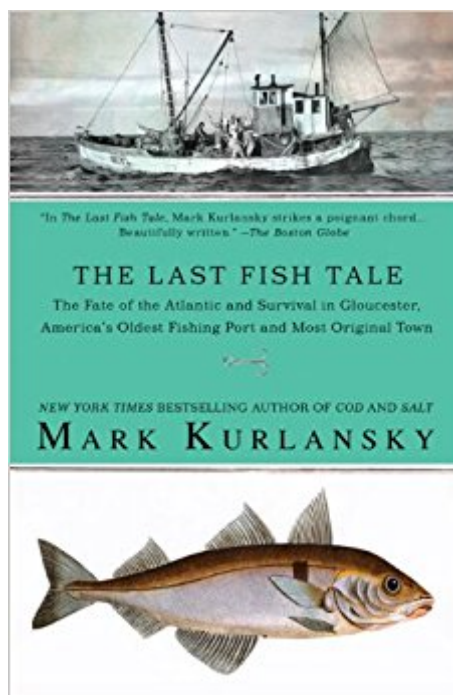




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The Last Fish Tale: The Fate Of The Atlantic And Survival In Gloucester, America's Oldest Fishing Port And Most Original Town



Synopsis

"A marvelous, compelling tale"(Rocky Mountain News) from the New York Times bestselling author of Salt and Cod. Gloucester, Massachusetts, America's oldest fishing port, is defined by the culture of commercial fishing. But the threat of over-fishing, combined with climate change and pollution, is endangering a way of life, not only in Gloucester but in coastal cities all over the world. And yet, according to Kurlansky, it doesn't have to be this way. Engagingly written and filled with rich history, delicious anecdotes, colorful characters, and local recipes, The Last Fish Tale is Kurlansky's most urgent story, "an engrossing multi-layered portrait of a fishing community that can be read for pure pleasure as well as being a campaigning plea for the environment" (Financial Times).

Book Information

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Ecology > Ecosystems

Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Bestselling author Kurlansky (Cod; The Big Oyster) provides a delightful, intimate history and contemporary portrait of the quintessential northeastern coastal fishing town: Gloucester, Mass., on Cape Anne. Illustrated with his own beautifully executed drawings, Kurlansky's book vividly depicts the contemporary tension between the traditional fishing trade and modern commerce, which in Gloucester means beach-going tourists. One year ago, a beach preservation group enraged fishermen by seeking to harvest 105 acres of prime fishing ground for sand to deposit on the shoreline. Wealthy yacht owners compete with fishermen for prime dockage, driving up prices. Fishermen also contend with federal limits on their catches in an effort to maintain sustainable fisheries. But while cod are protected from extinction, the fishermen are not. Some

boats must go 100 or more miles out to seaâ€”a danger for small boats with few crew members. Tragedies abound, while one, that of the swordfish boat Andrea Gail, documented by Sebastian Junger in *A Perfect Storm*, brought even more tourists to Gloucester. (June 3) Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A heartfelt tribute...as beautifully-written as the fondest and best-crafted eulogy." -Boston Globe "A colorful history of Gloucester...rich, varied, and satisfying, just like a good chowder." -Entertainment Weekly

Mark Kurlansky has made quite a name for himself writing popular histories centered around a commonplace theme; the importance of cod, of salt, of oysters. In *The Last Fish Tale*, he applies his viewpoint to the fabled city of Gloucester, the oldest fishing port in the United States. While the book is well written, I personally, as the descendant of Nova Scotia fishermen, would have preferred a bit more focus on the fishing industry in Gloucester and the artists who immortalized it and less on the "summer people" who, while part of the story, are not as central as the painters and especially the fishermen who "went down to the sea in ships" and truly made Gloucester what it was, is, and may be again.

I've been hooked on Mark Kurlansky's storytelling style since I picked up *"The Big Oyster."* *"The Last Fish Tale,"* like all his others, are not academic in technical research--but he gives a good seasoning of characters, history, facts, recipes, and when his subject "flows" (rather than fragmented), you really get a good story with fun facts about the history of a food through a town's growth. This was better than *"Cod,"* which was great but I felt was too fragmented and tried to cram too many milestones without a cohesive flow. I hope Kurlansky considers writing more! He has that distinct magic storytelling pen. His creative style is unique and is a treat--especially when one's daytime work is comprised of a lot of serious and technical writing (armed violence, conflict, cluster munitions, etc.). Kurlansky's writing is a treat. I'd read his books even if he were to write a 5,000 page on the history of lobster, pasta, rice, beef, chicken, beer, fish, the pomegranate, etc.

As a young boy growing up in Honolulu, I was fascinated at the hustle and bustle at what we called "Fisherman's Wharf" where Star Kist and Del Monte, cooked and canned tuna. The smell of cooking fish was enjoyed by the local folk but hated by the tourist. In the early 70's I moved to Southern

California and worked in Long Beach Harbor for over 20 years. The canneries in San Pedro had tuna, herring and anchovies to process. In both instances, tourists now dominate the harbors and fancy condo's and apartments proliferate. Gloucester should have been a warning to fishermen everywhere about what could happen to their harbors. Mark Kurlansky paints a great picture of what happened on the East Coast of America. As an ardent fan of his, I could not put the book down. Well done!

wonderfully told story of the history and current state of Gloucester, with special emphasis on its fishing industry and the influx of Irish, Portuguese, Swedish, and especially Sicilian immigrants. Yet better than the story of the Cod.

Perhaps the most accurate presentation of the past and future of Gloucester, MA - America's oldest fishing port. It is hard to read this work and not come away convinced that something should be done to preserve this culture. For the folks still living and working here, the culture remains firmly present in the DNA of their day-to-day living. But for the rest of the world - and most importantly, the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, only the environment and significant economic interests have a voice. As Kurlansky points out, there is no commitment anywhere to preserve the centuries-old fishing culture; and unlike Native American interests, the fishermen have no right to preservation. One would hope that persons with the power to make a difference read this book and consider Gloucester as an opportunity to demonstrate that government policy can actually deal positively with unique opportunities to enhance our cultural environment.

I live in Gloucester, the oldest American seaport, now nearing 400 years. But as expected, the socialist administration aided by the nefarious NOAA is making sure it doesn't reach that anniversary. As always the government's models are based on junk science. I loved the history but being knowledgeable about the current plight of the fishing industry, and who isn't in Gloucester, I skipped that section. I got a chuckle on the well known artist's, Hopper, reason for leaving Gloucester, having the oldest continuous art colony in America, he was beat up by a drunk. His Gloucester history is shown on one of the harbor side walk's granite posts. But there's no mention of why he left Gloucester. But, I mention it:-)

INFORMATIVE well researched Sad and concerning that we have ruined a great resource through greed and technology! Recommend HIGHLY that this book be on your READ list.

Don't stop reading Mark Kurlansky. Ever. This is a crisis and a reality - we are out fishing the oceans. In his usual manner Mark Kurlansky does such excellent research into the history of a human phenomenon based around one activity; fishing. I would highly recommend The Big Oyster after this book.

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