



Pacific Northwest Region Virtual Book Club

Salmon by Mark Kurlansky

7:00 PM PT on December 2nd, 2021

Meeting Schedule

Parts	Chapters	Date	# of pages
Part Four: The Dangerous Future	Chapter Twelve: Elegy for the Atlantic	2-Dec	86
	Chapter Thirteen: The Ballad of the Pacific		
	Chapter Fourteen: The Golden Fish Departs		
	Epilogue		

Chapter Twelve: Elegy for the Atlantic

1. Do you think the Atlantic is at the point where an “Elegy” is justified? (Methea)
2. What are your thoughts on pinks inhabiting the River Ness? Should they be managed, viewed as a potentially an invasive species or should we be letting nature run its course? (Methea)
3. Did you read these last chapters from a different paradigm, after it was pointed out last week that this is more of a history book by a culinary author vs a science book? (Kirk)
4. On p. 311, Kurlansky said that studies SHOW that the Dee will be 6 degrees warmer by 2080. Does this terminology of certitude, SHOW that Kurlansky really is not a science writer? (Kirk)

Chapter Thirteen: The Ballad of the Pacific

1. I was not in the PNW during the removal of the Elwha Dam. What personal stories do you all have of that event? (Kirk) Sidenote question - Who is a fan of the Monkey Wrench Gang?
2. On p. 342, Kurlansky discusses the billions of dollars spent on habitat restoration and other projects trying to reduce the decline of salmon populations. Considering all the issues facing Washington (and any state), how should we determine the budget priorities? Is there a point when we should throw in the towel and say we have lost a species? (Kirk)
3. Who would be willing to try the “recipe” on page 351? (Kirk)
 - a. What is the most unusual thing you have eaten? What was the experience like and why did you try it?

Chapter Fourteen: The Golden Fish Departs

1. On p. 366, the Kamchatka River is touted as having a robust salmon run “biggest salmon runs in a century” but this is quickly tempered by the next 3 pages on poaching in the Kamchatka; Do you think large scale poaching is inevitable when/if salmon numbers increase? Are there effective strategies to mitigate poaching? (Methea)

2. After comparing the book's previous recipes with those of this final chapter, do you think Kurlansky's placement of these recipes was intentional? (Methea)
3. On p. 369, I found it interesting that Kurlansky ended this chapter/section about poaching by saying that the poacher became a fly-fisherman. After the anti-fly-fishing chapter that we read last time, do you think he is specifically trying to draw parallels between the two? (Kirk)

Epilogue

1. On p. 376, Kurlansky writes "Reaching the historic levels of the past—though they may exist only in legend, books and documents—has to be the goal." Do you think this is the goal that we should be setting? (Methea)
2. Did you feel that the epilogue was essential to the closure of this book? How does it compare to the prologue? If you could write the epilogue, how might it compare? (Methea)
 - a. Does it seem that neither the Pro nor Epilogue are connected to the rest of the book?
3. How well did Kurlansky answer, or address, the thesis of the book (p. 32) that the future of Earth is tied to the future of salmon? (Kirk)
4. How do (or should) we as teachers present environmental issues/histories to our students? Like this book with a long list of what is wrong, or...? (Kirk)
5. Assuming that it was written at a grade appropriate level, how could you see using this book with your students?
 - a. What takeaways from this book can/will you use with your students? (Kirk)
6. Did Kurlansky really say that the solution to all the problems that he presented is to go down to the river and listen to the fishes? Is that actually the solution? Until we reconnect with nature, we won't be able to solve the issues? (Kirk)
7. Up until the end I kept expecting for him to present some solutions, but if this is a "history" book should he have included solutions for the future? (Kirk)
8. Would a summary of the book be something like "the 4 things that have been done around the globe to destroy salmon"? It seemed that I was rereading the same stories over and over, but just in a different location. (Kirk)

Appendix

1. Did anyone read this?