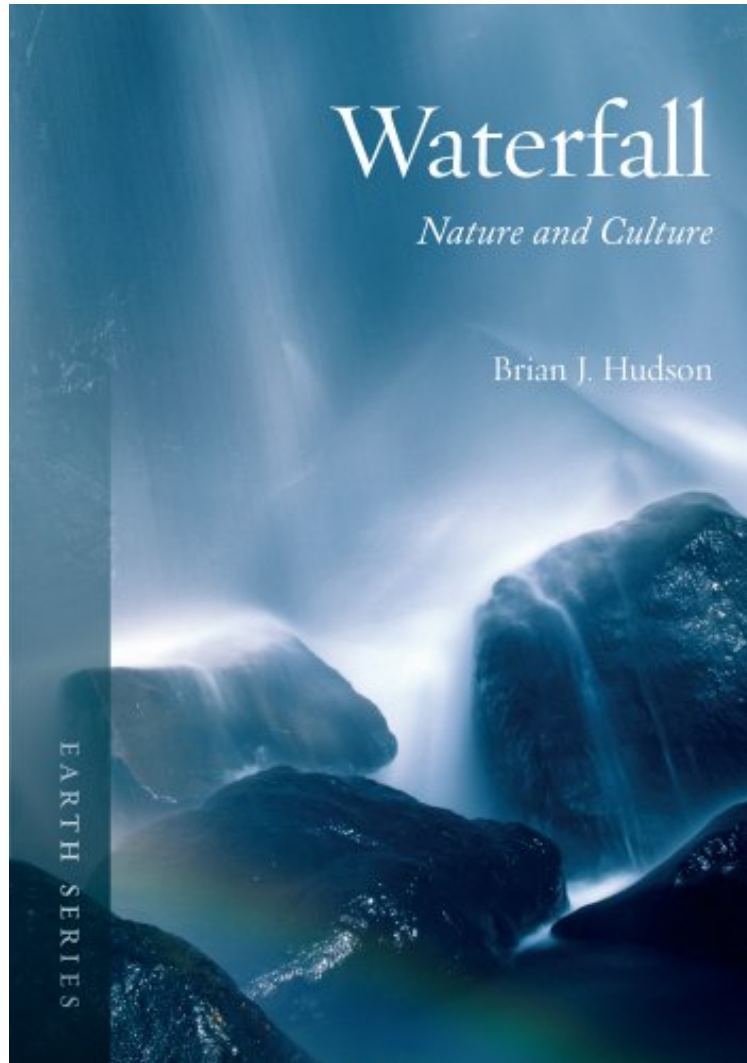


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## Waterfall: Nature and Culture (Earth)

*Brian Hudson*

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**Brian Hudson : Waterfall: Nature and Culture (Earth)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Waterfall: Nature and Culture (Earth):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. "Refreshingly Insightful Natural Wonder"By Ivana MladenovicBrian J. Hudson, Professor of Civil Engineering at Queensland University in Australia, and geographer and urban planner by training, has created an amazingly well organized, diligently researched, clearly written, and generously illustrated masterpiece. Book lovers and nature lovers will be exceptionally impressed, refreshed, and grateful for his highly entertaining, endlessly insightful, small-formatted, and affordable book. Its 117 stunning illustrations adorn each of the very detailed, appealing, and diverse 12 chapters. As part of the "Earth Series" collection of books, Hudson skillfully presents, chronicles, and reinvigorates the universal allure of the waterfall through the ages. He sheds new light and life on this natural wonder.In particular, he allows the reader to explore and

clarify numerous terms associated with various types of waterfalls and their formations. These include the cataract, a "steep, tumultuous, large waterfall", the cascade, a "small delicate waterfall or series of uninterrupted waterfalls", the "ephemeral" waterfall, generated by an "occasional rainstorm", the artificial waterfall, created through the man-made diversion, redirection, or restriction of water flow, and the natural waterfall. Many countries are utilizing these various scenic landscape resources while catering to the "tourist gaze" and boosting their economy (208). The author's primary agenda is to inform us about the complex conditions surrounding the formation of the natural waterfall via the forceful and "erosive action of flowing water" and the favorable alignment of geographical and geological conditions. He identifies these new beginnings of the waterfall as "high altitude of land traversed by rivers or streams" (12). Such prevalent waterfall formations are interwoven with revealing facts concerning the most numerous waterfalls in the world. They are chiefly located in North America and Europe (18). Additionally, the world's most famous and most notable waterfalls are: Hannoki Falls, "the tallest waterfall in Japan at 1,600 ft", Yosemite Falls, California, "the tallest in the state", Africa's Victoria Falls, "the largest curtain of water in the world", and Venezuela's Angel Falls, "the tallest waterfall in the world at 3,212 ft." Regarding the waterfall's function, impact, beauty, global appeal, and global future, Hudson reinvestigates and reinterprets the breathtaking visual marvels of the waterfall, its natural forces, and its capacity for influencing historically numerous and unexpected inspirations, inventions, and improvements in human thought and human life. Waterfalls have long been praised and harnessed for their amazing "hydro-power." This power is transmitted over long distances, while falling water constitutes "derived energy" from an "immediate source." Such alternative energy options can be utilized extensively in massive energy renewal programs all over the world. This power supply can be redirected for the benefits of an individual home or for a large community centered on the construction of dams and reservoirs. Our earliest connections with the waterfall as an essential source of life have also given rise to the earliest human settlements and the implementation of technological innovations. It is interesting to note that a segment of the northeastern United States has been designated as a "Fall Line" due to its abundance in waterfalls, streams, rivers, and rapids (172). The fascinating glimpse into the mesmerizing power of the waterfall is associated with its rich cultural legacy. The rush of creative thought and action, which the waterfall has inspired, is evident throughout history and across many cultures. The majesty of the waterfall has continuously promoted and prompted a variety of creative thinkers, poets, myth makers, individualistic and adventuresome naturalists, energetic travel guides and tourists, practical urban and landscape designers and architects, painters, photographers, festival planners, musicians, movie directors and environmentally conscious activists. Each of these experiences has been unique and has produced unique results. At the same time, these distinct inspirations are motivated by a shared desire to capture the powerful essence, force, fragility, and divinity of the waterfall. It is clear that this potent natural wonder continues to exert an influential effect on the emotions, a communal sense of gratitude, and limitless admiration. Brian Hudson's expert analysis on the endlessly fascinating subject of the waterfall actually becomes the ideal catalyst for the reader and explorer. This book becomes an incredible journey of rediscovery. It stresses that the viewing, study, and conservation of waterfalls is an admirable and rewarding task for humanity. In spite of the world's diversity, no one can deny the eternal links that waterfalls create within us and around us. They have become our shared pilgrimage sites and our interpersonal quests for spiritual communion, enlightenment, and sacred regeneration. Hudson concludes that there is something truly uplifting about the waterfall as a "beauty spot." Our quests to better understand and appreciate its original and overpowering phenomena can transform our thoughts and actions into a "beautiful, exploratory invitation." We will be greatly enriched by the waterfall's known and unknown facts, mysteries, and creative motivations through time.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. More than falling water. Not everyone is interested in waterfalls, but if you are, take a look at this, By lyndonbrecht I don't think this is a masterpiece as another review suggests, but it really is a very good book. The writing is excellent, interesting to read and the illustrations are lavish. The book starts with what might be described as the natural history of waterfalls, then goes into threats to them--which include tourism, development and especially hydropower. Hudson looks at geology, river flow, and other aspects of the interface between the fact of falls and the idea of falls in culture. The section on waterfalls in literature and poetry is good. The book examines falls mostly in Europe, North America and New Zealand, but does look at a few others, in Africa and Asia. The illustrations partly make up for this somewhat limited look. If you are interested in buying the book, double check your order, because there is another book in the same series, with the title "Water."

From Niagara Falls in North America to Angel Falls in Venezuela, Victoria Falls in Africa to Hannoki Falls in Japan, waterfalls provide some of the world's most spectacular scenes. Whether thundering cataracts or exquisite cascades, these astonishing natural wonders attract hordes of visitors each year. While waterfalls have often been considered in terms of their picturesque or sublime qualities, their rich cultural background has been neglected. In *Waterfall*, Brian Hudson portrays these marvels in a new light. He explores the many myths and legends that tumbling rivers and streams have inspired in cultures ranging from Native American to Celtic and Indian, and how they have been described by the poets and depicted in film and music. His examples of paintings by Chinese and Dutch Masters, the Hudson River School in America and in Britain by J.M.W. Turner, Thomas Girtin and others present a fascinating

variety of approach and technique in artistic attempts to capture the wonders painters encountered. Waterfalls also influenced landscape architects, for artificial effects featuring cascading water have long been a staple of park, garden and even backyard design. Hudson also discusses the ecology of waterfalls and the conflict that arises from their importance as both a source of hydroelectric power and tourist income in many countries. Countless waterfalls have been sacrificed to development, and many more are currently under threat, as the demand for energy and water grows. A superb addition to the library of any nature lover, this beautifully illustrated book is a fascinating look at the history and value of waterfalls.

At last, a series of books on the earth for lay people that combine authoritative, succinct, and entertaining narrative with magnificent illustrations. The Earth series will make us marvel anew at the diversity and astounding beauty of the world around us. Each book will take popular understanding of the earth to a new level. No one seriously interested in the future of our planet should be without them.