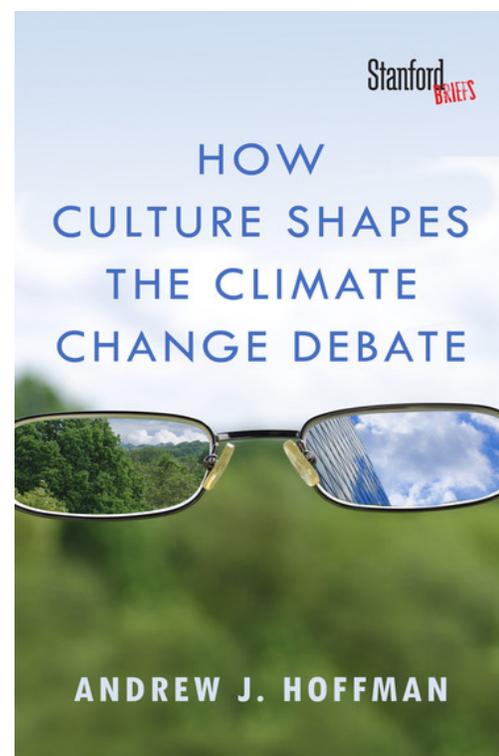


How Culture Shapes the Climate Change Debate

By Andrew J. Hoffman



Though the scientific community largely agrees that climate change is underway, debates about this issue remain fiercely polarized. These conversations have become a rhetorical contest, one where opposing sides try to achieve victory through playing on fear, distrust, and intolerance. At its heart, this split no longer concerns carbon dioxide, greenhouse gases, or climate modeling; rather, it is the product of contrasting, deeply entrenched worldviews.

This brief examines what causes people to reject or accept the scientific consensus on climate change. Synthesizing evidence from sociology, psychology, and political science, Andrew J. Hoffman lays bare the opposing cultural lenses through which science is interpreted. He then extracts lessons from major cultural shifts in the past to engender a better understanding of the problem and motivate the public to take action. *How Culture Shapes the Climate Change Debate* makes a powerful case for a more scientifically literate public, a more socially engaged scientific community, and a more thoughtful mode of public discourse.

"This is a well-researched treatment of cultural dimensions of climate science and policy. Hoffman's ability to organize overlapping literatures into a cogent assessment of the current conditions makes for a wonderful book."

—Max Boykoff, Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES), University of Colorado-Boulder

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"One of the tallest orders of our day is to communicate effectively about global warming. Hoffman shows us how to talk about climate science and policy in ways that depolarize the debate and empower people to form their own opinions based on the scientific risks. This book is a valuable resource, and it comes at the right time."

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"Hoffman's book is a much-needed analysis of how humans process information—and how that messy mix of reason, emotion, and cultural influence shapes and reinforces our views on global climate change. Important reading for anyone who wants to influence public opinion and public policy on this crucial issue."

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