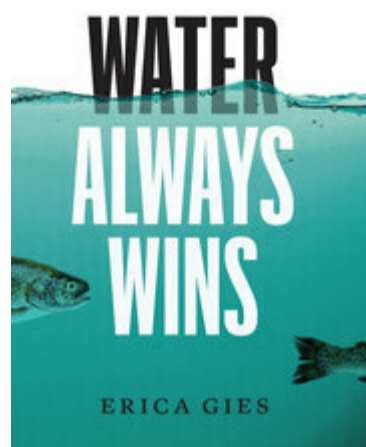


BOOK REVIEWS

Biography

Water Always Wins

THRIVING IN AN AGE OF
DROUGHT AND DELUGE



Erica Gies

Head of Zeus, £20.00

Water is essential for plant and animal life. Over the last 90 years the human population has quadrupled, and severe changes in climate are now leading to increased and decreased precipitation in different geographical locations. These changes are causing many people to rethink the way they manage water.

Gies, an award-winning journalist, has travelled around the world to see and hear about new ways of managing water. She has looked at the effect of dams, large and small, the reintroduction of beavers, and managed retreat from the coast to allow effective development of mangrove swamps and marshes.

She has also explored ways in which surface water management can be improved so that it has a chance to sink into the subsoil and recharge the groundwater reserves. These groundwaters are, in many places, being pumped out for use in dry weather and are not being adequately recharged. Close to the sea this allows saltwater intrusion into freshwater reserves.

This is an account of the many initiatives hoping to reverse the way humans have mismanaged water over centuries, but particularly during the last century. While many of these schemes are to be applauded, I do wonder whether there is sufficient space for them and for the needs of the enlarged human population.

There is a list of notes indicating where Gies has obtained her information, but sadly no index. The book should appeal to those who want an introduction to new ways of thinking about water management.

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