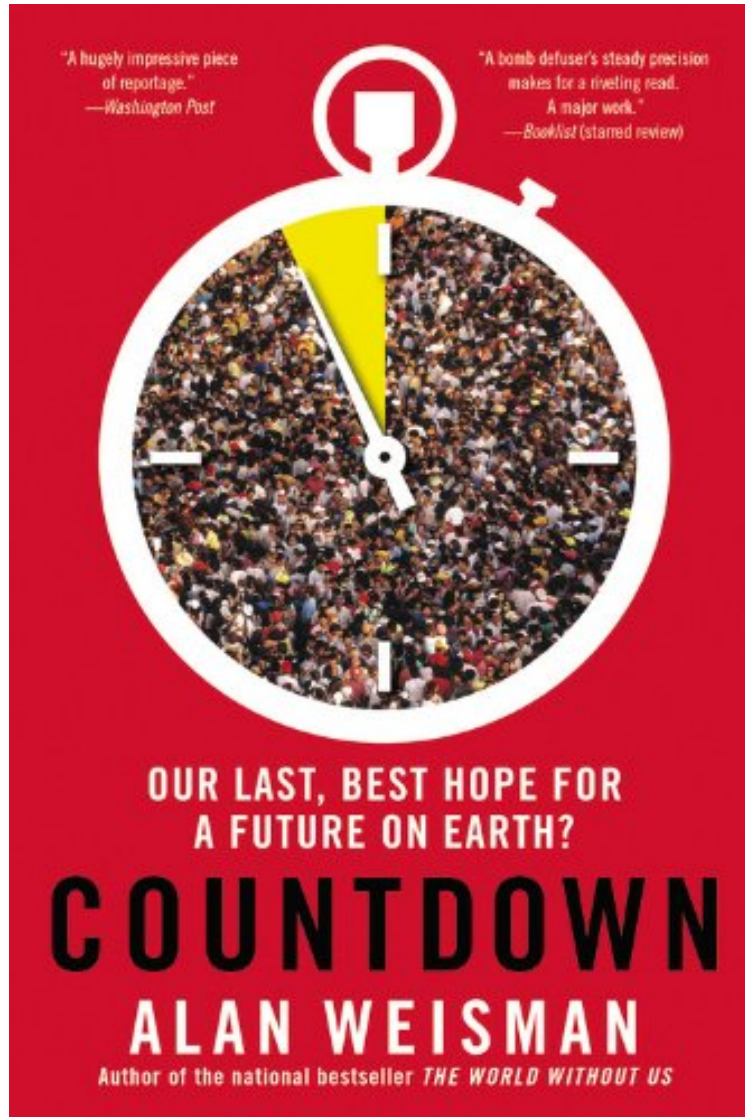


(Read free ebook) Countdown: Our Last, Best Hope for a Future on Earth?

Countdown: Our Last, Best Hope for a Future on Earth?

Alan Weisman

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Alan Weisman : Countdown: Our Last, Best Hope for a Future on Earth? before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Countdown: Our Last, Best Hope for a Future on Earth?:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Want to be scared?By W. LeeForget horror movies or the supernatural thriller. For a true fright, you need look no further than the real world revealed in this book. The author travels the earth and the decades, covering how humanity has so thoroughly soiled its nest.He doesn't just cover the environmental and social disasters. He also shows the solutions that have been tried and are still being worked on,

from family planning to conservation, plant genetics to education. Read this book and finally see what's around you. Or else wait for the reality version of a zombie apocalypse. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Worth reading - but consumption is a huge piece of the puzzle. By Monica Pallett I loved the style and content of this book as it explored human population and the impact upon ecosystems through story telling. However, the author simply wrote off the role of consumption by basically saying that there's nothing we can do about how much and how people consume. He suggests we have a population of 2 billion so that people can live first world lives and we don't have to worry about consumption. While I want fewer people on the planet and have chosen to only have one child for this reason, I have also greatly altered my patterns of consumption, my home, and my work to try to address the environmental crisis we are facing. To do otherwise right now, knowing what we know, is grossly irresponsible and selfish. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Made personal the challenges and problems of humans around the globe. By Dorthea J. Montaine Alan Weisman gave me new insights into why religions often encourage humans to make choices that are so violent and non-productive. With his vast personal knowledge of societies in other cultures, he shared his discoveries, both hopeful and discouraging, and hinted at paths to a better future. He also presented our ultimate challenge: How can we motivate people to care about future generations enough to act responsibly in the present? Yea how???

A powerful investigation into the chances for humanity's future from the author of the bestseller *The World Without Us*. In his bestselling book *The World Without Us*, Alan Weisman considered how the Earth could heal and even refill empty niches if relieved of humanity's constant pressures. Behind that groundbreaking thought experiment was his hope that we would be inspired to find a way to add humans back to this vision of a restored, healthy planet-only in harmony, not mortal combat, with the rest of nature. But with a million more of us every 4 1/2 days on a planet that's not getting any bigger, and with our exhaust overheating the atmosphere and altering the chemistry of the oceans, prospects for a sustainable human future seem ever more in doubt. For this long awaited follow-up book, Weisman traveled to more than 20 countries to ask what experts agreed were probably the most important questions on Earth--and also the hardest: How many humans can the planet hold without capsizing? How robust must the Earth's ecosystem be to assure our continued existence? Can we know which other species are essential to our survival? And, how might we actually arrive at a stable, optimum population, and design an economy to allow genuine prosperity without endless growth? Weisman visits an extraordinary range of the world's cultures, religions, nationalities, tribes, and political systems to learn what in their beliefs, histories, liturgies, or current circumstances might suggest that sometimes it's in their own best interest to limit their growth. The result is a landmark work of reporting: devastating, urgent, and, ultimately, deeply hopeful. By vividly detailing the burgeoning effects of our cumulative presence, *Countdown* reveals what may be the fastest, most acceptable, practical, and affordable way of returning our planet and our presence on it to balance. Weisman again shows that he is one of the most provocative journalists at work today, with a book whose message is so compelling that it will change how we see our lives and our destiny.

From Booklist *Starred * Intrepid planetary journalist Weisman put our minds in a whirl with his best-selling *The World without Us* (2007), a vivid projection of what would happen if humankind suddenly vanished. Here he asks a really tough question: What will happen on the warming earth if our population continues to grow? Aware that population control is a treacherous subject, Weisman boldly traveled to more than 20 diverse countries, from India to Italy to Japan, instigating remarkably candid conversations with religious leaders, scientists, and public-health experts. Spirited descriptions, a firm grasp of complex material, and a bomb defuser's steady precision make for a riveting read as Weisman takes a close look at China's one-child policy and the religious and political imperatives responsible for large Palestinian and ultra-Orthodox Jewish families in Jerusalem in spite of scarce resources. In stricken Niger, he talks with two brothers, both imams. One says man cannot hold back doomsday; the other actively supports the use of contraception. In Uganda, he discovers the connection between family planning, wildlife protection, and economy-boosting ecotourism. Weisman's cogent and forthright global inquiry, a major work, delineates how education, women's equality, and family planning can curb poverty, thirst, hunger, and environmental destruction. Rigorous and provoking, *Countdown* will generate numerous media appearances for Weisman and spur many a debate. --Donna Seaman "Spirited descriptions, a firm grasp of complex material, and a bomb defuser's steady precision make for a riveting read... Weisman's cogent and forthright global inquiry, a major work, delineates how education, women's equality, and family planning can curb poverty, thirst, hunger, and environmental destruction. Rigorous and provoking, *Countdown* will generate numerous media appearances for Weisman and spur many a debate." -- Booklist (starred review) "Provocative and sobering, this vividly reported book raises profound concerns about our future." -- Publishers Weekly (starred review) "Weisman offers heart-rending portrayals of nations already suffering demographic collapse... A realistic, vividly detailed exploration of the greatest problem facing our species." -- Kirkus (starred review) "Rousing." -- Ihsan Taylor, New York Times Book 's "Paperback Row" "Unflinching and ready for anything, Weisman's *Countdown* tackles the biggest question facing not only us, but every other living thing on earth. How many people can there be on the earth? Written with extraordinary clarity, without all the arm-waving and doomsaying

that seems to kill the conversation, his firsthand tour of the globe offers both worst case scenarios and the most hopeful futures we can imagine." -- Craig Childs, author of *Apocalyptic Planet* and *House of Rain*"Countdown converts globetrotting research into flowing journalism, highlighting a simple truth: there are, quite plainly, too many of us. A world that understands Weisman's words will understand the pressing need for change." -- Bill Streever, author of *Cold and Heat*"A frenzied barnstormer of a book.... Countdown is a chaotic stew of big stories, bold ideas and conflicted characters, punctuated by moments of quiet grace--just like our people-packed planet." -- *Scientific American*"A hugely impressive piece of reportage, a cacophony of voices from across the world." -- *Washington Post*"Rousing, urgent.... By exploring and integrating the lessons from cultures the world over, Weisman has been able to provide a blueprint that will ultimately benefit the planet as a whole. "Countdown" is a timely, essential, and hopeful work - one that suggests compassion in place of consumption and promises a return to an equilibrium that will prove a veritable windfall for humans, non-humans, and ecosystems alike." -- *The Oregonian*"Countdown is a gripping narrative by a fair-minded investigative journalist who interviewed dozens of scientists and experts in various fields in 21 countries. He also scoured the literature to deliver not so much a doomsday narrative but a warning followed by the practical solution employed by various countries to get control of their population." -- *Wall Street Journal* "He makes a strong case for slowing global population growth-and even for reducing overall population numbers-as a prerequisite for achieving a sustainable future...Weisman's book...offers hope... Weisman's emphasis on expanding access to contraception as the next-best strategy is both pragmatic and workable, as past efforts have shown. It is to be hoped that his message may be heeded sooner rather than later." -- *Nature*"Weisman's stories--from his travel to contemporary Israel and Palestine, where reproducing is a form of warfare, to histories of family planning in Asia and South America--are fascinating and often chilling." -- *Slate*"Weisman reminds us that when the experts are worried, we should pay attention." -- *Los Angeles Times*"Weisman's gift as a writer with a love of science is in drawing links for readers on how everything in our world is connected - in this case, population, consumption and the environment.... The pleasure in reading Countdown is in the interplay of interviews with experts and with everyday working people around the world, all trying to figure out the size of family they want." -- *Toronto Star*"[Weisman] found vivid, real-world portraits of what overpopulation portends." -- *Men's Journal*"Alan Weisman's Countdown is rich, subtle and elaborate. His magisterial work should be the first port of call for anyone interested in the relationship between population and the environment...It's a tightly argued, fast-paced adventure that crosses the planet in search of contrasts." -- *Literary* "While it is very much an alarming assessment, it is not without some genuine hope...It's a must read for all those who are concerned about the human prospect." -- Robert Walker, president of the Population Institute"Weisman's anecdotes and explanations...draw a clear picture.... Countdown asks the hard questions." -- *Shelf Awareness*

About the Author Alan Weisman is the author of several books, including *The World Without Us*: an international best-seller translated in 34 languages, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, and winner of the Wenjin Book Prize of the National Library of China. His work has been selected for many anthologies, including *Best American Science Writing*. An award-winning journalist, his reports have appeared in *Harper's*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Discover*, *Vanity Fair*, *Wilson Quarterly*, *Mother Jones*, and *Orion*, and on NPR. A former contributing editor to the *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, he is a senior radio producer for *Homelands Productions*. He lives in western Massachusetts.