



Oyster: A World History

Drew Smith

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In the vein of *Salt and Cod*—the incredible tale of the oyster in history, art, literature, and more, from the dawn of time up through its current role as a symbol of environmentalism in the U.S.

Oysters are older than people, older than grass, and this journey demonstrates that they have been present at every turn of human events—inspiring great writers, painters, and cooks; sustaining whole communities; and fashioning legend and history. Besides being an unusual species in themselves, oysters provide a fascinating insight into how the world has evolved. Their pearls have funded empires and caused the invention of modern-day slavery. The evidence oysters leave behind shows us that we were not cavepeople at all, but covepeople, exploring the world along the coastlines, because oysters were a sign of a safe and healthy marine economy. They have been influential both as one of the healthiest foods we can eat and with their perennial reputation as an aphrodisiac. This book discusses the scandal of what has happened to the oyster in the UK, its use as a symbol in the U.S., and the hopes for aquaculture in Japan and Korea. From pleasure, pearls, politics, piracy, piety, and poverty, this book reveals a whole array of incredible, little-known facts.

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