



# The Control of Nature

By John McPhee

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*The Control of Nature* is John McPhee's bestselling account of places where people are locked in combat with nature. Taking us deep into these contested territories, McPhee details the strategies and tactics through which people attempt to control nature. Most striking is his depiction of the main contestants: nature in complex and awesome guises, and those attempting to wrest control from her - stubborn, sometimes foolhardy, more often ingenious, and always arresting characters.

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## **The Control of Nature By John McPhee Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

Master how-it-works writer John McPhee has instructed his readers in the arcana of how oranges are commercially graded, how mountains form, how canoes are built and oceans crossed. In *The Control of Nature* he turns his attention once more to geology and the human struggle against nature. In one sketch, he explores the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' unrealized plan to divert the flow of the Mississippi River into a tributary, the Atchafalaya, for flood control; in another, he looks at the ingenious ways in which an Icelandic engineer saved a southern harbor on that island from being destroyed by a lava flow; in a third, he examines a complex scheme to protect Los Angeles from boulders ejected from mountains by compression and tectonic movement. As always, McPhee combines a deep knowledge of his subject with a narrative approach that is wholly accessible; you may not have thought you were interested in earthquakes and flood control, but he gently leads you to take a passionate concern in such matters.

### Review

"All three elemental battles recounted by the masterly McPhee are unified by the most uncontrolled and stubborn of all forces: human nature." ?R. Z. Sheppard, *Time*

"It is difficult to put these stories aside. If the stories bear witness to the ultimate triumph of nature over human engineering, they also testify to the triumph of art over nature." ?Stephen J. Pyne, *The New York Times Book Review* (front page)

"This book is unmistakable McPhee: the silky narrative, with keen detail and sharp dialogue, the finely drawn characters, the nimble metaphors." ?Stephen MacDonald, *The Wall Street Journal*

"Some of his passages left me gasping for breath...This book gave me more pure enjoyment than anything I've read in a long time." ?Christopher Shaw, *The Washington Post Book World*

### About the Author

**John McPhee** was born in Princeton, New Jersey, and was educated at Princeton University and Cambridge University. His writing career began at *Time* magazine and led to his long association with *The New Yorker*, where he has been a staff writer since 1965. Also in 1965, he published his first book, *A Sense of Where You Are*, with Farrar, Straus and Giroux, and in the years since, he has written nearly 30 books, including *Oranges* (1967), *Coming into the Country* (1977), *The Founding Fish* (2002), *Uncommon Carriers* (2007), and *Silk Parachute* (2011). *Encounters with the Archdruid* (1972) and *The Curve of Binding Energy* (1974) were nominated for National Book Awards in the category of science. McPhee received the Award in Literature from the Academy of Arts and Letters in 1977. In 1999, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for *Annals of the Former World*. He lives in Princeton, New Jersey.

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**Russell Carson:**

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**Kurt Bohnert:**

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