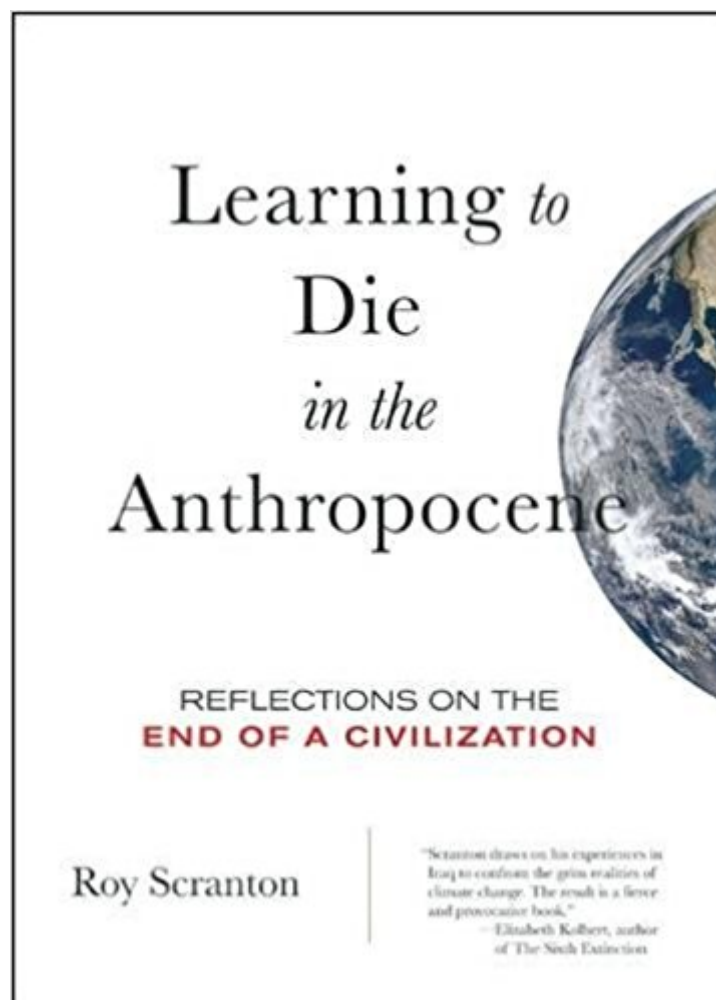


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# Learning To Die In The Anthropocene: Reflections On The End Of A Civilization (City Lights Open Media)



## Synopsis

"In *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene*, Roy Scranton draws on his experiences in Iraq to confront the grim realities of climate change. The result is a fierce and provocative book."--Elizabeth Kolbert, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*"Roy Scranton's *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene* presents, without extraneous bullshit, what we must do to survive on Earth. It's a powerful, useful, and ultimately hopeful book that more than any other I've read has the ability to change people's minds and create change. For me, it crystallizes and expresses what I've been thinking about and trying to get a grasp on. The economical way it does so, with such clarity, sets the book apart from most others on the subject."--Jeff VanderMeer, author of the *Southern Reach* trilogy"Roy Scranton lucidly articulates the depth of the climate crisis with an honesty that is all too rare, then calls for a reimagined humanism that will help us meet our stormy future with as much decency as we can muster. While I don't share his conclusions about the potential for social movements to drive ambitious mitigation, this is a wise and important challenge from an elegant writer and original thinker. A critical intervention."--Naomi Klein, author of *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*"Concise, elegant, erudite, heartfelt & wise."--Amitav Ghosh, author of *Flood of Fire*"War veteran and journalist Roy Scranton combines memoir, philosophy, and science writing to craft one of the definitive documents of the modern era."--*The Believer* Best Books of 2015

Coming home from the war in Iraq, US Army private Roy Scranton thought he'd left the world of strife behind. Then he watched as new calamities struck America, heralding a threat far more dangerous than ISIS or Al Qaeda: Hurricane Katrina, Superstorm Sandy, megadrought--the shock and awe of global warming. Our world is changing. Rising seas, spiking temperatures, and extreme weather imperil global infrastructure, crops, and water supplies. Conflict, famine, plagues, and riots menace from every quarter. From war-stricken Baghdad to the melting Arctic, human-caused climate change poses a danger not only to political and economic stability, but to civilization itself . . . and to what it means to be human. Our greatest enemy, it turns out, is ourselves. The warmer, wetter, more chaotic world we now live in--the Anthropocene--demands a radical new vision of human life. In this bracing response to climate change, Roy Scranton combines memoir, reportage, philosophy, and Zen wisdom to explore what it means to be human in a rapidly evolving world, taking readers on a journey through street protests, the latest findings of earth scientists, a historic UN summit, millennia of geological history, and the persistent vitality of ancient literature. Expanding on his influential New York Times essay (the #1 most-emailed article the day it appeared, and selected for Best American Science and Nature Writing 2014), Scranton responds to the existential problem of global warming by arguing that in order to survive, we must come to terms with our

mortality. Plato argued that to philosophize is to learn to die. If that's true, says Scranton, then we have entered humanity's most philosophical age--for this is precisely the problem of the Anthropocene. The trouble now is that we must learn to die not as individuals, but as a civilization. Roy Scranton has published in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Rolling Stone, Boston Review, and Theory and Event, and has been interviewed on NPR's Fresh Air, among other media.

## Book Information

Series: City Lights Open Media

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: City Lights Publishers (October 6, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0872866696

ISBN-13: 978-0872866690

Product Dimensions: 4.9 x 0.4 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 48 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #19,656 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Climatology #49 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Political #69 in Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Environmental Science

## Customer Reviews

More praise for *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene*: "Roy Scranton gets it. He knows in his bones that this civilization is over. He knows it is high time to start again the human dance of making some other way to live. In his distinctive and original way he works through a common cultural inheritance, making it something fresh and new for these all too interesting times. This compressed, essential text offers both uncomfortable truths and unexpected joy."--McKenzie Wark, author of *Molecular Red: Theory for the Anthropocene* "We're f\*cked. We know it. Kind of. But Roy Scranton in this blistering new book goes down to the darkness, looks hard and doesn't blink. He even brings back a few, hard-earned slivers of light. . . . What is philosophy? It's time comprehended in thought. This is our time and Roy Scranton has had the courage to think it in prose that sometimes feels more like bullets than bullet points."--Simon Critchley, Co-founder and moderator of The New York Times online philosophy series "The Stone" "An eloquent, ambitious, and provocative book."--Rob Nixon, author of *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* Roy Scranton has written a howl for

the Anthropocene--a book full of passion, fire, science and wisdom. It cuts deeper than anything that has yet been written on the subject."--Dale Jamieson, author of Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle to Stop Climate Change Failed--And What It Means For Our Future"As a motivator, the concept Life hasn't been working out so great, hardwired as it is into the post-Neolithic drive to exist no matter what the quality of that existence. Life won't help you to live. Including ecological awareness in our political decisions means including as much death in as many different modes (psychic, philosophical, social) as we can manage. Roy Scranton has written an essential recipe book for adding some death to the bland, oppressive and ecologically disastrous human cake."--Timothy Morton, author of Ecology without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics"

In the brief but crowded pages of Learning to Die in the Anthropocene, Iraq War veteran, Roy Scranton, wields both history and philosophy as forensic tools. With the unblinking eyes of a medical examiner, he systematically reveals the causes, trajectory and outcome of our planetary domination and its subsequent climate crisis. Slicing away obscuring adipose tissue of romanticism on the left and denial on the right, he pinpoints the source of the corpse's demise."--Jose Knighton, Weller Book Works' Newsletter"

Scranton has always been a few steps ahead of other veteran-authors. . . . Learning to Die in the Anthropocene casts a beautiful allure."--Peter Molin, Time Now"

Scranton's book has its own kind of power. . . . There is something cathartic about his refusal to shy away from the full scope of our predicament."--Rebecca Tuhus-Dubrow, The Los Angeles Review of Books"

This is a small book with big ideas from an Army veteran who views the flooding after Hurricane Katrina and sees 'the same chaos and collapse I've seen in Baghdad.' Scranton brings meaning and humor to the mayhem."--J. Ford Huffman, The Military Times"

With clarity and conviction, Scranton explores the global failure to address the climate crisis and the possibility that the planet could become uninhabitable. Referring to classic texts as far back as The Epic of Gilgamesh, he urges readers to face their fear of death and find guidance in literature as they prepare for and adapt to the future. The book is an unapologetic punch in the gut, likely to leave many readers gasping. Scranton does offer a kind of hope: By making tough accommodations and reconnecting with our core humanity, we may eventually be able to recover our collective breath."--Michael Berry, Sierra Magazine"

. . . Scranton's book is a very well researched investigation into our troubled future. Scranton doesn't sugar coat his findings, 'We are f\*cked' as he so bluntly puts it. And indeed with the rise in global temperatures set to soar in the next fifty years bringing with it melting ice caps, rising seas, a toxic cocktail of carbon dioxide and methane that has remained locked in the permafrost for centuries, no argument can be made against Scranton's statement."--Stephen Lee Naish, Hong Kong Review of Books

A war veteran, journalist, and author, Roy Scranton has published in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Rolling Stone, Boston Review, and Theory and Event, and has been interviewed on NPR's Fresh Air, among other media.

Well written with a lot of referenced material. It provides thought provoking information about what may be the end of the current human civilization. The author does provide a ray of sunshine in the last chapter by stating that while there be devastating consequences of climate change a portion of our species will probably survive.

Wonderful, very intelligent, fine book. A poetic and scientifically valid read. A wonderful book for a climate crisis activist like me.

Very good, although certainly not for everyone. It takes a steely eye to look into this abyss, but if you want to read words that nobody else dares print, give it a look.

This is possibly the most important of all communications about the crisis faced by planet Earth. Sobering, honest, horrifying and wise. A prophet whose voice should be heard.

It's a little shorter than what I expected. Roy combines some key points in (what I consider) stoicism philosophy and Zen Buddhism along with interpretations of the origins of the Universe and evolution to deliver a quiet prayer for the end of the human race. It's a sobering read but necessary soul searching for those who are ready to accept our upcoming demise.

This small and concise book presents the ecological likelihood of our human fate, the blinkered and predatory ways we are dealing with it, the inescapable human reliance of violence in the case of threat, and the lack of any real control in ensuring our continuity. Roy Scranton, a former soldier, has written a deeply thoughtful essay. It is a call to accepting our mortality while working to continue what has been deepest and most enduring in our culture. One may or may not agree with any of the specific arguments here, but there is no doubt that this book places all the crucial issues on the table.

Premise is really scary! It's sad that we have gotten to this point. Almost makes you wonder if we

could have prevented it at all.

This book delves into the reality of the current crisis that society faces with catastrophic climate change, from a philosophical perspective. Helping the reader to accept the end of civilization as we know it.

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