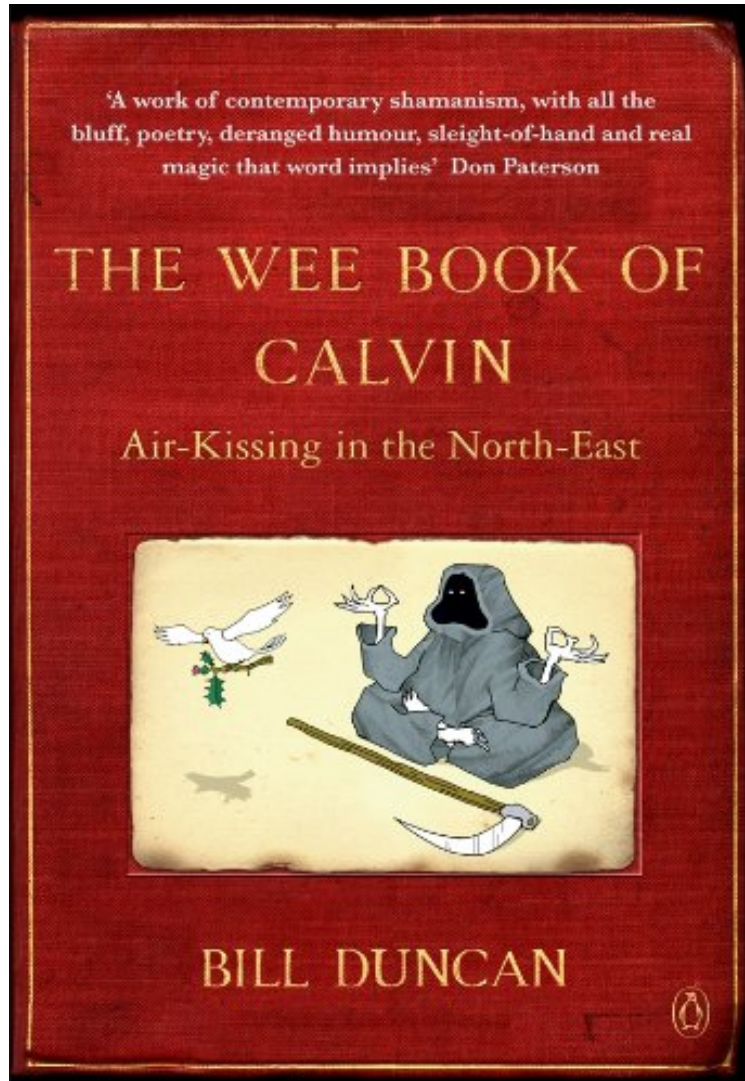


(Free and download) The Wee Book of Calvin

The Wee Book of Calvin

Bill Duncan

*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#3634853 in Books 2005-12-28 2005-12-28Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 .66 x 4.30 x 6.42l, .32 #File Name: 0141019727224 pages | File size: 64.Mb

Bill Duncan : The Wee Book of Calvin before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Wee Book of Calvin:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Comment on The Wee Book of CalvinBy Bill WickhamVery appropriate to the subject-matter and interesting for people familiar with the Scottish background.The book itself had an unwelcome black mark across the white pages at the bottom but this was no serious drawback ; it did not affect anything but I just thought I would mention it.I am still hoping that you will be able to supply another copy as originally sought.Bill (William)(Wickham)1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Wee Book of CalvinBy D. H. MaxwellStoic, laconic and fatalistic Scots. The books' many phrases and the general atmosphere relate

well of this climate of mild depression. As my Granny used to say; "ye will eat a pound of dirt afore ye die" and "sing in morn cry at night". Does it do them any good ? probably not,because poor people spend most of their time avoiding the bottom rather than going for the top thereby failing to blossom. It is good to do both in a better ratio than this Scots society allows.0 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Dinnae let a laddie hae yer threepenny bitBy CustomerI bought the book because I saw quite a bit of favorable press on it and was curious. Although it was an interesting read I would not pay a new price for it as in reality it is a 40 page pamphlet of short essays fluffed out to a 177 page book. I felt like the tourists at the end of Wullie Broon's marine museum display. If you know and love Scotland you will find a few things to jog your memory but buy it used as you will probably only read it once. For the full price You could get a collection of Oor Wullie, a copy of trainspotting or A journey to the Hebrides, Or even a copy of In search of Scotland.

A collection of essays and aphorisms about Scottish Calvinism. This is Scottish literary humour at its finest. 'A work of contemporary shamanism, with all the bluff, poetry, deranged humour, sleight-of-hand and real magic that implies.' Don Paterson. This is the first (and maybe the last) self-help guide that promises to make you feel a lot worse after you read it. A hilarious satire on freeze-dried mysticism and off-the-shelf enlightenment, it is also a haunting and lyrical reflection on places, voices and memories -- a literary journey into the heart of North-East darkness. 'A perfect evocation of Scotland's mysterious love affair with loss and sorrow. A powerful dram of Zen Calvinism.' Richard Holloway

About the AuthorBill Duncan is the author of *The Smiling School for Calvinists* (Bloomsbury, 2001), an outstanding debut collection of short stories. He is a Head Teacher of English in a Scottish secondary school and divides his time between Dundee, St Madoes and Orkney.Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.Fear and self-loathing in the North-EastThis project started life as a mischievous, ironic take on the plague of 'Little Book' publications: you know, the sort of irritatingly positive-looking things that infest the ever-expanding 'Mind and Body' section of your local bookstore. Those bland, emotionally glib 'New Age', touchy-feely self-help guides, usually with a yin-yang symbol or a lotus flower or a heart or a soaring dove or a sky on the front, offering an instant path to inner peace, the child within and off-the-shelf spiritual enlightenment. And all this, without anything as painful as thought, hard ideas or intellectual effort. Meanwhile, the philosophy section of the same bookstore will now, shamefully, be virtually non-existent, its demise assured as this fiendish mutation of a sub-genre, virus-like, sweeps through its shelves. If you're old enough, you'll recall the quiet pangs of trepidation when a well-meaning 'friend' reverently placed her treasured copy of Jonathan Livingston Seagull into your reluctant palm in the late 1970s. Maybe, like me at the time, you were discovering the attractions of punk, nihilism, Camus, alienation and the Ramones and felt a profound sense of inner panic at your first reluctant glimpse of the fearful cover images of gliding seagull and blue sky. Instinctively recoiling and shifting the book to arm's length, then cautiously turning to the back cover, an internal hazard light started to flash at the sight of the dread words 'vibes', 'peace', 'enlightenment' and 'free'. Then when you actually started reading it, the inexorable rush of homicidal, existential, misanthropic rage that this infernal work aroused in you. And that was before your ex-friend breathlessly informed you that there were plans for releasing a double 'concept' album based on the book, complete with rock band, string quartet and full classical orchestra ...Maybe, of course, you're lucky enough to be far too young to remember any of this, but you've nevertheless winced in silent agony in a restaurant at the evanescent, cloying, faux-Celtic blur of an Enya track or writhed at the subtly exquisite torture of a soundtrack involving the maddening vibrato of pan-pipes, the trilling chuckle of dolphins, or the gurgle of whale sounds that make your harpoon finger twitch unconsciously and murderously. Or may be you have simply nodded in silent empathy at the passing stranger, your unknown soul mate in the 'Kill All Hippies' t-shirt.Initially, the need for our Wee Book asserted itself as I looked with mounting incredulity and dismay at the promiscuous glut of Little Books the opposition was now producing. Faced with this loathsome onslaught, I was convinced the world needed to hear a different kind of voice: our voice. The fight was on. Marshalling my forces against the Powers of Blandness, the first idea was simply to gather a collection of sayings from everyday usage in the North-East and from memories of my grandmother and grandfather's generation, making some more up, as appropriate. North-East aphorisms seemed particularly appropriate, as their essential characteristics are a stinging tone of merciless laceration combined with pared-to-the-bone linguistic terseness; two virtues conspicuously absent, alas, from the conventional Little Books. The more I thought about these aphorisms, the more I was attracted to the idea of using them as the ammunition in a small but deadly weapon: a subversive form of the Little Book that would search and destroy the enemy from within. After all, these books are simply collections of sayings, snippets of advice, observations on the world. I liked the idea of a bleak, gloomy, guilt-ridden Northern version of all of this, conveying the attractions of an outlook that's a lot closer to my own and many of those dear to me.The more I considered those aphorisms, the more I was struck by their status as an un-acknowledged but intensely distinctive literary form, and I was increasingly impressed by the extent to which they conveyed a peculiarly Northern weltanschauung encapsulated in, say, half a dozen words: 'God made the back for burden.' Just pause for a moment to consider the power of the

image at work here, and the austerity of the world-view that informs it. And further, thinking about these sayings took me back into my own past: I started hearing the voices of my early childhood. The first time my mother ever attended a public reading of mine, she came over afterwards and startled me when she observed: 'Strange that. It wiz like hearin yer Grandad's voice again. Talkin through you ...' Drawn by the understated power of these sayings, I saw once again the cold, grey landscapes and seascapes of my childhood, with their sudden gleam of silver, changing swiftly back to dark. I felt again the cold glimmer of rain, driven on a North-Easterly from forgotten spaces. And I listened to the voices of ghosts, unheard for decades, through the quiet spell they cast across the darkneses of years caught in the memories, by turn dim and then uncannily vivid, evoked through their words. And the more I listened to these voices, the more I thought of my mother's remark, feeling the uneasy responsibility of being called upon to act as a witness to these voices. I was becoming intrigued by the way in which a past, which I thought I had comfortably escaped by moving from a fishing and mining village to a city, attending a senior secondary school in the West End, followed by University and a relatively middle-class profession kept resurfacing from deep, lost places, resonating through the sudden flash of language. The past I thought I had escaped, lightly tapping me on the shoulder with a shivering touch, enquiring 'D'ye no mind o me?' in a quiet, even voice with a Fife accent. So the starting point is a linguistic inheritance in the form of a corpus of sayings that strip expression back to the bone, conveying a mind-set with the clarity and economy that emerges from a culture where silence is more valued than speech, where less is more and where the display of affection is seen as decadent and socially aberrant, with public physical contact still perceived as a form of taboo. Hence 'Air-Kissing in the North-East.' After starting to collect the aphorisms, I felt that rather than simply expecting them to stand alone, they would benefit from one short introductory essay which would locate and contextualize them, helping the reader by giving a further sense of place and mind. This led to the first essay, 'You Mark My Words!' the title quoting my Grandmother, who frequently used the expression to overlay an already fearsome threat or warning with an additional sense of menace, ominously hinting at the dark shadow of Predestination that lurked among many of her sayings. However, the voices in that essay slowly took on a life of their own, leading me, blindfolded and somnambulist, down a dark corridor of time, hearing every whisper and echo, into a journey in uncharted yet eerily familiar spaces, exploring the geographical, spiritual, social, cultural and meteorological circumstances that gave rise to the state of mind and turn of language manifested through these aphorisms and investigated in further essays. As the sequence evolved I became aware of the profound legacy I had inherited from a culture I had ignored for decades. This project is a heartfelt tribute to the voices of those men and women whose voices speak across the years in their austere and eloquent glory. Brevity is their essence. This is their wee book. So welcome: friends and ghosts, alive and dead, young and old. The Wee Book of Calvin is for you: a counterblast to the easy comfort and cosy reassurance of all of those things you hate: an antidote to the Axis of Evil, the unholy amalgam of Zen, Californian, chilled-out, ethnic, post-Hippie, laid-back, Celtic and New Age. It's also a call to arms. Death to the Little Books! And don't worry if you're not one of The Elect from the North-East, with an extensive lexicon of Sin and Depression as a birthright. The Glossary is there for you. This is our Wee Book . . .