

Coming of Age at the End of Nature: A Generation Faces Living on a Changed Planet

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Coming of Age at the End of Nature ushers in a new wave of millennial thought on the environment, climate change, and the art of living.

This groundbreaking collection of essays, with a foreword by Bill McKibben, features twenty-two young writers in three different topical sections. Impressive in scope, the essays vary from the pleasantly anecdotal to the penetratingly philosophical. All focus on the relationship between humanity and nature, the inheritance of an industrialized, destabilized global ecosystem, and how millennials, more than any other generation, will be tasked with healing the planet.

An overwhelming sense of responsibility permeates these pages. It manifests itself in fiery polemics, such as in Bonnie Frye Hemphill's "We Are the Fossil-Fuel Freedom Fighters." The unholy alliance of big oil and big politics is targeted more than once. But these essays reach deeper than political activism. They examine underlying values and popular conceptions of consumerism, environmentalism, wilderness, and nature. In Lauren McCrady's wonderfully subversive "My Present is Not Your Tombstone," the elitist, sanctimonious strain present in so much environmentalist writing is identified and taken to task. Public lands are for everyone, McCrady argues, even cheesy tourists.

Coming of Age at the End of Nature distills the zeitgeist of the twenty-first century. Here are the age's youthful voices in the full bloom of their protest. But even more than protest, these essays offer new ways of identifying oneself with nature in a postindustrial world.

SCOTT NEUFFER (Winter 2017)

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