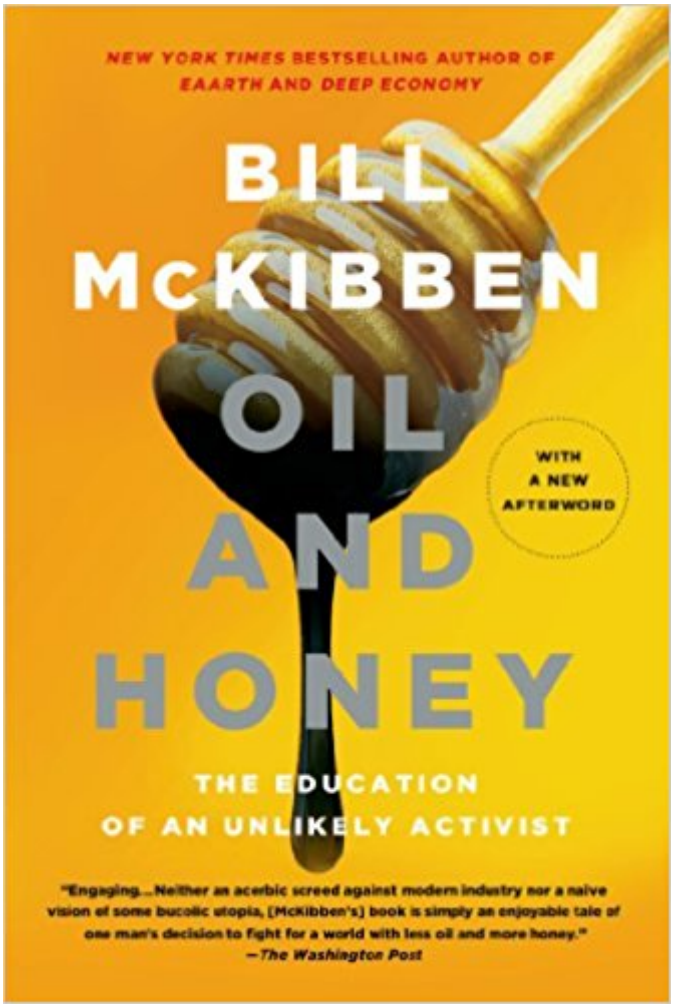
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Oil And Honey: The Education Of An Unlikely Activist



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Synopsis

Bestselling author and environmental activist Bill McKibben recounts the personal and global story of the fight to build and preserve a sustainable planetBill McKibben is not a person you'd expect to find handcuffed and behind bars, but that's where he found himself in the summer of 2011 after leading the largest civil disobedience in thirty years, protesting the Keystone XL pipeline in front of the White House.With the Arctic melting, the Midwest in drought, and Irene scouring the Atlantic, McKibben recognized that action was needed if solutions were to be found. Some of those would come at the local level, where McKibben joins forces with a Vermont beekeeper raising his hives as part of the growing trend toward local food. Other solutions would come from a much larger fight against the fossil-fuel industry as a whole.Oil and Honey is McKibben's account of these two necessary and mutually reinforcing sides of the global climate fightÃ¢â ¬â ¢from the center of the maelstrom and from the growing hive of small-scale local answers to climate change. With empathy and passion he makes the case for a renewed commitment on both levels of the fight to stop global warming, telling the story of raising one year's honey crop and building a social movement that's still cresting.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

jcSince 2007, former New Yorker writer McKibben (The End of Nature), has been at the forefront of the grassroots movement to fight global warming. With his organization, 350.org, McKibben has encouraged people all over the world to commit acts of civil disobedience in order to publicize the

way climate change had affected their way of life. He has also worked to challenge the Keystone XL Pipeline project, endorsed by the Obama administration, but excoriated by environmentalists. Here, McKibben's accounts of activism are punctuated with visits to a friend's farm, and discussions of small-scale farming techniques and bee husbandry. Although he was harnessing the power of politicians, scientists, billionaires, and celebrities and speaking through the loudest megaphone of his career, McKibben kept returning to the beehives flourishing in the Vermont woods. What lessons in organization, adaptation, and endurance could be gleaned from the way bees work together and interact with their environment? Tracking the emotional and intellectual journey that took McKibben from Vermont to picket lines in Washington, D.C. to town halls, universities, and arenas, the book is a call to action and an inspiring playbook for making changeÃ¢â ¬â •both locally and globallyÃ¢â ¬â •in the 21st century. (Sept.) --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Starred Review As global warming accelerates, McKibben, who has been writing about climate change and fossil fuels for 25 years, has stepped up his innovative activism even though all he really wants to do is stay home in Vermont and appreciate natureÃ¢â ¬â„¢s magnificent choreography. The title of his fifteenth book encapsulates the two lives he juxtaposes in this confiding and dramatic chronicle of environmental action in the Internet age, especially his founding of the nimble and impactful organization 350.org. On the oil front, McKibben illuminates the thinking behind and courage involved in protests against the Keystone XL pipeline, including his time in jail. Honey refers to his collaboration with beekeeper Kirk Webster, whose dream was to establish a chemical-free apiary and share his sustainable bee-raising techniques. McKibben eloquently contrasts the deep benefits of WebsterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s work with the unconscionable risks of tar-sands oil production and the toxicity of Washington politics. In this moving, wryly amusing account set against the heated presidential campaign of 2012, Ã Â- McKibben describes his extraordinary world travels and what it took to launch gutsy, creative, and effective protests, and shares invaluable information and such intriguing insights as what bees can teach us about reaching consensus. Galvanizing and inspiring. --Donna Seaman --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Today in the United States there is a deep void of reality in ignoring or at least shrugging off the addiction of carbon based fossil fuels. There is good reason for it and Mr. Bill McKibben gives his very personal account of his last thirty years or so dealing global warming and other environmental issues. I first must reveal I have been a member of the organization 350.org and have marched (not arrested yet) a number of times at the Capital. The last of which was President's Day when 40,000

to 50,000 showed up on a less than ideal day to show there is an actual movement of citizens to stand up and act to deal with this problem of our own making. For those that could not be there, the passages of these events are worth the price of the book.There is a mixture of facts, personal encounters with a diverse range of folks who are dealing with the challenge of trying to change the system.Unfortunately, the system is geared in part to Politicians and in turn they are beholden to influence of money. There is no coincidence that the most profitable business on the planet gets their ear and support. Mr McKibben shows how activism by ordinary citizens banding together can engage the Institutions that are non-responsive to the repeated calls of leading scientists and science organizations to reduce greenhouse emissions and other causes of climate change. Sometimes that means getting arrested and spending days in jail as a peaceful protest.I read the whole book in one sitting and will read it again.

Disclaimer: I was already positively biased towards this book before I started it given my interests and opinions on the issues that Bill McKibben discusses in this book. I have also read other works by the author so I did not come to this book objectively.IMO, we are in a protracted war to battle climate change and the work that Bill describes is about a major effort in that war written while the war is still being fought. As my review’s title relates, it is as if one read a book by a major player in the civil rights movement before the major federal civil rights legislation passed in the 60’s.Bill is one of the true heroes of the the war on climate change and his book is a riveting account of the last few years in this war and the important part that he has played. It is well written and inspiring and I highly recommend it.

Wherever you think you stand on the Climate Catastrophe issue - you want to read this book!Not only is it worth your time - which is precious - it doesn’t insult your intelligence.This author begins:"Chapter One: Two LivesHere’s a story of two lives lived in response to a crazy time--a time when the Arctic melted and the temperature soared, a time when the planet began to come apart, a time when bee populations suddenly dropped in half. Each story is extreme. They’re not intended as suggestions for how others should live, and I hope the reader won’t feel the need to choose, or reject, either one. Each story is mine, at least in part, for sometimes I think I’ve learned more in the past two years than in all the decades that came before. Some of that education came in the tumult and conflict of my own life, as I helped to build an active resistance to the fossil fuel industry. And some came in the beeyards of my home state, while I carefully watched a very different, very beautiful way of dealing with a malfunctioning modernity. These stories mesh together, I hope:

awkwardly right now, but perhaps, with luck, more easily in the time to come."

Readable, engaging, enjoyable learning about bees and humaneness, Sissyphean struggle and the physics of climate change. Bill McKibben, almost in spite of himself, turns from professional writer to activist to environmentalist to organizer of 350.com with national Keystone XL pipeline protests, fossil fuel divestment proponent and apiary acolyte. There is much here of genuine climate change history, heroes and heroines. The analogy to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s is close.

"Oil and Honey" describes how a stalwart of the climate change movement, Bill McKibben, became the unlikely activist and voice of change for climate change. The details about how 350.org came to be as well as the things McKibben and others took to derail the Key Stone pipeline are interesting but I found his discussion about three key numbers -- 2, 565, 2,795 -- more interesting (and relevant to humanity’s long-term prospects for survival). The first number, 2 (degrees Celsius), is the bottom limit for global temperature increase. If we surpass this limit -- we are already at a 0.8 degree Celsius increase -- then long-term disaster is almost a certainty. The next number, 565 (gigatons), is how much more carbon dioxide we can dump into the atmosphere by the middle of the century yet still have some shot at remaining below a 2 degree Celsius temperature increase. The last number, 2,795 (gigatons), is the amount of carbon waiting to be burned if we exhaust the fossil fuel supply already in the ground. The oil-rich countries and oil & gas companies would love nothing more than to drill, exploit, and profit from the oil & gas waiting to be extracted but if we do, well, life as we know it may become a distant memory.This book isn’t quite a call to action but it will certainly impress upon you the need to pay attention, be engaged, and do something, anything, to slow climate change.

I read this book because it was recommended as a good place to start in understanding the fight against global warming. It was said to be entertaining and it was. I enjoyed the education it gave me about bees and about politics and activism. Very glad I read and now my book club will meet and talk about this one!

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