Contents

Acknowledgments vii

Introduction: Water—Truly a Precious Commodity ix

CHAPTER ONE

"Improving" Rivers in America: From the Revolution to the Progressive Era 1

CHAPTER TWO

How Bad Theory Can Lead to Good Technology: Water Supply and Sewerage in the Age of Miasmas 37

CHAPTER THREE

Pure and Plentiful: The Development of Modern Waterworks in the United States, 1880–2000 57

CHAPTER FOUR

The Environmental Impact of the Big Dam Era 78

CHAPTER FIVE

Private Water: The Curious Case of San Jose's Water Supply 110

CHAPTER SIX

The Historical Significance of Houston's Buffalo Bayou 128

CHAPTER SEVEN

Houston's Public Sinks: Water and Wastewater Services— Local Concerns to Regional Challenges 144

CHAPTER EIGHT

Privatization of Water: U.S. and Worldwide Implications 181

Conclusion: The Question of Control 197

Further Reading 203

Notes 211

Index 275