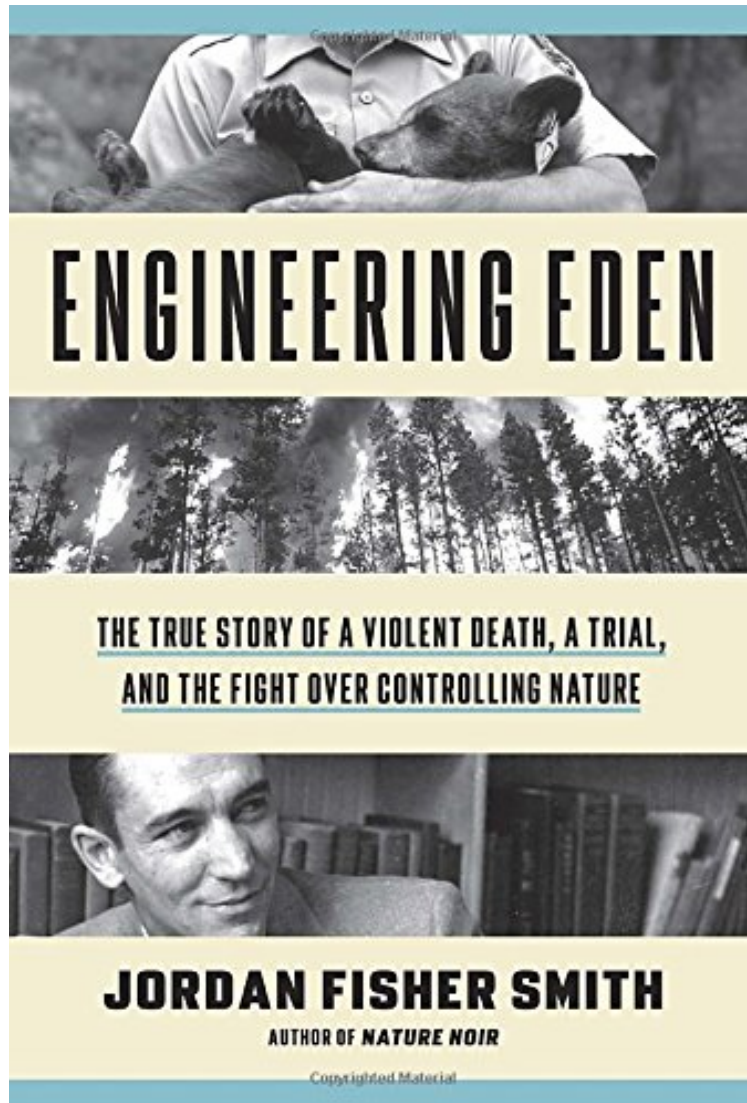


[Download free pdf] Engineering Eden: The True Story of a Violent Death, a Trial, and the Fight over Controlling Nature

Engineering Eden: The True Story of a Violent Death, a Trial, and the Fight over Controlling Nature

Jordan Fisher Smith

**Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#110838 in Books Jordan Fisher Smith 2016-06-07 2016-06-07 Format: Deckle Edge Original language: English PDF # 1 9.50 x 1.20 x 6.60l, 1.25 #File Name: 0307454266384 pages Engineering Eden The True Story of a Violent Death a Trial and the Fight Over Controlling Nature | File size: 58.Mb

Jordan Fisher Smith : Engineering Eden: The True Story of a Violent Death, a Trial, and the Fight over Controlling Nature before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Engineering Eden: The True Story of a Violent Death, a Trial, and the Fight over Controlling Nature:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Great historical accounting of defining moments and often tragic events subsequent to man's intervention in nature! By Dionisia found this book by Jordan Fisher Smith to be an intriguing historical accounting of the various interactions and interventions of humans in nature, specifically the National Parks and the consequences, both intended and unintended that are left behind. This true tale of park and wildlife management and the tragic incidents that occur as a result of the winding road of decision making demonstrates the difficulty that developed when attempting to adhere to the polar philosophies of those making the decisions. The question--to intervene or not to intervene? The author weaves in specific events such as the death of Harry Walker by a grizzly in Yellowstone in 1972 that perpetuate the question of good decisions and bad decisions made by both the stewards of the National Parks and the individuals who utilize them. The book explores the difficulty of creating a peaceful coexistence of humans and wild animals in the ecosystems in which they now live and roam.. Historical accountings of places and events allow for a review of what has been done and often it is in evaluating this history where learning occurs. The author has done extensive research and outlines the differing philosophies and actions that have been applied to the management of the National Parks. He speaks of real people and is able to characterize them in such a way that the reader can easily feel connected to them in one way or another. This makes you feel that you are in the middle of the drama created in the tale and puts you in the position to ask yourself, "What would I do?" Aside from the miscreant behavior of some, I could easily agree with opposing philosophies that are presented and I could have and probably did camp in areas not designated for camping at an earlier time in my life. After reading this book, I have a renewed appreciation for following the rules and using logical thinking in making a decision. Good decisions can have bad outcomes but more often, bad decisions will have bad outcomes. The best you can do is try to make the best decision with all of the information which is given to you. I appreciate all of the information given in this book and believe it is a great book for all to read, not just those interested in Wildlife Biology or other specific fields as some reviewers have mentioned.. We all live in nature and are exposed to animals of some sort living in our environment and most of us have traveled to national parks at some time in our life. Education begins with awareness and this book opens your eyes to becoming more cautious about actions that could have serious impact on yourself, others, animals or the environment. It also leaves you with hope that we can get it right with collective input that can help to move closer to the Edenic balance present before the destruction caused by human intervention!

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Detailed Insightful Perspectives By Scott CI was working at Old Faithful when this happened and know many of the details. Grizzlies were in our NPS housing area every night. Special precautions were in place when you left a residence after dark. One night there was a 900-pound grizzly on the front porch of the transit hut as we peered out the window thinking how easily this beast could tear down the flimsy door. Hiking back from Shoshone Lake we encountered a grizzly on the trail in the meadow as we came out of the wooded area. We retreated to climb a tree at the same time the grizzly decided to go the other way. The dump in West Yellowstone was like a drive-in to see the grizzlies with many tourists there nightly. The attached photo shows a grizzly at the West Yellowstone dump site. Jordan Fisher Smith has completed detailed research and revealed many facts and circumstances that were not known at the time of the events. He brings out many behind the scene events and personalities. The facts surrounding the death of Harry Walker are very accurate as described. He masterfully shows how the management of natural resources by the National Park Service has evolved over the years and what brought about the changes. At the 100 year anniversary of the NPS, this book provides valuable insight and perspectives about the creation of the National Park System and the challenges that are ahead in the coming decades. Enjoyable read providing many details of how this affected the persons involved and the resulting changes in park management.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A splendid and insightful book. By David Van Cleve Jordan Fisher Smith has written a magnificent book. Obviously, the hook here is the encounter between a grizzly and a human, with an unfortunate but predictable outcome. Mr. Smith, however, takes the reader behind the curtain into the inner workings of the National Park Service to discover the back-stories that created the conditions for this tragedy and many others. These include the wrangling over grizzly bear management policies between scientists and the Park Service, and between respected scientists themselves. The coverage of the history of the Park Movement, the evolution of scientific thought, and the application of science to real-life management decisions all add value to this book. Most intriguing and thought-provoking is the analysis of the biggest argument in park resource management – whether to let “nature” take its course, or whether park professionals should intervene to help create and sustain desired conditions in parks. Mr. Smith spent innumerable hours with victims, their families, scientists, and park managers to create this meticulously-researched and splendid work.

The fascinating story of a trial that opened a window onto the century-long battle to control nature in the national parks. When twenty-five-year-old Harry Walker was killed by a bear in Yellowstone Park in 1972, the civil trial prompted by his death became a proxy for bigger questions about American wilderness management that had been boiling for a century. At immediate issue was whether the Park Service should have done more to keep bears away from humans, but what was revealed as the trial unfolded was just how fruitless our efforts to regulate nature in the parks had always been. The proceedings drew to the witness stand some of the most important figures in twentieth

century wilderness management, including the eminent zoologist A. Starker Leopold, who had produced a landmark conservationist document in the 1950s, and all-American twin researchers John and Frank Craighead, who ran groundbreaking bear studies at Yellowstone. Their testimony would help decide whether the government owed the Walker family restitution for Harry's death, but it would also illuminate decades of patchwork efforts to preserve an idea of nature that had never existed in the first place. In this remarkable excavation of American environmental history, nature writer and former park ranger Jordan Fisher Smith uses Harry Walker's story to tell the larger narrative of the futile, sometimes fatal, attempts to remake wilderness in the name of preserving it. Tracing a course from the founding of the national parks through the tangled twentieth-century growth of the conservationist movement, Smith gives the lie to the portrayal of national parks as Edenic wonderlands unspoiled until the arrival of Europeans, and shows how virtually every attempt to manage nature in the parks has only created cascading effects that require even more management. Moving across time and between Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Glacier national parks, *Engineering Eden* shows how efforts at wilderness management have always been undone by one fundamental problem--that the idea of what is "wild" dissolves as soon as we begin to examine it, leaving us with little framework to say what wilderness should look like and which human interventions are acceptable in trying to preserve it. In the tradition of John McPhee's *The Control of Nature* and Alan Burdick's *Out of Eden*, Jordan Fisher Smith has produced a powerful work of popular science and environmental history, grappling with critical issues that we have even now yet to resolve.

“... An intensely reported, rousing readable and ambitiously envisioned book...This is a book that, while it brims over with descriptions of beautiful places and provides a primer of environmental thought over the past century, weaves together a dramatic court case in Los Angeles, a grizzly-bear attack, and a surprisingly fascinating debate over what constitutes the word ‘natural’ when it comes to national parks, as well as enough characters, complete with back stories, to fill a Leon Uris novel...a thrilling read. Like the best visions for parks, it combines the human and the animal, the managed and the natural, the controlled and the wild.” —Wall Street Journal “Timely and thoughtful...A vivid account of conflicts within the National Park Service over managing bears and other wild animals—conflicts that contributed to tragic results... Smith’s book will draw you in with his passion, thoughtfulness and first-rate story telling.” —Seattle Times “[*Engineering Eden*] is a dramatic, eye-opening chronicle of the struggle to preserve wilderness while making it accessible to the public...A galvanizing storyteller fluent in the conflict between environmental science and politics, Smith brings every player into sharp and indelible focus as he illuminates the urgent issues national parks grapple with as they struggle to wisely manage predators, invasive species, wildfires, and people.” —Booklist, starred review “A searching study of a tragedy and the legal contest that followed it, one that shaped the course of national park policy in the modern age. Is a natural environment modified by humans still natural? It's not just a question for philosophers...Smith, who understands that nature is 'a web of complex relations,' tells this complicated story clearly and well. Excellent reading for students of park policy, wildlife management, and other resource issues.” —Kirkus “This meticulously investigated history of Yellowstone and its wildlife management problems should appeal to fans of Jack Olsen's classic *Night of the Grizzlies*, as well as to readers interested in the broader issue of how much humans should intervene in nature in order to preserve it.” —Library Journal “*Engineering Eden* is a fascinating book about the relationship between humankind and nature. Jordan Fisher Smith illuminates the often embittered arguments what our role in wilderness should be, and has written a vivid historical account that sheds light on our place in nature’s complex web of life.” —Andrea Wulf, author of *The Invention of Nature* “This is a big, ambitious book about a seemingly small, if horrific event—a grizzly devouring a young man. And Jordan Fisher Smith has succeeded in his ambition. He produced a wonderful book, “wonderful” not only because of the quality of the writing, but because the book is filled with wondering; Smith uses that horror as a narrative focal point to explore science, policy making, bureaucracy, ego, even the law, and when he explores something he goes deep.” —John M. Barry, author of *Rising Tide* and *The Great Influenza* “What is ‘nature’? In a narrative delivered with elegance and vigor, Jordan Fisher Smith shows that our answers to this question have life-and-death consequences, for humans and for the ecosystems in which we live.” —David George Haskell, author of *The Forest Unseen* “*Engineering Eden* skates gracefully along the thin line between scholarly and popular writing. Jordan Fisher Smith’s grasp of the science involved in national park and wilderness management is impressive. So is his ability to tell a compelling story in the tradition of John McPhee and Jon Krakauer. The result is a classic, the literary history of America’s relationship to the natural world.” —Roderick Nash, author of *Wilderness and the American Mind* “In 1972 a Yellowstone grizzly killed a young man; from this tragedy a controversy erupted. Can wildlife be managed with no thought for unintended consequences? Does the Biblical injunction to dominate the earth and its creatures face evolutionary barriers embedded in the randomness of biological life itself? With open mind and deft narrative, Jordan Fisher Smith probes what is an intractable challenge to environmental stewardship.” —Kevin Starr, author of *California and Golden Dreams* “Jordan Fisher Smith’s gripping narrative about the death of a camper mauled by a grizzly, and the trial that follows, poses compelling questions about how to preserve wild nature. Highly recommended.” —Gerald Haslam, author of *In Thought and Action* and *Workin’ Man’s Blues* “A probing look at efforts to manage the “wild” in our fading wilderness - and at the trouble resulting when our guesses are wrong. *Engineering Eden* is especially timely as

we consider our responsibilities to nature on this fast-warming planet.” —Tom Kizzia, author of *Pilgrim’s Wilderness* “[A] painstakingly researched...vindication of the Craigheads, who were driven out of Yellowstone...because they refused not to speak out against the Park Service.” —National Parks Traveler “Smith has pulled off an amazing feat: he’s made wildlife management urgent and engrossing, writing about it with clarity, depth and a storyteller’s pacing...an outstanding introduction to ecological decision-making” —Shelf Awareness

About the Author JORDAN FISHER SMITH worked for 21 years as a park ranger in California, Wyoming, Idaho, and Alaska. He has since written for numerous publications including *Men’s Journal* and the *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, and he is the author of *Nature Noir* and narrator of the documentary *Under Our Skin*. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

LOS ANGELES All right. call the matter,” said Judge Andrew Hauk to the court clerk, seated below and in front of him. “Seventy-two-dash-three-zero-four-four, Dennis G. Martin versus the United States,” announced the clerk. It was a Thursday morning, the ninth of January, 1975, when the trial concerning the death of Harry Walker, known by then as *Martin v. United States*, convened in United States District Court in downtown Los Angeles. The courtroom was an impressively large chamber with fluted mahogany pilasters at intervals along its hardwood-paneled walls, their capitals touching a high ceiling of acoustical tile and fluorescent lights. A small audience was scattered in three blocks of hardwood pews, separated by a low fence from the judge, lawyers, court clerk, court reporter, and bailiff. A tall lawyer in a fine suit with an unruly head of curly, salt-and-pepper hair stood up from his chair at the leftmost of the two attorney’s tables at the front of the room. “Stephen Zetterberg for the plaintiffs, Your Honor,” he said. “William Spivak, Your Honor,” said the assistant US attorney, rising from his seat at the defense table to the right. He was an owlish, balding man in his thirties with glasses. “For the record, I would like to renew my objections to the venue,” he added. Spivak was referring to a highly irregular maneuver by which Zetterberg had gotten a case about an Alabaman who died in Wyoming adjudicated in a Los Angeles court that normally would have had no jurisdiction in the matter. Federal district courts are spotted all over the United States, and a given case will be heard in a particular court when one or more of the parties lives in that district, when the disputed matter took place there, or because assets in the case are located there. None of these things had been true of the Walker case when Stephen Zetterberg took it on, and what he then did was an expression of the creativity he brought to lawyering. In court, Stephen Zetterberg affected a restrained, dignified manner. Uncoiling his lanky frame to announce his readiness to proceed that morning, he reminded one witness of Abraham Lincoln. But underneath his solemnity he was a passionate man. He had grown up, and still lived and worked, in Claremont, a pleasant university town east of Los Angeles, with tree-lined streets laid out on a gentle slope of alluvium at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains. He graduated from Pomona College and Yale Law School, and during World War II he served on a Coast Guard ship patrolling for submarines out of Pearl Harbor. After the war, Zetterberg returned to the law in greater Los Angeles. By the 1960s his practice was thriving, he was active in politics, and California’s governor offered him a series of judgeships. Zetterberg turned them down. He later explained that judges had to take whatever cases came before them, and in private practice he could take the ones that really interested him. Zetterberg saw the courts as a democratic institution through which the little people could confront powerful adversaries, such as government and corporations. He was attracted to cases involving an underdog. His son, Charles, who became his partner at Zetterberg Zetterberg after law school, complained affectionately that at any given time his father always had some hopeless matter that could be counted on to bleed the practice of billable hours while the younger associates tried to keep the lights on and make a living. The Walker case was that one in the 1970s. The case of Harry Walker had three things going for it. First among these were Harry’s survivors, the Walkers themselves. To Zetterberg, they were the salt of the earth, American Gothic without the dour expressions. Second, they genuinely needed his help. Deprived of their son’s labor on their farm, they were in danger of going out of business. Third, there was a great expert witness on their side, a famous biologist who would testify that something had gone terribly wrong with the Park Service’s management of nature at Yellowstone. And there was Yellowstone itself. Zetterberg had no personal enmity toward national parks. On the contrary, he loved them. He and his wife were avid hikers, and the fact that the case would involve visits to Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and Yosemite for research and depositions was a major attraction for him. Finally, Zetterberg had already handled two other lawsuits against the Park Service; he knew the case law. *Martin v. United States* had acquired its name from Dennis Martin, a young associate lawyer who sat next to Zetterberg at the plaintiff’s table. A Yale Law classmate of Hillary Clinton’s, Martin had been recruited to the firm in the spring of 1972, in one of Zetterberg’s periodic trips back to New Haven to scout promising members of his alma mater’s graduating class. Martin was clerking for Zetterberg and hadn’t even passed the California bar when he became involved in Zetterberg’s scheme to extract the Walker case from its natural venues and bring it to California just so Zetterberg could represent the Walkers. When the Walker family contacted him about Harry’s death, Zetterberg sent Martin to a state court with a motion requesting that Martin be named administrator of Harry’s estate. In order for that to happen, at least some of Harry’s assets would have to be located in California, however Harry’s estate—consisting of little more than a few clothes, a secondhand car, some fishing rods, hunting rifles, a shotgun, and a pool cue—was at his parents’ home in Alabama. Zetterberg’s pleadings were a circular arrangement of interdependent ifs. Administrators of estates are empowered to take various actions, and Martin told the judge that if he were to be so appointed, he planned to sue the

federal government for negligence in Harry's death. If the estate were to win such a suit, the award would be paid to the estate in California. Therefore, the judgment's potential value could be construed as a California asset—just as an account receivable is listed as an asset on the balance sheet of a business. If such an asset could be construed to exist, then the estate had California assets, and it could sue in a California court to create the judgment the whole idea was based on. The argument was a Mobius strip, a snake eating its own tail. Zetterberg referred to the maneuver as “bootstrapping,” after the tall-tale notion of reaching down to grab your own bootstraps and lift yourself off the ground. The state judge apparently admired Zetterberg's fancy and approved Martin as administrator. Zetterberg and Martin then filed suit against the Park Service in Los Angeles. In a preliminary appearance before Judge Hauk, Assistant US Attorney Spivak objected, but Hauk came down on Zetterberg's side. Now Spivak renewed his objection and Judge Hauk defended his decision. There was no—as he put it—“skulduggery” or “callosity toward the law” in what Zetterberg and Martin had done, and he intended to give a fair trial. The case of Harry Walker's death at Yellowstone National Park would be heard in Los Angeles. “I ruled that way before. I rule that way again,” Hauk concluded. “I am going to keep the jurisdiction. I think, therefore, we will proceed.” It had taken over two years for Martin v. United States to reach trial, and when it was finally docketed for early January 1975, Stephen Zetterberg's office made arrangements for Harry's father, mother, and youngest sister to travel from their Alabama dairy farm to Los Angeles. It was the first time any of them had ever set foot on an airplane. Harry's mother, Louise, spent the trip to LA in the aisle seat, farthest from the window, gripping the seat arms with a pained expression every time the aircraft lurched over a thermal. Harry's father, Wallace, had grieved no less deeply than his wife over the loss of their only son, but he displayed as much youthful glee at his first view of the earth from above as did his twenty-year-old daughter, Jenny. Hurling west over Louisiana, the two of them watched, transfixed, out the window as dusk wrapped the earth thirty thousand feet below, even as the aircraft's wings sparkled in the orange sunlight. At Los Angeles International, the Zetterbergs picked them up and installed them in a Claremont resort hotel. On the first morning in court, Wallace sat listening in the pews. Jenny and her mother were out sightseeing with Stephen Zetterberg's wife. Zetterberg stood facing the judge at the podium between the defense and plaintiff's tables, which the lawyers were required to use when presenting their cases or questioning witnesses. “All right,” said Zetterberg, “next I would like to offer what amounts to—” Here he paused, glancing over his shoulder. “Would you mind stepping out, Mr. Walker?” Wallace stood up stiffly and made his way to the exit at the back of the room. Zetterberg waited for the door to swing shut, then finished his sentence. “—what amounts to an autopsy report of Harry Walker, consisting of seven pages. Mr. Spivak has a copy in his hand.” The document contained the death certificate and pathology report, as well as the typewritten narrative of a strong-stomached Yellowstone National Park wildlife biologist who'd been dispatched to a Livingston, Montana, funeral home to serve as the Park Service's witness to the autopsy. The latter read, in part: The body was examined carefully for tooth marks in an effort to measure spacing between canine tooth punctures. Very few puncture wounds were found, however, and none appeared to have been caused by large canine teeth. Most of the injuries seemed to have been caused by claws. The body cavity and cranium were opened by Dr. Steele; and the brain and body organs not previously removed by the bear were examined. Dr. Steele remarked that other than slight sub-cranial bleeding, which could have been the result of a mild concussion, there was no apparent skull or brain damage. The larynx had been crushed, apparently by a bite to the throat; and Dr. Steele felt at the time of the examination that anoxia from this injury, coupled with shock, seemed to have been the cause of death. “All right,” said Judge Hauk from the bench. “The autopsy report of the decedent. Any objections?” he asked Assistant US Attorney Spivak. “I don't know what this adds,” replied Spivak. “It's been stipulated that the decedent died in a bear attack.” Stephen Zetterberg explained that the cause of death, a crushing injury to the neck from the massive power of the grizzly's jaws, yet without the puncture wounds that would normally have been inflicted by the canine teeth, demonstrated that a particular old, toothless bear was involved. Bears are known for their long memories, part of a general tendency in nature to remember more than it forgets, in layers of stone, in the concentric rings of ancient trees, the migrations of elk, antelope, and trumpeter swans, even in our own recollections of the joys and sorrows of childhood. The autopsy was part of an arrangement of facts with which Zetterberg intended to indict authorities at Yellowstone National Park for believing that nature would forget our past mistakes the minute we tried to remedy them. Zetterberg didn't think nature worked that way, any more than people did. He had watched nature, hiking in the San Gabriel Mountains near his home, and in Yosemite, but he spent much of his working life in court, and courtrooms are full of long-remembered grievances.