

## The Ocean's Whistleblower: The Remarkable Life and Work of Daniel Pauly

**David Grémillet**

**Georgia Froman, Translator**

Greystone Books (Sep 21, 2021)

Hardcover \$29.95 (408pp)

978-1-77164-754-0

Daniel Pauly may be the most prominent ocean advocate you've never heard of. His unusual life and impressive achievements regarding planetary-scale marine topics are recounted by his colleague David Grémillet in *The Ocean's Whistleblower*, an exhaustive biography that includes scores of globetrotting interviews.

Life didn't start easily for the future "colossus of marine ecology." Pauly's French mother had a brief postwar relationship with his Black father, an American soldier; Pauly's childhood was spent with a dodgy, abusive Swiss family who took him in as a toddler for a respite that turned permanent. Bright, but a troublemaker at school, he slogged through a series of jobs, later juggling work and night lessons to earn his baccalaureate. His oceanography degrees from frosty Germany, where he dismayed professors with his Marxist activism, led to only one job offer—and Pauly wanted to be in the tropics.

In 1970s and 1980s Manila, at a marine resource organization, Pauly amassed and analyzed huge amounts of data to create databases and ecosystem modeling tools. These transformed popular understandings of marine life populations, placing Pauly at the fore in sounding the alarm about overfishing and the endemic degradation of the oceans. But as Pauly traveled and published at a constant rate, his workaholic regimen took its toll on his personal life and health. He moved to Vancouver, Canada, in the 1990s and became a professor. Tenure and strategic research grants gave him the freedom to critique the subsidy and unsustainability of industrialized fisheries, and he worked with environmental groups to call for local, sustainable fishing models and ecosystem restoration.

*The Ocean's Whistleblower* introduces a visionary scientist to a wider audience, showing that science-based decision making must lead action on climate change, environmental health, and food security.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (September / October 2021)

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