



# The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing

By Peter Westwick, Peter Neushul

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**The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing** By Peter Westwick, Peter Neushul

**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 industry**

Despite its rebellious, outlaw reputation, or perhaps because of it, surfing occupies a central place in the American – and global – 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. 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.

Drawing on Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul'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. In an engaging and provocative narrative history – 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 – the authors draw an indelible portrait of surfing and surfers as actors on the global stage.

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## **Editorial Review**

Review

***Los Angeles Times* Bestseller**

"The authors promise an intelligent guide to surfing. And they have delivered one... 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."- ***Los Angeles Times***

"The authors are studious, meticulous and logical...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-shirt corporations, placing the pastime in larger historical context." -***Wall Street Journal***

"Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul trace surfing from its ancient Polynesian roots to its current incarnation as a 'global commercial and cultural phenomenon.' 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 — even Islamic fundamentalism...The result is provocative and highly entertaining [and] the authors skillfully debunk some of the myths that have grown up around the sport." -***Washington Post***

"The great thing about Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul's new book, *The World in the Curl*, is that they explore all the ways surfing has been influenced by—and has influenced—colonialism, war, capitalist industry, and other outside historical forces." - ***Daily Beast***

"Surfers will be stoked to read *The World in the Curl*...Ambitious and compelling."-***Boom: A Journal of California***

"A lively coverage recommended for sports and sociology collections alike, which delves into topics most surfing histories don't begin to probe."-***Midwest Book Review***

"A well-rounded look at surf culture... the authors certainly did their research."-***Surfermag.com***

"Westwick and Neushul's focus on the cultural and socio-economic illuminates hidden forces that are rarely discussed by even the most knowledgeable surfers...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." -***Publishers Weekly***

"An encyclopedic history of riding the waves.... The authors leave no aspect of surfing unexplored—as rewarding for those addicted to pursuing the 'stoke' as for others merely smitten by surfing's idyllic island allure." -***Kirkus Reviews***

"*The World in the Curl* is the most scholarly and comprehensive history of the sport born on the waves of Hawaii." - **Fred Hemmings, Hawaii's 1968 world champion surfer and a founding father of pro surfing**

"*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." —**Susan Casey, author of *The Wave***

"Surf'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 kind—and a book—that only California can produce." —**Kevin Starr, University of Southern California**

"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." —**Daniel Duane, author of *Caught Inside***

"Although not often recognized as such, the ocean is by far the planet's largest wilderness. Surfing takes place at a frontier of civilization. Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul make their book come alive because they have walked (and swum!) the talk. It's an inside, honest, sometimes painful, story. Surfing provides the matrix, but there is broader and deeper dimension to this book. It's a cultural, environmental, and sociological history of the interface between our species and the edge of the continents." — **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. Surfing'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 surfing's rise has surprising depths, as it became the world'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 'surfing's constant struggle to save its soul.'" — **Wade Graham, author of *American Eden***

"Surfing rides the wave of history in Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul's *The World in the Curl*. 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. This book is as epic, in its way, as a big day at Mavericks. Read it for its context, dig it for its stoke." —**David Helvarg, author of *The Golden Shore***

"An excellent read, a scholarly look beneath the surface which results in a greater appreciation of the texture of an alluring sport and lifestyle." —**Shaun Tomson, world champion surfer and author of *Surfer's Code***

"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 – it's about how the modern world looks from inside the curl." — **Matthew Stewart, author of *The Courtier and the Heretic***

"Surfers, sprung from the natural sea to a Beach Boys soundtrack – who knew their origins span colonial confrontation to aerospace innovation? *The World in the Curl* is a brilliant history of sport, culture, technology and crashing political waves, a perfect ride for anyone who delights in understanding the complex crosscurrents that have shaped our social history." –**David Beers, author of *Blue Sky Dream***

#### About the Author

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. He has written extensively on defense industries, history of oceanography, and on environmental history.

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The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing can be one of your basic books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this e-book has good vocabulary which could increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort to put every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing nevertheless doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource information that maybe you can be considered one of it. This great information may drawn you into brand new stage of crucial pondering.

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