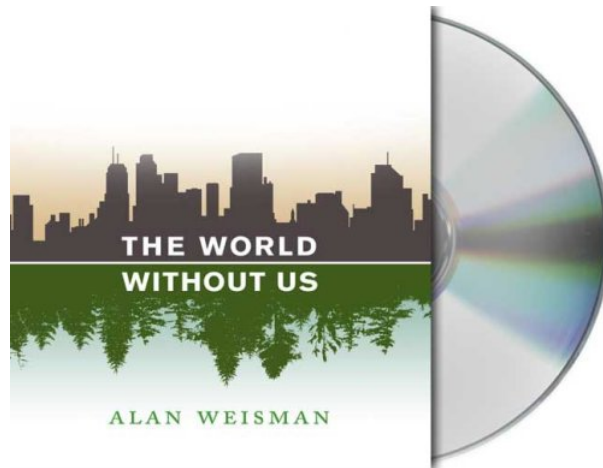
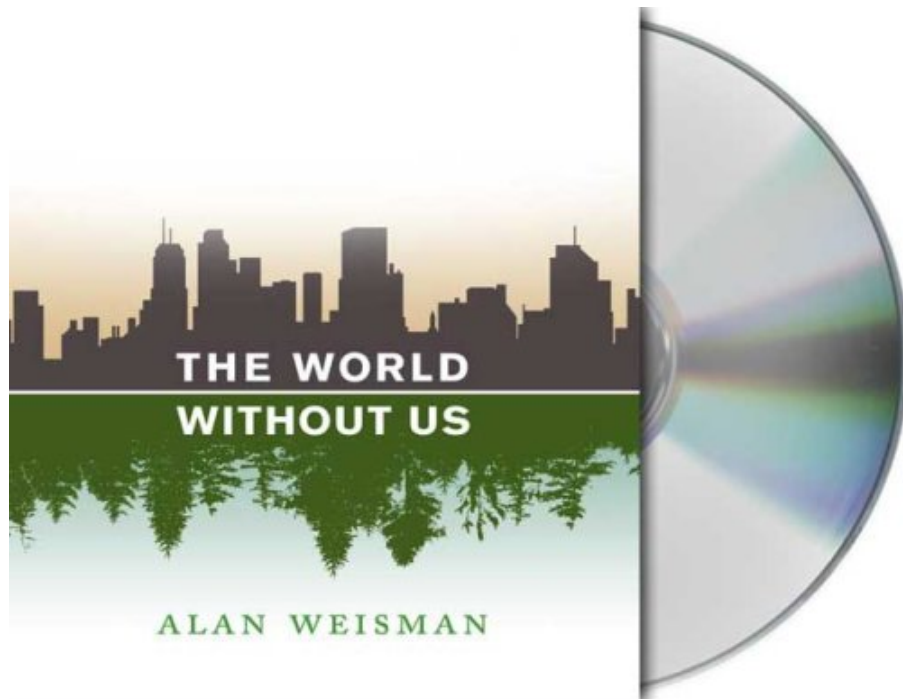


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THE WORLD WITHOUT US BY ALAN WEISMAN PDF

Discover the impact of the human footprint in *The World Without Us*. Take us off the Earth and what traces of us would linger? And which would disappear? Alan Weisman writes about which objects from today would vanish without us; how our pipes, wires, and cables would be pulverized into an unusual (but mere) line of red rock; why some museums and churches might be the last human creations standing; how rats and roaches would struggle without us; and how plastic, cast-iron, and radio waves may be our most lasting gifts to the planet.

But *The World Without Us* is also about how parts of our world currently fare without a human presence (Chernobyl; a Polish old-growth forest, the Korean DMZ) and it looks at the human legacy on Earth, both fleeting and indelible. It's narrative nonfiction at its finest, taking an irresistible concept with gravity and a highly-readable touch.

Some examples of what would happen:

- One year: Several more billions birds will live when airplane warning lights cease blinking.
- Twenty years: The water-soaked steel columns that support the street above New York's East Side would corrode and buckle. As Lexington Avenue caves in, it becomes a river.
- 100,000 years: CO2 will be back to pre-human levels (or it might take longer).
- Forever: Our radio waves, fragmented as they may be, will still be going out.

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Most helpful customer reviews

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

An Adventure in Journalism

By Jonas

The reason you came for this book is probably to find out what will happen to your home or New York City after people disappear. You want to learn if it will really be like "I Am Legend" or other Post-Apocalyptic stories where people are gone. At least, that's why I came.

And Weisman does explain just that. But he does so in the first few chapters. The remain 15 or so go into details about Earth without man you never would have expected. He examines places like Cyprus and the Korean DMZ, which people haven't touched in ages. He takes you places you never would have expected. Each chapter is a different story, a different location, a different analysis. Each could be it's own article.

This book ends up teaching a lot about human history as well. I certainly didn't expect that.

This book is an interesting read, a learning adventure across the globe. As cheesy as it sounds, its a great ride.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

My summary

By Amazon Customer

The World Without Us

Book written by Alan Weisman

Essay written by Caleb Cushman 9th grade English.

Many people wonder, "how would the world react if humans were gone?" With this question comes the thought process of, "have we done enough for the world to even recognize humans as a species?" In the book, *The World Without Us*, Alan Weisman proposes to the readers how the world was, is, and will most likely become because of humans or the lack thereof.

Before humans came along, many species of animals existed. These fabled creatures were abundant and the kings of their time. The earth was seemingly perfect, flawless, a perfect gem in the middle of their universe.

But our ancestor Humans would soon hunt species to extinction without realizing the inherent dangers of killing them off. With this activity would come the tyrannical, natural dictatorship of humans over all other animals, deciding what and why and which animals would exist.

The human species, (*homo sapiens*), have begun a long story to engrave in this planet. With this story comes the prelude of the time before us, the main event of how this world will end, and the exit where we humans leave this earth either to a glorious paradise or to a horrendously scarred remnant of a planet. Today many humans believe we are helping nature, but is what the truth? In his book, Author Alan Weisman states that nature repairs itself much better than any human who tries to help. But can humans play a roll destroying nature by building our automobiles and machines that constantly spew toxins into the atmosphere; or will we help nature rebuild into a haven worthy of being called a "Garden of Eden"? The great question humans have created with our existence today is whether we have a purpose on this planet.

Humans have created many objects to last, but will these objects outlast even nature itself? Mount Rushmore, a massive mountain with the four presidents of great integrity carved into its side, is only losing an approximate 1 inch every 10,000 years, giving Mount Rushmore 7.2 million years to boast about Americas success. The underground city of Derinkuyu in Turkey was built to last as a defensive fort and is almost impenetrable. Nevertheless, the fort still has the possibility of crumbling under earths mighty earthquakes and pressures. Man has created quite a world for itself but nature will always come back twice as strong, causing almost any building to fall under its fatal grasp. The greatest feats for man still fall short of natures full power.

The impact of man is quite great upon the earth. However, no force known to earth is more powerful than nature itself. Therefore, man has been allotted a small amount of time to show what potential we have to dedicate to this planet, but is it enough to change it? We return to the question asked earlier by humans, "how would the world react if humans were gone?" perhaps has been answered. Humans may be remembered by the things we leave behind, but the earth will not change drastically because of our disappearance.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

The (Mostly) Recovered World after We've Left

By Caitlin

No matter who you are or where you have lived, you have had an impact on the world, whether it is more global or local, immediate or delayed. When you compile the impact of the approximately 7 billion people alive today as well as the effect of all those that have lived before us, it amounts to many different consequences by our species, and everyday our impact increases. But what if we were all of a sudden gone? What if *Homo sapiens* no longer tread on the soil that we have so disturbed? What impact would we leave behind?

Although Alan Weisman acknowledges that it is unlikely that our species will quickly perish, he still addresses this question in *The World Without Us* in order to more closely examine our environmental impact. Weisman examines human impact ranging from megafauna extinctions to genetically modified plants and from the altered composition of the atmosphere to what will happen to cities and nuclear plants when we leave. Unlike many authors that address human environmental impact, Weisman takes a surprisingly positive approach. Perhaps our impact may not be as lasting as many view it to be. In many of these chapters he does note that some things will last long after we have gone. Although, this does not appear to be his main focus.

The book is well written, captivating, and definitely gives hope that *Homo sapiens* have not forever destroyed many aspects of the world. The atmosphere can return to normal despite the holes we have contributed to in the ozone layer. Forests can thrive even after we come through and displaced many species and harvest many trees. Despite these positive points, Weisman does some things that will last longer, but I find that Weisman fails to emphasize the fact that our impact will forever alter the world. The species that have gone extinct can never come back. Yes, extinction is a natural part of growth for the world, but many species have gone extinct primarily because of humans. At the same time I think of the fact that we must

have an impact. There is no way for a species to have no impact. Each species on the planet affects many others both directly and indirectly.

One example of when Weisman fails to bring concern is when he talks of the impact our production of plastics is having. We are not seeing plastics biodegrade. There is hope that something will develop the ability to degrade the plastics, but in the meantime it will continue to kill all sorts of wildlife as they ingest it. The rubber we use for tires also has yet to find something that can degrade it. Both rubber and plastic will likely be around long after Homo sapiens are gone and continue to affect the world we left behind. Yet, after reading these segments by Weisman, I did not feel incredibly compelled to minimize my use of plastic or rubber. Weisman does not seem to be rallying people against their negative environmental impact. Since humans will likely be around a long time, we need to work on lessening the impact that we have, and I found that Weisman did not emphasize this as I believe he should.

Comparing Weisman to George Perkins Marsh, we find some things that at least appear to contradict each other. Marsh examines the balance that is a key part of nature. As humans expend resources, they don't come back as they were. Nature is not able to bring itself back to where it was. Weisman seems to find that nature can reflect what it was in the past, and he appears to find this acceptable. Perhaps this is all we can ever expect. It may be best that nature is not exactly as it was. It is ever changing and adjusting together with all its interconnected parts. Whatever the result, Weisman finds hope where many fail to.

Weisman also alludes to human's desire to be remembered. We've sent off signals to try and contact other intelligent life, and we do our best to preserve our bodies that inevitably decay anyways. If you think about it, we all have a desire to be remembered by others, to do something which will have impact that will outlast our bodies. However, we want to make sure that what we leave does not doom the earth that housed us for so long.

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