



The Wump World

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The Pollutians invade the Wump World and turn the green meadows into a concrete jungle.

The Wump World Details

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From Reader Review The Wump World for online ebook

Melki says

The happy little wumps - cute, capybara-like creatures - are the only inhabitants of a lush green planet, brimming with rivers, lakes, edible grasses, and bumbershoot trees.

So, of course, someone MUST come along and ruin everything.

Strange blue creatures called Pollutians arrive, and the wumps are driven underground as their home is soon destroyed by giant machinery, freeways, and skyscrapers. Before long, the planet is so befouled, the Pollutians leave on spaceships to wreck another world.

There is no Lorax in Peet's bittersweet cautionary tale, and it's pretty clear which species the Pollutians are supposed to be. Rather than try to fix the planet we're destroying, some of us are talking about starting over on another one.

Look out, Mars! Apparently, you're next.

Judy says

The message is similar to that of Seuss' Lorax, but this is more straightforward and a faster read. Every child will feel sad for the wumps and be angry with the Pollutians. ... And I bet that this book angers every non-environmentalist. Surely it's been nominated for a banned book list somewhere.

Re: 3-star rating

The message and the art are definitely worthy of 4 or 5 stars, but the story is so sad that it isn't a book I enjoy reading.

Lisa Vegan says

This is a very 1970 book. The first Earth Day was in the spring of 1970, and I was mostly involved in it because that was the semester I was editor of the school paper and we covered it extensively. I don't remember this book though.

The wumps are probably the cutest fictional creatures I ever did see. I love the illustrations of them: their expressions, movements, their young riding on the backs of the adults; they're just so lovable and adorable.

The wump world is a bucolic place and then it's invaded by polluting monsters (who look an awful lot like human beings) who build it up with buildings and freeways and get rid of most of the natural world the wumps cherish and need for their sustenance. The story is a very heavy handed message but it's a good one, and I suppose it was slightly forward thinking in 1970 when this was first published.

It has a bit of a bittersweet ending, and it's definitely a cautionary tale, and sobering because it conveys that while some damage can be reversed, the world will never be the same, yet hopeful at some level too.

I recently read How Droofus the Dragon Lost His Head by this author and I really enjoyed it. I can tell from these two books and their themes, that I'm interested in reading some other books by this author.

Jennifer Olague says

This is the story of these little creatures living on Wump World, full of green and beautiful land, that is until they get an unwanted visit from the Pollutians, coming from another planet. The Pollutians end up taking over some of their land, turning it into a concrete jungle but the little creatures end up finding one last piece of land and make it their best and start from the bottom up, all over again.

At first the little creatures are afraid but towards the end of the book, they make the best of what they have left. The setting takes place in Wump World and what is left of it towards the end. A theme in this book is go green, it really shows children what happens when land that is nothing but green gets polluted. This is a book that kids in elementary school can read and they would enjoy it, as for the illustrations as well. I really liked this book because it's symbolizing what happens to our world and that we too should make the best of what we have left and help out our mother earth.

Stephanie A. says

As far as children's books about environmentalism go, this outstrips the Lorax by a mile in terms of charm. The problem aliens are much funnier-looking, for starters. And more to the point, who wouldn't feel sorry for cuddly little Wumps? Evidently modeled after capybaras, they're plump little fluffballs of placid cuteness - one of my favorite species in the Peet menagerie.

Joel Spring says

When I was a child, I read the heck out of Bill Peet's library of books. His stories were entertaining, sometimes thought provoking (especially to a child), and the artwork was detailed and fun without being overly trite. This is the book that stands out to me the most.

The story of the Wumps is a timeless morality tale, that is as relevant as it was when the book was written, as it is today.

My mother was an elementary school teacher before she retired and still retains much of her class library. Everytime I go visit them I sneak out to the garage and run through the well-worn pages to revisit the Wump World.

John Clark says

This colorful book provides an approachable introduction to the interrelated problems of resource consumption, environmental degradation, and pollution. A friend of mine dropped it in my lap after we had finished watching "The Cove" and started talking about sustainability and respect for nature, and I think it does an admirable job of sketching out the bigger picture with broad strokes. The resolution is rather abrupt, which risks misleading readers about the intensity of the analogous problems implied by the book.

James Robertson says

"There was more and more noise and more of everything. More buildings with more smokestacks puffing more and more smoke. More freeways with more traffic shooting out moi'e and more clouds of exhaust. More trash and more trash piles, with more and more waste gushing into the rivers and lakes." In a far off alien planet, an adorable species called the Wumps lived in peace until one day when a species called Pollutians fly in and take over. They force the Wumps to live underground as they begin to build their city and pollute the world.

The Wump World addresses the issues of unnatural pollution and long term effects of environmental damage in the form of a child's book. Sharing an extremely similar premise to the famous Dr. Seuss story The Lorax, The Wump World actually was released a year prior. It parallel's human society with the pollutian race, who end up traveling from planet to planet abandoning the last after it gets too polluted. While the book has a very serious undertone, I find that it presents the information in an easily digestible fashion for children. I really like that the book ends on a somewhat somber note, despite being hopeful and positive. Some of my favorite morale's in stories are the ones that aren't happy go lucky solutions to problems, but are simply the truths that we have to acknowledge and understand. The Wump World has this same premise for a morale, where it shows part of the world is ruined from pollution that nobody wanted to take credit for, but thankfully there's still some clean world left.

I give The Wump World a 5 out of 5. I don't want to rate this book simply by how well it compares to The Lorax, but I feel both try to convey the same general idea, and The Wump World does a slightly better job at it. The book summarizes the environmental dilemma without making clear ties to reality and setting out to be educational. Additionally, it utilizes illustrations well and keeps a good narrative pace from beginning to end despite being slightly wordier than most picture books.

Gabrielle Bethany says

I love this book because of the lighthearted way a serious topic is presented not to mention the adorable illustrations. The wumps are peaceful beings that have their world destroyed by the pollutants. The writing and illustrations offer an amazing approach to get children to love the Earth. The takeaway is to be kind to our planet and the creatures that inhibit it. I would use this book in an elementary school classroom as well as read to my own children.

Dolly says

We borrowed this book from our local library as part of a kit with an audiocassette. We listened to the story in the car while our girls followed along with the book. I read the story myself later to catch the effect of the illustrations. The story reminded us strongly of The Lorax and has a hit-you-on-the-head environmental message. Overall, it's an entertaining and cautionary story and we all enjoyed it.

This story was selected as one of the books for the April 2010 - Environmental and Nature Themes reads at the Picture-Book Club in the Children's Books Group here at Goodreads.

Mike says

So I've had this book since forever. I remember really enjoying it as a child and it still holds its old charm for me as an adult.

For those not in the know, this is a wump (or more specifically, several wumps):

They are likely the reason I find Capybaras awesome. For those ignorant of these fair beasts, here is a picture of one:

Here is a picture of a family of them:

And here is one with a caiman:

OK, maybe I am just using this review as an excuse to post Capybara pictures, but the resemblance is striking.

Anyway, since this site is called GoodReads and not GoodLargeRodents, suppose I should talk about the book.

It is a very straight forward environmental parable about the perils of resource exploitation and non-sustainable economic growth wrapped up in a Manichean conflict between nature and industry with our poor wumps stuck in between.

The villains of this morality play are the aptly named "Pollutians", refugees from a previous planet they spoiled. Having learned nothing from their previous lifestyle they continue their non-sustainable way of life, driving the poor wumps underground. The Pollutians use up the planet's resources, foul its environment, and generally make a mess of things. However, instead enacting policies and changes to their way of life, the

Pollutians instead send out scouts to find a new planet. The Pollutians leave when they find such a planet, letting the wumps reclaim their broken planet. Since this is a children's book it naturally turns out alright as nature finds a way to overcome the Pollutians damage and the wumps return to their idyllic lifestyle.

On the surface this is a good lesson to teach children: respect the environment and don't pollute. I certainly would want these values instilled in the next generation. However, the wumps in this book are very passive. They cannot and do not resist the Pollutians, fleeing to underground caverns. If the Pollutians never left they would still be down there, living out their dark and meager existence. A better lesson for children is to be proactive in dealing with problems and not hide underground waiting for the solution to happen on its own.

Further, the ending also teaches a level of passivity. The Wump World is able to naturally repair the damage caused by the Pollutians. But this is not always the case in the real world. Environments have been permanently damaged by pollution and resource exploitation. Waiting around for nature to fix it or for the industries that damaged the environment to leave the planet are not reasonable responses to real world problems. Extractive industries won't pick up and leave the planet, they will pick up and move to a different part of the planet. Without environmental protections we could very well end up like the Pollutians of Wump World, but without the benefit of interstellar travel.

So by all means read this book to your children, but be sure to stress the importance of a being proactive in solving problems.

OK, that is kind of a bummer to end on. How about more Capybara pictures!!!!

Liz says

This was my *favorite* book when I was a kid. It's amazing.

No wonder I turned out the way I did.

Kathryn says

(SPOILERS) I really liked some things about this book, and I had a few issues with other aspects. It tells the story of the gentle (and adorable!) Wumps, the only creatures to inhabit a small and grassy planet, and the Pollutians (from the planet Pollutus) who come to take over (their arrival looks like something out of "Avatar"!!!) turning the green world into a concrete jungle and polluted mess. The poor little Wumps have to hide in caves underground for many years--until the Pollutians destroy the planet so much they flee to find another planet to destroy--ahem, call home.

I'm giving the book four stars as it was written in 1970--I'm guessing it was a lot more "revolutionary" in

terms of content back then and also didn't have quite as much competition in the environmental picture book category. The illustrations are great--I love the darling Wumps and the destruction by the Pollutians is absolutely disgusting. And it's written well style-wise.

BUT...

It is SO heavy-handed in terms of message!!! I mean, Pollutians from the planet Pollutus... not hard to figure out what they'd be like, huh? Also, some might argue that they never even SEE the Wumps, so maybe they don't know they are messing up the homeland of another species--though surely the destruction of the plant life is something they ought to have noticed. I was not a fan of the ending of the book--the Pollutians just up and leave the planet when they find another one that they haven't messed up. Didn't they learn ANYTHING!? Have they no RESPONSIBILITY!? I much prefer the stories that show some sort of positive outcome to the pollution etc going on in the world--one of the reasons I love the movie "Wall-e" so much is that the humans have to wake up and take responsibility in the end. Of course, this could be a great springboard for discussion with kids: What if there HADN'T been another planet for the Pollutians to run to? Should they have abandoned their mess? Was it okay for them to move to the Wump planet (given that they thought no one else lived there)? How might they have been more caring of the land?

Even with my gripes, kudos to Bill Peet for creating the adorable Wumps and crafting an environmental tale that is still thought-provoking almost forty years later. Sad to see that the tale is still as relevant today as it was back then!!!

Aimee says

As soon as I saw the cover, I knew I had to read it. And then I saw the publication date (1970) and I got even more excited. Opened the book and saw rocket ships... not quite what I expected for a book with a bunch of fuzzy rodents on the cover.

The message is obvious: humans are destroying the planet. Sadly, even more so now than 45 years ago. Some of the illustrations are a little ugly by today's standards, but this book would be a good way into a conversation with your elementary schooler about climate change or imperialism. And the Wumps' adorableness stand the test of time.

Ronyell says

“The Wump World” is an inspiring environmental story from the great mind of Bill Peet and it is about how the Wumps’ world changes when a race called the Pollutians come onto the Wump world and start polluting the world. “The Wump World” is a truly effective tale that really delivers the message of the dangers of pollution in a creative and dramatic way.

Bill Peet has done a magnificent job at bringing the message of the consequences of polluting as the Wump World becomes so polluted that no life can really live on the planet. Many children will understand the negative effects of pollution as the book does a great job at describing the terrible effects that pollution caused on the Wump World. Bill Peet's illustrations are beautiful and effective as the illustrations of the wumps are creative as the wumps look like half moose and half elephant creatures and there are more creative images in this book as the Pollutians look like little blue people. The images that stood out the most in this book are the images of the pollution that the Pollutians have brought to the Wump World as the sky and the world looks so dark and dreary, which effectively brings out the message of the dangers of pollution in an effective way.

Parents should know that the Pollutians do not seem to learn their lesson as they seem more intent on finding another planet to live on rather than just fixing up the mess they have caused. Parents should tell their children that pollution is bad for the environment and that if they caused a mess, they have to clean up after themselves.

“The Wump World” is a heartwarming tale about the importance of respecting the environment that children will learn greatly from I would recommend this book to children ages five and up since the length of the book might bore smaller children.

Review is also on: Rabbit Ears Book Blog