



Gulf of Mexico Region Virtual Book Club
Gulf: The Making of an American Sea by Jack E. Davis

Meeting Schedule

Parts	Chapters	Date	# of pages
Part Two: Sea and Sky: American Debuts in the 19th Century	Chapter Five: Manifest Destiny	18-April	87
	Chapter Six: A Fishy Sea		
	Chapter Seven: The Wild Fish that Tame the Coast		
	Chapter Eight: Birds of a Feather, Shot Together		
Part Three: Preludes to the Future	Chapter Nine: From Bayside to Beachside	2-May	112
	Chapter Ten: Oil and the Texas Toe Dip		
	Chapter Eleven: Oil and the Louisiana Plunge		
	Chapter Twelve: Islands, Shifting Sands of Time		
	Chapter Thirteen: Wind and Water		
Part Four: Saturation and Loss: Post-1945	Chapter Fourteen: The Growth Coast	16-May	134
	Chapter Fifteen: Florida Worry, Texas Slurry		
	Chapter Sixteen: Rivers of Stuff		
	Chapter Seventeen: Runoff, and Runaway		
	Chapter Eighteen: Sand in the Hourglass		
	Chapter Nineteen: Losing the Edge		
	Epilogue: A Success Story Amid So Much Else		

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Chapter Five: Manifest Destiny

1. What were some of the reasons that Jefferson had for purchasing New Orleans from Napoleon?
2. What was meant by the thought "...nature was the kindling that allowed manifest destiny to burn as an idea—that very American idea that the nation was ordained to take dominion over the continent."?
3. How did the author compare the settling of the Gulf to the settling of the West?

Chapter Six: A Fishy Sea

1. Bernard Romans had encouraged the British to seize the land and the Gulf's potential for commercial fishing. The British, Spanish, and French never took advantage of what the sea had to offer. What were some of the reasons?
2. Are you a fan of oysters? Cooked, raw, or not at all? Oyster harvesting and eventually canning were big businesses in Louisiana. Oysters need lime in their diet, what mistake did oyster processors make?
3. How did innovations change commercial fishing and shrimping in the Gulf?

Chapter Seven: The Wild Fish That Tamed the Coast

1. What are some of the reasons that tarpon is such a draw to anglers? Where were they caught and why was this a draw? How did the growing sport fishing for tarpon impact transportation, advertising, lodging in the area?
2. Compare and contrast sport fishing and hunting between the landed gentry of Great Britain and Americans as explained by Walton. Was saltwater fishing included? Why or Why not?
3. How did Randy Wayne White spread the allure of the tarpon? Were you surprised at the famous people that White quoted or included essays from in his book [Randy Wayne White's Ultimate Tarpon Book](#)?
4. What happened to the frenzy of tarpon fishing from Florida to Texas?

Chapter Eight: Birds of a Feather, Shot Together

1. Share your thoughts on why modern science cracked the code for nuclear fission before it accepted the validity of trans-Gulf avian execution.
2. What did you learn about the trans-Gulf migration that was new to you?
3. What almost caused the extinction of many gulf-wading birds? What role did Alfred Lechevelier (Old Frenchman) play in this?
4. Ned McIlhenny was an avid adventurer and hunter. On page 199, when the book says "It turns out there were some birds McIlhenny wanted to shoot and some he wanted to save" what did the author mean? What did Ned McIlhenny do in the early 1920's that shocked everyone and caused a massive controversy (page 218).
5. Discuss the [Audubon Society](#) creation, the roles women played, and how important it was in the passing of the [Model Law](#), and [Lacey Act](#).