

There are a number of minor errors and quibbles with the book. The Pacific Area Travel Association is called the Pacific Air Travel Association on one occasion. Whalewatch Kaikoura is referred to as an ecotourism product which is not a claim that Whalewatch themselves make. In fact any form of nature tourism from the 1980s onwards is called ecotourism. Some terminology, such as SARS, is not explained. While this may be acceptable now, it may not be the case in the future. Similarly aspects of New Zealand culture for which implicit knowledge is required may not be understandable to a non-New Zealand audience.

Nevertheless, McClure provides an excellent starting point for the history of New Zealand tourism. The narrative is lively and provides plenty of incentive for further study. This, hopefully, will include more work on domestic tourism.

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Our Islands, Our Selves: A History of Conservation in New Zealand. By David Young. University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 2004. 298 pp. NZ price: \$59.95 ISBN 1-877276-94-4.

THIS HANDSOMELY PRODUCED BOOK provides a scholarly and comprehensive synthesis of the history of conservation in these remote isles. As such it represents a very real contribution to the newly emerging field of environmental history in particular, while also constituting a significant addition to New Zealand historiography in general. It is certain to serve as an indispensable reference work for many years to come.

There is little that is new in *Our Islands, Our Selves*, but Young has synthesized the work of Ross Galbreath, Michael Roche, Geoff Park, Paul Star, Lynn Lochhead, Robin Hodge, Les Molloy, Neville Peat and many others in expert fashion. The book is particularly strong on context. Each part of the finely crafted narrative is explained in satisfying depth. Young is a good and sometimes clever writer ('Romanticism, child of the enlightenment and protégé of nineteenth-century intellectual life, was a strange foundling in the challenging landscape of Victorian New Zealand') apart from the odd occasion when he tries a little too hard to massage the complexities of the past ('Marsh, often referred to as a "dessionationist", argued that indiscriminate forest clearing meant degradation of landscape and civilisation — old and new . . . His was a kind of "Rome wasn't silted in a day" approach'). Well-chosen illustrations amplify the text and small box inserts add details on key people and events (even if I find that these additions tend to distract the reader's attention from the main text). The balance of coverage is sensible and appropriate (patterns of antiquity; Maori; transforming landscape and identity, 1790–1870; dawning awareness, 1870–1905; reserving remnants, 1905–1945; sleepers awake, 1945–1965; the price of progress, 1965–1985; citizens of a living landscape, 1985–2003) apart from spending more time than is necessary on pre-human history given that there are many excellent books on this subject. Equally important, Young's primary concern is with environmental rather than ecological history, a distinction that he needed to discuss a little more fully. Despite this quibble Young's energy and powers of organization have opened up many new areas for postgraduate inquiry (examining the relationship between first-wave feminism and concern with conservation comes immediately to mind) and no one need ever again believe that conservation started in the 1960s.

The few responses which follow reflect Young's success in meeting his target audience and result from his ability to write so well to task. Indeed it would be very useful if he replied in essay or article form where he is less concerned with maintaining a powerful

narrative and tidy organizational shape. Somewhere he now needs to contemplate more fully the difference between conservation and preservation. Furthermore, he is now better positioned than anyone else to answer the interesting question as to why the wilderness ideal, which caught on so early in the USA, took so long to gain currency in New Zealand. Probably his account is also a touch too whiggish in that it suggests things have improved because of human endeavour whereas any advance might have more to do with necessity than idealism. One is certainly left wondering if the petro-chemical pollution, depleted fish stocks and lakes poisoned by fertiliser runoff of the early twenty-first century represent much tangible improvement over the wanton destruction of forest a hundred years earlier. Certainly, Young has succeeded in avoiding the doom laden apocalyptic or declensionist tone which mars so much environmental history, but his account is probably a little too positive and comforting. A revised or second edition would benefit by moving away from the state and its records to concentrate on more peripheral organizations and less well-known individuals. The organic alternative in farming goes back further than the 1980s, for example. Future studies also need to examine Maori beliefs and actions rather more systematically. These are difficult matters but they are by no means impossible with Treaty claims, for example, providing much information on the Maori experience of environmental degradation and rescue. Like an earlier project in which I have been involved, more attention needs to be focused on sea, coast and waterways. Then there is the matter of overseas comparisons. How has the conservationist trajectory differed from that of similar societies such as Australia and Canada? The rich literatures on Britain and the USA also hold out some exciting comparative possibilities. The emergence of conservation as a popular cause needs to be related to wider sociological and cultural developments in a much more exhaustive manner.

Obviously, a single author working to tight deadlines could not have achieved all these tasks. Many of my reactions also relate to matters of tone and emphasis. My major criticism of this generally excellent start to understanding the history of conservation in the environmental and social laboratory of New Zealand is rather that the book could have been a little more analytical. Perhaps this expectation is unrealistic given that this is primarily a popular account, but there is no harm in encouraging authors to take a little time out from the busy whirl of researching and drafting to write a contemplative piece on some of the issues which emerge from writing commissioned history. True, professional historians have to move on to new projects to earn a living, but it would be good if they could prompt academic historians and postgraduates to push projects deeper and wider in this manner. Academic toilers in the archive and field also must attempt to relate the New Zealand story to the rapidly expanding international literature on environmental history.

With this caveat in mind Young still deserves considerable praise. Young has succeeded in doing this by revealing so much about what has been achieved as well as making clearer some of the large gaps that still exist in terms of what has yet be done. For this reason alone his excellent book represents a very important contribution to the future as well as the past of Gondwana/Aotearoa/New Zealand.

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Remembering: Writing Oral History. Edited by Anna Green and Megan Hutching. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2004. 182 pp. NZ price: \$44.99. ISBN 1-86940-317-7.

IN *REMEMBERING: WRITING ORAL HISTORY*, Anna Green and Megan Hutching have collated a range of essays as an 'introduction to the field of oral history that will also