



Any Way You Slice It: The Past, Present, and Future of Rationing

By Stan Cox

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Rationing: it's a word—and idea—that people often loathe and fear. Health care expert Henry Aaron has compared mentioning the possibility of rationing to “shouting an obscenity in church.” Yet societies in fact ration food, water, medical care, and fuel all the time, with those who can pay the most getting the most. As Nobel Prize–winning economist Amartya Sen has said, the results can be “thoroughly unequal and nasty.”

In *Any Way You Slice It*, Stan Cox shows that rationing is not just a quaint practice restricted to World War II memoirs and 1970s gas station lines. Instead, he persuasively argues that rationing is a vital concept for our fragile present, an era of dwindling resources and environmental crises. *Any Way You Slice It* takes us on a fascinating search for alternative ways of apportioning life's necessities, from the goal of “fair shares for all” during wartime in the 1940s to present-day water rationing in a Mumbai slum, from the bread shops of Cairo to the struggle for fairness in American medicine and carbon rationing on Norfolk Island in the Pacific. Cox's question: can we limit consumption while assuring everyone a fair share?

The author of *Losing Our Cool*, the much debated and widely acclaimed examination of air-conditioning's many impacts, here turns his attention to the politically explosive topic of how we share our planet's resources.

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Editorial Review

Review

"An iconoclast of the best kind, Stan Cox has an all-too-rare commitment to following arguments wherever they lead, however politically dangerous that turns out to be. In this richly informative and deeply courageous book, he tackles one of the greatest taboos of our high-consumer culture: the need to consume less and to fairly share what's left."

—Naomi Klein, author of *The Shock Doctrine*

"Today, rationing is about as acceptable a topic of conversation as hemorrhoids. But that doesn't mean it isn't happening. In fact, we do it every day and our reluctance to admit it serves us poorly. From death panels to water wars, *Any Way You Slice It* explains with wit and sophistication how rationing happens. More important, Stan Cox gives us the tools to talk about rationing sensibly. And if we heed him, those conversations will not only be better informed, but might even lead to a better democracy."

—Raj Patel, author of *The Value of Nothing*

"A cool and cogent analysis of a taboo subject...a brilliant opening of a global dialogue on who gets what, when, why, and how."

—David W. Orr, Paul Sears Professor of Environmental Studies and Politics, Oberlin College

"The warning signs are flashing ominously everywhere you turn: warming climate, swelling populations, dwindling water supplies, rising food costs, a host of new deadly diseases, and a widening chasm between the super-rich and the destitute. The ecological crisis afflicting the planet has mutated into a savage political and economic crisis that threatens to erode the very foundations of human culture. Time is running out for incremental, piecemeal solutions to these looming global threats. In *Any Way You Slice It*, Stan Cox offers a way out through a kind of ethical and rational triage. He maps out a plan to ration the Earth's shrinking resources in a way that is socially just and ecologically sane. This brave book is not for the timid or those frozen by political taboos, but it is a must-read for those who want to forge real change before the ecological doomsday clock strikes midnight."

—Jeffrey St. Clair, editor of *CounterPunch* and author of *Born Under a Bad Sky*

About the Author

Stan Cox is a plant breeder at the Land Institute in Salina, Kansas. He has written on environmental issues for newspapers nationwide, including the "Washington Post" and the "Los Angeles Times," and for many online publications. He is the author of "Losing Our Cool" (The New Press).

Users Review

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Ana Steadman:

Spent a free time to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or all their friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Do you want to something different to fill your

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