



Greta Thunberg: Almost Everything is Black and White

Talare

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Aktivist

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When I was about eight years old, I first heard about something called climate change, or global warming. Apparently, that was something humans had created by our way of living. I was told to turn off the lights to save energy, and to recycle paper to save resources.

I remember thinking that it was very strange that humans, who are an animal species among others, could be capable of changing the earth's climate.

Because, if we were and if it was really happening, we wouldn't be talking about anything else. As soon as you turned on the TV, everything would be about that. Headlines, radio, newspapers. You would never read or hear about anything else. As if there was a world war going on.

But. No one talked about it. Ever.

If burning fossil fuels was so bad that it threatened our very existence, how could we just continue like before? Why were there no restrictions? Why wasn't it made illegal?

To me, that did not add up. It was too unreal.

I have Asperger's syndrome, and to me, almost everything is black or white.

I think in many ways that we autistic are the normal ones and the rest of the people are pretty strange. They keep saying that climate change is an existential threat and the most important issue of all. And yet they just carry on like before. If the emissions have to stop, then we must stop the emissions. To me that is black or white. There are no grey areas when it comes to survival. Either we go on as a civilization or we don't.

We have to change.

Countries like Sweden and the UK need to start reducing emissions by at least 15 per cent every year, to stay below a 2°C warming target.

But, as the IPCC has recently stated, aiming instead for a 1.5°C target would significantly reduce the climate impact. But we can only imagine what that means for reducing emissions. You would think every one of our leaders and the media would be talking about nothing else – but no one ever mentions it. Nor does anyone ever mention anything about the greenhouse gases already locked in the system, nor that air pollution is hiding a warming, so when we stop burning fossil fuels, we already have an extra 0.5–1.1°C guaranteed.

Nor does hardly anyone ever mention that we are in the midst of the sixth mass extinction, with about 200 species going extinct every single day.

Furthermore, does no one ever speak about the aspect of equity, or climate justice, clearly stated everywhere in the Paris Agreement and the Kyoto Protocol, which is absolutely necessary to make the Paris Agreement work on a global scale? That means that rich countries need to get down to zero emissions, within six to twelve years, so that people in poorer countries can heighten their standard of living by building some of the infrastructure that we have already built. Such as roads, hospitals, electricity, schools and clean drinking water. Because how can we expect countries like India or Nigeria to care about the climate crisis if we, who already have everything, don't care even a second about it or our actual commitments to the Paris Agreement?

So, why are we not reducing our emissions? Why are they, in fact, still increasing? Are we knowingly causing a mass extinction? Are we evil?

No, of course not. People keep doing what they do because the vast majority doesn't have a clue about the consequences of our everyday life. And they don't know the rapid changes required.

Since, as I said before, no one talks about it. There are no headlines, no emergency meetings, no breaking news. No one is acting as if we were in a crisis. Even most green politicians and climate scientists go on flying around the

world, eating meat and dairy.

If I live to be 100 I will be alive in the year 2103.

When you think about ‘the future’ today, you don’t think beyond the year 2050. By then I will, in the best case, not even have lived half of my life. What happens next?

The year 2078 I will celebrate my seventy-fifth birthday.

What we do or don’t do, right now, will affect my entire life, and the lives of my children and grandchildren.

When school started in August this year I decided that this was enough. I sat myself down on the ground outside the Swedish parliament. I school-striking for the climate.

Some people say that I should be in school instead.

Some people say that I should study to become a climate scientist so that I can ‘solve the climate crisis’. But the climate crisis has already been solved.

We already have all the facts and solutions. All we have to do is to wake up and change.

And why should I be studying for a future that soon will be no more, when no one is doing anything whatsoever to save that future?

And what is the point of learning facts within the school system when the most important facts given by the finest science of that same school system clearly mean nothing to our politicians and our society?

A lot of people say that Sweden is just small country, and that it doesn’t matter what we do. But I think that if a few children can get headlines all over the world just by not going to school for a few weeks, imagine what we all could do together if we wanted to.

Today we use 100 million barrels of oil every day.

There are no politics to change that. There are no rules to keep that oil in the ground.

So we can't save the world by playing by the rules.

Because the rules have to be changed.

Everything needs to change. And it has to start today.

So everyone out there: it is now time for civil disobedience.

It is time to rebel

Taggar

2010-tal, 2018, Fridays for future, Kvinna, Miljö och klimat

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