

Discussions Points for
Chapter 1 of
McPhee, J. (1989). The Control of Nature, Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Atchafalaya

1. Why is the Mississippi River attempting to change its course to the Atchafalaya?
2. What is this natural process called?
3. If allowed to happen, what would be the economic effects of this changing course?
4. Is it economically justifiable to attempt to control the course of a river?
5. What is significant about the discharge distribution between the Atchafalaya and Mississippi in 1950?
6. What is Old River?
7. Why is the U. S. Army charged with controlling the course of the Mississippi River?
8. How does discharge down the Mississippi affect the salinity of drinking water in New Orleans?
9. What are the advantages of straightening out the Mississippi River?
10. What are the long term effects of straightening out the Mississippi River?
11. What is a Design Flood?
12. Why is New Orleans *below* sea level?