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Carl N. McDaniel

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Carl N. McDaniel : At the Mercy of Nature: Shackleton's Survival Saga Gives Promise for Our Future before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised At the Mercy of Nature: Shackleton's Survival Saga Gives Promise for Our Future:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. At the Mercy of Nature, just as we are.By R. MorrisonHere is a tale of hardship, heroism and superb leadership; a tale that will warm the weariest of hearts and inspire the bleakest of minds. It tells of ordinary men who, thanks to Shackleton, found inside themselves the reserves of courage and

resilience that we commonly attribute to the legendary heroes of ancient Greece. Here is a small, isolated group of men fighting for survival against seemingly impossible odds, and winning, thanks to the same kind of teamwork, tenacity, courage and resilience that carried our tribal ancestors through a million ice-age years on the hazardous plains of East Africa. This is a riveting account of heroic endeavour, told by a fine writer with a biologist's iron grip on the realities of the natural world, a writer who also delineates with equal dexterity the mental dilemmas that Shackleton and his 27 crewmen faced every day of their long and arduous journey 'home'. It is tightly written, well-researched, and entirely unencumbered by 'decorative' literary flourishes. As a result of this Spartan approach, the inherent drama unfolds with an icy relentlessness that keeps you on the edge of your seat and in awe of the physical and emotional difficulties that Shackleton and his men endured on a daily basis. "The Endurance party survived because of cooperation, discipline, luck, superb leadership, and an unflinching belief in verifiable, evidence-based reality." Author Carl McDaniel concludes by summarising the ultimate value of the Shackleton story as a parable for our times. "Survival for the Weddell Sea Party 100 years ago was as challenging then as the continuance of modern civilisation is now." He suggests that modern culture has locked us into the habit of making short-term economic decisions that blind us to the evolutionary train wreck that lies ahead if we fail to change course. Our only chance of survival now lies in making long-term decisions founded on well-tested science and empirical data from the natural world. Handicapped as we are by our ancient habit of using mystical explanations to account for natural phenomena, that vital switch to science will not be easy for us, and McDaniel outlines some of humanity's difficulties in shedding our tribal beliefs and accepting unpalatable evidence from the real world. The overwhelming evidence of anthropogenic global warming is a prime example; as is the evidence that we have launched a mass extinction of other species (the sixth mass-extinction in a billion years). And he dissects with forensic precision our mystical devotion to the fairytale of sustainable growth in trade and consumption on a planet that stubbornly refuses to grow in unison with its human population. As McDaniel warns, if we fail to find national leaders of Shackleton's calibre we shall not survive much longer on this overloaded planet. But so long as multinational corporations continue to increase their commercial and legal grip on the global economy, the chance for finding new Shackletons who can cut through the mystical pack-ice of economics becomes vanishingly small.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. McDaniel's book is an important read for our time. By Presto Photo Carl McDaniel's highly readable (and relatively brief, 150 page-long) book poses what may be the most important questions of our time: are we awake and alert to what is happening all around us as the natural world changes in profound ways -- largely due to the impact of the human population -- and what sort of leadership qualities will it take to lead the way forward? The story of Shackleton's expedition is richly told and provides a perfect allegory for the issues -- and choices -- facing our generation and the world we will leave to our heirs and theirs. McDaniel asks, "Why did the Endurance party survive, and what lessons can we learn from them?" In straight-forward language and science, he shines light on just this and shows us that the seemingly monumental tasks before us can indeed be tackled with hope. This book should be widely read by citizens everywhere -- by students, parents, teachers, policy-makers and home-makers -- for it is ultimately about the home we are making for human kind.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. You need to read this book. By Nutmeg I'm asked constantly; "What can I do, personally; to survive climate change?" Up until now, my only good answer has been "Study the Transition Movement, and join it." Now I have another: "Read *At The Mercy of Nature*. 4 times." Carl McDaniel is an unusually broadly skilled ecologist, and a co-founder of "ecological economics". He understands our situation on the planet; far better than most. And he explains much of it- with unusual clarity, in this book. He IS a professor; so you may have to read that sentence 3 times; you can get it. And the Shackleton story is absolutely stunning - those guys should have been 100% dead; twice a week at least, for 2 years. But they all survived. McDaniel analyses in detail how and why they did not wind up dead- and it's all relevant to our immediate future. Read it now. Give to everyone you know. It may save all your lives.

At the Mercy of Nature by Carl N. McDaniel. The year 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of Sir Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. On December 5, 1914, Sir Ernest Shackleton, along with 27 men aboard the ship *Endurance*, departed South Georgia Island in the southern Atlantic Ocean for Vahsel Bay on the northeast coast of Antarctica with the intent of trekking across the continent. Biologist Carl N. McDaniel retells the story of the Endurance Party in detail to provide the reader with an appreciation of what an extraordinary accomplishment Shackleton and his men achieved.