

## **Review: How Climate Change Comes to Matter: The Communal Life of Facts**

By Candis Callison

**Reviewed by Kenneth Rankins**

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Callison, Candis. *How Climate Change Comes to Matter: The Communal Life of Facts*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University, 2014. 316pp. ISBN 9780822357872, paperback, US \$24.95, acid-free paper.

*How Climate Change Comes to Matter: The Communal Life of Facts* by Candis Callison aims to determine the best ways to tackle climate change. The book investigates climate change using five case studies to find the best solutions which will encourage diverse groups through taking actions and saving our environment. The author argues that conflicts regarding personal beliefs, not science, are the primary reason we have not discovered feasible solutions to climate change. According to Callison, increasing the scientific literacy of the general public, academics, religious groups, and politicians is the key to solving many problems with climate change.

The book focuses on methods to overcome the public's resistance to climate change. The author shares that she has faced opposition on climate change by a Canadian tribe, while talking about environmental problems. A locally elected official claimed that climate change was something that they only hear on television and do not speak about within their tribe.

Callison argues that accurately reporting on climate change is an effective way to improve society's scientific literacy on the subject. She writes that not everyone with an academic degree should be taken seriously and that we should be critical of climate change skeptics' research. The author suggests that we should focus more on answering ethical questions rather than questions about the facts of climate change.

The book emphasizes the role played by religious groups in the climate change debate and argues that some religious groups are suspicious of scientific research. For instance, the author presents a religious group called, Creation Care, who is the leading voice in the Christian community concerning the environment. This group's view approaches climate change from a moral and biblical point of view, not from a scientific point of view. The members of this community will consider the information about climate change only if Christian leaders and scientists "bless the facts" of a report. Callison does not offer a concrete solution to overcome the conflict between religion and climate change.

Callison transitions from discussing the role of religion to focusing on what is considered valid climate change research and what studies that people should avoid. Conflicts may arise due to the public's uncertainty around climate change studies. She suggests that we change the focus of our questions about climate change from the legitimacy of

climate change to what we can do to prevent it. This shift in the dialogue will get us further in possible solutions for climate change.

In the concluding chapter, Callins addresses corporations' social responsibility to the health of the environment. The author believes that many corporations are practicing greenwashing, a public relations strategy where they make themselves appear more environmentally friendly. She argues that many corporations do not want to make changes to their standard operating practices regarding the environment because their primary concerns are increasing profits and minimizing financial losses.

*How Climate Change Comes to Matter: The Communal Life of Facts* is a useful book designed for academia, politicians, and various cultural groups. The book raises many critical questions about the debate over the reliability of climate change sciences and would have been more compelling if the author had also offered tangible solutions to improve the public's scientific literacy. Additionally, a concluding chapter that ties together the five case studies would be useful to help the reader understand the overarching themes. Overall, this book will be effective at sparking much needed discussions about climate change science.

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