, overview of where climate science stands today, acknowledging controversies but standing strong in its stance that the climate is changing " and something needs to be done. The Thinking Person's Guide to Climate Change is a full update and revision of Robert Henson's The Rough Guide to Climate Change and is now published through the American Meteorological Society, with distribution through University of Chicago Press.

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Customer Reviews

This is a lucid and well written book. It is written in a friendly spirit of curiosity. And it manages to somehow speak to the unlearned, the skeptics, and more experienced climate advocates, like myself, alike. This is a tall order and should not be taken lightly - Henson has written a remarkable book. Eschewing the wake-up calls of climate advocates and textbook science alike, Henson writes with a spirit of curiosity. This can be disarming of climate skeptics, because it focuses attention on open scientific inquiry and a sense of fascination. And there is a friendliness to his tone, which lends itself well to sustained inquiry. Henson is less likely to leave you depressed or else swinging between hopelessness and heroic action. But he does not neglect the politics of climate change or what you can do in your own life. The Thinking Person's Guide is, in short, a very thorough and balanced work. Many climate advocates know how to answer the difficult questions and how to stare down a climate skeptic, but the sense of open inquiry found in this work is often missing in their approach. And it all too often seems they are missing the core of the science. Climate science is immensely complex, drawing on multiple different sciences: oceanography, meteorology, geology, ecology, and more. Climate advocacy, on the other hand, requires a focused and sustained message. Henson's work covers it all and with great balance, and can thus serve as a compliment to the focus of climate advocates. He is a meteorologist, and this lends to his work its own unique hues. It is good to explore climate science from many different viewpoints so as to deepen your sense of what is happening. It is not a simple issue and treating it as such can dissociate climate activism from climate science.

This is a recommendable book, but not as much so as it might have been. It is indeed a derivative quite closely from material originally published as the "Rough Guide to Climate Change"™, by the same author, and, as with its predecessors, includes some important updates befitting a still fast-evolving subject. This work remains valuable as a concise yet encyclopedic, readable yet scientifically accurate one-stop-shopping reference guide. It was for that reason that I

purchased the second edition of the 'Rough Guide,' used it for a class I taught, recommended it to the students, and later replaced it with the equally praiseworthy third edition. Though it has the same section titles, and much the same solidly informative content as the 'Rough Guide,' this newer 'Thinking Person's Guide' has added length without adding comparably to quality, and unfortunately does not fully replace the earlier publication (e.g., the third edition). The most serious step backwards is the complete axing in the new book of a very well-done ten page section of 'Resources: Climate change books and websites' in its predecessors. Given the book's raison d'être as a reference tool, to entirely omit the sources for additional reading component amounts to a notable editing error. Any inference (e.g. from page xvii) that the AMS bookstore website (with a small number of its own publications on climate topics, T shirts, etc.) is some sort of effective online replacement for a proper comprehensive bibliography and source guide would be absurd.

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