





# Rethinking Climate Change: A Holistic Approach to Economic and Environmental Solutions

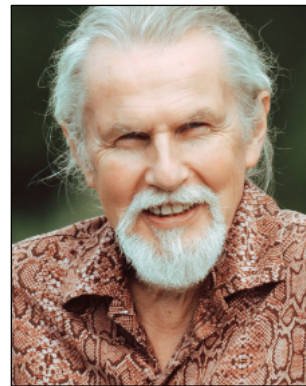
*Roar Bjonnes*

IN THE ARTICLE *Climate Change... from the Deep Past to the 22nd Century (Neohumanist Review 2)* author Michael Towsey shares in detail why climate change is nothing new on our planet, that it has happened in the past, has always been challenging, even cataclysmic, but that these events also lead to flourishing evolutionary changes.

In the past, cosmic shifts, sometimes spanning millions of years in the making, have been the main causes of ice ages, droughts, and floods, but also new animal species, even new humanoids. But this time, here in the relatively stable Anthropocene, human-made inventions are the main causes of climate change. To understand climate change on an evolutionary scale, Towsey uses the whole parts model.

“From a systems perspective,” he writes, “ecosystems, social and economic systems can be understood as wholes composed of parts (plants, animals, humans, as the case may be). The important insight is that the whole and its parts cannot be understood in isolation—they are interrelated and interdependent. Living systems cycle through four stages: growth → maturity → breakdown → reorganization.”

Seen from this macro perspective, we are instructed to see climate change as part of an evolutionary cycle inviting us to adapt to change. According to this model, we have, in fact, reached the maturity stage of our civilization. We are looking at a period of breakdown, and we need to plan for the next stage, for reorganization.



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This is a new way of looking at not only climate reality but also on human history. For centuries, since the great enlightenment ideas and scientific concepts of Copernicus, Bacon, and Descartes, we have operated as if the universe was a predictive machine consisting of neat little parts, easy to manipulate and predict. We have thought of progress, mainly material, as moving in a straight line—from poverty to riches, from primitive to more sophisticated civilizations.

Now, however, we are entering an unpredictable phase of human evolution, and the mechanistic worldview is becoming outdated. A new worldview is needed. New solutions are needed. Systems science has promoted this new worldview of not only parts but also of wholes. A dynamic new vision of reality in which there is both growth and maturity, but also an acknowledgement of eventual breakdown and reorganization.

While Towsey's article focused mainly on the underlying causes of climate change, this article will look at how the new systems worldview emerging within the sciences and among economists, environmental activists, and spiritual thinkers can be applied to finding solutions to not only the climate crisis, but also the social and economic crises, and even to a more fundamental crisis: the crisis of human imagination and meaning. Below are six ways to explore the problems and possible solutions to the climate crisis.

### 1. The Worldview Perspective

Activist thinkers such as Jeremy Lent and Fritjof Capra have highlighted that climate change isn't just about carbon emissions or overuse of nonrenewable energy; it's about our entire way of viewing the world. They argue that our current systems, obsessed with short-term gains and endless growth, are driving us towards ecological disaster. To tackle climate change, we need a fundamental shift in how we see ourselves in relation to nature, embracing a perspective that recognizes our interconnectedness with all life.

The Indian philosopher P. R. Sarkar agreed. He emphasized that a whole new vision, including economic systems change, is urgently needed today. Sarkar proposed a holistic approach to environmentalism and to economics.

At the core of Sarkar's ideas is the concept of Neo-Humanism, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all life forms and advocates for the well-being of not just human beings but all living beings in dynamic interaction with the environment.

Sarkar argued for a balanced relationship between human society and the natural world, promoting sustainable economics based on decentralization and economic democracy, so that we can meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

He advocated for the protection and preservation of natural resources, including forests, rivers, and wildlife, recognizing their intrinsic value beyond their utility to humans.

Additionally, Sarkar emphasized the importance of individual and collective responsibility in caring

for the environment. He believed that spiritual growth and ecological consciousness are intertwined, suggesting that a deeper connection with nature fosters a sense of stewardship and respect for the planet.

In summary, a systems change perspective is needed today as our civilization, in the words of systems thinker Jeremy Lent, "careens toward climate breakdown, ecological destruction, and gaping inequality."

This crisis, Lent claims, is caused by our fractured and reductionist worldview causing a body/mind and human/nature split invalidated by both indigenous wisdom and modern systems science.

These failures have led to an urgent need for new environmental, social, political, and economic systems that can act in more dynamic balance with nature—the source of all these human-made systems.

### Organisations Working Toward a More Integrated Worldview

1. Schumacher Center for a New Economics ([centerforneweconomics.org](http://centerforneweconomics.org)) - Founded in 1980 to carry on the legacy of E.F. Schumacher's ideas of "small is beautiful" and human-scale economics.
2. Post Growth Institute ([postgrowth.org](http://postgrowth.org)) - Advocates for a transition to a post-growth economy that prioritizes human and ecological wellbeing over GDP growth.
3. Center for Humans & Nature ([humansandnature.org](http://humansandnature.org)) - Promotes ethical and spiritual perspectives on human responsibilities to nature.
4. Neohumanist Educational Futures ([neohumanisteducation.org](http://neohumanisteducation.org)) - Applies the philosophy of P. R. Sarkar's neohumanism to education and social change.
5. Transition Network ([transitionnetwork.org](http://transitionnetwork.org)) - Supports community-led initiatives for transitioning to a low-carbon, resilient future.
6. P2P Foundation ([p2pfoundation.net](http://p2pfoundation.net)) - Researches and advocates for peer-to-peer dynamics and commons-oriented policies.
7. The Institute for Sacred Activism ([andrewharvey.net](http://andrewharvey.net)) - Advocates for the integration of spirituality and activism.

These are just a few of the organizations focused on fostering a more holistic worldview, including rethinking economics, promoting resilience, applying neohumanist principles, and fostering systems change towards more sustainable and equitable societies.



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## 2. The Environmental Change Perspective

Systems visions, such as Sarkar's Neo Humanism, embraces the vision that human society, economics, and technology are subsystems of nature. Without a thriving ecology, there will be no thriving economy.

Building on this vision, the environmental change perspective, influenced by voices like Paul Hawken in his book *Drawdown*, emphasizes holistic changes rather than quick fixes to cut emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

This means ramping up renewable energy, protecting natural habitats, rethinking how we farm, and the food we consume. The aim? To slash emissions while restoring the planet's ability to soak up carbon.

When it comes to shaping the future of our planet, there's a dynamic chorus of visionary voices leading the charge. Let's take a closer look at some of the most inspiring and cutting-edge environmental visions advocated today.

Paul Hawken's vision isn't just about reducing emissions; it's about flipping the script on climate change altogether. His approach is like a treasure map, highlighting the top solutions to reverse global warming.

From embracing renewable energy to empowering girls through education, Hawken's vision covers the whole spectrum of strategies. It's a call to action that sees climate change as more than just an environmental issue but as a chance to create a world that's better for everyone.

Similarly, the degrowth movement isn't afraid to shake things up. Instead of chasing endless growth, it champions a more balanced and sustainable way of life. Think smaller footprints, fairer sharing, and prioritizing well-being over wealth. It's a radical rethink of how we measure progress, offering a vision of a society that's happier, healthier, and more in tune with the planet.

Amid these modern challenges, there's wisdom to be found in ancient traditions. Indigenous communities have long lived in harmony with nature, passing down knowledge that's as relevant today as ever. By honoring and learning from

indigenous perspectives, we can gain insights into sustainable living and respect for the Earth that's vital for our collective future.

Technology isn't just part of the problem; it's also a big part of the solution. From solar panels to electric cars, innovation is paving the way to a greener future. By investing in green tech and supporting clean energy solutions, we can speed up the transition to a world where clean air, clean water, and a stable climate are the norm.

These visionary ideas aren't just pie in the sky; they're practical paths forward to a better world. By weaving together bold strategies, ancient wisdom, and cutting-edge innovation, we can chart a course towards a future that's not just sustainable but thriving—for people and the planet alike.

### Promising Environmental Solutions to Climate Change

#### **Refrigerant Management**

Properly managing refrigerants used in air conditioning and refrigeration systems can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. According to the book *Drawdown* by Paul Hawken, which lists 80 of the most important solutions to climate change today, refrigerant management is one of the top solutions for mitigating climate change.

#### **Wind Turbines (Onshore and Offshore)**

Expanding the use of onshore and offshore wind turbines for electricity generation is a highly effective solution for reducing emissions from fossil fuels.

#### **Reduced Food Waste**

Reducing food waste at various stages of the supply chain, from production to consumption, can substantially lower emissions associated with agriculture and landfills. This solution is a crucial step towards a sustainable food system.

#### **Tropical Forest Restoration**

Restoring and protecting tropical forests is crucial for carbon sequestration and preserving biodiversity. This solution is particularly important to implement in regions like the Amazon rainforest.

### **Mass Transit**

Investing in and expanding public transportation systems, such as bus, rapid transit, and light rail, can reduce emissions from personal vehicles and alleviate traffic congestion in urban areas.

### **Concentrated Solar Power**

Utilizing concentrated solar power (CSP) technology, which uses mirrors or lenses to concentrate sunlight to generate electricity, can provide a reliable and renewable source of energy.

### **Biochar**

Producing biochar, a charcoal-like substance made from biomass, and incorporating it into soils can sequester carbon and improve soil fertility and water retention.

### **Agricultural Revolution**

Move away from centralized agricultural production which relies heavily on a gas guzzling global transport system for its existence, as well as implement policies and infrastructure to ensure increased production of plant crops for human consumption and thus to reduce meat production.

## **3. The Social Change Perspective**

Then there's the social side of things. The degrowth movement, for example, urges us to move away from a society obsessed with GDP growth towards one focused on well-being and sustainability. It's about reshaping our values, norms, and behaviors to create a more balanced and fairer world.

Alright, let's talk about the changes we need to make on a personal level to tackle the climate crisis head-on. It's not just about policy and big industry; it starts with each of us making conscious choices every day:

We also need to rethink our consumption habits. That means cutting back on stuff we don't really need, being mindful of where our products come from, and opting for eco-friendly options whenever possible. It's about quality over quantity and understanding that every purchase we make has an impact on the planet.

Our carbon footprint—the amount of greenhouse gases we produce—is a biggie when it comes to climate change. So, we must find ways to shrink it. That might mean driving less, using public transportation, biking, or walking whenever we can.

Most importantly, it must mean cutting back on or eliminating meat and dairy, which have a hefty environmental footprint, as well as cutting down on energy use at home by being more efficient with things like heating, cooling, and electricity.

Another key piece of the puzzle is supporting businesses and initiatives that prioritize sustainability. Whether it's buying from local farmers markets, supporting companies with eco-friendly practices, or

advocating for sustainable policies in our communities, every little bit helps. By voting with our wallets and our voices, we can push for positive change on a larger scale.

Knowledge is power, so we need to arm ourselves with the facts about climate change and its impacts. From understanding the science behind it to learning about the social and economic factors at play, the more we know, the better equipped we'll be to make informed decisions and advocate for change.

And let's not keep that knowledge to ourselves; let's share it with our friends, family, and communities, sparking conversations and raising awareness along the way.

Finally, let's remember that we're all in this together. Solving the climate crisis isn't something anyone can do alone; it's going to take collective action on a global scale. So, let's join forces with others who share our passion for the planet, whether it's through grassroots activism, community organizing, or through supporting environmental initiatives in our area. Together, we can make a difference. By making these personal changes and working together towards a common goal, we can help create a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient future for all.

## **Social Changes to Avoid Climate Catastrophe**

### **From Material Progress to Human Progress**

Move away from an obsession with GDP growth and material accumulation. Instead, prioritize quality of life, social connections, ecological sustainability, and human fulfillment over relentless economic expansion. Redefine societal values and measures of success beyond purely economic indicators.

### **Reduce Consumption and Embrace Sustainability**

We cannot rely on individuals to make changes, we need public policies to ensure sustainable consumption habits by cutting back on unnecessary purchases, as well as policies for sustainable resourcing, and policies embracing the idea of quality over quantity, because every product and purchase has an environmental impact.

### **Rethink Work and Leisure**

Challenge the notion that work is the sole measure of a fulfilling life. Explore options like shorter workweeks, job-sharing, and finding fulfillment in non-market activities like caregiving, volunteering, and personal pursuits. Reclaim time for leisure, community engagement, and personal growth.

### **Promote Active and Sustainable Transportation**

Move away from car dependency and promote policies encouraging active modes of transportation



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like walking, cycling, and e-biking. This can significantly reduce personal carbon emissions from transport.

#### **Reduce or Eliminate Meat Consumption**

Meat and dairy production are one of the main carbon emitters today. Hence, a dietary shift towards plant-based foods and away from meat and dairy products can significantly reduce emissions from livestock production. This is an important way to improve human health and environmental sustainability.

#### **Foster Democratic Participation**

Encourage community participation in shaping economic and environmental policies to ensure diverse voices are heard and decisions align with local needs and values.

The overarching theme is the creation of a “good society” through a cultural shift towards prioritizing well-being, sustainability, and ecological responsibility over relentless economic growth and material accumulation.

#### **4. The Economic Change Perspective**

Economically speaking, it's time for a shake-up. Drawing from ideas like Sakar's Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout) and Kate Raworth's doughnut economy, the economic change perspective envisions an economy that works for people and the planet, not just profit margins. Think decentralized, cooperative models and measures of progress that go beyond money to include things like health and happiness.

Imagine a world where everyone—not just the big corporations and the wealthy elite—has a say in how our economy is run. That's the vision of economic democracy, where decisions about ownership structure, production, distribution, and consumption are made by the people, for the people.

We can help this trend by supporting businesses and initiatives that prioritize worker ownership, cooperative models, and community control. By putting economic power back in the hands of the local people, we can create a more just and equitable society.

For too long, our measure of success has been tied to one thing: economic growth. But as thinkers

like economist Herman Daly have pointed out, there's more to life than just making more stuff. It's time to shift our focus away from GNP growth and towards measures of well-being that consider things like health, happiness, and environmental sustainability.

So, let's challenge the status quo by supporting policies and initiatives that prioritize quality of life over quantity of stuff. Whether it's advocating for a basic income, shorter work weeks, or investments in social services, let's push for a new way of measuring progress—one that puts people and the planet first.

One of the keys to building a more sustainable and resilient economy is to shift our focus away from global markets and towards local economies. That's where thinkers like P. R. Sarkar come in, advocating for self-reliant, community-based economies that prioritize local production, consumption, and distribution.

We need to start supporting local businesses, farmers markets, and community initiatives that promote self-sufficiency and resilience. By strengthening our local economies, we can reduce our dependence on global supply chains, build stronger communities, and reduce our ecological footprint in the process.

While Sarkar's Prout economy can serve as a foundation for a new economy, Raworth's doughnut economics can help pave the way for a new economy thriving within the "safe and just space for humanity." That means finding a balance between meeting everyone's needs without overshooting the Earth's limits.

By embracing these personal changes inspired by visionary thinkers like Daly, Sarkar, and Raworth, we can help build a more just, sustainable, and resilient world for generations to come. It's not just about changing our habits; it's about changing the very structure of economics, so that we can build a foundation for living in harmony with each other and the planet we call home.

To avert climate catastrophe, we need to transition towards a more decentralized, cooperative, and ecologically sustainable economic model. Here are seven main economic changes required.

## Economic Changes Needed to Create a More Sustainable Society

### Three-tiered Economy

Implement a three-tiered economic system as promoted by P.R. Sarkar's and his Prout economy. But why three tiers? These three tiers exist in society already and have proven themselves to be practical and effective institutions. Good government has shown us how to provide health care and free education. Cooperative enterprises, such as the Mondragon coops in Spain and the Emilia Romagna region of Italy, have demonstrated their effectiveness reducing inequality and improving wellbeing and democratic decision making in business. Small business enterprises are effective at providing employment and resources to the local economy. But no country or bioregion has yet to develop such an economy on a comprehensive scale.

According to Sarkar, such a comprehensive restructuring of the economy will be the most effective way to create a post-capitalist economy with minimal wealth inequality and environmental destruction. Here, in brief, are the three tiers: 1. Government-controlled key industries to avoid concentration of wealth and speculation in key industries such as energy, transportation, and transportation and water infrastructure, and 2. turn corporations into worker-owned businesses to reduce inequality and to maintain mostly locally controlled industry and agricultural sectors, and 3. keep private industries, farms and restaurants small and local to ensure minimum profit speculation and environmental overshoot.

### Local Production

Implement policies that protect and incentivize local production, especially for essential goods, while still allowing trade for strategic materials not available locally. This fosters economic self-reliance and resilience. This reduces resource exploitation, transportation emissions, and economic vulnerability from global supply chain disruptions.

### Decentralized Economy and Economic Democracy

Reorganize production and distribution primarily through cooperatives owned and controlled by workers and communities. Encourage democratic participation in economic decision-making processes to ensure policies reflect diverse voices and local requirements. Community engagement in shaping the economy is crucial.

### From GDP to Purchasing Capacity

Move away from GDP growth as the sole measure of progress and instead use purchasing capacity—the ability of people to afford basic needs—as the primary indicator of economic progress, while also

adopting new indicators that account for environmental and social factors. This will ensure an economy away from constant GDP growth to equality and sustainability by design.

### Limits on Wealth

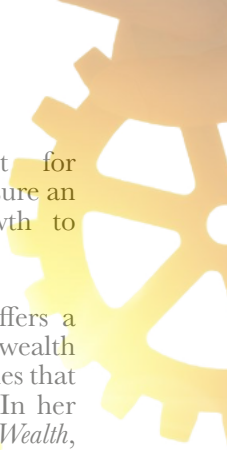
Ingrid Robeyns' concept of limitarianism offers a compelling critique of extreme wealth accumulation, aligning with degrowth principles that challenge infinite growth on a finite planet. In her book *Limitarianism: The Case Against Extreme Wealth*, Robeyns argues for a moral limit to individual wealth, proposing a “riches line” above which wealth is considered surplus. Her main arguments encompass the threat to democracy posed by extreme wealth, urgent unmet needs that could be addressed through wealth redistribution, and ecological concerns.

Robeyns contends that reducing wealth concentration among elites would diminish incentives for corporate leaders to prioritize profit over environmental and climate considerations, thus, in effect, decreasing the production of goods increasing our carbon footprint. By highlighting how the super-rich exert disproportionate influence on political decisions and environmental policies, Robeyns' work has sparked a crucial debate on wealth inequality's societal, economic, and environmental impact.

### Maximum Utilization

P. R. Sarkar and others, such as R. Buckminster Fuller, who developed the phrase “doing more with less” urges us to maximize the utilization of all natural resources to avoid waste and pollution. By employing such a principle, architect and cradle-to-cradle innovator William McDonough has already shown we can create “affluence from effluence.” He and his business partner, the chemist Michael Braungart, helped design a carpet factory producing no effluent runoff. This principle thus urges us to proceed with caution and innovation when it comes to developing new technologies and products to avoid pollution and waste of natural resources.

The concept of maximum utilization is a holistic approach to resource management and societal development that not only can produce economic efficiency but also ecological effectiveness. Sarkar's concept emphasizes the use of advanced, eco-friendly technologies to increase productivity while maintaining ecological balance, and stresses the importance of coordinated local economic planning to avoid duplication and maximize cooperation. Importantly, the concept is not static; it calls for progressive adaptation of utilization methods to evolving circumstances and human needs.





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### **Rational Distribution of Money and Resources**

Rational distribution, or as Kate Raworth calls it, distribution by design, to ensure that resources are not wasted before, during, and after the production cycle of a product. Rational distribution of money will ensure that all in society have a basic income and that the inequality gap between the lowest and the highest earners is kept at a minimum. This will again ensure less waste and a reduction of carbon output.

### **5. The Well-being Perspective**

In a world obsessed with material wealth and economic growth, it's easy to lose sight of what truly matters: our inner well-being and personal fulfillment. This is where the well-being perspective comes in, challenging us to shift our focus from the pursuit of stuff to the cultivation of inner growth and happiness.

Instead of measuring success by the size of our bank accounts or the number of possessions we own, let's measure it by the depth of our relationships, the richness of our experiences, and the sense of purpose and meaning in our lives. By prioritizing inner growth and personal happiness, we can create societies that are not just materially prosperous, but emotionally and spiritually fulfilling as well.

Central to the well-being perspective is the idea that success and progress should be defined in terms of human well-being, rather than GDP growth. After all, what good is a booming economy if it leaves people stressed, anxious, and unfulfilled?

Instead of chasing endless growth, we need to focus on building societies where everyone can thrive, where basic needs are met, and where people feel valued, connected, and empowered. By redefining success and progress in terms of human well-being, we can create a more just, equitable, and sustainable world for all.

A key to promoting well-being is by investing in the foundations of a healthy society: adequate income, affordable housing, health care, education, and social support. Access to quality health care ensures that everyone can lead a healthy and fulfilling life, while education can provide the knowledge and skills needed to pursue our passions and aspirations.

Social support systems, such as affordable housing, childcare, and elder care, help create a safety net that ensures no one is left behind. By prioritizing these investments, we can build societies that are not just economically prosperous, but also socially inclusive and resilient.

At the heart of a well-being society is a sense of connection—to ourselves, to each other, and to the world around us. This is why fostering meaningful connections, cultural and artistic activities, and building strong, supportive communities is so important.

Whether it's through volunteering, participating in community events, or simply spending time with loved ones, nurturing our relationships and sense of belonging is essential for our well-being. By prioritizing community, culture, and connection, we can create societies that are not just happier and healthier, but also more resilient in the face of challenges.

By embracing the well-being perspective and prioritizing inner growth and personal happiness, we can build societies that are not just economically prosperous, but also emotionally and spiritually fulfilling.

It's time to shift our focus from the pursuit of stuff to the cultivation of what truly matters: our well-being and the well-being of those around us. In doing so, we can create a world vision and planet that is not just materially abundant, but also ecologically balanced, socially harmonious, and filled with inner meaning, purpose, and joy.

### **Social Policies for Increased Social Wellbeing and Reduced Carbon Footprint**

#### **Implement a Shorter Workweek**

Reduce standard work hours to allow more time for leisure, personal pursuits, and work-life balance. This challenges the notion that work is the sole source of fulfillment. This will reduce GDP but also the global carbon footprint.

#### **Universal Basic Purchasing Capacity**

A guaranteed purchasing capacity to cover basic needs will reduce financial stress. It will allow people to pursue activities beyond just income generation while reducing the need for government handouts.



### **Investing in Community Spaces**

Fund the development of public spaces like parks, community centers, and libraries to foster social connections and a sense of belonging.

### **Prioritizing Early Childhood Education**

Increase funding for high-quality early childhood programs like pre-K and Head Start to support cognitive and social-emotional development from an early age.

### **Subsidizing Lifelong Learning**

Offer subsidies or tax credits for continuing education, skills training, and personal enrichment courses to facilitate ongoing growth and self-actualization.

### **Measuring National Well-being**

Develop robust national indicators of well-being that go beyond just economic metrics like GDP and use them to guide policy making.

The key themes are reducing excessive work hours, providing economic security, investing in education and community, incentivizing sustainable living, and redefining progress using a well-being framework that prioritizes quality of life over mere economic expansion.

### **Conclusion**

Climate change is a complex, multifaceted challenge that requires a holistic, systems-based approach. It is a symptom of a failed vision and worldview based on materialistic and reductionist thinking and a profit-oriented economy. Drawing from the philosophical perspective of neo-humanism, systems thinking, and alternative economics, this article has outlined a multifaceted strategy to address climate change through systemic change across different domains.

Most importantly, even without climate change, the planet would be facing serious systemic environmental and economic problems today. By accepting that our planet is potentially facing an environmental and economic tipping point, we need to weave together the above-mentioned threads to build a comprehensive approach to tackling the systemic crisis we are in. More importantly, even if there were no climate crisis, we are compelled to implement systems change for moral and philosophical as well as economic and environmental reasons. We have strayed too far away from what Aristotle considered a “good society.” Hence, it is time to address not just the symptoms but the root causes of our planetary predicament, so that we can envision and create a world where both people and the planet can thrive.

*The article with its complete references is available at the journal web pages [theneohumanist.com](http://theneohumanist.com).*

## **Two Reviews of Kathleen Kesson's *Becoming One With the World: A Guide to Neohumanist Education***

# **Beyond Humanism**

*Paul Freedman*

IN KATHLEEN KESSON'S extraordinary new volume, *Becoming One With the World: A Guide to Neohumanist Education* (2024), the author takes us on a beatific journey of discovery. The text spans great distances progressing step by step from the philosophical and pedagogical foundations of holistic consciousness theory to the contemporary practice of neohumanist education. This book also plunges through many layers of depth reminding us of the deep spiritual connectedness of all beings as the rock-solid foundation of a worldview beyond humanism and the educational models that have emerged from it. This volume offers tools for individual reflection and personal and professional growth through its offer of probing questions compelling the reader to integrate these concepts into our own life and practice. Kesson's ambitious book represents both a challenge and a delight to anyone serious about reimagining and re-enchanting education from the roots up.

To readers of this journal, some of Kesson's chapters in Section 1 of *Becoming One With the World*, will traverse familiar philosophical terrain. She reminds us of many core principles of holistic education, while she simultaneously poses existential questions; “What does it mean to be human?” “What is the purpose of life?” “How do we come to know?” These questions drive an initial exploration of a humanist approach focused on the individual, towards the possibility of an ontological shift, from an absolute sense of being, epistemology and truth towards one that is more relational. Kesson identifies several prominent philosophical traditions that undergird specific approaches to contemporary education, namely, perennialism, behaviorism, romanticism, pragmatism and critical pedagogy. She then proposes a kind of post-humanist approach that is holistic and presupposes much deeper and more essential levels of mutuality and interconnection.

Kesson powerfully describes the need for teachers who embrace this more holistic worldview to be willing to work on developing themselves, unpacking the self in all its complexity and nuance and embracing a journey towards wisdom. Relational and connected teaching is not defined by technique but by being and presence. One must endeavor to see oneself before one can see and engage with learners. Indeed this is not a journey for the faint of heart.