



## The Control of Nature

By McPhee, John

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989. Book Condition: New. Brand New, Unread Copy in Perfect Condition. A+ Customer Service!  
 Summary: While John McPhee was working on his previous book, *Rising from the Plains*, he happened to walk by the engineering building at the University of Wyoming, where words etched in limestone said: "Strive on--the control of Nature is won, not given." In the morning sunlight, that central phrase--"the control of nature"--seemed to sparkle with unintended ambiguity. Bilateral, symmetrical, it could with equal speed travel in opposite directions. For some years, he had been planning a book about places in the world where people have been engaged in all-out battles with nature, about (in the words of the book itself) "any struggle against natural forces--heroic or venal, rash or well advised--when human beings conscript themselves to fight against the earth, to take what is not given, to rout the destroying enemy, to surround the base of Mt. Olympus demanding and expecting the surrender of the gods." His interest had first been sparked when he went into the Atchafalaya--the largest river swamp in North America--and had learned that virtually all of its waters were metered and rationed by a U.S. Army Corps of...



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