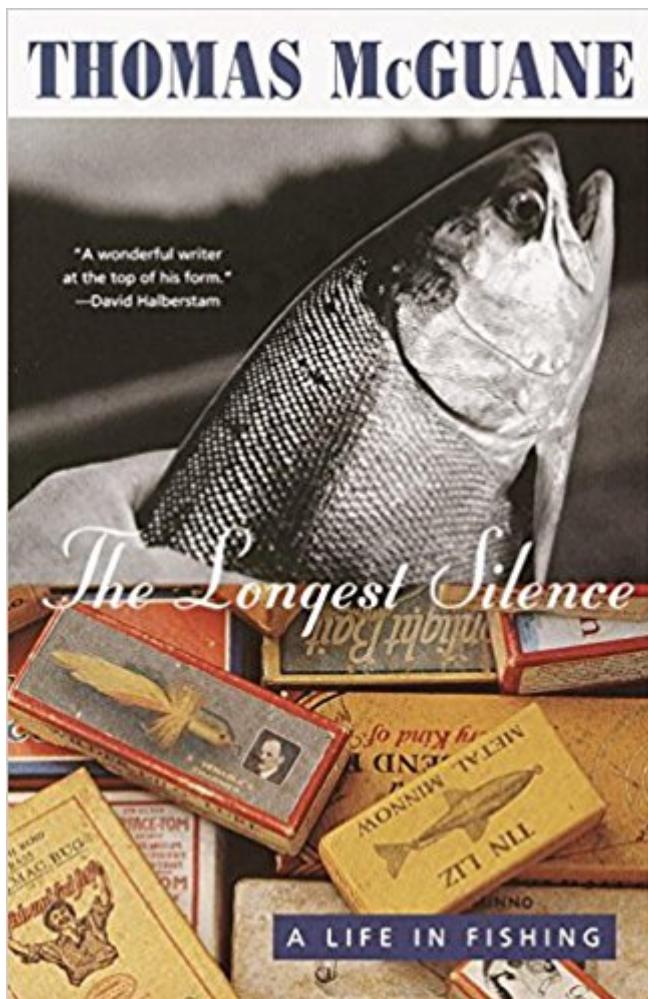


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The Longest Silence: A Life In Fishing



Synopsis

From the highly acclaimed author of *Ninety-Two in the Shade* and *Nothing but Blue Skies* comes this collection of breathtakingly exquisite essays borne of a lifetime spent fishing. The thirty-three essays in *The Longest Silence* take us from the tarpon of Florida to the salmon of Iceland, from the bonefish of Mexico to the trout of Montana. They bring us characters as varied as a highly literate Canadian frontiersman and a devoutly Mormon river guide and address issues ranging from the esoteric art of tying flies to the enduring philosophy of a seventeenth-century angler. Infused with a deep experience of wildlife and the outdoors, both reverent and hilarious by turns, *The Longest Silence* sets the heart pounding for a glimpse of moving water and demonstrates what dedication to sport reveals about life.

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Customer Reviews

"You can't say enough about fishing; but that won't stop me," Tom McGuane wrote half a lifetime ago. He has quite a lot, indeed, to say about fishing. In "The Longest Silence," his precision of language and love of sport conjoin in a life's body of fishing essays. McGuane is the angler we all hope to emulate. As for imitating his writing, well, lower your head, shake it and smile--it ain't happenin', bro--not in this life. And, of course, this book is nothing short of genius. If you follow sporting writing in general and McGuane in particular few of the entries in this collection will be new to you, especially the seminal title piece: "What is most emphatic in angling is made so by the long silences--the unproductive periods." Not a problem. Few of us keep our old issues of *Sports Illustrated*, *Men's Journal*, *Esquire* or *Sports Afield*--rather, we look to compilations such as these to

round out our collections. Besides, these essays are only fully appreciated after multiple (re)readings. If McGuane is a new discovery to you, well, I can only envy you. His fiction--bought, borrowed or stolen--must be read; it is among the finest this country has to offer late in our century. It's hard to imagine but there are probably those who enjoy McGuane's fiction but are not familiar with his sporting prose. At any rate these writings, many collected here--are without equal. Be McGuane's sporting work new, savor it. If, however, you find it familiar, then let in the dogs, light the fire, build a drink and dig in. It doesn't get any better than this. Highly, completely and without reservation recommended. Buy this book, read it, cherish it, tell a friend.

In this latest effort Thomas McGuane easily proves that he is one of the preeminent writers on fishing today, and for that matter of our century. *THE LONGEST SILENCE* covers a life of fishing ranging from his youthful remembrances of fishing the trout streams of Michigan to more recent experiences pursuing the game fish of the oceans. McGuane combines a dazzling language and style with a real knowledge of the intricacies of the art to produce some of the best prose on angling I've encountered, equalling and bettering that of Harry Middleton, Ted Leeson, and Russell Chatham. This is truly a fine book.

It is unusual to find an author of a fishing book who is as fluent with words as he is with a fly rod. In probability, *The Longest Silence* will disappoint many diehard anglers anxious for 'how to' or 'where to' information. But it will delight those who relish good writing. Drenched in atmosphere and with a warmth that glows like the embers of a campfire, this book is about the fishing, rather than the fish. Haunting, mesmerising and tremendously readable, *The Longest Silence* is a piece of literature that will become a fishing classic. It has been criticized for McGuane's affection for high-cost fishing holes and there may well be some merit in this, but it is the writing and not the locations that generates the fascination.

It's nice to read a fisherman/writer who's more interested in the experience than in the pounds-per-day and the gadgetry, and takes the time to understand how flyfishing fits into larger patterns of his life. Adding to that, some of the sentences and phrasings alone are worth the price of the book. I can't agree with him that longer rods necessarily translate to tailing loops, but that's a mere quibble. Sure, some of what he relates is jet-set fishing, with a guide putting him on the fish, but he's dead honest about the experience, de-romanticizing much of it, if anything, and appreciating his guides as characters. Those who enjoy McGuane would enjoy *NORTH BANK*:

Claiming a Place on the Rogue, another crafted and thoughtful look at flyfishing in a larger frame.

There are many good books on flyfishing, but only a very few that make it to great. This is one of the latter. For this book, McGuane received the coveted Roderick Haig-Brown Award for Literature from the Federation of Fly Fishers. The Longest Silence is the finest book on fly fishing that I have read. The style of a novelist is brought fully to these pages, offering a wonderful sense of place that all successful novelists must have. For this died in the wool trout fisherman, even the title essay, which is on permit fishing, was a wonderful read. I have never seen a permit, have no strong desire to catch one, and probably will never try, but even that essay on a subject so foreign to me, rang as true as any essay can. McGuane's talent is absolutely marvellous!

McGuane's angling essays in The Longest Silence should appeal to both the sporting and non-sporting public. Hot-blooded writing swirls his decades of experiences into a landing net of honest, from-the-heart prose that speak well for appreciating Mother Nature -- the natural world. Once you finish his collection, add to your reading the classic book LIFE WITH NOAH, a posthumous memoir of Richard Smith, an Adirondack mountain fisherman, outdoorsman who was befriended by Noah John Rondeau, a hermit who lived in the Cold River valley from the 1920s until his death in the late 1960s. Both fished for their survival, for the love of the sport and had no greater respect for woodland animals and nature's importance to an individual's inner peace.

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