

Inventing Pollution Coal Smoke And Culture In Britain Since 1800 Ecology History

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Peter Thorsheim's *Inventing Pollution* describes the beginnings of this still hesitant and ambivalent regulatory process in the world's first urban-industrial nation. The modern idea of pollution was invented, Thorsheim argues, in Britain during the course of the last two centuries and the trigger was coal smoke.

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Peter Thorsheim. *Inventing Pollution: Coal, Smoke, and Culture in Britain since 1800*. (Ohio University Press Series in Ecology and History.) Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press. 2006.

~~Inventing Pollution: Coal, Smoke, and Culture in Britain ...~~

Peter Thorsheim's new book, *Inventing Pollution: Coal, Smoke, and Culture in Britain since 1800*, is an interesting addition to this burgeoning subfield of environmental history. Drawing on an impressive range of source materials, including some excellent photographs, cartoons and advertisements, this concise and clearly-written study explores public understandings of air pollution in Britain over the past two centuries.

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Inventing Pollution examines the radically new understanding of pollution that emerged in the late nineteenth century, one that centered not on organic decay but on coal combustion. This change, as Peter Thorsheim argues, gave birth to the smoke-abatement movement and to new ways of thinking about the relationships among humanity, technology, and the environment.

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Britain's supremacy in the nineteenth century depended in large part on its vast deposits of coal. This coal not only powered steam engines in factories, ships, and railway locomotives but also warmed homes and cooked food. As coal consumption skyrocketed, the air in Britain's cities and towns ...

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