



the evergreen state college

Welcome to Evergreen!

You are receiving a copy of *The Collapse of Western Civilization* from the College to prepare you for Orientation. Naomi Oreskes, one of the co-authors, will be our speaker for All-Campus Convocation at the beginning of Orientation. After her address, you will attend small faculty-student workshops to discuss the book and academics at Evergreen. You will also reflect on your education so far and write about your plans, hopes, and dreams for your education at Evergreen and beyond.

The Collapse of Western Civilization is a powerful book that describes a fictional aftermath of global climate change. The book highlights the ethical importance of individuals working across disciplines to find solutions. As such, it helps you to think about interdisciplinary study as central to a liberal education. These themes align closely with Evergreen's values.

Please read the book and bring your questions to our first conversation.

We look forward to beginning the year with you. Let's make Greener history together!

Kind Regards,

Your Orientation Planning Team



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Before Reading

Prepare

- Locate a pen/pencil, notebook, & dictionary
- Examine
- The cover design, title, & any text on the cover
- The table of contents & how the text is set up (chapters, section titles, endnotes, index, etc.)
- Examine the print (italics, font size, etc.)

As you examine these features, write questions and make predictions and/or connections near these parts of the text and/or in your notebook.

During Reading

Mark in the Text

- Key ideas, terms, & words
- Dates, names, & places
- Vocabulary (be sure to look these words up)
- Interesting turns of phrase
- Passages that confused you
- Passages that excited you
- Endnotes that were particularly interesting or useful

Reading With a Purpose

During Reading

Continued...

Write in the Margins

- Summarize the main ideas in your own words
- Make predictions
- Formulate opinions (including objections or doubts)
- Ask questions
- Analyze the author's craft: how do they do things with words?
- Write reflections/reactions/comments
- Look for patterns/repetitions

After Reading

Reflect Upon

- Reread your annotations and perhaps even annotate them
- Reread sections you enjoyed or were puzzled by—try to figure out something new the second time through
- Examine patterns/repetitions—determine possible meanings
- Make connections to examples not included in the book

Oreskes and Conway's novel *The Collapse of Western Civilization* offers a provocative picture of our world, how we live, and how we might live differently. As you read, ask yourself some of the following questions. They will get you thinking about the book and provide some initial thoughts for our campus conversations.

- In this story, what goes wrong?
- Where are the people in the story – the ones who bear the brunt of the catastrophe?
- What did you make of the book's conclusion?
- What alternative endings can you imagine?
- Does the story leave any room for you to be optimistic about the future? Why or why not?

The attached bookmark may be a useful guide for your reading.

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ORDERS READY SAME DAY