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High Tide on Main Street: Rising Sea Level and the Coming Coastal Crisis

John Englander
The Science Bookshelf (Dec 1, 2012)
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High Tide on Main Street: Rising Sea Level and the Coming of the Coastal Crisis addresses the topic of rising water levels worldwide based on climate change. While it's presented in an easy-to-understand fashion that makes it accessible to either the average student or transit reader, its inclusion of researched data and to-the-point language make it something to be taken seriously, if uneasily, by everyone walking on two legs.

John Englander, a geologist and environmentalist, makes his case within the first few chapters. He digs deep into the histories of rising sea levels and uses such astonishing evidence as now-submerged marine life and stalactites/stalagmites almost as literary imagery to communicate to the reader where his concern for rising sea levels comes from.

High Tide on Main Street also addresses common myths, including Biblical stories and Haida mythology. Englander includes a hilarious portion about the stupidity of combatting rising seas with floating house construction. And there's the odd political jab against certain pushy, rich skeptics—i.e. Donald Trump—along with some simultaneous debunking of environmentalist fanaticism. Instead, the author calls for level-headed, science-based thinking and the avoidance of corporate finger pointing and even overt political advocacy to avoid problems at the bureaucratic level. This combination of rational ideas and humor gives the book a truthful air and the tone such a publication deserves to be truly accessible to the reader.

There are a lot of graphics and charts included, and some doomsday bits about the losses to shore land and property if sea levels rise as Englander predicts. When all is said and done, *High Tide on Main Street* makes its case with less rhetoric than contained in similar books, which typically hail from the apocalyptic writing school of political-science journalese. The skeptic, the green warriors, and the stone-hearted can all gain something from its content, namely the concern for an intelligent, data-supported approach to combating environmental issues. It's a book for everyone, and there's no higher compliment.
JAMES BURT (February 5, 2013)

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