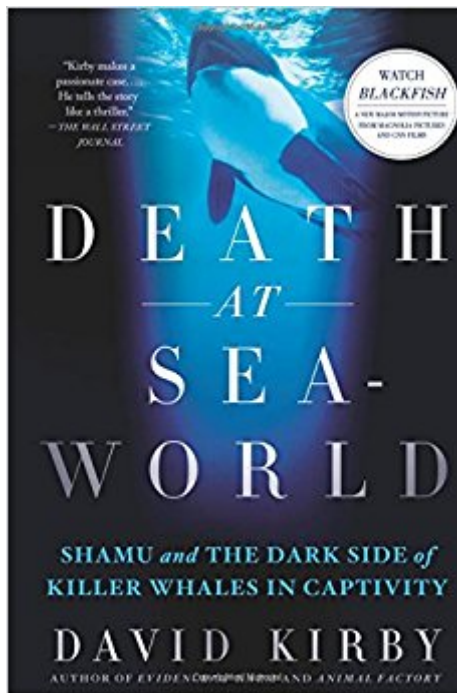




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# Death At SeaWorld: Shamu And The Dark Side Of Killer Whales In Captivity



## Synopsis

From the New York Times bestselling author of *Evidence of Harm* and *Animal Factory* – a groundbreaking scientific thriller that exposes the dark side of SeaWorld, America's most beloved marine mammal park. *Death at SeaWorld* centers on the battle with the multimillion-dollar marine park industry over the controversial and even lethal ramifications of keeping killer whales in captivity. Following the story of marine biologist and animal advocate at the Humane Society of the US, Naomi Rose, Kirby tells the gripping story of the two-decade fight against PR-savvy SeaWorld, which came to a head with the tragic death of trainer Dawn Brancheau in 2010. Kirby puts that horrific animal-on-human attack in context. Brancheau's death was the most publicized among several brutal attacks that have occurred at Sea World and other marine mammal theme parks. *Death at SeaWorld* introduces real people taking part in this debate, from former trainers turned animal rights activists to the men and women that champion SeaWorld and the captivity of whales. In section two the orcas act out. And as the story progresses and orca attacks on trainers become increasingly violent, the warnings of Naomi Rose and other scientists fall on deaf ears, only to be realized with the death of Dawn Brancheau. Finally he covers the media backlash, the eyewitnesses who come forward to challenge SeaWorld's glossy image, and the groundbreaking OSHA case that challenges the very idea of keeping killer whales in captivity and may spell the end of having trainers in the water with the ocean's top predators. For more on the subject, watch *Blackfish*, a major motion picture from Magnolia Pictures and CNN Films.

## Book Information

Paperback: 480 pages

Publisher: St. Martin's Griffin; Reprint edition (July 2, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1250031257

ISBN-13: 978-1250031259

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 1.3 x 234.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 296 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #106,673 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #12 in [Animals & Travel > United States > Florida > Orlando](#) #32 in [Animals & Travel > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Animal Rights](#) #39 in [Animals & Travel > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Marine Life](#)

## Customer Reviews

“Should some of the most social, intelligent and charismatic animals on the planet be kept in captivity by human beings? That is a question asked more frequently than ever by both scientists and animal welfare advocates. Now the issue has been raised with new intensity in *Death at SeaWorld* by David Kirby, just released in paperback. The New York Times “Kirby makes a passionate case for captivity as the reason orcas become killers (and) tells the story like a thriller. His argument is, for the most part, fair and persuasive. We probably can’t free the orcas in captivity today, but we could make the current group of captive killer whales the last. Wall Street Journal “A chilling depiction Kirby lays out a compelling scientific argument against killer whale captivity. New Scientist “A gripping inspection. Hard to put down. Booklist (\*\*Starred Review) “Brilliantly and intensively researched and conveyed with clarity and thoughtfulness, Kirby’s work of high-quality non-fiction busts the whale debate wide open. Reads like a thriller and horrifies like Hannibal Lector. San Francisco Book Review œ FIVE STARS “Kirby says people do not realize that whales often live with the same pod from birth and that when marine parks take them from their pods they are separated from their families. The killer whales then, in some instances, take out those emotions on other whales, which doesn’t happen in the wild as much. CBS This Morning “Thanks to investigative journalist David Kirby, we are now equipped to consider (attacks in captivity) in context. His book is packed with facts about killer whales and the stress caused by keeping them in captivity and asking them to perform for humans. NPR.org “Nature has a way of biting back. The true story told in the 2012 scientific thriller *Death at SeaWorld* exposes the dark side of America’s most beloved marine mammal park. From the tragic death of trainer Dawn Brancheau in 2010 to other less-publicized incidents, the book chronicles the perils of attempting to subdue the species. Al Jazeera “David Kirby, author of ‘Death at SeaWorld: Shamu and the Dark Side of Killer Whales in Captivity,’ has posted a persuasive rebuttal. SeaWorld as much as self-indicts its orca practices as indefensible. Chicago Sun Times “Death at SeaWorld dismantles the carefully crafted industry myth of animals who are content to live in small tanks and perform tricks for spectators. All Animals Magazine “David Kirby, whose recent book ‘Death at SeaWorld’ traces the history of killer whales in captivity, found that Tilikum was captured off Iceland in the early 1980s when just two years old. He was kept in a tiny covered pool for two years before being sold to a marine park in Canada which closed after he drowned a trainer. Kirby says Tilikum is a very disturbed and dangerous animal.

Ã¢â¬âSunday Times (UK)Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âRecent publications like David Kirby's Ã¢â¬âDeath at Sea World' are increasing recognition of the great wrong being done to the mind in the waters by continuing live captures and captive breeding of orcas. Some orcas in captivity do attack and kill or injure their captors. Tilikum, once captive at the former Sealand in Oak Bay, has killed three people.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âVictoria (BC) Times ColonistÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬â'Death at SeaWorld' by David Kirby was just released in paperback. (It) tells a story of intelligent animals that, while often friendly to humans, nevertheless carry with them what some argue is inevitable psychological damage due to captivity.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âNature World NewsÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âDetailed and thoroughÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âKirby writes objectively, and with a clear vision when discussing the history of killer whales in captivity. He also shows how SeaWorld is a microcosm where smiles are required.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âMetro MontrealÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âDeath at SeaWorld, a 2012 exposÃ¢â¬âfÃ¢â¬â by David Kirby, is a comprehensive account starting from when the first orca was captured up until 2012, when OSHA hit SeaWorld with safety violations. It has helped change and educate the public about orcas in captivity.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âThe ManitobanÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âKirby shows that the reality (of orca captivity) is more akin to a circus, in which any benefits are outweighed by the cost to the whale Ã¢â¬â and sometimes to the keepers.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âFinancial TimesÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âThorough and disturbingÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âOne of the great books of the summer.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âColumbus DispatchÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âSeaWorld got a firm slap in the form of journalist David Kirby's fascinating and deeply disturbing book.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âChristian Science MonitorÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âAn outstanding bookÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âvery-well written, extremely well documented, and timely.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âPsychology TodayÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬â#1 Readers Poll Choice for Summer BooksÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âWall Street Journal OnlineÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âAn informed narrative that strongly suggests that despite their name, only when captured do the mammals become dangerous to humans. Free Willy, indeed.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âNew York Daily NewsÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âKirby has done his homework and does an excellent job of educating the public about orcas in the wild, as well as highlighting the dangers inherent in keeping these highly evolved, intelligent animals in captivity.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âExaminer.comÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âA masterful work.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âSeattle Post IntelligencerÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âEye-opening poolside readingÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âDeath isn't supposed to pop up in environments carefully choreographed for family fun.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âSan Francisco Bay GuardianÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âA real-life scientific thriller.Ã¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âBarnes and NobleÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âOne of the summer's most anticipated new releasesÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âApple I-BookstoreÃ¢â¬â Ã¢â¬âWell written, well studied so as not to come across as a misinformed or ill-informed journalism (as if we had any doubt), two sided, and done with a lot of emotion to help draw the reader in as if you were reading a murder mystery. Done like a true novelist... Definitely a

five star review and a two thumbs up. [Artists On Demand](#) “A new book examining the dark side of keeping killer whales in captivity has slammed SeaWorld for its treatment of the enormous beasts and for massive safety failings which still haunt the world famous marine parks. [Daily Mail \(UK\)](#) “Fascinating, shocking, even infuriating, but ultimately rewarding | Discover the majesty of killer whales, the inherent cruelty of their captivity and the passion of those who fight for their freedom. [Shelf Aware, Online Book Reviews](#) “A page-turning book | a disturbing account that will be hard for SeaWorld to transcend | Kirby makes it horrifyingly clear how serious (captivity) can be for human safety and orca well-being. [Wayne’s Blog, Wayne Pacelle, CEO of The Humane Society of the United States](#) “Even if you’re not an animal nut like me, David Kirby’s *Death at Sea World* is a fascinating book. [Sam Simon, Co-Creator of The Simpsons and leading animal-rights activist](#) “An exhilarating journalistic achievement--the reporting is singularly deep and wide, the research enormously meticulous, the storytelling as gripping as in a great novel. [Talking Animals with Duncan Strauss, WMNF-FM, Tampa](#) “I was sent a pre-release copy and can’t put it down | Get a copy of this book. It’s about time it was written. [Fayetteville Observer](#) “Kirby’s knockout format is articulate and mind-blowing. This riveting read is not one that will easily be dismissed. [Digital Journal](#) “Lives are at stake here, and Kirby can be trusted to tell the story, having won a passel of awards for his investigative work. [Library Journal](#) “ Journalist Kirby offers another passionate industry exposé ... the narrative goes into high gear with its concluding confrontation. [Publishers Weekly](#) “Simply superb | David Kirby has left no stone unturned. He has successfully refuted the arguments put forth by the pro-captivity advocates. [Philosophy Book Review](#) “Get insight into this excellent story by David Kirby about the human-amusement park’s treatment of these animals via his book, *Death at SeaWorld*. [Sacramento News Review](#) “Captivity disrupts (orca) behavior in practically every manner. Contrary to marine mammal exhibition industry claims, orca lifespans are significantly shortened in captivity. [Animal People Magazine](#) “I particularly enjoyed this book. It reads very much like a novel to the point when you are staying up later than you should to finish it. [San Juan Island Update](#) “The bottom line of these findings is that keeping these magnificent beings in confinement is not a good thing. [Wild Time Radio TCR-FM \(UK\)](#)

DAVID KIRBY is the author of Evidence of Harm, which was a New York Times bestseller, winner of the 2005 Investigative Reporters and Editors award for best book, and a finalist for the New York Public Library Helen Bernstein Award for Excellence in Journalism, and Animal Factory, an acclaimed investigation into the environmental impact of factory farms. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

I've read "Under the Surface," Blood in the water, watched "Blackfish," and even went as far as reading the transcripts from the OSHA v SW case talked about in this book. "Death at "Seaworld," has been the best one yet. Mr. Kirby was able to balance the anti-captivity debate, science backed natural history facts, and the horrible deaths of trainers because of the actions of captive hybrid orcas, and make this a fact driven book laying out BOTH sides of the debate. Best SW anti-captivity book I've read so far. RIP TILI!

I just finished this book. While I'm an avid reader of anything orca, I still wanted to read this book, even though I knew it would be much of the same info I've already read. And it was. It was heavier in the science than I'd expected, so that was interesting.

Fantastic explanation of how our society has damaged the lives and well-being of these sentient creatures! It uses decades of scientific field research to explain why whales in captivity are lonely, broken, and living only half the number of years as orcas in the wild. It has interviews with not only whale researchers, but also former Sea World trainers from around the globe. It reminded me that Sea World, at its core, is a multi-billion dollar entertainment business. You'll learn why whales collected from around the world do not make a pod, and so much more including how Sea World knew the danger to the trainers before the deaths that occurred. Yes, deathS, plural.

Anybody who cares about animals should read this book. Its very informative and a good read.

This book uncovers the trade behind keeping killer whales in captivity. The main reason it's done is for profit. Yes, it can be argued that captivity has helped us learn much about this species. However, we have also learned captivity makes these magnificent creatures neurotic and cuts their lives short. The time for retiring these animals to sea pens has arrived. Establishments, like sea world can charge folks to view these creatures in their sea pens. If Sea World is really a company concerned with conservation, this would be the way to go. If the industry continues the way it's going, there will

be more trainer deaths and injuries. Make no mistake, it's not a question of if, it's a question of when.

David Kirby rips the mask of captivity and reveals the secrets behind the shows.

I loved this book. After reading this there is just no way I can support killer whales in captivity. The book highlighted so many things about killer whales such as their bonds, feeding habits and general lifestyles that I had no idea about previously. I can't look at Sea World the same anymore after reading this book. I don't feel that the author led you to believe that Sea World is manipulative etc.. I think he presented the facts of both sides evenly. I don't see how you can look at a killer whale in captivity and think that they are happy and content. It took me a month or so to read this book but not because it was "slow" but because I really wanted to comprehend everything that I was reading. And frankly, sometimes the subject matter depressed me and I would have to step away for a bit. It's hard to think that we, as humans, are doing this to these amazing creatures. I would definitely recommend this book!

This book documents not only the deaths of SeaWorld trainers (yes, more than the 2010 death of Dawn Brancheau that we're familiar with), but also the deaths and various maladies of the whales. The author makes a strong case against keeping these intelligent, ocean-going mammals in small pools and training them to perform in "Shamu" shows. Although I found the book to be extremely interesting at first, I felt that it dragged on too long. I also felt that the ending was unsatisfactory, ending in the middle of an OSHA v. SeaWorld hearing without revealing the outcome. After finishing the book, I checked on Google, and apparently the hearing is still going on due to the many appeals by SeaWorld. Still, I believe that the book ended too abruptly, and that the author should have given some indication that the outcome of the hearing was still to be resolved.

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