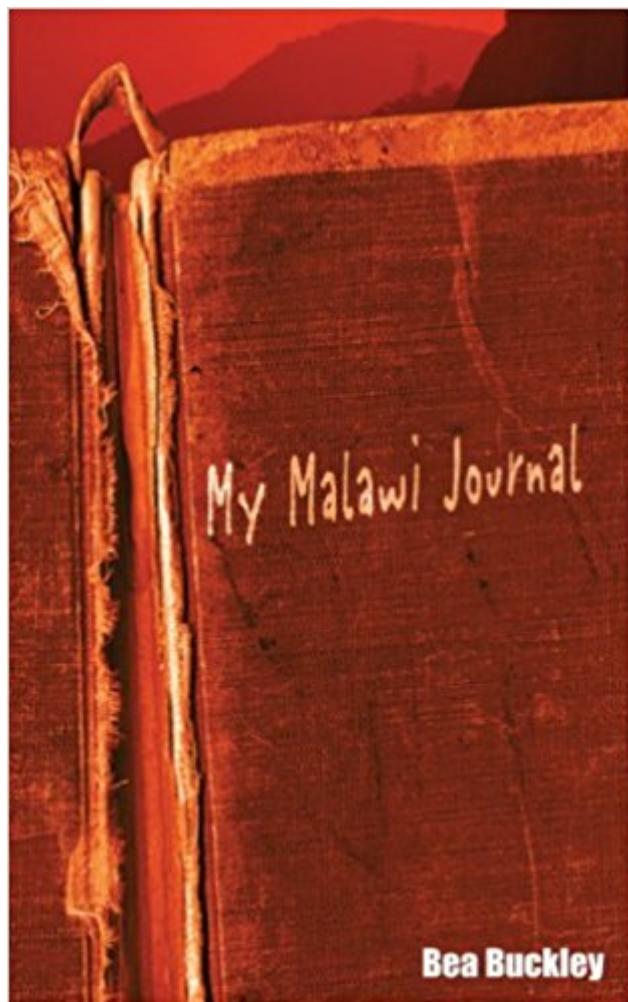


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My Malawi Journal



Synopsis

My Malawi Journal is a travelogue, in which the writer narrates her rich experiences of Malawi, a small, landlocked country in east central Africa. As a Peace Corps volunteer, the author lives with her adopted village family and gains first-hand knowledge of the hard rural life. A simple and chronological account, of the day-to-day activities of the narrator, gives the reader an insight into the widespread poverty and hunger that exists amongst a large population of the world.

Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Athena Press (January 13, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1931456488

ISBN-13: 978-1931456487

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.5 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 1.3 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

If you are interested in the Peace Corps and/or Malawi, avoid this work. Filled with misspellings and completely lacking in content and depth, this book is a waste of time.

As a Peace Corps volunteer who will be serving in Malawi shortly, I was so excited to get this book for Christmas and I read it right away. Although it was very insightful, brutally honest (ie- I can't even count the number of bowel mentionings), and written in everyday language (this includes multiple grammatical errors), I just can't see why anyone would want to publish a journal such as hers. So yes, if you are interested in the Peace Corps, are in the application process, or already nominated for a certain region, particularly Africa, I would definitely not suggest this book, unless you are 100% sure you want to go and would like to read up on the culture of Malawi and what the PC happenings looks like. If you are looking for motivation or encouragement to go overseas and dive into another culture and way of life, pass on this book.

This book was a colossal waste of space. All she did was complain and write about her trips to the chim. This could have taken place in any Third World country. She completely failed to see any of the beauty or rich culture around her--something I only partially fault her for, the rest of the blame resting the indoctrination Peace Corps refers to as training. This is a neurotic and whiny account of time in a beautiful place, the people of which, though impoverished, have a joy and generosity from which any American, and especially this author, should take a lesson. This book is crap. Don't waste your time with it. Go to Malawi instead and try to not focus on yourself the entire time--though I know this is difficult for Americans.

Bea Buckley's approaches her Peace Corps experience with trepidation and a kind of self-imposed ageism. Though no doubt well-intentioned, she worries and whines during her few months in Malawi concerned with toothpaste and clean underwear. Only once--this when she is waiting for a ride to the airport to go home after quitting--does she allow herself to see the beauty and possibilities of the country. Whether the Peace Corps failed her by not screening its candidates properly or whether Buckley failed herself hardly matters. Overwhelmed by depression and worries about physical illness, she cannot continue. Her family, for whom she claims this book is written, should never have allowed her to publish it. The writing is atrocious, needs editing, and the product is not what it claims to be--about the poverty and hunger in a Third World country. It is about a woman who is so self-involved that she cannot see beyond her own minor discomfort (on a bus, with the food, outhouse, darkness, even Athlete's foot!) to allow herself the compassion necessary to identify with those more needy than she. As a reader older than Buckley, I resented her ageism. As a person who has frequently traveled to impoverished countries, I found her desperation (She brushed her teeth with perfumed soap, for heaven's sake!) pathetic.

This book badly needed editing once the inexplicable decision was made to publish it. Buckley does not give us a sense of the history of the country, the political situation, environmental problems or anything else connected to Malawi. Most of the text (laden with exclamation points tagging the most trivial observations) is concerned with the author's intestinal problems; thus the claim that the book is about Malawi is misleading and the title should have been "My Truncated Experiences with the Peace Corps in a Generic African Country." Truly a squandered opportunity.

I was so frustrated with this book! All Bea does is complain! The bugs, the water, how she slept, her eyes, her age, her energy, the language! Horrible account of her very very short time in the Peace

Corps! She doesn't DO anything in the book!

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