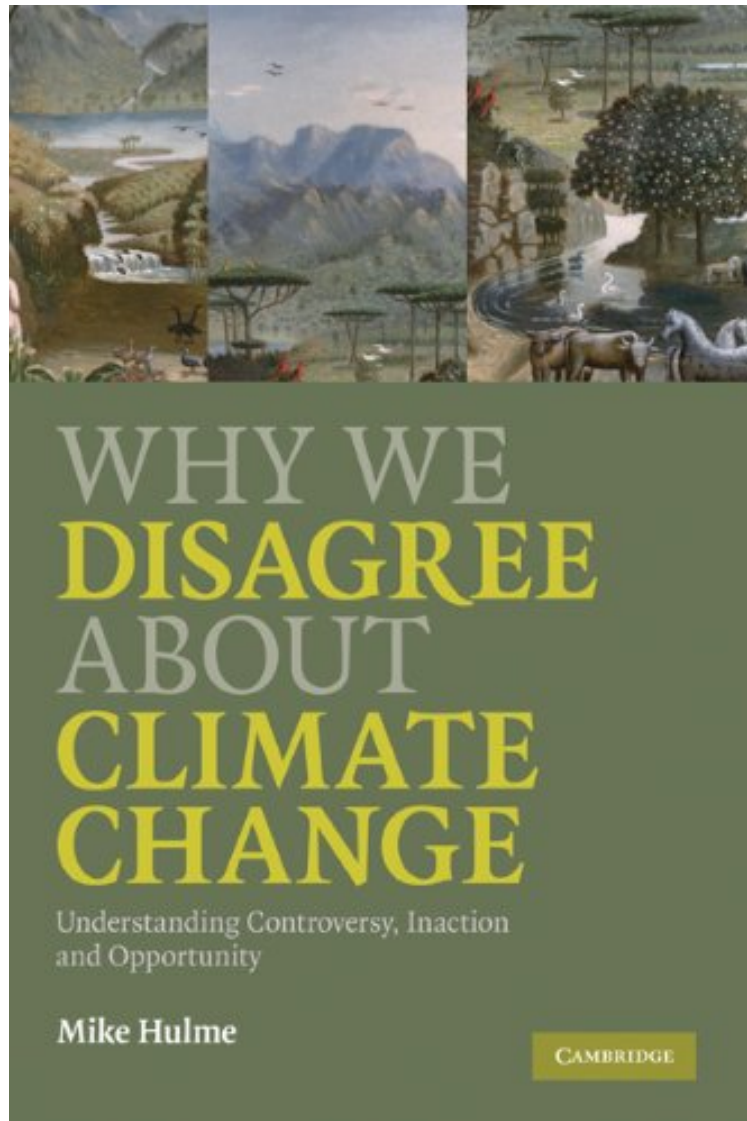


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## Why We Disagree About Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction and Opportunity

*Mike Hulme*

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**Mike Hulme : Why We Disagree About Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction and Opportunity** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why We Disagree About Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction and Opportunity:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This is a very fine book, the product of immersion in the issues ...By David Mcrae This is a very fine book, the product of immersion in the issues professionally for many years. It is more

inventive and insightful than many its counterparts which have heated up this and related topics. It is determined to be constructive without being Pollyannaish. It is probably as good as you'll get today. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Climate is so multi-dimensional. By P. K. Foster. This book analyses very thoroughly the multi-dimensional nature of climate issues. Because international agreement is required, the extent to which it is dependent on political and economic issues is well summarised by Hulme. It is a key aspect in this often vitriolic field, that Hulme writes as an insider to the system, and one who is concerned about anthropogenic global warming. It is an excellent analysis of the whole field. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. On Conceptions of Science and Nature. By Brett Cassette. Hulme's book asks an important question regarding our understanding of 'climate change,' namely: how do different cultures, religions, and histories come to regard the subject in such multifarious ways? Philologically, it is important to understand the histories of words like 'nature,' 'natural,' 'society,' and 'culture' before understanding how these histories came to shape our current ideas re: the science and inform policy decisions. Moreover, disparities in opinion must understand culture ethics, religion, prioritization of outcomes (in this issue and others), and economization, among other data. Climate change will not act as an issue to be solved, but rather, will serve as an impetus to reassess our place in the world and the prioritization of issues.

Climate change is not 'a problem' waiting for 'a solution'. It is an environmental, cultural and political phenomenon which is re-shaping the way we think about ourselves, our societies and humanity's place on Earth. Drawing upon twenty-five years of professional work as an international climate change scientist and public commentator, Mike Hulme provides a unique insider's account of the emergence of this phenomenon and the diverse ways in which it is understood. He uses different standpoints from science, economics, faith, psychology, communication, sociology, politics and development to explain why we disagree about climate change. In this way he shows that climate change, far from being simply an 'issue' or a 'threat', can act as a catalyst to revise our perception of our place in the world. *Why We Disagree About Climate Change* is an important contribution to the ongoing debate over climate change and its likely impact on our lives.

An Economist Book of the Year, 2009 A Nature Reports: Climate Change Must-read for Copenhagen "This is a very rare book. A scientific book about climate change, that deals both with the science, and our own personal response to this science. It does all this supremely well, and should be compulsory reading for both sceptics and advocates. However, it does so much more, it is a book of great modesty and humanity. It uses climate change to ask questions more broadly about our own beliefs, assumptions and prejudices, and how we make individual and collective decisions." - Chris Mottershead, Distinguished Advisor, BP p.l.c. "In this personal and deeply reflective book, a distinguished climate researcher shows why it may be both wrong and frustrating to keep asking what we can do for climate change. Tracing the many meanings of climate in culture, Hulme asks instead what climate change can do for us. Uncertainty and ambiguity emerge here as resources, because they force us to confront those things we really want - not safety in some distant, contested future but justice and self-understanding now. Without downplaying its seriousness, Hulme demotes climate change from ultimate threat to constant companion, whose murmurs unlock in us the instinct for justice and equality." - Sheila Jasanoff, Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies, Harvard University "This book is a 'must read' for anyone interested in the relationship between science and society. As we know from other controversies over GM Crops and MMR, by the time science hits the headlines, and therefore the public consciousness, it's always about much more than the science. This book shines a fascinating light on this process by revealing how climate change has been transformed from a physical phenomenon, measurable and observable by scientists, into a social, cultural and political one. Everyone must surely recognize Hulme's description of the way climate change has become a kind of Christmas tree onto which we all hang our personal favourite bauble and Hulme highlights the way the issue has been appropriated by so many different groups to promote their own causes. Believers in turning the clock forwards and using more advanced technology, and those who argue we should turn the clock back and live more simply can equally claim that climate change supports their case. Over the past few years Hulme has bravely spoken out against what some have described as 'climate porn', the tendency of some sections of the scientific community and the media to present climate change in ever more catastrophic and apocalyptic terms. This book elaborates on Hulme's hostility to the language of 'imminent peril' and calls for a different discourse. This book is so important because Mike Hulme cannot be dismissed as a skeptic yet he is calling for a radical change in the way we discuss climate change. Whether or not people agree with his conclusions - this book is a challenging, thought-provoking and radical way to kick start that discussion." - Fiona Fox, Director, Science Media Centre, London "With empirical experience that includes seven years' leading the influential Tyndall Centre, Professor Hulme here argues that science alone is insufficient to face climate change. We also 'need to reveal the creative psychological, spiritual and ethical work that climate change can do and is doing for us.' It is the very 'intractability of climate change', its sociological status as a 'wicked' problematique, that requires us to reappraise the 'myths' or foundational belief systems in which the science unfolds. That returns Hulme to the bottom line question: 'What is the human project ultimately about?' and herein resides this book's distinctive importance." - Alastair McIntosh, author of *Hell and High Water*:

Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition, and Visiting Professor of Human Ecology at the Department of Geography and Sociology, University of Strathclyde" A much needed re-examination of the idea of climate change from a vantage point that takes its cultural coordinates as seriously as its physical properties. Through the twin lenses of scientific scrutiny and rhetorical analysis, Mike Hulme helps us to see just why we disagree about climate change and what we can do about it. With wisdom, wit and winsome writing, he shows us that debates about climate change turn out to be disputes about ourselves - our hopes, our fears, our aspirations, our identity. Hindsight, insight and foresight combine to make this book a rare treat." - David N. Livingstone, Professor of Historical Geography, Queen's University, Belfast" In a crowded and noisy world of climate change publications, this will stand tall. Mike Hulme speaks with the calm yet authoritative voice of the integrationist. He sees climate change as both a scientific and a moral issue, challenging our presumed right to be 'human' to our offspring and to the pulsating web of life that sustains habitability for all living beings. As a peculiar species we have the power to create intolerable conditions for the majority of our descendants. Yet we also have the scientific knowledge, the economic strength, and the political capacity to change direction and put a stop to avoidable calamity. This readable book provides us with the necessary argument and strategy to follow the latter course." - Tim O'Riordan, Emeritus Professor of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia" Hulme articulates quite complex arguments in a remarkably clear and effective manner. He not only covers a lot of ground, but by avoiding an overly compartmentalized approach he achieves a great deal of connectivity throughout the book. For those who are regularly immersed in the social sciences literature on climate change, the content itself may not hold many surprises. But Hulme's approach makes these arguments accessible and meaningful for a wider audience, and this tome could also serve as a great teaching text. Through the book, Hulme makes important contributions to continued understanding of environmental, cultural, political and physical - eminently interdisciplinary - aspects of climate change. As more citizens, students, scientists and policy players read it, Why We Disagree About Climate Change is very likely to be an important and 'discernible influence' on the ways we think about and discuss global change, and how we plan to engage with it." - Nature Reports: Climate Change" In the crowded and noisy world of climate-change publications, this book will stand out." - The Economist" This book is particularly useful in identifying the linkages between different perspectives on climate change, value systems, and beliefs about the way things should and do work.... This is not a book that advocates or even facilitates a course of action to mitigate the consequences of climate change. Rather, it encourages reflection, not only about the complexity of the issue but also about how we want to respond to the challenge that climate change poses to our social as well as ecological systems." - PsycCRITIQUES" A distinctive and courageous book." - The Times Higher Education Supplement" A climatologist who has devoted some serious time to studying history and social studies of science, Hulme aims to offer a broader perspective on the debates that arise once the initial question of the reality of human-caused global warming has been settled. His book is valuable for its diagnosis of the many different levels at which disagreement can arise and the variety of political stances and value judgments that can incline people to divergent conclusions about what is likely to happen and what might be done." - Science Magazine

About the Author Mike Hulme is Professor of Climate Change in the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia (UEA), and Founding Director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research. He has published over 100 peer-reviewed journal papers and over 30 books or book chapters on climate change topics. He has prepared climate scenarios and reports for the UK Government, the European Commission, UNEP, UNDP, WWF-International and the IPCC. He is leading the EU Integrated Project ADAM (Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies) during the period 2006-2009, which comprises a 26-member European research consortium contributing research to the development of EU climate policy. He co-edits the journal Global Environmental Change and is Editor-in-Chief of the Interdisciplinary on Climate Change.