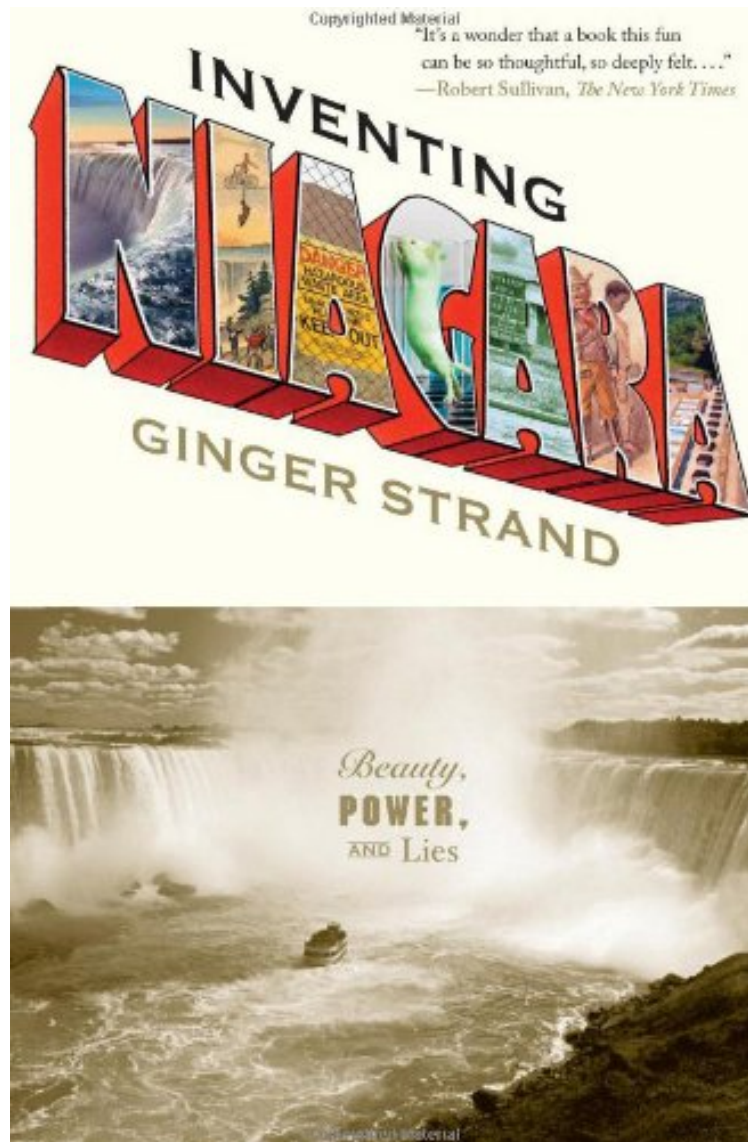


[Download ebook] Inventing Niagara: Beauty, Power, and Lies

Inventing Niagara: Beauty, Power, and Lies

Ginger Strand

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Ginger Strand : Inventing Niagara: Beauty, Power, and Lies before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Inventing Niagara: Beauty, Power, and Lies:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. while creating a ghost town full of empty useless buildings and structures that serve no purpose By Texas Teacher Having grown up in the city of Niagara Falls, NY, I truly appreciate how Ms. Strand has chronicled the demise of the city over the past two centuries. Avarice were/are the primary factors that led, and continue to lead, the politicians of this once thriving town to sell out to seedy developers, whose only

interest is to make money off their ill advised schemes. Essentially the politicians of the 1960-70's did the most damage to the city, with their "urban renewal" projects that decimated the historic downtown and thereby ruined the tourist trade forever in the city, while creating a ghost town full of empty useless buildings and structures that serve no purpose. It's a sad place to visit as it continues to go into decline with each passing decade. Meanwhile across the border in Canada, the tourist trade is bigger than ever.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An idiosyncratic, first person look at Niagara Falls. ...By FallingwatersAn idiosyncratic, first person look at Niagara Falls. She has a journalist's bent, not a historian's, and this is neither a guide book for the curious nor a deeply researched history. With a brief overview of the history of the falls, she move on to interview people that catch her interest. The owners of two of Clifton Hill's tourist stops are made somewhat interesting; she indulges in her own gentle sarcastic commentary in lieu of any attempt at objective conclusions.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must read if you're going to Niagra FallsBy Danielle BarryI thoroughly enjoyed this book and it made me want to go to Niagra Falls and follow the author's footsteps. She approaches the topic from several different fascinating and rather quirky perspectives. The writing style is engaging as well, a very nice balance of scholarly and breezy. My only very small complaint: although I enjoyed a lot of the details of her research process, I sometimes found the personal details and humor a little grating over the long haul. That said, I would still highly recommend this book to anyone interested in history, travel, the environment, art, feminism, or pop culture.

Americans call Niagara Falls a natural wonder, but the Falls aren't very natural anymore. In fact, they are a study in artifice. Water diverted, riverbed reshaped, brink stabilized and landscape redesigned, the Falls are more a monument to man's meddling than to nature's strength. Held up as an example of something real, they are hemmed in with fakery -- waxworks, haunted houses, IMAX films and ersatz Indian tales. A symbol of American manifest destiny, they are shared politely with Canada. Emblem of nature's power, they are completely human-controlled. Archetype of natural beauty, they belie an ugly environmental legacy still bubbling up from below. On every level, Niagara Falls is a monument to how America falsifies nature, reshaping its contours and redirecting its force while claiming to submit to its will. Combining history, reportage and personal narrative, *Inventing Niagara* traces Niagara's journey from sublime icon to engineering marvel to camp spectacle. Along the way, Ginger Strand uncovers the hidden history of America's waterfall: the Mohawk chief who wrested the Falls from his adopted tribe, the revered town father who secretly assisted slave catchers, the wartime workers who unknowingly helped build the Bomb and the building contractor who bought and sold a pharaoh. With an uncanny ability to zero in on the buried truth, Strand introduces us to underwater dams, freaks of nature, mythical maidens and 280,000 radioactive mice buried at Niagara. From LaSalle to Lincoln to Los Alamos, Mohawks to Marilyn, Niagara's story is America's story, a tale of dreams founded on the mastery of nature. At a time of increasing environmental crisis, *Inventing Niagara* shows us how understanding the cultural history of nature might help us rethink our place in it today.

From Publishers WeeklyWith wit and passion, Strand (*Flight: A Novel*) explores the history of Niagara Falls and shows that the famous natural wonder is in reality a prime example of man's manipulation of nature, constantly exploited to attract tourists. In the 19th century, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, appalled by the crass commercialism of souvenir shops, ugly signs and cheap attractions, pledged to restore Niagara to its natural beauty; instead, he created a fake wilderness. In the 20th century, humans learned to control the falls by harnessing them for electric power, and this led to what is for Strand the most shocking fakery: the water going over the falls is manipulated for greater output in the daytimeto impress visitorsand turned down at night to generate more power. In addition, the capacity to generate large amounts of hydroelectricity has made Niagara Falls a prime spot for industries that manufacture electrochemical products and for nuclear weapons facilities; the author paints a vivid picture of a region awash today in toxic waste and radioactive contaminants. Strand's provocative and iconoclastic book says much about how America has dominated nature, despoiled it and shrouded the offense in myth. 8 pages of color photos not seen by PW. (May) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"Niagara Falls is where America discovered the sublime. And Ginger Strand has discovered everything that happened since. If you want to understand our relationship with the natural world, you better read this book." -- Bill McKibben, author of *The Bill McKibben Reader*"Here we have two captivating stories -- one about America's most famous waterworks, and the other about how a self-proclaimed 'hydrogeek' schooled herself in the myths and meaning of the great falls. Displaying wit and verve on a scale worthy of her subject, Ginger Strand shows that Niagara has been harnessed, perhaps to a greater degree than any other of our natural wonders, to human purposes." -- Scott Russell Sanders, author of *A Private History of Awe*"A brilliantly entertaining history of America's original natural wonder and its heedless boosters and failed visionaries." -- Mike Davis, author of *City of Quartz* and *Planet of Slums*"As engaging as it is insightful, *Inventing Niagara* is a careful and caring study of how myth and machine have covered over a great natural place. Peeling back the myths and looking behind the machines, as she brilliantly does, Strand reveals who we have been and who we need to become." -- Curtis White, author of *The Spirit of Disobedience* and *The Middle Mind*"This is a deep and exhilarating book. Its material could have been played for irony, but Strand chose

profundity instead, burrowing down through self-conscious layers of artifice until she arrives at a place both strange and vital." -- David Gessner, author of *Soaring with Fidel* "Strand's book is a kick, illuminated and infected with her wry voice."