

Windfall. The Booming Business of Global Warming
McKenzie Funk
Penguin Press
2014
Hardcover
\$32.95

A frank, confrontational exposé of corporate profits and losses from climate change

McKenzie Funk has spent the last six years trying to answer the question, “What are we doing about climate change?” Travelling to 24 countries and extensively throughout the United States, he meets a cast of characters, “driven by ideology, fear or hard-nosed realism—or all three,” trying to mitigate, adapt to or profit from climate change. The answers they are coming up with are awe inspiring, frightening and with dollar figures that are equally eye popping.

Funk separates his book into three parts: “The Melt” (ice sheets, glaciers); “The Drought” (desertification, non-existent or intermittent rains, wild fires, crop failure); and, “The Deluge” (rising seas, surging rivers, super storms). He looks at responses by companies, governments and individuals and how they stand to profit or lose. It is a cold-eyed look at the ultimate

tragedy of the commons told with dark, gallows humour and some optimism, although the old axiom of the “rich getting richer” kept running around in my head the whole time I read this book. As Funk says, “in an unfair world, rational self-interest is not always what we wish it would be.”

This book is going to inspire some to invest in Greenland mining companies, Russian farmland, Biotech companies that make drought-resistant salt-tolerant seeds or Dutch sea-wall manufacturers. However, it should inspire in us all an urge to look at this as an issue of human justice, not just profit and loss. An intensely thought provoking and troubling book. I enjoyed it vastly more than I thought I would, expecting another dose of green-washed ‘sustainability’ talk, maybe some anti-capitalist screed. What was delivered was a thorough global account of what is being done. Like it or not there is money to be made from climate change. Perhaps “Windfall” will act as a moral signpost. You should read it.

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Startling insights into the Newfoundlander's profoundly unique sense of place

To say **Moses Sweetland** is a stubborn character is like saying the Atlantic Ocean is stormy. As steadfast as the eponymous island he inhabits, he is immovable, intractable and one of the most unlikely and memorable fictional heroes in recent memory.

The community of Sweetland is slated for resettlement and its inhabitants are to be compensated with \$100,000 from the provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The only catch? It requires unanimous consent and Moses is the last holdout. In the face of a fierce gale of opposition, imprecation and outright threats, Moses resists the Government Man, family, friends and enemies, just as he walks against a blizzard; chin tucked in, shoulders hunched. Unwavering.

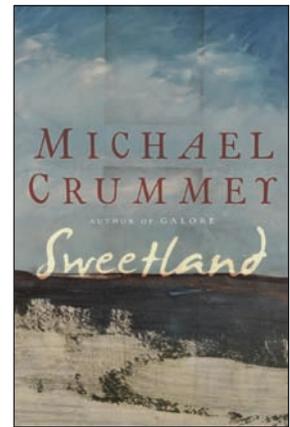
This story is about a very small island and one man's place upon it, but the geography is not just physical.

Crummey explains the emotional and spiritual landscapes of Sweetland, meandering from past to present through the lives of generations of islanders, living and dead. He explores the larger themes of belonging and loss, the notion of 'home,' our sense of place.

The lyrical descriptions of the landscape and weather, lost and becalmed in fog, struggling blind against the snow, escaping the icy clutches of the sea, give them a life of their own, as anyone who has spent time in Newfoundland can tell you.

The cast is large for a small place and includes a boatload of Sri Lanka refugees, two semi-feral brothers who are on leave from Fort McMurray and an autistic boy who can talk to Moses' dead brother.

Both beautiful and at times terrifying, some of the scenes will haunt you and Moses' profanity-laced colourful turns of phrase will pop into your head for days afterward. For anyone who wants to understand why Newfoundlanders are so attached to 'home,' read this book.



Sweetland
Michael Crummey
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Desmond Hallett is a lifelong bibliophile who devours three books a week on average. Feedback: dchafe@atlantic-businessmagazine.com; [@AtlanticBus](https://twitter.com/AtlanticBus); [@ABM_Editor](https://www.facebook.com/ABM_Editor/); #OfTheShelf



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