



Thursday, November 25



THE CANADIAN

Fastest News Reporter In Canada, North America and Europe

CONTACT US HOME

Fisheries scientist Daniel Pauly's life is one for the books

October 26, 2021

Breadcrumb Trail Links

- 1. Local arts
- 2. Books

The biography delves into the story of the internationally renowned UBC marine biologist.

Author of the article:

Dana Gee

Dr. Daniel Pauly, marine biologist and Sea Around Us project leader at the UBC Institute for Oceans and Fisheries at UBC, is the subject of a new biography of David Grémillet. Photo by Mike Bell /PNG

Article content

UBC teacher [Daniel Pauly](#) he has spent his entire life traveling the world studying fish stocks and conducting groundbreaking research on overfishing.

Commercial

This ad has not been uploaded yet, but your article continues below.

Article content

The 75-year-old principal investigator of the [Sea Around Us Project](#) at the UBC Institute of Oceans

RECENT POSTS

Querétaro seeks to digitize procedure through regulatory reform

The new face and the new pace of transport passengers climb aboard | Watch new videos online

Vancouver Mayor Proposes Climate The Canadian News

My commitment is the fight against inflation, not touching reserves and fulfilling the autonomy of Banxico: Rodríguez Ceja

Christmas in Canada – How is Christmas Celebrated in Canada

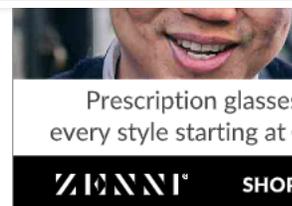
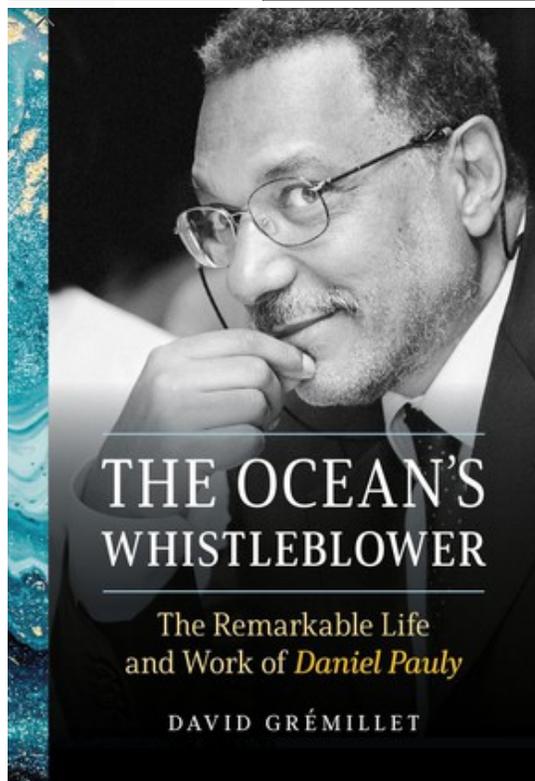
Champions: Real Madrid seals the p Manchester City steals the lead

Canada is starting vaccinations for children five and older

Roller Coaster Week for Canadians | show

We use cookies on our website to give you the most relevant experience by remembering your preferences and repeat visits. By clicking "Accept All", you consent to the use of ALL the cookies. However, you may visit "Cookie Settings" to provide a controlled consent.

Cookie Settings Accept All



As you read the book, it becomes clear that the title is far from hyperbole.

We met Pauly when he was a child in Paris. It is the product of a brief romance between his French mother and an African American aviator at the end of World War II.

Commercial

This ad has not been uploaded yet, but your article continues below.

Article content

Pauly was a sickly baby with an exhausted mother who fell prey to what appeared to be a pair of Swiss con men he met one day on the edge of the Seine. The couple's wife convinced Pauly's mother to give the couple their two-year-old son to take care of for three months while she rested and recovered.

His mother tried to get him back, but eventually gave up and Pauly stayed to grow up in Switzerland.

His mother married and had seven other children in France.

In Switzerland, Pauly's childhood was Dickensian. She missed school a lot to work collecting recyclables and cleaning the apartments of people who had died alone.

We use cookies on our website to give you the most relevant experience by remembering your preferences and repeat visits. By clicking "Accept All", you consent to the use of ALL the cookies. However, you may visit "Cookie Settings" to provide a controlled consent.

[Cookie Settings](#) [Accept All](#)



His youth in Switzerland was tough. However, he managed to find his way to higher education in Germany and never looked back. The book takes the reader through the academic career of Pauly, who first leaned towards agronomy, but changed when he encountered old Nazis working in the faculty of agronomy at the University of Kiel. It was around this time that Pauly discovered politics and began his journey to become the self-described southpaw troublemaker who, according to him, continues to this day.

“I don’t think much about my youth,” Pauly said.

Luckily for the reader Grémillet has. An oceanographer and research director at the French National Center for Scientific Research Grémillet has known Pauly for years and has always been intrigued by the story of his old friend.

Commercial

This ad has not been uploaded yet, but your article continues below.

Article content

“I wrote this book because it’s a good story, because everything made sense with this project: the person, the science, the environmental context, the fact that Daniel’s story takes us through essential parts of modern history, from the civil rights movement to current geopolitics,” Grémillet said via email from France. “I felt that this book project was an environmental thriller about a surviving child who changed the world by the sheer power of his intellect, of his words.”

We use cookies on our website to give you the most relevant experience by remembering your preferences and repeat visits. By clicking “Accept All”, you consent to the use of ALL the cookies. However, you may visit “Cookie Settings” to provide a controlled consent.

[Cookie Settings](#) [Accept All](#)

Bitdefender
BLACK FRIDAY**-61%**Get Bitdefender at
special discount!

After years of meeting world-renowned marine scientist Daniel Pauly, writer David Grémillet has presented the biography *The Ocean's Whistleblower: The Remarkable Life of Daniel Pauly*. Photo by Bénédicte Martin /PNG

At first Pauly, who speaks French, German, English and Spanish, was reluctant about the biography project, but then he began to see it as another platform in the fight to protect our oceans.

“It was intriguing to have a biography where you don’t have to die first,” said Pauly, who has two children and a grandson. “It is not just my story. It’s a story about a generation, a cohort of people who were concerned about the world around them. “

We use cookies on our website to give you the most relevant experience by remembering your preferences and repeat visits. By clicking “Accept All”, you consent to the use of ALL the cookies. However, you may visit “Cookie Settings” to provide a controlled consent.

[Cookie Settings](#) [Accept All](#)



like the establishment of the changing baseline syndrome, the theory and understanding of oxygen and fish growth. A 1998 article in Science magazine titled Fishing Down the Marine Food Web was literally a game changer. He summarized how overfishing of large predatory fish forced fisheries to rely on small fish until their population was also eliminated. That would leave humans dining on invertebrates or, as Pauly puts it, “jellyfish soup.”

“I hope (readers) enjoy reading about this adventurous life around the world and ocean science! Beyond an incredible personal story, this book shows how science is done, how Pauly and a few others managed to mark overfishing and provide tools to heal the oceans,” said Grémillet.

Commercial

This ad has not been uploaded yet, but your article continues below.

Article content



Dr. Daniel Pauly is a marine biologist and principal investigator for the Sea Around Us Project at the UBC Institute of Oceans and Fisheries. Photo by Mike Bell /PNG

A current running through Pauly’s story is the constant fight against corrupt corporate fishing practices.

One notable story in the book has whaling nations, seeking support, paying government officials to pass on a lie.

We use cookies on our website to give you the most relevant experience by remembering your preferences and repeat visits. By clicking “Accept All”, you consent to the use of ALL the cookies. However, you may visit “Cookie Settings” to provide a controlled consent.

[Cookie Settings](#) [Accept All](#)



along with many other people, have worked a lot in west Africa. It's well established that overfishing by the foreign fleet is ruining the place," Pauly said. "Seeing the politicians pretend that it was the whales that were eating the fish, when they lie like that they know that I know they are lying. It was very disappointing."

Commercial

This ad has not been uploaded yet, but your article continues below.

Article content

Despite solid science on overfishing, fish farms and warming waters, Pauly says finances often beat fins.

"There is a simple answer," Pauly said when asked why these worst practices still continue. "If this were astronomy and we were discussing the distance of a certain star, they would argue only on a scientific basis because there is no commercial interest behind it, but the moment you have a commercial interest, people would lie under their breath."

Today Pauly continues to teach, lecture, and write. He says he has no plans to retire.

"I stop all the time, I am 75 years old and I cannot retire. This is the only scar I can identify," said Pauly, who first came to UBC in 1994. "I get anxious when I don't do things."

Forced to reflect on his legacy, Pauly explains that his skill in science is not delving into a topic, but the ability to combine things to get a bigger result.

Are you proud of your life, of your work?

"That's a dangerous thing," Pauly said.

dgee@postmedia.com

twitter.com/dana_gee

Share this article in your social network

Commercial

This ad has not been uploaded yet, but your article continues below.

 Vancouver Sun Headline News Logo

Sign up for daily headlines from the Vancouver Sun, a division of Postmedia Network Inc.

By clicking the sign up button you agree to receive the above newsletter from Postmedia Network Inc. You can unsubscribe

We use cookies on our website to give you the most relevant experience by remembering your preferences and repeat visits. By clicking "Accept All", you consent to the use of ALL the cookies. However, you may visit "Cookie Settings" to provide a controlled consent.

[Cookie Settings](#) [Accept All](#)