

# **The Everglades: River of Grass Study Guide**

**The Everglades: River of Grass by Marjory Stoneman Douglas**

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# Plot Summary

The Everglades: River of Grass is written by Marjory Stoneman Douglas, who is a champion of environmental concerns regarding the Everglades. This fascinating book tells the history of the Everglades and the people of the Everglades. The author is the person who focused attention on the Everglades and how it was being destroyed by man and why it was important to protect it.

The Everglades is a grassy wetlands area in southern Florida. It begins south of Lake Okeechobee and extends the rest of the length of Florida. It has its own finely balanced ecosystem and supports a variety of animal and plant life. It plays an important role in the ecosystem of all of southern Florida and, therefore, affects the economic viability of the area.

Douglas discusses the structure and history of the Everglades and how it came to be inhabited by Indians. There were various tribes that settled in different parts of Florida and they adapted their ways to their environment. They arrived around 900 AD. As European navigation aids improved, the white man began to arrive. The Indians resisted any attempts to imprison them and maintained their freedom. They knew how to survive in the swamplands. As the explorers arrived, they interacted with the Indians. Many whites who were shipwrecked were taken captive.

The explorers dealt with the great Chief Carlos. Carlos was interested in maintaining peace with the white man but also in protecting the freedom of the Indians. For over three hundred years, the Indians thwarted the attempts of the white man to take control of Florida. When the continent began to be settled by the whites, the Indians were pushed further into the Everglades. There were frequent wars, especially once the government tried to relocate the Indians to the west.

As Florida became more settled, the Everglades became a sanctuary for escaped slaves who banded with the Indians. This remained a source of conflict until the end of the Civil War.

As Florida became more settled, the Everglades were confronted with the issues of modernization. There were attempts to drain the Everglades. As agriculture developed, the agricultural and industrial wastes were dumped into the Everglades which began to ruin the delicate balance of the ecosystem. Attempts at water management and flood control led to the entry of salt water which caused further damage to the ecosystem. This eventually led to efforts to protect the Everglades and to try to repair some of the damage that had taken place. The author, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, has been very active in these efforts.

The reader will find the Everglades River of Grass very interesting reading and well worth the time spent reading it. The reader will enjoy the book and find it filled with interesting details and facts.



# Chapter I

## Chapter I Summary and Analysis

There is no other place on Earth like the Everglades of Florida. It is the southernmost part of the United States, one degree away from the tropics. It lies below Lake Okeechobee, the second largest fresh water lake. The first white men arrived on the shores surrounding the Everglades.

The name 'Everglades' first came into use in the early eighteen hundreds. The Indians referred to the area as Pahayoke, which meant Grassy Water. The Everglades begins at Lake Okeechobee, the Indians meaning of which is Big Water, and is approximately seven hundred fifty square miles. The area is covered with saw grass that extends for the one hundred miles between Lake Okeechobee to the Gulf of Mexico. It ranges in width from fifty to seventy miles.

There are rivers and other small creeks that flow into Lake Okeechobee. They are formed from rain water and springs. There are no mountains or melting snows to feed them. The area receives an average of sixty five inches of rainfall per year. The rains begin in April or May and lasts for an hour or two everyday. The rains usually end by the end of May and then there is a long hot summer. Another rainy season begins in August or September. There are usually hurricanes in late September and October. The hurricane season officially closes in mid-November. After this, the dry season begins and the rain waters evaporate.

Rock lies below the water of Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades. The rock is limestone and is usually not exposed unless there is a drought. This rock structure is referred to as the Floridian plateau.

There is a large diversity of life in the Everglades, both flora and animal.



# Chapter II

## Chapter II Summary and Analysis

Man did not originate in the Everglades or Florida. The Indians moved to Florida. In the beginning, there were three races - white, black and a yellow and brown one that led to the red and yellow. All of the races migrated from where they arose, as did many animals. Many animals, like deer, tapirs and wildcats came to Florida. Since Florida is a peninsula, they were trapped there. Many became extinct. There was a wealth of fish life and sea birds.

The Indians were descended from Mongolians. The Indians that settled in Florida came from west of the Mississippi and spoke the Muskogean language. Once in southern Florida, they slowly developed their own civilization.

The first group of Indians were the Calusa and they settled the area between the Ten Thousand Islands and Cape Sable. The Mayaimi settled around the great central lake and the Jeaga settled along the east coast. The Tekesta settled on the eastern coast of southern Florida. They had no metals or flints to work with, only shells. They shaped the shells into tools and other implements. Their homes were built on poles or pilings and consisted of platforms and roofs. These people are believed to have arrived in the Everglades around 900 AD.

They invented a knife made of sharks teeth around 1200 AD. They established their burial grounds away from their living areas. The bodies were buried in either a straight position or in a fetal position. On the east coast, they boiled the flesh from the bones, tied the bones together and added them to the bones of the older generation.

The Indians became expert woodworkers, making canoes and other items. They also used gold, silver and copper to make ornaments.



# Chapter III

## Chapter III Summary and Analysis

The Age of Exploration began as Europeans looked for a way of reaching Asia. Colonies were established in various parts of the world as a result of sea travel. New technology resulted in navigation equipment like compasses and astrolabes, even though they had few maps. There was talk of legendary islands west of Portugal. Maps drawn in the early fourteen hundreds suggested the existence of Cuba, Jamaica, the Bahamas, and Florida, but they were wrong in their estimated distances. They began to hypothesize that the world was round.

In 1492, Spain sponsored an expedition by Admiral Christopher Columbus who would sail west to reach Asia. He reached the Bahamas and felt that Asia was beyond the islands. He made a second trip and more people came under Spanish domination. There was an Indian slave business and many smugglers. Other explorers followed.

The maps they made contained many errors because they did not have the precision instruments required to correctly determine latitude and longitude. John Cabot was the first to reach Florida. He was the first to explore the area in 1497.

During Ponce de Leon's 1513 voyage, he reached what he thought was an island that he named La Florida. He did not find the slaves or gold that he wanted and went on to explore the islands.



# Chapters IV and V

## Chapters IV and V Summary and Analysis

After the explorers reached Mexico and its riches, only Juan Ponce de Leon was interested in Florida where the Indians fought fiercely for their freedom. De Leon was killed trying to settle Florida. As the explorers moved around Florida, word spread among the Indians.

Panfilo de Narvaez was given the right to explore Florida and to conquer the people from Florida to northern Mexico. The Indians would be subdued if they refused to become Christians and submit to the Spanish king.

A young nobleman named Juan Ortiz was rescued by an Indian maiden and lived among the Indians.

Hernando de Soto was given the governorship of Cuba and Florida by the Spanish king. He set out with a fleet of thirty ships and took possession of the territory. De Soto had Juan Ortiz brought to him and believed him when he said there was no gold there. The de Soto group began to explore further north in August 1539.

In Chapter 5, the explorations continue in North America and Mexico. Boats frequently left Havana for Florida and the Indians would wait for them. Many of the ships were wrecked in the hurricanes. Survivors would swim ashore where the Indians waited for them. Once such survivor was a thirteen year old boy named Escalante de Fonteneda who remained with the Indians for seventeen years. He wrote of his years with the Indians and talked of the great Chief Carlos who wanted to unite all of the Everglades Indians into a federation which he would control.



# Chapter VI

## Chapter VI Summary and Analysis

In 1562, the French, under Jean Ribaut, founded a colony at Port Royal, which was north of present day St. Augustine. The colony could not survive. The French were eventually chased out by Menendez de Aviles who eventually came to control Florida. Menendez, who was looking for his son, found his party held captive by Chief Carlos. His son, Juan, had not survived the shipwreck. Menendez secured the release of all of the captives by inviting Chief Carlos and twenty of his men to dinner on his boat and sailing to the open sea telling the Indians that they would be released when the captives were released. Carlos released the captives.

Carlos gave his sister to be the wife of Menendez. When Menendez explained he could not be with a non-Christian woman, Carlos said to make her Christian. Menendez had a meeting with his men to decide what to do. Not wanting trouble with Carlos, they decided to baptize the woman. They christened the woman as Dona Antonia. She believed that she was married to him and when Menendez said, he told her that he would see her in Havana.

In Havana, his brother-in-law met him and gave him money. Menendez decided to return Antonia to Florida. In Florida, he asked Carlos if he was prepared to become a Christian. Carlos said not yet and sent another relative and two young Indians to Havana to be converted and told Menendez to return in nine months. When he arrived in St. Augustine, the Spanish fleet was waiting.

In the end, Menendez failed to achieve leadership in Florida. No one ruled the Indians.



# Chapter VII

## Chapter VII Summary and Analysis

For the next three hundred years, the Indians of Florida were left alone. The Indians lived a peaceful existence. The Tekestras found a group of ship wrecked Spanish on the beach. They were mutineers who lived with the Tekestras and soon took Indian wives. One of the men was Captain Reynoso.

Menendez returned once more to Florida, this time with three Jesuits. One of the priests was killed, but the other two went with Menendez to see Carlos. The priests would have been killed by the Indians if Captain Reynoso hadn't stopped them. Reynoso returned to Havana with the priest, after obtaining the release of the Tekestan captives. They traveled to Europe with Menendez and were the first Indians to travel to Europe.

The Spanish priests continued to try to convert the Indians. Many of the Indians died as a result of the diseases of the white man. The French and British had established settlements in the Americans. Some of the Indians were sold into slavery by the British. A group led by Captain James Moore moved from Carolina to the Everglades, taking Indians captive for the slave trade. Spain still controlled Florida despite the challenges of the English. The Spanish armed the Indians to fight against the English, but the English captured Havana. The Spanish gave up Florida in exchange for Havana in 1763.

# Chapters VII and IX

## Chapters VII and IX Summary and Analysis

The Seminoles were the Indians of northern Florida. The Creeks lived along the mountains between the Gulf and the Atlantic. They were known as the Upper and Lower Creeks depending on how close to the mountains they were. The Mikasukis moved into Florida around 1750. The Talasis tribe settled in the area around Tallahassee. There were also some other smaller tribes in Florida. When the tribes moved further south, they adopted the habits of the Calusas.

The Mikasukis and the Seminoles did not get along and they didn't have much to do with the escaped slaves. The Indian and Black culture blended in many ways. The Blacks had much more to lose than the Indians which made them harder workers and fiercer fighters. Both groups had been given freedom and citizenship by Spanish Florida causing problems between Spanish and English America that would continue for more than one hundred years. Spain obtained control of Florida again after the American Revolution.

The Americans signed many treaties with the Indians because they wanted the Indian land. In 1818, America purchased Florida from the Spanish. The Indians were forced to move further south, but there were many treaty violations. The Indians were forced to sign the Treaty of Payne's Landing and the Additional Treaty of Fort Gibson. The government was trying to force them to emigrate to the West. This resulted in a bloody battle.

In Chapter Nine, war broke out, ignited by the Dade Massacre. Dade County was formed by dividing Monroe County, the single county in Florida. The Indians attacked settlements. Some of the Indians began to register for the trip to the west. When the war ended, slaveholders began to stage raids to capture escaped Blacks. When General Jesup amended the treaty to return the escaped Blacks to their owners, the Indians claimed the treaty was negated.

General Jesup was called to Washington to account for his actions in 1838. The war continued.



# Chapter X

## Chapter X Summary and Analysis

Zachary Taylor was in charge of Florida and the government's Indian policy. Since he allowed the Blacks to go west with the Indians and prevented them from being hunted in the war zone, four hundred of the Indians agreed to move west. The Mikosukis, Calusas and others refused to move. In 1838, the whites began to move back into the settlements.

Indian Key and Key Biscayne were the two most important settlements along the coast. A lighthouse was built at Key Biscayne in 1827. A base was established near them in 1838 and Dr. Henry Perrine received a twenty-four thousand acre grant to develop tropical plants.

The Indians, who thought the new policy would allow them to remain in Florida, found they had been lied to. They attacked the army settlement at Charlotte Harbor and the hostilities began again. When Taylor retired from the Army in 1840, he was replaced by Brigadier General Taylor and a new government policy.

When the Indians attacked Indian Key, Perrine was killed but his wife and children escaped. The survivors were taken to St. Augustine while the Indians retreated into the Everglades. Colonel Harney and his troops went into the Everglades looking for the Indians. They found and killed some of the Indians who had taken part in the attack on the Perrine compound. They were the first group of white men to ever cross the Everglades from east to west.

The government's policy now was to suppress the Indians and this was the job of Colonel Worth. He had his men pursue the Indians through the Everglades. Eventually they sent any Indians they found, including Coacoochee, to New Orleans. In 1842, the remaining Indians, led by Billy Bowlegs, were given an area of the Everglades and the war ended.

# Chapter XI

## Chapter XI Summary and Analysis

After the peace, the Army moved out of Florida. Slaves continued to escape to Florida. Slaves were valuable since they could not be imported to the United States legally after 1808. Slave ships that docked in Florida were attacked. The waters of the Caribbean and Gulf were full of pirates. There was no policy that gave land to men who, subject to certain conditions, would inhabit the lower east coast of Florida.

Florida became a state in 1845. It was admitted to the union as a slave state. Most European immigrants went further west rather than try to compete with the slave labor in Florida. The state needed to attract settlers and looked into the possibility of draining the Everglades. One argument was that the area could not be surveyed without being drained.

In 1849, the murder of three men caused fears of another Indian uprising. Major General Twiggs was ordered to the area. He established a post named Fort Myers after his future son-in-law. Billy Bowlegs told Twiggs that the murders were committed by five young Indians that had been captured by Chief Chitto-Hadjo. The Indian Council regretted the incident. The Indians turned over the survivors of the five.

Twiggs was told to try to get the Indians to emigrate but the Indians became angry at the mention of emigration.

After the passage of the Swamp Lands Act of 1850, the Everglades came under the control of the state of Florida. The state was still trying to get rid of the Indians. The surveyors entered the neutral zone in the Everglades which violated the treaty with the Indians. At this time, Captain Casey took over the Office of Indian Affairs. The surveyors surveyed as much of the Everglades as they could. There were skirmishes with the Indians and war was declared.

Eventually Billy Bowlegs and others were offered money to leave Florida. They accepted and left for New Orleans.

# Chapter XII

## Chapter XII Summary and Analysis

When the Civil War ended slavery, it also ended the white man following the escaped slaves to the Everglades. They were now interested in making a life in other parts of Florida, mainly along the coast. Many men who had fought the Indians now settled in areas where they had contact with them. They didn't worry about land titles. Then they tired of one place, they moved to another.

Mail delivery developed slowly first by foot, and then by wagon and stagecoach. The Indians made a living by capturing birds and selling them to Havana. There was also a business in egrets and other plumes.

William H. Gleason set up a company to obtain land grants in the Everglades. Eventually the first canal was dredged by Hamilton Disston, who purchased four million acres of swampland west of Lake Okeechobee. Henry B. Plant purchased bankrupt Southern Railroads and planned a railroad from Sanford to Tampa. Henry M. Flagler constructed a hotel in St. Augustine and was also interested in Florida railroads.

By 1882, the government was told that Disston would not be able to drain all of the Everglades. Plant and Flagler continued to purchase railroads, thinking they could use the Everglades land. Flagler had a line that covered most of the east coast of Florida. During the Spanish American War, Plant's railroads handled the troops and Flagler stopped surveying the lower Everglades.

# Chapter XIII

## Chapter XIII Summary and Analysis

There was a yellow fever epidemic after the Spanish American war. There was a quarantine that stopped everything but real estate activity in Miami. Towns formed along Flagler's Florida East Coast Railroad. While progress and expansion occurred along the East Coast, there was none in the Everglades. The lives of the Indians had not changed and they refused any offer of help from the government.

People moved into the Everglades and lived peacefully with the Indians. They taught them new modern ways, like how to use a sewing machine. Dr. Cyrus Teed founded the Koreshan Unity which was devoted to communal living. Two hundred people followed him and lived in the commune he established.

Frank Hamilton Cusing explored the archaeological aspects of the Everglades finding many artifacts. This was the first big archaeological find in the Everglades and provided knowledge about the prehistoric Glades people.

In 1903, Governor William S. Jennings invalidated the swampland land grants to the railroads. The railroad sued, but lost. There was still talk of draining the Everglades. When Broward became governor in 1905, they again tried to drain the Everglades. Several canals were dug and the price of land increased. People all over the country were interested in Everglades's land which resulted in a big scandal.

# Chapter XIV

## Chapter XIV Summary and Analysis

After World War I, people decided to grow sugar cane in Florida. They thought they could replace the chemicals that were missing from the land. When the fields were flooded by the rains, they built a dike and tried planting the cane again.

In 1915, Carl Fisher laid out the plans for Miami Beach and built hotels. There were many bathers and casinos. Rum running was popular during the Prohibition era. The crime in the Everglades increased due to hijacking. Corruption spread into the politics of Miami.

The area south of Okeechobee was successfully growing fruits. Tourism was an important industry for the cities. George Merrick designed the plans for the city to be called Coral Gables. The lots began to sell quickly there and in Miami. The real estate boom spread throughout southeastern Florida. There was a massive inflow of building supplies that clogged the railroads. Building supplies arrived by truck and ship.

In 1926, the Miami area was struck by a hurricane. Thousands of buildings were damaged or destroyed. This ended the real estate boom. After this, roads were built. Some extended into the Everglades along with railroads.

# Chapter 15

## Chapter 15 Summary and Analysis

Miami and nearby areas prospered in the years following the depression. Miami Beach was the first to recover with a myriad of new hotels. The University of Miami was established by Bowman F. Ashe who became its president. The University began in a hotel and grew. Beaches, parks, tropical gardens and other places were developed. Port Everglades became a good, increasingly important port. All of the cities grew, but they grew too quickly for improvements and infrastructure development to keep up with the growth. Vegetable growing prospered and highways, canals and railroads now connected the cities. The residents prospered with much of the work being performed by migrant whites. The migrant workers followed the crop seasons. This ended with World War II.

Black workers then replaced the white migrant workers. Cattle country developed west of Clewiston. When the cattle became infested with ticks, they blamed the deer for carrying ticks and massive deer killing began. The Indians would not allow deer killing on their Big Cypress reservation.

The lives of the Indians were also changing as they adapted more modern ways, especially the younger ones. They used more store bought items, and earned money from tourism. The Indians were free to do what they wanted on their own reservation. They knew that the Everglades was being destroyed. Salt water was entering the rivers and canals.

The salt water problems caused by drainage began to affect vegetable growing and livestock as well as the water supply of the cities. There were fires in the Everglades. People began to realize they had to restore the natural balance in the Everglades. Studies of the Everglades and its problems were made.

In 1947, the Everglades became a national park.



# Chapter XVI

## Chapter XVI Summary and Analysis

This chapter is a result of a 1987 discussion with the author about what has happened in the forty years since the book was first published. The Everglades still has problems, as does the rest of the area, because of the population.

In 1947, South Florida experienced two hurricanes and as a result, there were demands for flood control. The result was the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project. This would manage the water of the Everglades and the cities through a series of pumps. This affected the bird population of the Everglades, which decreased dramatically due to the changing water levels affecting reproduction and nest building. There has been more of an interest in conservation.

The changing water level also affected animal life. In addition, there has been a change in the demographics of the population with an inflow of younger working families. The waters are now affected by pollution and industrial waste.

The rowing of sugar cane became more important after Fidel Castro's 1960 sugar embargo. This required irrigation that affected the water level of Lake Okeechobee. Many communities developed around the lake. The dairy industry in the area contributed to the lake's pollution. They began to dump water into the Everglades. This waste contained nitrogen and phosphorous which accelerated the decline of the Everglades. The saw grass died and was replaced by cattails, as a result many deer died of starvation. The Everglades were being destroyed by the water management policies.

By 1987 efforts were underway to correct the problems.

# Chapter XVII

## Chapter XVII Summary and Analysis

The Everglades is fighting for its life. More attention was paid to the problems in the 1990s as water in the area was threatened. This affected the economy of the area so there was more interest in conservation and ecology.

The Clinton administration named Everglades restoration one of its top priorities, weighting environmental enhancement equally with water supply and flood control. The result was the Water Resources Development Act of 1996. The Army Corps of Engineers was to have a plan prepared by July 1999.

The author, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, led many environmental fights to protect the Everglades. There were more studies on the ecology of the Everglades and how to restore the damaged ecosystems. The 1994 Everglades Forever Act provided for a series of fifty restoration projects including the protection of the everglades from phosphorous. Environmentalists felt the sugar industry should bear most of the costs since it caused the problems. There was also an Everglades Trust Fund providing money for restoration.

The preliminary results on the cleanup are promising.



# Characters

## Chief Carlos

Chief Carlos was the chief of the Calusas and referred to as the greatest chief among the Indians in Florida. His strength was so great that he would come to dominate all of the Indian tribes. The chief was given the name of Carlos by the Spaniards who told him it was the name of a great Spanish king. Carlos was the son of Senquene, who had also been a chief. Carlos had a vision of uniting all of the Everglades Indians into a federation which he would lead. He controlled a large number of Indian towns among the different tribes. The other Indians had to pay him tribute, which he then traded with the Northern tribes. When Menendez de Aviles learned about Carlos, he went to see him. The Indian king arrived, carried on a litter borne by slaves. They exchanged gifts, but Carlos felt the Spanish did not give them enough. Menendez invited them to dine on his flagship and Carlos and twenty braves boarded the ship. As soon as the Indians were aboard, the ship headed for the open sea. Menendez told the Indians that they would be released when they agreed to release all of their captives. Carlos had to agree and released the captives. He invited Menendez to visit a town upriver, but Menendez was warned that Carlos planned to kill them. Carlos traded gold and silver with the Spanish and he was rumored to have had hidden a large fortune. He offered his sister as a wife to Menendez, trying to build an alliance with him. He died when he was shot through the throat by a Spaniard with a crossbow.

## Menendez de Aviles

Menendez de Aviles was a Spanish seaman, lord, fighter and leader. He was extremely loyal of the kind. He was born to an improvised noble house. His family married him to a ten year old girl, Maria de Solis, when he was eight years old. At the age of fourteen, he set off in his own vessel and defeated the pirate Jean Alphonse. He was acknowledged by the king, but hated by the Casa de Contratacion, which was a corrupt organization that basically controlled the Spanish empire. The king thought that Menendez could fight the corruption of the Casa de Contratacion and this Menendez did by gaining control of their fleet system. In 1554, the king named him captain general and gave him control of New World trade. The Casa group had him imprisoned and the king had him released. Even though he died a poor man, he had the ingenuity to organize the business of the New World commercial empire. He and his wife, Maria de Solis, had three daughters and a son. His son Juan was sent to Mexico in 1563 and was lost. Hoping his son was alive and being held a slave, Menendez arranged for a fleet and arrived at a place he named St. Augustine on August 28, 1565. He fought both the French and the Indians which left him in control of Florida. When he arrived in Havana, he had to borrow money to continue his mission. Sailing again in February 1566, he found some of his son's group and learned that his son had not survived and learned of the Indian Chief Carlos.



## Coacoochee

Coacoochee was the son of the Indian king, Philip, when, along with his father, was imprisoned at St. Augustine in September 1837 over the issue of migration to the west. He escaped. Known as Wildcat, he continued to fight the relocation attempts of the government. He was arrested and sent to New Orleans and then returned to Florida. Eventually, he and the others were sent to New Orleans.

## Henry E. Perrine

Henry E. Perrine was a medical doctor who came to Indian Key. He was interested in tropical botany and one of the first to recognize the value of quinine in the treatment of malaria. He received a grant of twenty-four thousand acres for the development of plants. His wife, two daughters and son lived with him at Indian Key. He was killed in an Indian attack.

## Colonel Zachary Taylor

Colonel Zachary Taylor was an Army officer and hero of the Mexican American War. He led a unit into the Everglades during the Indian uprisings of the 1830s. Most of the men were killed, but they won the battle of Lake Okeechobee. Taylor went on to become the twelfth President of the United States.

## Colonel Worth

Colonel Worth was an Army officer in Florida who confronted and held the great Chief Coacoochee. He pursued a tough policy against the Indians and pursued them through the everglades and eventually negotiated a peace with the remaining Indians. He left Florida in 1843.

## William H. Gleason

William H. Gleason was the Republican Lieutenant Governor of Florida in the 1860s. He lived in Dade County. He was forced to resign over a scandal involving grants to the railroads. Gleason established a company to receive free land grants in the Everglades and to drain the land.

## Billy Bowlegs

Billy Bowlegs was one of the remaining Indians in Florida. He accepted Colonel Worth's terms of peace, allowing the Indians to remain in Florida in a specified area of the Everglades. Bowlegs eventually accepted money to leave Florida.



## **Dr. Cyrus R. Teed**

Dr. Cyrus R. Teed was a Chicagoan who was interested in communes. He like the lands he saw along the Estero River and established the Koreshan Unity in Florida. Two hundred people came to live in his commune. When he died, he was buried on Estero Beach.

## **Henry M. Flagler**

Henry M. Flagler was a partner of John D. Rockefeller in the Standard Oil Company. He built a hotel in Saint Augustine in 1882 and purchased railroads.



# Objects/Places

## Florida

Florida is a southeastern state with the southernmost reach in the United States.

## Lake Okeechobee

Lake Okeechobee is a large fresh water lake located above the Everglades in Florida.

## The Everglades

The Everglades is a grassy wetland in Florida that lies below Lake Okeechobee and is approximately seven hundred fifty square miles.

## The Gulf of Mexico

The Gulf of Mexico is the body of water to the west of the Everglades.

## Everglade Keys

Everglade Keys are a group of rocky islands in the Everglades.

## Ten Thousand Islands

Ten Thousand Islands are located on the western side of central Florida.

## Cape Sable

Cape Sable is a peninsula located in the southernmost western part of the Everglades.

## Jupiter Inlet

Jupiter Inlet is on the east coast of Florida, directly east of Lake Okeechobee.

## Indian Key

Indian Key, also known as Biscayne, is located on the east coast of Florida near the present city of Miami.

## **Marco Key**

Marco Key is located on the Western coast of the Everglades, north of the Ten Thousand Islands.

# Themes

## Hostility

One of the dominant themes of the book during the period of the development of Florida is hostility. Hostility is the national reaction when one group of people tries to dominate another group. The Indians had inhabited the Everglades for centuries before the appearance of the white man. They would not easily give up their land or freedom and this was the source of continual conflict between the Indians and the white men. The white men, like Menendez, wanted to take control of the Indians and Florida but couldn't. When white settlements appeared, there was constant conflict between the settlers and the Indians; each attacked the other. After Florida gained statehood in 1845, it entered the union as a slave state. The Everglades continued to be a sanctuary for runaway slaves who were accepted and protected by the Indians. This led to many conflicts with slave owners and this source of hostility continued until the end of the Civil War. During this period, there was pressure on the Indians to leave Florida. They refused to leave without free passage for the escaped slaves. The whites wanted the Indians out of Florida and the government tried to move them to Arkansas in various ways. Some of them left. Eventually the remaining Indians were given a designated area in the Everglades as their reservation and the hostilities ceased. The hostility between the two groups resulted in the loss of many lives over the centuries.

## Effects of Modernization

Another theme of the book is the effect of modernization and the problems that it brought to the Everglades. When the various Indian tribes arrived, they adapted their customs and culture to the environment of the Everglades. They didn't try to change the Everglades. The Indians just adapted to the environment they were in. This wasn't true of the white man as Florida became more settled. They tried to change the Everglades. They dug canals and tried drainage of the swamplands, thinking they could use the lands for other purposes. The surrounding urban and agricultural areas had a need for water management and flood control. As a result, they built dikes in various places and installed pumps to manage the water level and dump both agricultural and industrial waste into the Everglades. The dikes and canals resulted in the inflow of salt water into the fresh water of the Everglades. The agricultural dumping introduced nitrogen and phosphorous into the environment. They changed the delicate balance of the ecosystem and resulted in fires. When the swamplands should have been drying in the dry season, it was being flooded. The result of all of this tampering with the environment was the dying of the saw grass which was replaced with cattails. This resulted in the dying off of plant and animal life. The Everglades was dying and it was affecting the ecostructure of the region which affected the economy.





## Conservation and Environment

Another theme of the book is the importance of the environment and conservation efforts. Man's tampering with the environment led to the changing of the balance of the ecosystems which changed the environmental conditions for the animal and plant life. This also brought about changes in the ecosystem in the area which affected the economy. It wasn't until the late 1970s that people became concerned with the protection of the Everglades and began to study the ecosystem of the Everglades and the damage that had been done to it. Without understanding this, there was no way to try to repair the damage done to the Everglades. Preservation of the Everglades became a goal of the Clinton administration. They allocated funds for environment research and restoration and regulation. They referred to the preservation and restoration of the Everglades as an investment in Florida's future. The Army Corps of Engineers was to prepare a plan for restoration, based on scientific study, by July 1999. They immediately began a plan to try to introduce more fresh water into the Everglades. They impounded some of the waters into Water Conservation Areas and tried to relieve the imbalance of water in the Everglades. The animals were dying from the mercury in the contaminated water. Conservations tried to protect not only the Everglades, but also Lake Okeechobee, the Kissimmee River and other areas. One of the leaders in this conservation effort was the author, Marjorie Stoneman Douglas.



# Style

## Perspective

The perspective given in the book, *The Everglades: River of Grass*, is that of the author Marjory Stoneman Douglas, who was a resident of Florida for eighty-three years until her death in 1998. She was one of the leading spokespeople for the protection of the Florida Everglades environment. In her book on the Everglades, she looks at the treatment of the Glades people and the effect that development of the surrounding areas had on the Everglades. As a result of economic development and in the interests of economic pursuits, agricultural wastes were dumped into the Everglades introducing phosphorous and nitrogen. Dikes and pumps were used as a means of water management and flood control which introduced salt water into the fresh water area. The result was to damage the sensitive balance of the ecosystem which caused plant and animal life to die. Since that time, the author has fought to save the Everglades. In this book she describes how the damage was done and the amount of time it took for people to recognize the significance of the damage. She explains some of the steps that have been taken to understand the ecostructure of the Everglades and to repair some of the damages that have been done. She wanted people to understand the seriousness of the problems and what her position, and that of other environmentalists, was. Anyone interested in history or environmental problems will find this book of interest. The author wanted the general public to understand the environmental problems of the Everglades and why they were important.

## Tone

The mood of the book is one of concern. The author is concerned with the damage done to the environment of the Everglades and the affects on the ecosystem of the area. She describes the history of the Everglades and how the Indians adapted to their environment without damaging the Everglades. The problems with the environment began with the modernization and the increased population in the southern Florida area. Speculators who thought they could develop and sell the Everglades land needed to have it drained. The early attempts at draining and the digging of canals changed the water levels. Then came the agricultural wastes, followed by the pumps and dikes of the flood control, and water management problems. All of these caused serious damage to the Everglades and its plant and animal life before there was an interest in protection of the Everglades environment. All of these events are presented in an objective and factual manner. The author is a noted environmentalist and has always been a strong supporter of environmental protection of the Everglades. She states the facts of how the damage was done, what the effects of the damage are, and allows the reader to draw his/her own conclusions. She doesn't try to force her own views on the reader of the importance of environmental protection of the Everglades, an area that she loves. The author respects the intelligence of the reader and the reader has to appreciate this. It makes the book much more interesting to read.

## Structure

The structure of the book is a little unusual because of the two additional chapters written forty years after the first publication of the book. The body of the book is divided into seventeen chapters, the last two of which were added forty years after the first publication. Randy Lee Loftis wrote chapter sixteen with Marjory Stoneman Douglas. Chapter Seventeen was written by Cyril Zaneski.

There is a Table of Contents giving the chapter number, title and page numbers. There is no Introduction or Preface. There is an Acknowledgments section after Chapter Fifteen, with the two latter chapters following it. The Acknowledgments section isn't mentioned in the Table of Contents and comes as a bit of a surprise to the reader.

There is an Index at the end of the book. Chapters one through fifteen are included in a general index. There are separate indices for Chapter Sixteen and Seventeen, which makes it a little difficult for the reader who is trying to look up information. A combined index would have been easier to use. There is a bibliography which is in alphabetical order with no mention of chapters sixteen or seventeen. Sketches are presented throughout the book. It would have been nicer to have included actual photographs of the Everglades.

The overall structure of the book is appropriate for the subject of the book.

## Quotes

"There are no other Everglades in the world." (Chapter 1, pg. 5)

"The freezing northern airs kept the animals in the warm south and in that developing shape of Florida like a sack with no lower opening. Nowhere else in America was there to be a more crowded or richer or more varied animal life." (Chapter II, pg. 61)

"No single man of them all had any idea of what they had discovered." (Chapter III, pg. 106)

"The triumphant Indians of south Florida made very clear to the Spanish king and all his officials and gentlemen that they were not to be made slaves of. There was nothing else of any value to outlanders in that flat country of theirs, only sudden death in the sun." (Chapter V, pg. 128)

"The only aim he had here was to settle the land and make it peaceful, and see that all the Christians were saved from the Indians, and the Indians baptized." (Chapter VI, pg. 158)

"The Tekeestas and the Mayaimis of the lake had disappeared. Only the scattered Calusas were left, ranging throughout the area. It has been repeated often that after 763 they left for Cuba en masse. I do not believe that there was ever a time when the Glades were empty of villages." (Chapter VII, pg. 184)

"The word was 'war'. It blazed all along the white settlements and echoed in panic as far as Georgia and Alabama, carried by frantic, galloping men." (Chapter IX, pg. 205)

"The Indians could not read, but they did not need to. They understood at once that the white man, his officers and his government had lied." (Chapter X, pg. 227)

"The great war ravaged the South. But in it peace came to the Everglades." (Chapter X, pg. 267)

"Now out of the welter of politics a figure began to emerge with new hope for southern Democrats and confidence to rich possible investors wintering at Jacksonville and St. Augustine and along the St. Johns." (Chapter XII, pg. 281)

"The air of expansion and progress hung only over the east coast. The Everglades, under the winds and storms, the rains and dews, and the constant work of the sun, lay unchanged." (Chapter XIII, pg. 297)

"The tempo quickened. At the end of World War I new men and events began to crowd and hurry about the coasts and the lake and the Everglades, with a new recklessness, a greater violence." (Chapter XIV, pg. 327)



"Now all the years of tall talk and resounding claims for these four and a half million acres of Everglades were reduced to available facts." (Chapter XV, pg. 378)

"The great wet wilderness of South Florida need not be degraded to a permanent state of mediocrity. If the people will it, if they enforce their will on the managers of Florida's future, the Everglades can be restored to nature's design." (Chapter XVI, pg. 427)

"In the half century since *The Everglades: River of Grass* was published, the Everglades' troubles worsened." (Chapter XVII, pg. 428)



## Topics for Discussion

What is the Everglades? Where is it located? What makes it unique?

Where did the Glades people come from? Who were they and how did they develop their civilization in the Everglades area?

What problems existed between the Indians and the white man in Florida once the area was settled? What was the role of the Blacks?

How did the Civil War affect the Everglades and Florida? What changes occurred after the Civil War?

What was the purpose of trying to drain the Everglades? How did the project end?

What problems did the Everglades face as the result of modernization and drainage? What were the effects on the rest of the area?

What are the recent attempts to save the Everglades?