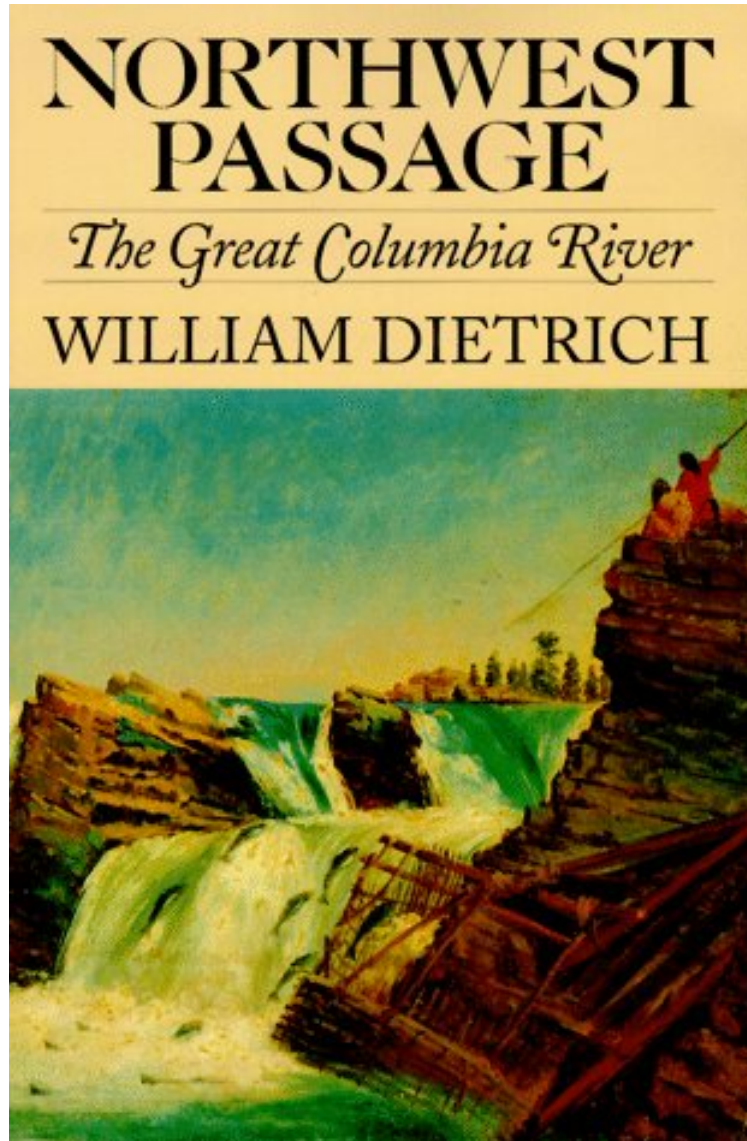


(Free) Northwest Passage

Northwest Passage

William Dietrich

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William Dietrich : Northwest Passage before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Northwest Passage:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. My personal perspective By Theodore Kobernick Other reviewers have done a great job, so I will offer my personal perspective. This superb history is easy to read, very entertaining. We live in Vancouver, Washington, across the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon. I grew up in Philadelphia, immersed in American history and wonderful museums -- more of the same during undergrad. years near Chicago.

When I came to Seattle in 1971, it seemed to me that the Pacific Northwest had no past worthy of the name "history". Of course there was the Lewis Clark expedition, but what else? My Dad was a Woody Guthrie fan: we often sang "Roll on Columbia" and "The Great Grand Coulee Dam" Well, within a year of getting to Seattle, I drove east to see that dam. Before getting anywhere near it we saw signs with "Columbia Reclamation". It was stunning to drive on a two lane country road, and see on the left a desert of volcanic rubble and sparse scrub vegetation. But on the right side of the road were green irrigated farm fields. Before and after. The dam itself was stunning. I had never seen anything to compare it to. Huge, massive! The trucks and cars of the dam workers looked like matchbox toys next to the dam. This was well before 9/11, so we enjoyed a full tour of the dam. Wow! Still, I failed to think of the dam in any historic sense. Forty (40) years later, having lived here in Vancouver twenty-one years, my neighbor loaned me Dietrich's book. It was so compelling that I bought my own copy. Dietrich completely changed my perspective regarding the history of the Northwest. I think "Northwest Passage: The Great Columbia River" should be required reading for all students (both youth and adult) who dwell near the Columbia, or in its vast basin. Highly desired reading for anyone living in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Recommended reading for anyone interested in the history of the United States. Dietrich's book really comes alive when he tells about the people he met and interviewed -- farmers, engineers, dam workers, fisheries biologists, tug barge crews, and members of several Native American nations. This is in addition to his many fascinating stories of various historic personages and their deeds. A good read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Raises the question about whether progress is good or bad. By Customer A well-written book and full of interesting history. Also somewhat depressing, given the mistreatment of the river and the Native Americans who lived in the area. Raises the question about whether progress is good or bad. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An excellent history of the Pacific Northwest. By Hank An excellent history of the Pacific Northwest. How the great passage was missed again and again, then "discovered" by a tyrannical ship captain who was then tricked by the native peoples who inhabited the area before his arrival.

"Dietrich's measures, thoughtful book views the Columbia through a succession of different lenses--as a bountiful fishery for the Indians, as a snag-ridden and nearly impassable highway for the early white explorers, as a hugely powerful manufacturer of hydroelectricity, as a source of irrigation for farmers, as the town drain for the mining and nuclear weapons industries. His Columbia is really a woven braid of the many rivers of the fisherman, the farmer, the engineer, the towboat operator, the explorer, the industrialist." -Jonathan Raban, author of Old Glory "A wonderful, disturbing and thought-provoking history of the Columbia River, Northwest Passage is a remarkable book, first of all in its scope and complexity. Here is a fine blend of natural history, of human history, and of political history." - Washington Post Book World "An engaging case study of a whole bundle of environmental and social issues (pollution, hydropower politics, Indian rights, resource economics) that should matter to people all over the country." - New York Times Book Review

From Publishers Weekly Washington's mighty Columbia River has been transformed in 60 years from an unruly river into a series of placid pools; it is the most heavily dammed river in the world, and the greatest producer of hydroelectricity. Dietrich (The Final Forest), Pulitzer prize-winning science reporter for the Seattle Times, looks at the Columbia as a whole?its history, geology, biology, hydrology, economics, contemporary politics and management. The report is disturbing and compelling. Wild salmon stocks have nearly disappeared; there are competing demands on the river for power, irrigation and fish. Dietrich charges that no single agency is in charge of measuring pollution or maintaining the health of the river. Conceding that dams are of undeniable benefit, producing energy, food, navigation and flood control, he notes that few would pass environmental and economic review today. This comprehensive survey of the Columbia ecosystem points out the social and environmental costs of engineering marvels. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Dietrich, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for the Seattle Times and author of The Final Forest (LJ 5/1/92), here covers a wealth of information and personal histories. Once supporting the greatest chinook salmon and steelhead trout runs in the world and one of the most complex native cultures on the continent, the Columbia has been transformed into a series of computer-controlled reservoirs virtually devoid of fish, designed to maximize hydroelectric production. While Dietrich has done a good job of examining the history, current conditions, and problems confronting the river from a variety of viewpoints, the organization of his text seems erratic at times. A well-researched chronology of the river is included. Recommended for all regional, as well as subject and history collections, in secondary school libraries and above. Tim Markus, Evergreen State Coll. Lib., Olympia, Wash. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. "A wonderful, disturbing and thought-provoking history of the Columbia River, Northwest Passage is a remarkable book, first of all in its scope and complexity. Here is a fine blend of natural history, of human history, and of political history." Washington Post Book World "An engaging case study of a whole bundle of environmental and social issues (pollution, hydropower politics, Indian rights, resource economics) that should matter to people all over the country." New York Times Book