

The Wonder of Water: Lived Experience, Policy, and Practice

Ingrid Lemán Stefanovic, Editor

University of Toronto Press (Dec 15, 2019)

Softcover \$34.95 (256pp)

978-1-4875-0593-6

The thought-provoking and scholarly chapters of *The Wonder of Water* reframe how we think about water. This interdisciplinary collection examines the developing field of water ethics, with ideas about realigning human relationships with water and the natural landscape.

In the course of the book, a common theme emerges: water should not be viewed as an extractable resource. Instead, a more restorative view of the precious element is needed. Water not only embodies us, making up 60% of human bodies, but it underpins the function of the larger, living, and inanimate world.

Among the authors are environmental philosophers who explore big ideas about water's existential meaning. Stephan Harding's beautiful entry relates complex interconnections throughout the "water-spangled cosmos," like the effect water has in softening the outer crust to enable plate tectonics, affecting Earth's magnetic field to just the right degree to keep the atmosphere from evaporating into space. David Abram's lyrical prose about animal migrations, and Martin Lee Mueller's entry contrasting salmon fishing policies in Norway with those in the Olympic Peninsula, are also noteworthy contributions. They combine sparkling descriptions with new paradigms that rethink the Anthropocene narrative that "our weedy, invasive species" must dominate and befoul the biosphere.

Other entries are specific about the ways that water can be restored and protected, including the restoration of underground streams and riverfronts and ways to improve water quality and environmental justice in areas as diverse as Amsterdam, Nigeria, Toronto, and the Standing Rock Reservation. Several chapters contain thorough and passionate discussions of Indigenous and non-Western philosophies that illuminate how we should be decoupling from harmful practices that endanger water security.

It is no accident that *The Wonder of Water* starts and ends with poetry. While it is an academic and rigorous compilation, most of its contributors infuse their prose with expressive admiration of water's foundational and life-affirming properties in a way that's wonder inducing indeed.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (January / February 2020)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.