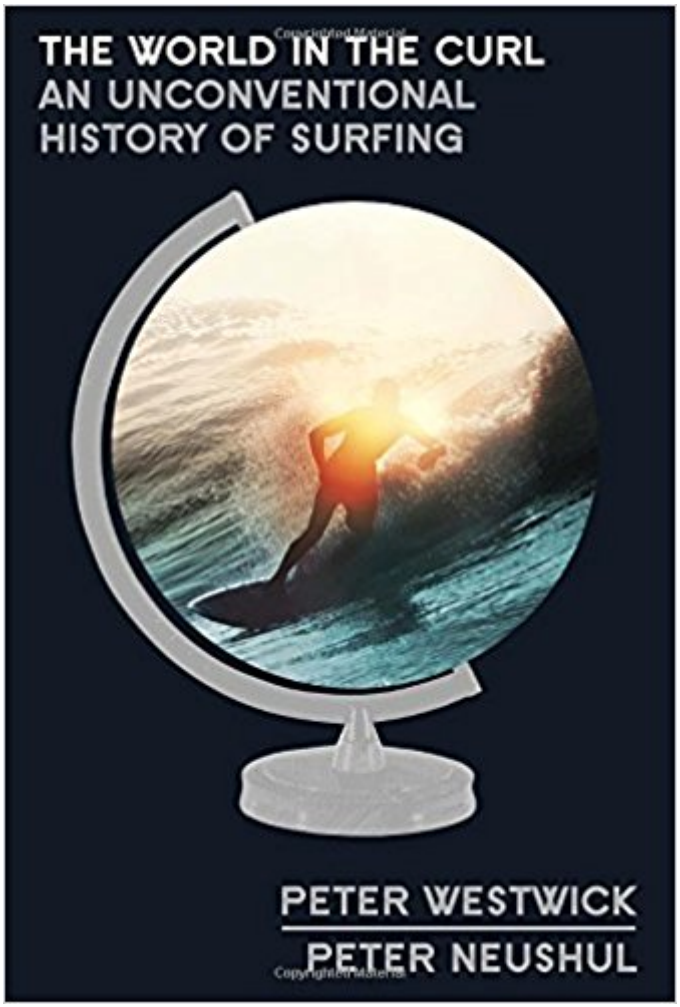
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The World In The Curl: An Unconventional History Of Surfing



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Synopsis

A definitive and highly readable history of surfing and the cultural, political, economic, and environmental consequences of its evolution from a sport of Hawaiian kings and queens to a billion-dollar worldwide industryÃ Â Despite its rebellious, outlaw reputation, or perhaps because of it, surfing occupies a central place in the American Ã¢â ¬â œ and global Ã¢â ¬â œ imagination, embodying the tension between romantic counterculture ideals and middle-class values, between an individualistic communion with nature and a growing commitment to commerce and technology.Ã Â In examining the enduring widespread appeal of surfing in both myth and reality, The World in the Curl offers a fresh angle on the remarkable rise of the sport and its influence on modern life. Ã Â Drawing on Peter Westwick and Peter NeushulÃ¢â ¬â„¢s expertise as historians of science and technology, the environment, and the Cold War, as well as decades of experience as surfers themselves, The World in the Curl brings alive the colorful history of surfing by drawing readers into the forces that fueled the sport's expansion: colonialism, the military-industrial complex, globalization, capitalism, environmental engineering, and race and gender roles.Ã Â In an engaging and provocative narrative history Ã¢â ¬â œ from the spread of surfing to the United States, to the development of surf culture, to the reintroduction of women into the sport, to big wave frontiers Ã¢â ¬â œ the authors draw an indelible portrait of surfing and surfers as actors on the global stage.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Los Angeles Times Bestseller"The authors promise an intelligent guide to surfing. And they have

delivered oneÃ¢â ¬Â| The book is a serious compendium of historical developments in the sport, from its earliest known roots in Hawaii to today. Westwick and Neushul bring an academic rigor to the topic, backed up with an impressive review of the literature from the archives of surf magazines and The Times to books, films and historical records.Ã¢â ¬Â•- Los Angeles TimesÃ¢â ¬Å“The authors are studious, meticulous and logicalÃ¢â ¬Â|.The 400-plus-page book tracks the strange, cultish practice of riding an oblong floatation device on the surface of a moving wave. It ranges from its ancient Polynesian roots to modern competitions, mechanized wave-pools, and international T-shier corporations, placing the pastime in larger historical context.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œWall Street JournalÃ¢â ¬Å“Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul trace surfing from its ancient Polynesian roots to its current incarnation as a Ã¢â ¬Ëœglobal commercial and cultural phenomenon.Ã¢â ¬â„¢ Along the way, they look at the connections between surfing and, among other things, colonialism, technology, Hollywood, advertising, fashion, real estate development, pollution, climate change Ã¢â ¬â • even Islamic fundamentalismÃ¢â ¬Â|The result is provocative and highly entertaining [and] the authors skillfully debunk some of the myths that have grown up around the sport.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œWashington PostÃ¢â ¬Å“The great thing about Peter Westwick and Peter NeushulÃ¢â ¬â„¢s new book, The World in the Curl, is that they explore all the ways surfing has been influenced byÃ¢â ¬â •and has influencedÃ¢â ¬â •colonialism, war, capitalist industry, and other outside historical forces.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Daily Beast"Surfers will be stoked to read The World in the Curl...Ambitious and compelling."Ã¢â ¬â œBoom: A Journal of CaliforniaÃ Â "A lively coverage recommended for sports and sociology collections alike, which delves into topics most surfing histories don’t begin to probe."Ã¢â ¬â œMidwest Book ReviewÃ¢â ¬Å“A well-rounded look at surf cultureÃ¢â ¬Â| the authors certainly did their research.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â œSurfermag.comÃ¢â ¬Å“Westwick and NeushulÃ¢â ¬â„¢s focus on the cultural and socio-economic illuminates hidden forces that are rarely discussed by even the most knowledgeable surfersÃ¢â ¬Â|For every enthusiast killing time before the next big swell, the authors provide a satisfying immersion into the story of how a near-extinct Polynesian pastime came back to conquer the beach.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œPublishers WeeklyÃ¢â ¬Å“An encyclopedic history of riding the wavesÃ¢â ¬Â|. The authors leave no aspect of surfing unexploredÃ¢â ¬â •as rewarding for those addicted to pursuing the Ã¢â ¬Ëœstoke Ã¢â ¬â„¢ as for others merely smitten by surfingÃ¢â ¬â„¢s idyllic island allure.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œKirkus ReviewsÃ¢â ¬Å“The World in the Curl is the most scholarly and comprehensive history of the sport born on the waves of Hawaii.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œ Fred Hemmings, Hawaii’s 1968 world champion surfer and a founding father of pro surfingÃ¢â ¬Å“The World in the Curl is a fascinating, fast-paced chronicle of one of the

world’s most colorful sports. Westwick and Neushul have written a book that’s as immersive as it is engaging; one that does deep justice to the power and allure of the ocean itself.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Susan Casey, author of The WaveÃ¢â ¬Å“SurfÃ¢â ¬â„¢s up! And so is this history and celebration of the surfing art, at once academically impressive yet alive with the passion and insight of two surfer dude professors of a kindÃ¢â ¬â œand a bookÃ¢â ¬â œthat only California can produce.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œKevin Starr, University of Southern CaliforniaÃ¢â ¬Å“Every surfer on earth ought to buy and read this book. From the motorized ’warboards’ developed by the US military in WW2, to the hidden racist evil of legendary surfer Mickey Dora, The World in the Curl offers that greatest of gifts to any sub-culture: taking it seriously, treating our great sport as a legitimate lens through which to view human experience in, on, and around the oceans for the last thousand years.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œDaniel Duane, author of Caught Inside Ã¢â ¬Å“Although not often recognized as such, the ocean is by far the planetÃ¢â ¬â„¢s largest wilderness.Ã Â Surfing takes place at a frontier of civilization.Ã Â Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul make their book come alive because they have walked (and swum!) the talk.Ã Â ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s an inside, honest, sometimes painful, story.Ã Â Surfing provides the matrix, but there is broader and deeper dimension to this book.Ã Â ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a cultural, environmental, and sociologicalÃ Â history of the interface between our species and the edge of the continents.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œ Roderick Frazier Nash, Professor Emeritus of History and Environmental Studies at the University of California Santa Barbara and author of Wilderness and the American Mind"The World in the Curl deftly and engagingly charts the origins and evolution of surfing from ancient Polynesian pastime to a truly global sport with 20 million devotees, from Tasmania to Iceland, Gaza to Japan. SurfingÃ¢â ¬â„¢s cultural and commercial influence reaches vastly farther, touching billions with pervasive images of personal freedom, youth, and quintessential cool. Westwick and Neushul show that surfingÃ¢â ¬â„¢s rise has surprising depths, as it became the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most iconoclastically-iconic sport by thriving at the intersections of radical change: colonialism, capitalism, consumerism, shifting gender, class, and racial mores, and above all in the paradoxical landscapes of modern war: with leisured teenagers in Sunbelt suburbs, with soldiers in Vietnam, and with aerospace engineers making surfboards and wetsuits with techniques and materials from the military-industrial complex. Surfing has long had a split personality: is it harmless, wholesome fun, or a more subversive, outsider activity? Is it soulful communion with nature, or commercial enterprise, competitive and commodified? Throughout the narrative, we are reminded of the social and moral dimensions of sports, perfectly exemplified by ’surfingÃ¢â ¬â„¢s constant struggle to save its soul.’"Ã¢â ¬â œ Wade Graham, author of American Eden"Surfing rides the wave of history

in Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul's The World in the Curl.Ã Â Through deeply researched and engagingly told tales from the Polynesian settlement of Hawaii to today's global surf industry, Westwick and Neushul take us into the impact zone where surfing and society collide and cultures are transformed.Ã Â This book is as epic, in its way, as a big day at Mavericks.Ã Â Read it for its context, dig it for its stoke."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â œDavid Helvarg, author of The Golden ShoreÃ¢â ¬Å“An excellent read, a scholarly look beneath the surface which results in a greater appreciation of the texture of an alluring sport and lifestyle.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œShaun Tomson, world champion surfer and author of SurferÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Code Ã¢â ¬Å“With excellent research and epic storytelling skills, they expose the contradictory reality of surfing without forgetting the thrill of catching a wave. This entertaining book isn't just for surfers Ã¢â ¬â œ itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s about how the modern world looks from inside the curl.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œ Matthew Stewart, author of The Courtier and the Heretic"Surfers, sprung from the natural sea to a Beach Boys soundtrack Ã¢â ¬â œ who knew their origins span colonialÃ Â Ã Â confrontationÃ Â to aerospace innovation? The WorldÃ Â in the Curl is a brilliant history of sport, culture, technologyÃ Â and crashing political waves, a perfect ride for anyone who delights in understanding the complex crosscurrents that have shaped our social history."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â œDavid Beers, author of Blue Sky Dream

PETER WESTWICK is an assistant research professor of history at the University of Southern California, the director of the Aerospace History Project at the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West, and the author or editor of three books.PETER NEUSHUL is a visiting senior associate researcher in the Department of History at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Ã Â He has written extensively on defense industries, history of oceanography, and on environmental history.

Two SoCal surfer dudes who also happen to be history researcher/professors at UCSB & USC connect the history of Hawaii, California, Australia & other surf locales through the lens of surfing. The authors did a brilliant job explaining how and why surfing evolved from a sacred Hawaiian leisure activity into the modern sport and activity enjoyed by millions and a lifestyle that fascinates millions more. They dispel many long held myths with academic yet still very readable explanations how surfing soul slowly grew through the 20th century into a multi-billion dollar industry going strong in the 21st century global economy. As a transplant (from the lakes & rivers of Madison, Wisconsin!) SoCal-Baja/SD/OC/LA surfer for the past 20 years I have read quiet a bit about the various characters and history of surfing. Overall their take is a very interesting blend of thoroughly

researched academic history and fun readable surfer dude history! EnJoy!!

As someone born in San Clemente, many of the names and places bring back memories. This is the consummate text as to the history and pathology of surfing. This is the first book to really give George Freeth his due (even though no mention is made of the fact that he saved a bunch of Japanese fishermen in California and they named a town after him). This book also recognizes Miki Dora for what he was. Westwick does give short shift to Big Wednesday, a film that had a mega effect on the masses and he effectively tones down Greg Noll's constant cursing (it's old hat Noll; you're cool, we get it). Brilliant stuff.

A good readable overview of surfing. The authors keep it fresh and not derivative of previous narratives.Not sure that I agree with the authors' avoiding the topic of modern professional surfing. The quality level of modern professional surfing is insane right now. Not that it has much to do with what most surfers do, but it has a lot to do with what most surfers want to do (if they are honest with themselves).

This is a terrific book. It is smart, charming, and engrossing. Anyone who grew up in the 1950s, 1960s, or 1970s just has to read this book to understand the impact of surfing on popular culture. And of course, anyone with an interest in surfing has to read this, as well as anyone who lives or has visited California, Hawaii, or Australia. I read this on a trip to Maui and could hardly put it down long enough to enjoy the view.

Gave this book to my husband who surfs and has read many, many surfing-related books. This one has an unusual take on the sport beside just the history, it weaves stories and interesting tidbits into the history. When he finished it, I read it as well. Really enjoyable and interesting. Highly recommend!

Great book, a totally different take on history. A few things here and there are bothersome, such as the reference to using guava leaves (p. 11). Guavas are not Hawaiian trees, so arrived from South America/Mexico some years after Cook. The leaf use is not cited as to when observed. Overall an excellent book.

great read and got here very early.....

It gave a really interesting perspective on surfing history with some in-depth information that broadened background and put the topic into an interesting context. I learned so much more about surfing's genesis in Hawaii. A great book to own.

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