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The Northwest Salmon Crisis: A Documentary History - Book Review

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The Northwest Salmon Crisis: A Documentary History by Joseph Cone; Sandy Ridlington
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author's conclusions, due to the impossibility of documenting the many complex personal relationships. Some will find the frequent use of words such as "seems to," "must have," and "I believe" troubling, despite the author's extensive use of documents.

Specialists in Mexican-United States relations and of the initial years of the Mexican Revolution will find that this work follows well-established themes of earlier studies, adding valuable new documentation that further illuminates a complex and controversial era in the history of both nations.

University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh

KENNETH J. GRIEB

The Northwest Salmon Crisis: A Documentary History. Edited by Joseph Cone and Sandy Ridlington. (Corvallis, Oregon State University Press, 1996. v + 374 pp. \$29.95)

"When the fate of the salmon entered the world of science," pens historian William Lang, "it also entered the world of politics" (p. 359). Lang could not be closer to the mark, for from the earliest nineteenth-century "industrial" harvests of salmon on the West Coast to the present, salmon, science, and politics have been inexorably intertwined. The many "players," ranging from fisheries experts, fishers and cannery hands, canners, and Native Americans to regional planning boards and state governments, have only complicated the issue. In this work, editors Joseph Cone and Sandy Ridlington have brought together an impressive set of documents dating from the mid-1850s treaties with Native Americans to the present. The authors divide the volume into four sections that cover the ideologies and parties involved in the debates over the place and role of salmon fisheries. The first three sections cover the "historical" period: hatcheries and gear regulation; dams, timber, and regional planning; and the "Indian Experience." The final section engages current science, policy, and politics. The organization is strong, despite some redundancy, and the selection of documents is superb because no longer can anyone claim that questions of salmon survival are driven by recent "political" or "environmental" correctness. All must recognize that this has been a lively topic for consistent debate since the mid-nineteenth century. While the focus of the materials is on the Columbia River, brief treatments of coastal streams, British Columbia, and Alaska greatly strengthen the volume.

Cone and Ridlington also recruited a strong cadre of historians, anthropologists, lawyers, and biologists to provide commen-

tary on the various sections. Readers will especially want to study the introduction by William G. Robbins and the conclusion by William L. Lang, for they nicely support the documents set between them. Each document carries a concise explanatory paragraph and a brief biographical note that is quite helpful. Nowhere else does such an extensive, well-designed, and well-supported collection exist.

In spite of its strengths, scope, and size, this work is not without its holes. The editors have given little space to competing visions, such as the "fair-" or "wise-use" camp, leaving the volume politically lopsided. More glaringly, the community impacts of declining salmon fisheries are scarcely examined outside of those for Native Americans. The volume contains no entries regarding the tens of thousands of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos who depended upon salmon fisheries for their livelihoods from the 1870s to the 1980s. Moreover, the work provides no discussion on European American or Native American women whose lives were impacted by the many fish-processing plants. The demise of these livelihoods, first in the canneries and then in the preparation of frozen and fresh fish, is part and parcel of larger shifts in the Northwest economy and environment that have generated their own important consequences. Even a passing treatment of these issues would have made this excellent volume even stronger. Those qualifications notwithstanding, *Northwest Salmon Crisis* should grace the shelves of anyone engaged in the history and politics of the region and the environment.

Western Washington University

CHRIS FRIDAY

Environmentalism and Economic Justice: Two Chicano Struggles in the Southwest. By Laura Pulido. (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1996. xxiii + 282 pp. \$45 cloth, \$17.95 paper)

This book makes a valuable contribution to environmental studies, Chicano Studies, and the social sciences generally. It is an excellent geohistorical account that broadens our understanding by showing how "sheer survival" characterized the environmental concerns of ethnic minority populations (p. 6). Currently, the most commonly publicized slogan among environmentalist groups is "quality of life." Taking an approach that provides rich descriptive and in-depth insights, the author, Laura Pulido, emphasizes "listening to what people said, observing their actions, and placing them within the larger historical and geographical