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Steve Braunias

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Steve Braunias : Fish of the Week: Selected Columns before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fish of the Week: Selected Columns:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. worth picking up By Lost John This is a collection of 80 weekly newspaper columns written by New Zealand journalist Steve Braunias between February 2005 and June 2007. As Braunias indicates in his introduction, writing a weekly column is more taxing than might at first appear. He puts 12 hours' work into each 900 word offering; his entire Monday, every week. That itself is quite a commitment, but the

harder part is to find some topic worthy of those 12 hours, 900 words, and his readers' attention, week after week after week. It helps to be a man (or woman) of many parts, and to have strong personal likes and dislikes, and not to shrink from offending those who feel differently. Braunias qualifies on all those counts; and that he and his publisher thought fit to re-publish in book form about two-thirds of his total output over a period of not much more than two years tends to speak both for itself and for his popularity in his native country. Among his enthusiasms are bird-watching - on which he is also a published author - barbecues, beef steak, and his infant daughter, who during the course of this series is expected, comes into the world, and becomes someone to whom he can begin to show the world. He takes enormous pleasure in that, and in showing her to the world. He is clearly also interested in, and succeeds in interesting us, in New Zealand's terrain and history. Australia and Tasmania he is not so keen on. (Is there a country anywhere that gets on well with its immediate neighbors?) A couple of visits to England produce mixed reports. Mixed as they are, those reports are highly perceptive. Most Brits would never walk in London's East End (nor, come to that, Central Manchester, or within the precincts of a Cambridge College), let alone notice and report what he does. Some entertaining controversy tends to produce itself; from readers who insist on taking seriously what he thought was very obviously a joke, and others who take diametrically opposing views on matters such as the quality of New Zealand beef steak. The content of their e-mails frequently becomes instant copy for a subsequent column. His purported correspondence with a Nigerian e-mail scammer is good stuff too, made all the more amusing by incorporating the standing New Zealand joke that spontaneous telephone calls between the southern and northern hemispheres tend to interrupt the sleep of the party at the other end. In all, it is worth picking-up this book to read two or three columns at a time. As with anything composed of short pieces of varying relationship to each other, it is best not to try reading more than that at a single sitting.

A collection of New Zealand's most celebrated journalist's works, this lascivious selection of Steve Braunias's columns addresses a variety of topics, including the current state of New Zealand steak, the beauty of mangroves, the lunacy of film festivals, the attractions of small towns, the charms of Cambridge University, and the strange habits of the English. With a satirical voice and keenly astute observations on society, these best of columns shed light on the surprisingly vulnerable life of a writer and the love-struck nature of being a father.

About the Author Steve Braunias is an award-winning writer and columnist. His weekly column appears in The Sunday Star-Times' Sunday magazine. His first book of selected columns, Fool's Paradise, won Best First Book of Nonfiction at the 2002 Montana Book Awards. He has been editor of Capital Times, feature writer at Metro, deputy editor at The Listener, and senior writer with The Sunday Star-Times. He is a contributing writer to TV One's Eating Media Lunch and The Unauthorised History of New Zealand.