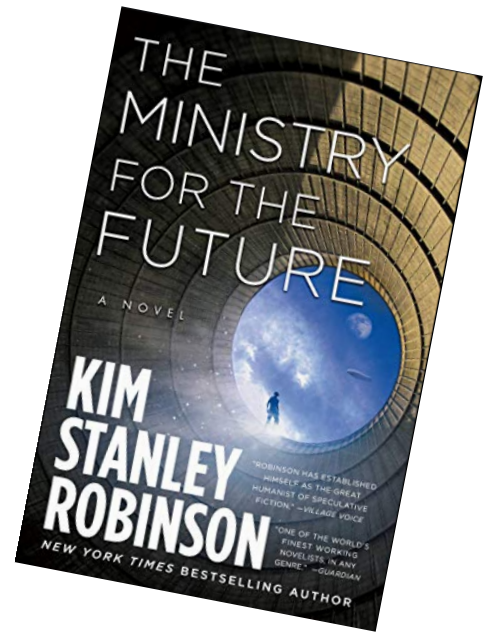


The Flagstaff 3.5% Reading Action Groups

DISCUSSION PROMPTS PAGES 200-300



Reminder: the main objective is to learn from each other and ultimately to move us to take action. Kim Stanley Robinson's book is a medium for the bigger conversation! These are some suggestions for discussion, 200-300.

Some Discussion Questions for pages 200-300, Ministry For the Future

1. 205-207 In just a few pages, Robinson captures something of the pain and shock of being dislocated. "You never think it can happen to you, until it does." Who will be the new migrants of the climate crisis? If we are among the lucky who do not lose our homes, how will we respond to climate migrants? What can we do now to prepare for such a future?

2. 212 When Mary goes to the bankers to ask them for their help in addressing the climate crisis, they initially refuse because, as they put it, their job is to ensure the health of the banks, not the health of the planet. And yet, the banks have enormous power to shape and reshape the economy--and now, enormous influence on the wellbeing of the planet. What is Mary's proposal to the bankers? What kind of leverage do ordinary people have in relation to the banking industry?

One possibility: Public banks! There's a new movement underway for governments (states and nations) to own their own banks. Take a look at this exciting effort:

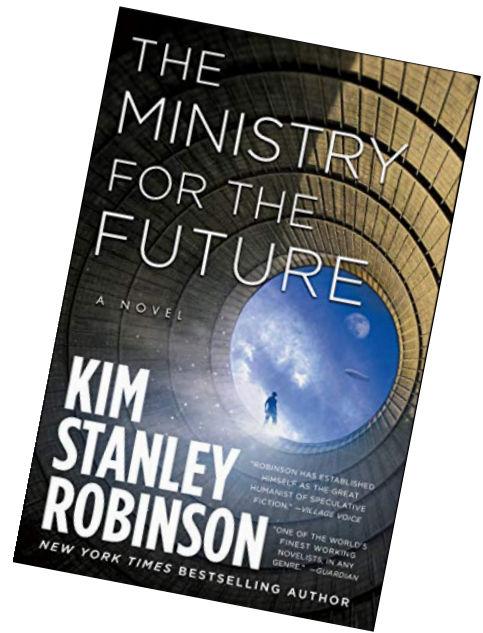
<https://www.publicbankinginstitute.org/>

3. 228 The Children of Kali resort to downing private jets (jets owned by wealthy individuals and corporations) and then commercial airlines. Then they turn their attention to container ships and even to cows, declaring "the War for the Earth." What are your thoughts on turning to violence and acts of terrorism in the effort to keep the planet from burning up? Are such acts ever justified? Are there other, equally effective ways, to achieve the greater good? (What do you think Erica Chenoweth would advise?)

4. 251 The six biggest emitters of carbon are industry, transport, land use, buildings, transportation, and "other." Robinson gives a litany of strategies for reducing carbon in these sectors. And he makes it clear that these strategies need to happen from "the bottom up," like a whirlwind. Which ones can we help to implement in our cities and towns? Which ones require national-level regulations?

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5. 254 Mary's close advisor and friend, Badim, tells her, ". . . we need a new religion." What does he think religion has to offer as a way of addressing the climate crisis--and what do you think of this proposal? Do we need new religions or are there resources in existing religions that could be lifted up in a useful way? (Ignacio Castuera also suggested that we consider "earthism" as a new and needed religion.)

6. 257 There are several times in the book that proposals for geo-engineering are explored. In this chapter, the focus is on pumping water from under glaciers to slow glacial melt. Robinson presents geo-engineering as a strategy that ought to be included in the climate response playbook. But there are many who argue against such large-scale interventions. How do you think we ought to approach geo-engineering efforts? Are there guard rails we should require?

Here's a primer on geo-engineering from MIT (with some interesting follow-up articles):
<https://www.technologyreview.com/2019/08/09/615/what-is-geoengineering-and-why-should-you-care-climate-change-harvard/>

7. 271 Mondragon is one of the best examples of a successful worker-owned cooperative. It's been touted as an example of a democratic, non-capitalist form of economic activity. It's not perfect, especially as it's entered the global arena, but it offers an interesting example of an alternative to our current way of constructing local business. <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/the-mondragon-cooperative-gives-lessons-in-democracy/>

8. 274-279 The carbon coin is designed to be a carrot while the carbon tax is a stick. The question raised by both is whether it is possible to use the current economic system to break our addiction to fossil fuel--and if so, how? Your thoughts?

9. 297 What do you say to people who say, "Well, yes, we're screwed, there's nothing we can do about planetary climate change, so we might as well live it up?" (Of course, those who hold this position are often sure that they and their loved ones won't suffer the consequences...)