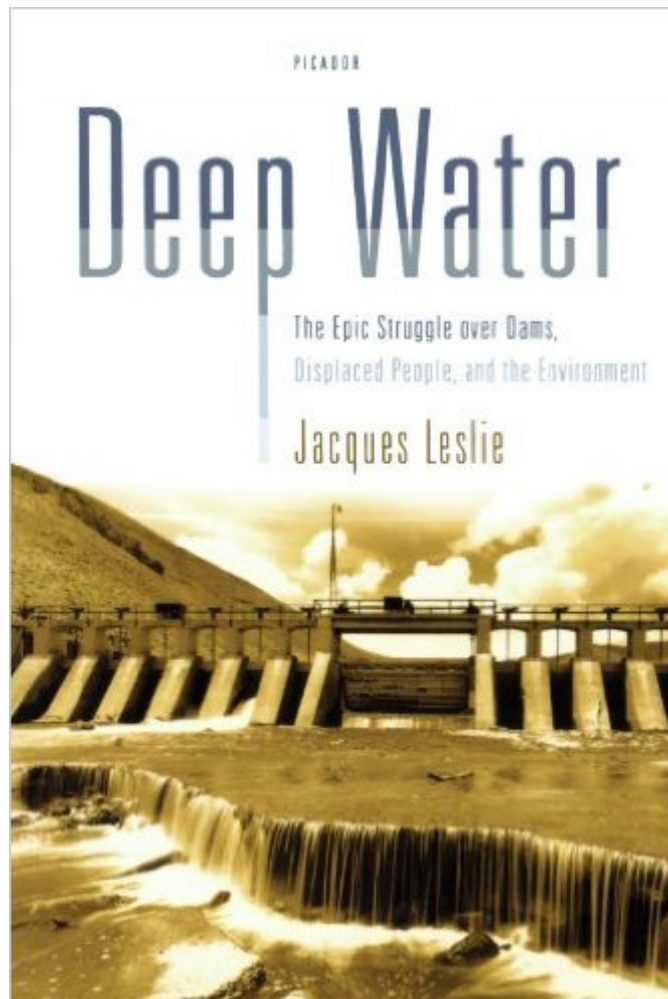


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# Deep Water: The Epic Struggle Over Dams, Displaced People, And The Environment



## Synopsis

A Discover Magazine Top Science Book of the Year A Northern California Book Award Finalist There are more than 45,000 of them in the world. They have altered the speed of the planet's rotation, the tilt of its axis, and the shape of its gravitational field. They influence landscapes and societies. They are dams, and in *Deep Water*, Jacques Leslie offers an incisive, searching, and beautifully written account of the emerging crisis over dams and the world's water. Reporting in the tradition of John McPhee and Peter Matthiessen, Leslie examines the crisis through the lives of three people: Medha Patkar, the world's foremost anti-dam activist; Thayer Scudder, an American anthropologist; and Don Blackmore, an Australian water manager. In each of these engrossing portraits, Leslie shows how dams seduce national leaders with seeming bounties of water and power but end up producing blights on the citizenry and landscape. *Deep Water* is an eloquent and important book about the water crisis and a startling look at the fate of our planet.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The completion of the Hoover Dam in 1935 was a head-snapping experience â€” something like the moon landing, or the atomic bomb â€” history-making techno-craziness. It was the greatest construction project in human history, and the world's biggest power plant. It was a giant leap forward in humankind's crusade to enslave and abuse Big Mama Nature, and leave behind enormous messes for the kids. Legions of hustlers were thrilled to realize the fabulous new opportunities for becoming rich whilst not getting their hands dirty. From 1935 to 2000, about 45,000

large dams were constructed in 140 nations. In his book, *Deep Water*, Jacques Leslie takes readers to India, Africa, and Australia to explore the dark world of the dammed. In India, we meet Ms. Medha Patkar, a charismatic full-throttle activist determined to stop the Sardar Sarovar Dam on the Narmada River. It would flood the homes of 200,000 to 300,000, many of whom were indigenous tribal people. Tribal folks were happy to live in the roadless forest, where the Hindus didn't molest them. In the Hindu world, tribal people were assigned a status even lower than the untouchables. Tribes had zero political power. The primary villain in this book was the World Bank, which poured billions of dollars into dam projects, to spur what is comically referred to as sustainable development. Devious bureaucrats in India were highly skilled at diverting a good portion of this flood of money into their own pockets. The politicians of India were so corrupt that they made American officials almost look virtuous. Social and environmental concerns went out the window. In India alone, dams have displaced somewhere between 21 and 55 million people (40 to 80 million worldwide).

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