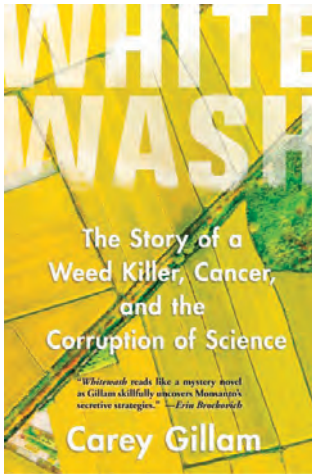


Whitewash

THE STORY OF A WEED KILLER, CANCER, AND THE CORRUPTION OF SCIENCE



By Carey Gillam
Published by Island Press
October 10, 2017, 272 pages

Much of *Whitewash* will be familiar to readers of Carey Gillam's articles on glyphosate and Monsanto in the *Huffington Post*. Although Ms. Gillam's articles present a deeper view than most, the book length enables her to dig even deeper into the lies and deception that keep glyphosate on the market—and in our food, water, and land.

Formerly a senior U.S. correspondent for Reuters newswire, the author is now research director for U.S. Right to Know and has been recognized as one of the top journalists covering food and agriculture. In the book, she makes broader connections, ultimately indicting the entire pesticide industry and the regulators charged with protecting us from the dangers inherent in its products.

As I write this review, I am riding the train through a landscape transformed by glyphosate—thousands of acres of corn and soybeans in Illinois, probably all sprayed with glyphosate. The monotony and lack of diversity is depressing to an ecologist. This is a landscape created by an agriculture that depends on killing in order to grow crops.

The killing takes place in the field and off. Off the field, Ms. Gillam documents the ever-continuing efforts by Monsanto to cover up—through fraud, intimidation, ghostwriting agency documents—the science showing that glyphosate kills humans as well as weeds. For example, Monsanto led attacks on Aaron Blair, PhD, who chaired the committee of the prestigious International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) that classified glyphosate as a probable human carcinogen. Through CropLife America, Monsanto pressured EPA to remove the world-renowned epidemiologist Peter Infante, PhD from a science advisory panel (SAP) examining the carcinogenicity of

glyphosate. Monsanto ensured that government agencies would not sample food for glyphosate residues. A recurring theme is the support given to Monsanto by regulatory agencies—particularly by EPA, whose response to the IARC finding was described by Ms. Gillam: “But EPA said there was nothing to fear, for the studies showed glyphosate’s safety. What the EPA did not say was that 27 of the 32 studies were conducted by or funded by Monsanto or its industry allies. Only five of the studies considered by EPA were independent, and three of those five did in fact find that the chemical could pose a threat.”

In the field, the success of glyphosate comes from its action against *all* plants—all plants except those engineered to tolerate it. The combination of a totally nonselective herbicide and “Roundup Ready” crops has been a huge success for Monsanto, which gives the company incentive to use every means possible to protect it. Unfortunately for Monsanto, it cannot thwart evolution, and evolution has produced monster weeds that are not susceptible to glyphosate. But Monsanto’s insane response—if insanity is doing something over and over and expecting a different outcome—is to repeat the process with another herbicide, dicamba. However, the tragic effects of that endeavor on farms and farmers—resulting in drift damage throughout the South and Midwest, rifts in rural communities, and at least one murder—are only insane from the perspective of weed control. Meanwhile, Monsanto will continue to rake in profits.

The highlights presented here focus on Monsanto and glyphosate, but Ms. Gillam knows that they merely represent a particularly disturbing case history. Monsanto is not the only company rewriting agency science, and glyphosate is not the only chemical poisoning people and the landscape. The corruption of science in regulating pesticides is inevitable given EPA’s reliance on risk assessments and industry-generated studies. The poisoning of people and the land will continue until we adopt methods of food production based on nurturing the ecosystem and soil biology rather than killing it.

Every pesticide activist should read *Whitewash*. It will produce outrage, and that outrage can only lead to action.

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