



## Hope's Edge: The Next Diet for a Small Planet

*Frances Moore Lappé , Anna Lappé*

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Thirty years ago, Frances Moore Lappé started a revolution in the way Americans think about food and hunger. Now Frances and her daughter, Anna, pick up where *Diet for a Small Planet* left off. Together they set out on an around-the-world journey to explore the greatest challenges we face in the new millennium. Traveling to Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe, they discovered answers to one of the most urgent issues of our time: whether we can transcend the rampant consumerism and capitalism to find the paths that each of us can follow to heal our lives as well as the planet.

Featuring nearly seventy recipes from celebrated vegetarian culinary pioneers-including Alice Waters, Mollie Katzen, Laurel Robertson, Nora Pouillon, and Anna Thomas-*Hope's Edge* highlights true trailblazers engaged in social, environmental, and economic transformations.

## Hope's Edge: The Next Diet for a Small Planet Details

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## **From Reader Review Hope's Edge: The Next Diet for a Small Planet for online ebook**

### **Mary says**

If you're feeling despairing about the state of things in the world, this is a good antidote! There are people all over the world doing inspiring, meaningful, social change work. This book highlights some of those efforts. There's a woman in Brazil, for example, who determined that no one in her city would be hungry anymore, and she set about (pretty successfully) to do that. The Grameen Bank, which just won the Nobel Peace Prize, is also covered, as well as food to school programs. There are whole chapters on these movements, so you really get a sense of the details, which I found helpful.

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### **Deanna Lack says**

Ten years ago when I was a vegetarian, I read *Diet for a Small Planet*. After reading this book, I think I may have sort of missed the point of it. I was looking for diet recommendations, but I missed its political and humanitarian message.

So here, after reading a lot of Michael Polan recently, I was looking for a treatise on the food choices we make, maybe a case for vegetarianism. Not exactly.

This book is about change. It's about Gandhi's "being the change you wish to see in the world." The Lappes travel to several different locales in the world where people are having the courage to stand up to the regime that exists - Brazil, Bangladesh, India, Kenya, and back to the US. In each case food is involved in some way. She is passionate about food as a RIGHT for every human being. But I was most inspired by the courage demonstrated by these people in other parts of the world. Kenya especially was inspiring to me, with the joy they express despite the challenges they face.

The fact that we have "plenty" here in the US does not mean we have no people who are hungry or undernourished. I find it terribly sad that there IS plenty and yet so many of our chronic health problems stem from our horrific diet, and that it should be so much cheaper to eat processed crap (excuse the term) than it is to eat simple, real, healthy food.

So ultimately, this IS about choices but it is about making a difference in a bigger way as well. It's inspiring and a highly recommended read.

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### **Ben Williams says**

A more up-to-date book than *Diet for a Small Planet*, this book is a touching account of Frances and Anna's travels around the world in an effort to better understand the role that food plays in our lives. These books seem to contain some sort of good omen for me. I was cooking one of the meals out of this book--Frisian Oat Curry--one night in the dorm, met a friend who also liked to cook, and seven years later we still cook. Since reading her books, I have seen Frances speak several times and was lucky enough to join her in a panel discussion this fall when she visited NAU and Flagstaff. A great woman!

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## **Jill says**

This is a fascinating read that discusses where our food comes from and the impact it has on all of our lives. In this book, I read for the first time about Monsanto's (large agricultural product company) practice of selling terminator seeds that can't be saved year to year, therefore, insuring that poor farmers in developing countries have to buy their product each year and can never get ahead financially, the pesticide industry's bad impact on farmers in developing countries, the denigration of traditional agricultural practice (that served those regions much better) and a whole lot of other ugly practices. However, the author also makes a case for hope, by showing positive changes in the world. It also includes some lovely sounding recipes (though I did not test them).

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## **Michelle says**

One of my favourite books ever. It's sad and depressing in some ways, but it will then make you feel strong and hopeful.

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## **Adam Eichen says**

Absolutely stunning. Beautiful prose. Wonderfully crafted. Must read.

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## **Andi says**

Frances Moore Lappe and her daughter Anna don't seem to shy away from any challenge during their travels across several continents in this spectacular book. Described as the 'next Diet for a Small Planet', it is fun to meet the daughter who was just a tot when Frances published her first book. Now, as a team, mother and daughter pick up where "Diet..." left off.

Most of the book is written by Frances as she describes many of the social visionaries she and Anna met during their trip. Each chapter includes several essays written by Anna, whose insight and honesty is inspiring, especially when you realize that she was in her early 20s at the time they made their journey. Her point of view comes from a younger generation, and it's a pertinent inclusion.

Each country they visit has a whole different set of social problems and people trying to find solutions for those problems. Along with examining how local peoples are working to find answers to their sometimes overwhelming issues, Frances and Anna are consistently showing the ways the issues connect to the bigger picture, and how all of our decisions affect each other person on the planet.

Though the driving point revolves around world hunger and how completely unnecessary it is (Lappe maintains that we are in world of plenty, and that our current systems worldwide cause hunger), there are many other issues discussed.

Starting on American soil, the Lappes discuss the Edible Schoolyard, a perfect example of empowering, enabling and connecting kids to growing food along with their self-worth. Another inspiring project; former prisoners working the soil and learning to grow organic produce on otherwise unused plots.

From Brazil, the Lappes take a look at the severe discrepancy between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', and the MST, a controversial group of landless people who move in and occupy portions of unused land. While in Brazil they visit Belo Horizonte, a city determined to assure that every citizen has access to affordable meals and local organic produce.

Bangladesh proves to hold hope for the Lappes, despite the common thought that this country is a 'basketcase' due to its huge population and constant disasters, both ecological and economic. Even though Frances herself is saddened by the gulf between male and female, she ultimately believes in the country's ability to provide for its people. The Grameen Bank, originator of 'micro-loans'(usually a few hundred dollars) to help women start their own livelihoods in order to support their families, is examined in-depth by the Lappes. Frances admits that she was hoping to leave Bangladesh with proof that hope is justified in even the poorest of nations, but instead realized that hope cannot be 'proven' or 'justified' by anyone...it is a movement that one must jump into, messiness and all, and just keep pushing for answers.

India brings us people who are fighting against patenting life-forms (i.e. the neem tree, which has many uses that have been passed down for thousands of years), as well as farmers who are giving up conventional farming for organic methods in response to terrible illness, debt and uncontrollable pests. We also see India's seed-saving groups, who are recognizing the deep value of diverse, indigenous crops. The chapter on India ends with a chilling scene in which Frances and Anna meet a leader at the Ministry of Consumer Affairs. When questioned what would happen to the tons of surplus grain the Lappes had learned about (equal to 32 pounds per citizen), Shanta Kumar flatly stated that it would not be available to India's citizens, who 'have received enough handouts'. With monsoon season looming, export was unlikely, and the tons of grain was likely to rot, rather than go to hungry citizens. Lappe was sharply aware in that moment of the disconnect many leaders have to the solutions their own people are developing, the work being done to improve daily life--and how some leaders can reduce these citizens simply to helpless people, always looking for handouts.

In Kenya the Lappes learn about the Green Belt Movement (women of Kenya planting trees, trees and more trees), the idea of 'gunnysack gardens' (villagers growing greens and veggies next to their huts in literal gunnysacks), and more village farmers becoming aware of the huge disadvantages of chemicals in agriculture.

Spanning several European countries, the Lappes write a wonderful chapter on Fair Trade and how it has grown, with tremendous speed, worldwide.

Ending up back in America, the Lappes visit Wisconsin and see how family farms are being thrown away as big agriculture moves in. While showing us even more devastating effects of conventional agriculture, the Lappes also show positive movements that are growing and giving us as American consumers real choices that can make changes in how food is grown and distributed.

Lappe includes recipes from every region that tempt and intrigue! I have to say, compared to the recipes she included in *Diet for a Small Planet*, these seem to be much more palatable and accessible to the average American. :)

Wrapping up the book is a list of 5 "Liberating Ideas" that can help each one of us break the mental map that may hold us back from finding real solutions.

Throughout the book, the Lappe women continuously reach within themselves to 'check' their opinions. They humbly admit that they could be wrong about any number of things, but that all they can do is write what they have seen, learned, and know. I admire the honesty and deep concern and insight these two women exhibit.

There is no possible way for me to include all the valuable lessons, ideas, and thought-provoking stories this book holds. I've left out many specific leaders, peoples, and inspirations that kept me turning each page with more hope and clarity.

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### **Molly Hanlon says**

Falling into the category of "don't eat *that*" books is this Lappe family effort. What I like about this, even more so than Pollan's masterpieces, is the story-like quality and the intervening into personal lives. I like to think that this is because it's written by women (ahem, ahem). Good for anyone who is thinking about the locavore movement or altering their diet in any way. Couple it with any Kingslover book and you have yourself a group of diet-changing adventures.

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### **Emily says**

Excellent book. Very well written and both authors make an excellent case for a locally grown, worker respecting food system.

Only criticism: the last chapter is very redundant of the rest of the book and doesn't give a lot of new info, so the end is mildly unexciting. Luckily, she finishes the book with a spread of FANTASTIC recipes, so that is an excellent read for any cook or food lover.

Quote: "Today, consumers don't realize we pay for our food not just once, but many times. We pay at the store, yes. But we pay again in taxes going to subsidies for the biggest producers, who don't need them. We pay a third time in the costs of pollution we endure from large farms destroying our soil, water and air. Then we pay again in social services for those squeezed out by factory farms. And we pay again in the costs of urban crowding and sprawl.... So, sure, [...] producing sustainably costs more in labor, for instance- but conventional foods are not really less expensive. It's just that their costs are hidden."

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### **Yuri says**

I enjoyed this book. I liked how you were taken around the world to see examples of real people taking action to overcome hunger, poverty, violence, etc. to demonstrate that there are plenty of resources (especially food) to go around. It has an optimistic outlook about how changing the way we think can lead to the realization that overproduction and overconsumption is not the way to go. Gave me a better understanding of why it's better to eat organic, seasonal, local foods, and support fair-trade goods as a way to help the little guys around the world. I found it to be a little preachy at times but it definitely made me think twice about where my food comes from and what is in the food we eat. A good resource for information on

organizations and groups around the world making 'a living democracy' come to life. A bonus: a bunch of great vegetarian recipes at the end of each chapter, as well as the end of the book.

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### **Jenny says**

In Hope's Edge, Frances Moore Lappe revisits the themes in Diet for a Small Planet 30 years later by traveling the world and meeting with ecological and culinary pioneers who are working to change the way we live, farm and eat. Accompanied by her daughter Anna Lappe, Frances visits 5 continents and introduces us to remarkable people from each one who are trying to move away from dependence on chemical pesticides, fertilizers and commercially available seeds to find other ways to feed the hungry of the world.

Throughout the book, delicious sounding vegetarian and vegan recipes entice the reader to eat less meat and more vegetables, to eat locally grown produce and to eat more variety.

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### **Rachel says**

I have been moved by this book. Not only does Lappe give tangible suggestions for how to eat in a more health conscious way, she goes deeper to explain how the actions we take at the dinner table and beyond impact people around the world. Lappe, while clearly an expert in her field, makes clear and understandable connections between the economics and politics of poverty to our own lives. I would be shocked if those who agree with her aren't moved to change their eating and buying decisions after reading this book.

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### **Nell says**

The five stars are for importance. As much as I agree with a lot of what the authors have to say, I can't say I enjoyed reading it. It's filled with the stories of passionate people committing themselves to changing the world, and indeed effecting some change. Enough to stop or even significantly slow the world's rush toward disaster? I don't think so. Still, that doesn't absolve each of us from doing what we can to preserve the environment so that as many of the human race as possible can survive for as long as we can.

Tying the book to the author's earlier influential book may have helped with name recognition, but also limits it if people assume they know what this book contains. Food is just the entry point to show how most of our political and economic systems have grown unbalanced. In that way, though a 2002 imprint, it ties in neatly with the debate about inequality that has recently come to the fore.

Well worth reading. Some may find it uplifting. Certainly enlightening.

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### **Alex says**

I didn't know what to expect from this book but was pleased by what I got. The two authors (one of which wrote the original Diet for a Small Planet) traveled the world to see what changes had occurred (if any) since the publication of the original book 30 years ago. I have to say it was very interesting reading - micro-

finance, landless Brazilians, organic farming in the U.S. and France, fair trade - all was discussed. A side squick for me was hearing how woman are still being treated as... really, worse than dogs... in many places in the world. Very upsetting and unsettling.

Anyway, I recommend. Very interesting and informative if sort of utopian and obsessively positive.

Plus, lots of vegetarian recipes.

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### **Sara Jaye says**

Honestly, I was pretty relieved to finish this book. I kept on pushing through because some of the people and organizations that the Lappes talk to are fascinating and it was genuinely informative to learn about them - but the whole thing is couched in a kind of weird personal narrative that was very annoying to me and at times distressingly ethnocentric. The main author, Frances Moore Lappe, seems to wander somewhat cluelessly across the globe having her preexisting perceptions confirmed - even by brown people, who knew?!? [One example: "It's funny to our ears to hear unschooled farmers talk about the neo-liberal models, but that phrase has profound meaning for them (p.87)" Shocking! Who would have guessed that people in the "South" understand that globalization affects them...] As far as bigger arguments about globalization and sustainability go, I was basically already on the Lappes' side...but if I hadn't been, I doubt this book would have gotten me there.

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