# Summary of Notes on Charles Eisenstein

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Notes on *Climate: A New Story* Charles Eisenstein. North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA. 2018, by Mary Kay Klein (MK-Climate) and Julie Carey (JC-Climate)

Notes on the New Story Hub video “Ecological Economics and the Evolution of Capital” an interview with Eisenstein and Carolyn Finney. Paraphrased and abbreviated by Cornelia Parkes (CP-Econ)

# The Old Story is The Story of Separation

The story of Separation, which answers deep questions, as all myths do, like who are you, why are you here, what is important, where do we come from, and what is the destiny of humanity. It says that you are a separate self in an objective world outside of you, a world that operates by force (Newtonian physics), and that the world outside of ourselves does not have the qualities of self, does not have intelligence, purpose, or inherent organization and certainly does not have consciousness. Thus, marooned in the alien world of generic particles and mathematical forces, competing with other separate selves and the arbitrary forces of nature, human progress becomes a matter of insolating ourselves from the outside forces, of mastering them, and imposing intelligence onto a world that has none. (CP-Econ)

- we see nature as “environment” – thereby separate

- mechanistic view of nature

- belief that humans are the only fully conscious, subjective agents (JC-Climate)

# The New Story is the Story of Interbeing

“A story of Interbeing motivating earth healing neither contradicts nor depends on the story of saving the world from greenhouse gases. It supersedes it. The larger story of humanity in service to the healing and flourishing of Gaia is already bursting to take over.” (p. 134) “People are not going to be frightened into caring.” (p. 138) (MK-Climate)

New frame: Earth is a living organism (JC-Climate)

We need a revolution of the heart, not the head. Following our hearts is the substratum for all that follows. Interbeing: we are not all one, but existence is relation. Our system moves according to organizational mythology. (MK-Climate)

Indigenous people see human activity, including ritual, as part of the glue that holds the world together. We need to embrace their core understanding. (pp. 254, 258) (MK-Climate)

Many have direct experiences that contradict what science and authority generally tell them is real and possible. (MK-Climate)

An Affair of the Heart: “I would say that matter is sentient, watching, listening… God, you might say is in all things, and nothing is not God.” (JC-Climate)

# Climate and the New Story

The Revolution is Love – issue of environmental degradation cannot be separated from the need for social, economic, and personal healing; a different kind of civilization is possible. (JC-Climate)

Our climate derangement, not warming, is the main threat. Earth is a living body; we have been destroying its tissues and organs. Increased levels of drought and flooding are not caused by climate change; they are climate change. (p. 83) It’s about more than temperature changes.

Belonging is essential: We all belong to each other and the rest of the universe. Technical details such as controlling carbon will not succeed on their own.

Love the earth for what it is, not what it provides. (p. 151) If the world is dead, what is there to love? (p. 153) Healing is the way forward.

The premises of the conversation of environmentalists are now shifted away from love of nature and toward a fear for our survival. This will not work in the long run. We need healing, not polarization. (MK-Climate)

Regeneration – In the new relationship whenever we take from the earth, we seek to do so in a way that enriches the earth.

* The threat isn’t to Gaia, it is to humanity
* Reference to European settlers – natives had “inhabited” it, not “developed” it; calling it virgin territory gave them license to occupy and develop it. “The ideology of the wild is of a piece with ideology of conquest.” (Current reference to the Amazon exploitation) (JC-Climate)

# Energy

In population, moving from high fertility, high mortality to low fertility, low mortality – as in energy, from high growth, high waste to steady state model; civilization is in midst of phase transition. (JC-Climate)

# Money

Money sits comfortably in a story of separation and in the story of growth. This story says that human destiny is to become masters of nature. That our well-being, our progress comes through making more and more of the world OURS, extending our world to the non-world, the genetic realm, and to outer space. And we believe that we will solve all our problems that way.

What Leon Eisler called the dominator paradigm is baked into the cake of the story of Separation. The story of money as it is currently constituted is part of that story: it encourages competition; it generates scarcity of things that are fundamentally abundant. We have more than enough food, for example. Probably half of all food is wasted at this point, yet people will go hungry. (CP-Econ)

# On Sustaining our World

Do we want to sustain our “world” as it is? Racism and all other isms are part of the same mind set of othering that turns nature into an object. In order to exploit something, first you must reduce it. To exploit a human being or to kill a human being, it helps if you can turn them in a dehumanized caricature. On a more subtle level that is happening to everybody all the time when we get reduced to a consumer or a labor force or to a market. Ecological healing and gender healing are part of the same movement. It’s about giving full beingness back to those we have objectified and devalued. (CP-Econ)

A healed world is possible. (JC-Climate)