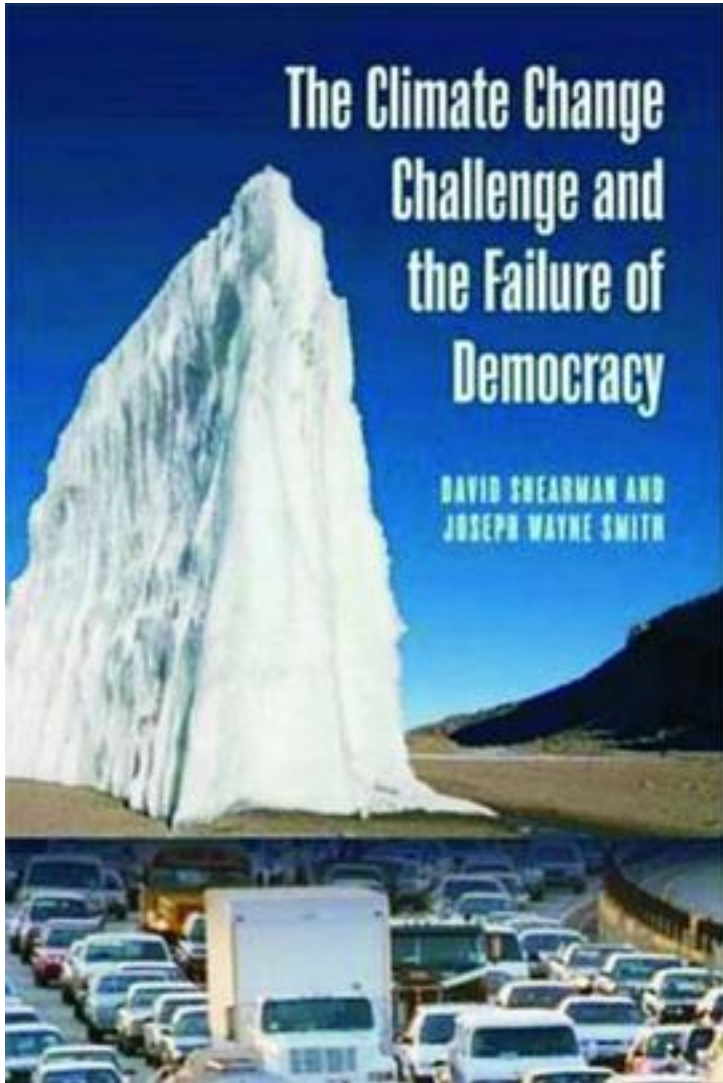


The Climate Change Challenge and the Failure of Democracy



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Climate change threatens the future of civilisation, but humanity is impotent in effecting solutions. Even in those nations with a commitment to reduce greenhouse emissions, they continue to rise. This failure mirrors those in many other spheres that deplete the fish of the sea, erode fertile land, destroy native forests, pollute rivers and streams and use the world's natural resources beyond their replacement rate. The authors of this provocative new book present evidence that the fundamental problem causing environmental destruction - and climate change in particular - is the operation of liberal democracy. Its flaws and contradictions bestow upon government inability to make decisions that could provide a sustainable society. Having argued that democracy has failed humanity, the authors go even further and demonstrate that this failure can easily lead to authoritarianism without our even noticing. Even more provocatively, they assert that there is merit in preparing for this eventuality if we want to survive climate change. They are not suggesting that existing authoritarian regimes are more successful in mitigating greenhouse emissions, for to be successful economically they have adopted the market system with alacrity. Nevertheless, the authors conclude that an authoritarian form of government is necessary, but this will be governance by experts and not by those who seek power. But there is a third way between democracy and authoritarianism; the authors offer up a radical vision of a reformed democracy that would entail ending our worldwide reliance on growth economies. Unpalatable as this model may be, they argue for the adoption of this fundamental reform of democracy over the journey to authoritarianism.

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