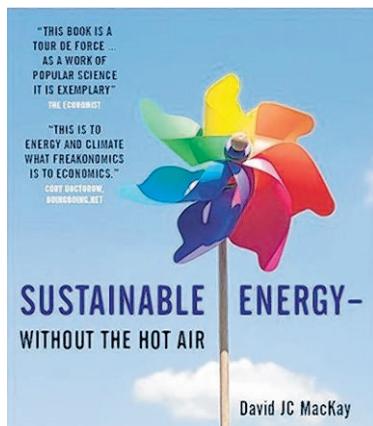


Reviews

Air raiding



David J C MacKay, **Sustainable Energy – Without the Hot Air** (UIT Cambridge, 2008; ISBN 978-0-954-452-93-3; 384pp; £19.99; free to download from www.withouthotair.com)

Kate Evans, **The Carbon Supermarket** (16pp; free to download from www.cartoonkate.co.uk)

Turbulence Collective, **Turbulence Issue #5: And now for something completely different** (Turbulence Collective, 2009; 40pp; free download from www.turbulence.org.uk). Review by PATRICK NICHOLSON.

I enjoyed David MacKay's book unpicking energy issues and exploring the realities of the tough choices we face.

It's had favourable reviews from influential quarters, including those in political power here in the UK. MacKay, a Cambridge physicist, has essentially made a book out of lots of back-of-an-envelope calculations, pulling them together to see, for example, whether potential UK renewable energy sources stack up against our energy consumption.

He's done almost everything possibly to make it accessible, from great graphics to separating the trickier stuff into optional technical chapters.

What I didn't like was the lack of vision. MacKay pretty much takes our current energy profligacy for granted and tries to find some way to meet our addiction.

It wouldn't have taken much to have added inspirational material showing the fantastic lives that can be lived on a fraction of the UK average carbon footprint. But it's still a fascinating read.

Kate Evans' latest comic also tries to make technical issues accessible, but in this case the topic at hand is carbon trading.



McCullin, Beirut 1982.

PHOTO: SADDI

Kate's lively and engaging style communicates the essentials of the issue very effectively, explaining the key conceptual drawbacks of carbon trading.

We find out about the abject failure of the European Trading Scheme, and harmful effects like promoting spurious "green" developments in the majority world and spawning carbon derivatives markets and new classes of parasites profiting from global ruin.



A new insight for me was that the recession has created huge windfall profits for corporations, since their lower activity means lower carbon emissions, hence they have lots of unwanted carbon emission permits to sell.

Whatever way you look at it, carbon trading is a grand con trick to facilitate business as usual.

Finally we come to *Turbulence*, an altogether different kettle of fish. It's the publishing project of a small group who met in the counter-globalisation movement, and aims to create space for debate on this "movement of movements".

I first picked up a copy late last

year, and found myself drawn to slowly working through the long and thoughtful articles.

Issue 5 includes pieces by names I know (Rebecca Solnit, Tazio Mueller) and names I don't (Walter Mignolo, Rodrigo Nunes), and covers topics from the "Green New Deal" to reassessing the Seattle protests. Whilst not an explicit focus, climate change is a common thread linking most if not all of the articles.

The most interesting piece is the opening article, which explores the zombie-like state of neoliberalism, stumbling on after its death, intellectually and literally bankrupt.

The article argues that realisation of this void prompts a stepping back and creates the potential for new common ground amongst the movements and ideas for alternatives. *Turbulence* is a difficult, dense but valuable read for anyone grasping to make sense of our political future.

Shot dead

Shaped by War: Photographs by Don McCullin, 10am-6pm daily until 13 June, Imperial War Museum North (The Quays, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester M17 1TZ); then 11 September – 21 November, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath; and 7 October 2010 – 30 January 2012, Imperial War Museum London; Don McCullin, **Shaped by War** (Jonathan Cape Ltd, 2010; ISBN 978-0-224-090-26-1; 208pp; £25). Reviewed by CATHERINE BAN.

At the end of this powerful retrospective of the work of photographer Don McCullin, there is space for visitors to question

the photographer. I wrote "How could you experience this, and not become active in opposing war?"

The photographs, mostly in his stark black-and-white style, many the subject of awards, are well-known and need few words.

If nothing else in the Imperial War Museum can persuade you of the unbearable realities of war, McCullin's photographs surely must. The images of battle are gripping, but it is where McCullin focuses on the civilian tragedies that the true power of his photography manifests.

The guilt for "just taking pictures" is described by McCullin in the filmed interview and book which accompany the photos.

"They think you're bringing them something," he said about the people he has photographed, "But you're bringing them nothing when you have a Nikon with some 35mm film. You're bringing them no hope whatsoever."

One particular dying Biafran boy has continued to haunt him: "My god, this is like he's been sent to frighten me."

It is interesting to consider whether the short-term help he could have offered had he stepped out from behind the camera (and he did on occasion do this) is equal to the long-term impact an iconic image can have.

His photos of starving people in the Biafran war shocked the world into mounting a humanitarian effort and the power of war photography to stir us into action is some justification for the "terrible way to earn a living".

The military acknowledge the power that war photography has in forming opinion. That is one of

the reasons they now prefer "embedded" journalists, a practice that McCullin abhors.

That McCullin was a "war junkie", excited by war, unhappy when at home, does not change the fact that we must be grateful that he and others risk their lives to document war.

Perhaps this answers my initial question.

Mud pie



Vandana Shiva, **Soil Not Oil: Climate Change, Peak Oil, and Food Insecurity** (Zed, 2009; ISBN 978-1-848-133-15-0; 160pp; £12.99). Review by THERESA WOLFWOOD.

Vandana Shiva has a knack of bringing together issues we often see as separate, and linking our awareness to these connections.

In *Soil Not Oil* she argues that the triple crisis of the title is actually a triple opportunity – in relation to industrial farming, petroleum-based fertilisers and oil-based transportation on- and off-farm.

What better and more immediate way to reduce our CO₂ emissions than to change our food habits? Shiva encourages us to power down our consumption as we power up our creativity which includes using democracy and human energy for change.

Using fewer resources also decreases the "necessity" of wars to control the Earth's riches.