

Greenpeace: How a Group of Journalists, Ecologists and Visionaries Changed the World

By R. Weyler. 2004. Raincoast Books, 9050 Shaughnessy Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6P 6E5 Canada. 574 pages. \$25.95.

Rex Weyler has released an honest, informative, and politically motivating history of the first nine years of the Greenpeace movement, charting its course from its inception in a Vancouver living room in 1970 to its official internationalization in an Amsterdam pub in 1979. While others have written histories of this now widely-studied movement, Weyler's is of a different sort: he is an insider to the group, having been a Greenpeace activist since 1974, and knows its key players better than most. He relates individual motivations and personalities, and shares both the bitter disputes between factions of the movement and the eco-political victories celebrated over pints of beer. Weyler divides his study into three sections: War and Peace, All Sentient Beings, and Political Ecology. Throughout, he relates the growth of the movement and its increasing lens of awareness in a style that is clear and captivating, teaching readers about the commitments of the movement and winning new environmental activists as he details the group's adventures.

Weyler begins by locating the global climate of 1970, as seen from the west coast of Canada. War in Vietnam continued to rage, and American draft dodgers were fleeing to Canada by the thousand. The public outcry against war built throughout the 1960s, and the ever-quickening pace of the international arms race daily increased the number of anti-war activists. Meanwhile, the world's superpowers invested billions to stay in military advance of competing nations. Nuclear bombs were dropped at a rate of one per week, often with total disregard to populations neighbouring test sites. These nuclear blasts were contaminating entire cities with fallout, and the toxic Strontium-90, a by-product of the nuclear tests, was spread globally through the atmosphere. Most frightening, perhaps, were the questions surrounding the bombs that continued to be tested with ever-increasing rapidity. In the race to produce the biggest and strongest atomic bomb, each superpower allowed their testing to proceed in advance of scientific answers as to the effects of the bomb. Physicists cast bets among themselves about whether the next bomb would ignite the atmosphere. Civilians were intentionally uninformed of their proximity to the tests, to allow governments to test the effects of radiation on humanity.

Into this scene of rising and potentially deadly conflict, Weyler introduces his Vancouverite "cast of characters," including political journalist Bob Hunter, pacifist ex-soldier Ben Metcalfe, and Quaker social activists Dorothy and Irving Stowe. This team realized that nuclear testing and the threat of nuclear warfare promised to kill our planet. They combined their strengths to develop a movement committed to gain-

ing the general public's support for pacifism, with emphasis on ending atmospheric nuclear testing. The team shared an awareness of the power of the media, and while they understood the science-based arguments against the danger of nuclear testing, they realized that the public would be won not by numbers, but by images.

Hunter called these images "mindbombs": they were "simple images, delivered by the media, that would 'explode in people's minds' and create a new understanding of the world" (73). The team realized that whoever has the best picture wins, and set out to use this knowledge to their advantage. As ecological and disarmament goals merged, the group found their identity advocating not only peace, but an environmentally-aware peace, a *green* peace, and thus found their name.

The newly formed Greenpeace realized that protest groups had been largely ignored in the past because they weren't demanding to be seen. Greenpeace decided to sail a boat into the middle of the next scheduled nuclear explosion, a United States test scheduled to take place in October of 1971 on Amchitka Island, a "registered National Wildlife Refuge" (55). By placing themselves in the middle of the event, and ensuring that dramatic photographs and news stories were released to the media, Greenpeace guaranteed that their campaign could not be overlooked. Though this initial campaign, the sailing of the *Greenpeace I* and *II*, did not prevent the bomb from being detonated (creating "the largest human-made earth tremor in history," (131) a 7.2 magnitude earthquake), the mission was nevertheless a success. They had informed politicians and the general public of the dangers of the bomb, and had made their case for the futility of the arms race. As protests erupted around the world, atmospheric nuclear testing became an embarrassment to the United States government, and experiments soon moved underground. Other countries followed suit, after similar pressure and embarrassing attention from Greenpeace groups.

The strategy proved successful: Greenpeace had lodged itself between the aggressor and the resource they aimed to protect, and people took notice. The movement grew, and attracted new activists. With the anti-nuclear success, the group shifted its attention to environmental injustices. Biocracy, the right of each living thing to be respected, became the credo of the group, as reflected in the "Greenpeace ecology manifesto," titled the "Declaration of Interdependence" (393). Individual Greenpeace members maintain individual ecological vision, and while this varies from member to member, most seem to be deep ecologists, maintaining that the survival of each living thing is dependent on the ecosphere at large; no species, including humans, takes priority over another. Greenpeace as a whole adamantly proclaims its "fundamen-

tal values” as “peace, tolerance, bearing witness, ecology, innovative direct action, [and] non-violence” (489).

One of the new attendees at Greenpeace meetings, Dr. Peter Spock, a psychologist who had come to realize the enormous intelligence and complex brain waves of whales, advocated that their protection from whaling fleets should be the focus of the next Greenpeace campaign.

Fleets of whaling ships, including factory boats that would process the whales while still at sea, had hunted the world’s whales to dangerously low levels, pushing some species to extinction. The Greenpeace team decided to emulate their successful anti-nuclear tactics, and again place themselves between the aggressor and the victim: they will pilot zodiacs between the whaling ships and the whales. This proved an enormously dangerous task, as the whaling ships were equipped with canon-fired harpoons, and the whalers were often not persuaded by the activists’ presence to hold their fire. Nevertheless, the Greenpeace team time and again positioned themselves between the guns and the whales, all the while snapping pictures to send to worldwide media, communicating the gory horror of the whale hunt. As with the anti-nuclear warfare campaign, Weyler relates devastating statistics about the depletion of the whale population, simultaneously explaining the need for change and campaigning further to his readers.

Both the anti-nuclear and the anti-whaling campaigns had found success, but the split-focus had divided the group. Names, places, and projects proliferate in the latter section of the book, speaking to the new nature and diversity of Greenpeace. However, funds were limited, and members disagreed about priorities. Further dividing the group was a new interest in an anti-sealing campaign. Sealers off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador slaughtered hundreds of thousands of white coat seal pups each season, a hunt that Greenpeace claimed was rapidly and dangerously depleting the seal numbers. Greenpeace activist Paul Watson advocated spraying the pups with a harmless green dye, which would make them worthless to the fashion industry to which their pelts are usually sold. The team set out for Newfoundland, with this intent. They were not well received by Newfoundlanders, who viewed them as outsiders, without right to decide on Newfoundlanders’ means of income.

Realizing the support of Newfoundland was vital, Hunter agreed to abandon the green dye idea, in favour of direct confrontation with the sealing companies. The focus, Hunter maintained, was not the sealers themselves, but the foreign factory ships that employed the sealers for very little, and sold the seal pelts at a great profit. This focus seemed to appease the Newfoundland sealers, who guardedly welcomed the Greenpeace activists. While Weyler makes mention of the realization that this is an economic as well as an environmental problem, and briefly alludes to a

campaign to replace a portion of the wages of sealers who would agree to give up their work, this vital aspect of the problem is not pursued. The anti-sealing campaign continued, but did not present an economic alternative for sealers.

The group became increasingly divided as Watson, frustrated over the slow pace of success in Newfoundland, advocated for a more aggressive approach in confronting environmental abuse. Greenpeace, however, remained staunchly committed to non-violence, and Watson left to form his own campaign, the Sea Shepherd Society. A faction of Greenpeace remained committed to the seal campaign, and there seemed now to be three separate Greenpeaces, each competing for funds, each demanding that their own campaign was most important. A suggestion arose from the group: “If we’re ecologists, then let’s rise above our particular issues to see the bigger pattern” (231). Despite their vision of an ecologically-just society, it became clear that, amidst all of their funding problems and internal bickering, they were not promoting balance, nor were they celebrating diversity. As their debt mounted, they gave in to pressure from Greenpeace groups that had formed worldwide to give up Vancouver control, and merge with newer collectives to become Greenpeace International. Though the Greenpeace campaign lives on, its focus is no longer Canadian, and Weyler’s retelling ends here.

The continued international presence suggests that this truly is “the movement the world needs” (135). Projects continue to proliferate: as www.Greenpeace.ca clearly evidences, “the ecological crisis seems to be expanding on an exponential trajectory” (352). It will be of great benefit to those motivated to participate in today’s Greenpeace campaigns to know something of the roots of the movement.

Weyler makes only brief mention of a common criticism leveled at Greenpeace; the rising feminist movement called the Greenpeace Foundation sexist, and perhaps rightfully so. Feminists accused the largely-male collective of militaristic language and macho and aggressive tactics. Hunter suggested at the time that a forceful and aggressive strategy was necessary to ensure that their environmental concerns were heard. Weyler himself doesn’t take the claims to task: instead, he allows the history of the movement to speak for itself. Throughout this history, he highlights the contributions of women to the campaign, and follows the story of Susi Newborn’s efforts to launch the first Greenpeace UK boat, the *Rainbow Warrior*, on a hugely successful mission. The concerns of ecofeminists, however, seem to stand, even as Hunter’s motto “A flower is your brother” (150) changed to the more inclusive “A flower is your brother *and* your sister” (489). Other criticisms, such as the now common concern that the boats Greenpeace uses for its eco-interventions are themselves far from eco-friendly, remain unaddressed. But perhaps such silence is justified: Weyler doesn’t set out for himself the task of justifying Green-

peace. Instead, he recounts the passions that formed the movement and kept it motivated, and the inner conflicts that forced its evolution.

The history certainly has its shortcomings. A tiresome *Lord of the Rings* analogy runs throughout the 574 pages of text, and the foreshadowing of future Greenpeace trouble is almost constant. Most distracting is Weyler's tendency to tediously set a scene, detailing the room, the lighting, and even the contents of paintings hanging on the walls. But his goal is as much to convey the emotion as the historical record of these first nine years, and the details help to transport the reader to the time and place remembered. (Weyler's elaborate scene-setting becomes slightly more understandable once we learn that he is the group photographer.)

The Last Great Sea: A Voyage Through the Human and Natural History of the North Pacific Ocean

By T. Glavin. 2000. David Suzuki Foundation and Greystone Books Douglas & McIntyre Publishing Group, Vancouver/Toronto, Canada. 244 pages, \$34.95 hardcover.

This book belongs in every conservationist's bookshelf, to say the least. As D. Suzuki describes very convincingly in the foreword, the environment of today's North Pacific is characterized by its loss of (fish) species and its wipe-out of protein assemblages. The collapse of Sockeye Salmon is only one of many sad examples, many more exist: Steller's Sea Cow, Spectacled Cormorant, Dawson's Caribou (Queen Charlotte Islands), and even plant species like Tobacco (Queen Charlotte Islands). Other species like Walruses, Sea Otters and Fur Seals barely survived until now.

The first chapter starts slow but allows a very solid overview about historical and archaeological facts. Already after Chapter 2, nobody can deny anymore the environmental disaster and mis-management of the North Pacific and coastal British Columbia. Nevertheless, the author convinces the reader that the North Pacific still is THE largest fish producer in the world. "As in aboriginal fisheries, mythology played a part in industrial fisheries management, especially the myth of a superabundant ocean and the all-powerful capability of science and technology to fix the messes made by hydroelectric dams, lousy forestry practices and overfishing". The governmentally encouraged Merganser Control and Bear Shooting Programs designed for the sake of Salmon Protection prove this citation very well. Galvin strongly eliminates all illusions on how to heal the problem of overfishing. For instance, he shows that S. Livingstone's widely followed idea of Fish Hatcheries does not produce more salmon, but instead takes away funds and harms natural salmon stocks since they simply replace the last remaining and struggling stocks with poorly adjusted new ones. Strong also are Gavin's arguments against Salmon Farming; e.g., it contributes to the closure of

Ultimately, Weyler's passion and enthusiasm for the ideals of the Greenpeace movement are shared with the reader in a style that is politically, scientifically and historically informed, making his book the perfect starting point for anyone who is looking for either a history of Greenpeace, or the inspiration to become politically and environmentally active. This history, I think, will make Greenpeace's proud, as it functions as a mindbomb: reading about Greenpeace's commitments, their successes and failures, awakens an awareness of the potentials of eco-activism within each reader. You can put the book down, but you can't stop thinking about it...

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marine fisheries for wild salmon, and it requires 3 kg of fish to produce 1 kg of salmon.

Fisheries and the ecology of all major North Pacific fish species get well-covered in this book. Since the abundance of salmon shaped western North America, this topic receives major attention in the text. All Pacific salmon species are discussed: Chum, Sockeye, Pink, Coho, Steelhead, Masu and Amago. Of major interest is in this regard the scientific discussion around the taxonomy of salmon; e.g., Steelhead (classified until 1980s as Trout). The author brilliantly points out the implications of the religious-based and somewhat outdated taxonomical system by Carl von Linné, and how this affects the species management by national governments (provincial and federal) on an international level even (Canada vs. USA).

The backwardness and failure of fishery laws are shown by outlining that the first salmon-fishing regulations for the Fraser River was a simple word-for-word replication of fishing regulations on English Rivers. At that time, Canada's external affairs jurisdiction was still controlled by the British, which affects the Canada-U.S. salmon treaty concluded 1930s and renewed in 1985. In addition, Galvin shows that Canadian and U.S. fishery scientists significantly differed in their stock assessment results for the same species in the same waters even; consequently, so did the management and political agendas. This is the classical picture of "mixed-stock" fisheries, which also threatens small salmon runs.

The author reports the incidental death of 50 000 marine mammals and 500 000 seabirds due to driftnet fishery activities in the North Pacific; marine (plastic) pollution comes with it. Despite the well shown failure of a European and Western approach dealing with the North Pacific fisheries, domestic Japanese and Native fisheries seemed to work well and be sustainable. Galvin shows the magnitude of "pre-contact" fish-