



by Eva von Redecker
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Non-Fiction

Revolution for Life

Revolution für das Leben

review

Revolution for Life is a passionate philosophical critique of the power structures that underpin our society, proposing radical solutions to contemporary social problems.

Eva von Redecker examines how the established power structures we often take for granted determine our human relationships, our understanding of property and the way we view nature. She offers a fascinating take on the Covid-19 pandemic within the context of environmental protest movements and their philosophical rationales.

The book is divided into two sections, the first of which concentrates on dominion, power and possessions. Von Redecker's sights are firmly set on capitalism and its relentless pursuit of profit with no regard for the environment, highlighting an out of control and destructive consumerist spiral. This theme is developed in a broad sweep that connects the pandemic with the Black Lives Matter movement and global environmental movement.

The second half of the book focuses on environmental protest groups and considers the sustainable changes that industry, society, and individuals need to make. Von Redecker argues that industry must repair the damage it has inflicted on nature and human society, that work must meet the personal needs of individuals and contribute to the healing of the environment, and that property should be replaced with communitarian ownership.

The author thus challenges societal norms, but acknowledges that this will take a revolution to achieve. She imagines a future in which childbearing is regarded as an economic activity, and all children will be cared for collectively.

The 'Revolution for Life' is an ongoing process, drawing inspiration from equal rights movements, worker strikes, and actions to save trees and land from destruction. Von Redeker reflects on the social inequalities that the Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare, considering the groups most likely to lose their lives to the virus and those most severely impacted by the lockdown restrictions. Her proposed social reforms take as their basis a collective effort to refocus on the common good and to enshrine ecological solidarity at the heart of all actions.

Revolution for Life is a gripping read, with clear arguments and compelling examples, and serves as a comprehensive introduction to twenty-first-century environmental activism. It will appeal to readers of titles such as Robin Hanbury Tenison's *Taming the Four Horsemen*, and *There is No Planet B*, by Mike Berners-Lee.

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'A very engaging account of how environmental resistance is grounded in civil rights movements and the struggle for freedom, through history and around the world. The author expounds on the philosophical rationales that underpin various forms of activism, thereby providing a new manifesto for the environment. A timely and encouraging contribution in an era of Covid, climate change, and civil unrest.'

Sarah Tolley, translator

press quotes

'This book could become the bible of intellectual resistance against real existing capitalism.'

Deutschlandfunk Kultur

about the author

Eva von Redecker is a German critical theorist and public philosopher, writing about social change, modern property, and sometimes even life and death. She grew up on a small organic farm and still prefers living in the countryside to inhabiting metropolises.

At present, Eva holds a Marie-Skłodowska-Curie-fellowship at the University of Verona, where she pursues a research project on authoritarianism (PhantomAiD). Previously, she has worked as research associate at Humboldt-University, Berlin (2009 to 2019) and acted as deputy director of the Berlin Center for Humanities and Social Change. She also visited the New School for Social Research as Heuss lecturer and spent a semester at Cambridge University during her PhD.

Eva's take on oppressive populism is developed in her article "Ownership's Shadow" which is accessible here: <https://doi.org/10.1215/26410478-8189849>; the English translation of her 2018 monograph *Praxis und Revolution* is forthcoming with Columbia University Press this spring.

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S. Fischer Verlag (Germany)
Hedderichstrasse 114
60596 Frankfurt am Main

Contact: Verena Gräfin von Bassewitz

foreignrights@fischerverlage.de