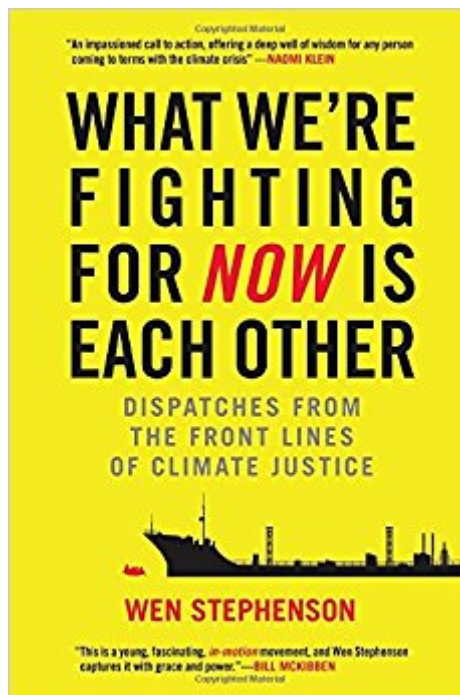




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# What We're Fighting For Now Is Each Other: Dispatches From The Front Lines Of Climate Justice



## Synopsis

An urgent, on-the-ground look at some of the “new American radicals” who have laid everything on the line to build a stronger climate justice movement. The science is clear: catastrophic climate change, by any humane definition, is upon us. At the same time, the fossil-fuel industry has doubled down, economically and politically, on business as usual. We face an unprecedented situation—a radical situation. As an individual of conscience, how will you respond? In 2010, journalist Wen Stephenson woke up to the true scale and urgency of the catastrophe bearing down on humanity, starting with the poorest and most vulnerable everywhere, and confronted what he calls “the spiritual crisis at the heart of the climate crisis.” Inspired by others who refused to retreat into various forms of denial and fatalism, he walked away from his career in mainstream media and became an activist, joining those working to build a transformative movement for climate justice in America. In *What We’re Fighting for Now Is Each Other*, Stephenson tells his own story and offers an up-close, on-the-ground look at some of the remarkable and courageous people—those he calls “new American radicals”—who have laid everything on the line to build and inspire this fast-growing movement: old-school environmentalists and young climate-justice organizers, frontline community leaders and Texas tar-sands blockaders, Quakers and college students, evangelicals and Occupiers. Most important, Stephenson pushes beyond easy labels to understand who these people really are, what drives them, and what they’re ultimately fighting for. He argues that the movement is less like environmentalism as we know it and more like the great human-rights and social-justice struggles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, from abolitionism to civil rights. It’s a movement for human solidarity. This is a fiercely urgent and profoundly spiritual journey into the climate-justice movement at a critical moment—in search of what climate justice, at this late hour, might yet mean.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Impassioned, provocative, beautifully written.”  
—Mark Hertsgaard, *Daily Beast*  
“In this harrowing, compelling call to action, Stephenson argues for radicalism, for a moral and even spiritual awakening similar to what fueled 19th century abolitionism.”  
—Kate Tuttle, *Boston Globe*  
“Thoughtful and self-aware...Stephenson grapples with the existential threat of environmental catastrophe by turning his gaze outward, onto the foot soldiers of the young and growing climate justice movement.”  
—Chris Bentley, *Chicago Tribune*  
“At its heart, this book is about a transformative social movement that is desperately needed and might just already be here.”  
—Caroline Selle, *Orion*  
“Readers will feel that they’ve traveled along with Stephenson and will likely be as transformed as he was as they think about what they might contribute to the environmental movement.”  
—Booklist  
“What We’re Fighting For Now Is Each Other is impassioned, provocative, beautifully written...The great value of the book, as well as its great risk, is that it forces each of us to ask: what am I doing about the train that’s barreling down the tracks towards me, my loved ones, and all we hold dear?”  
—The *Daily Beast*  
“Wen Stephenson has written nothing less than a love letter to the student organizers, preachers, and frontline fighters struggling for climate justice across the United States. Together, these portraits coalesce into an impassioned call to action, offering a deep well of wisdom for any person coming to terms with the climate crisis.”  
—Naomi Klein, author of *This Changes Everything* and *The Shock Doctrine*  
“In this powerful treatise, Wen Stephenson chronicles the convergence of climate activism and human rights struggles in frontline communities viewed through a climate justice lens. He convincingly presents climate change as the definitive global environmental justice issue of our day.”  
—Robert D. Bullard, author of *Dumping in Dixie* and co-author of *The Wrong Complexion for Protection*  
“To take the climate crisis seriously is to take it personally, to let it shake your soul. Wen Stephenson has done that, in a book that beautifully intertwines his own story with the stories of other Americans who encounter the endangered world

with the better angels of their nature. This is a profound, soul-stirring exploration by a twenty-first century abolitionist who, when he warns that it's too late, means that it's not too late.

• Todd Gitlin, author of *The Sixties* and *Occupy Nation* "In this lucid, compelling and deeply moving book, Wen Stephenson invites the reader to confront the same stark question that he himself had to confront: given the climate crisis now unfolding around me, what are my sources of hope and what shall I do with the time I've been given?"

This marvelous book charts a path to social and political transformation that springs from a spiritual awakening to the power of love.

• Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Ph.D., Missioner for Creation Care, Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts "It has been often said that the fight against climate disruption needs stories and heroes to bring the struggle to life. Well, look no further than Wen Stephenson's *What We're Fighting for Now is Each Other*. This glorious, moving telling creates a narrative that can inspire a movement for deep change before it is too late."

• James Gustave Speth, author of *America the Possible: Manifesto for a New Economy* "This is a young, fascinating, in-motion movement, and Wen Stephenson captures it with grace and power. I learned a good deal about things I thought I already understood."

• Bill McKibben, co-founder 350.org From the Hardcover edition.

Wen Stephenson, an independent journalist and climate activist, is a contributing writer for the *Nation*. Formerly an editor at the *Atlantic* and the *Boston Globe*, he has also written about climate, culture, and politics for *Slate*, the *New York Times*, *Grist*, and the *Boston Phoenix*.

If you care about the future of the planet - and it's hard to imagine who doesn't - this is a book that demands to be read. Stephenson - a journalist contributing to the *Nation*, walker to Walden, father, husband, Zen Buddhist practitioner, climate change and DivestHarvard activist - has not only studied the science, and talked the talk with us and with those who know, including the likes of Bill McKibben and other climate change leaders - he has walked the walk, going out to Port Arthur, Texas, Somerset, Massachusetts, Nacogdoches, Texas - the frontlines in this country of the resistance to fossil fuels, and he has brought back to us the tales of today's climate change heroes - of which he is one - and their analyses, moral commitment, and bravery. Read this book at peril to your complacency.

As a young activist relays to him, being a climate activist is like walking around with a knife in your

chest. Wen takes that knife and twists it a little bit, not to cause us pain but to wake us up a little more. As a nearly fulltime activist for over 3 years now and an environmentalist for all of my adult life, I was sure going into reading this book that I was fully awake to the problem and the need to take action. And yet, Wen managed to awaken me a little more still. Not by speaking to the intellect, but by speaking to the heart, he articulates the reason that we keep on going, in the face of overwhelming odds, in the face of a corrupt system of power, in the face of an apathetic populace too busy living their lives to see the catastrophe ahead. And yet, he reminds us, it is vital that we do this work, not to save the world, which may indeed be beyond saving, but to save our souls from that very fear, corruption and apathy that would otherwise destroy us long before we're dead! Thank you Wen for writing this and for fighting with us.

This is an emotional, honest response to climate change denial: "Put your life on the line or everyone's life will be threatened.

part of the United Methodist Women reading list this year

The author puts his heart and intellect on the line to bring the critical nature of climate change to everyone's attention. Please read. Please tell others.

A must read for everyone.

Need a perspective...? Or two...?Read this!

Very useful

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