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"The Coming of Age to Australian Forests"

Dargavel, John

Dargavel, John. "The Coming of Age to Australian Forests." *Environment and History* 4, no. 2, Australia special issue (June, 1998): 169–190. doi:10.3197/096734098779555673 . The concept of 'old-growth' has gained public recognition and political force in Australia where government agencies are engaged in mapping its distribution. Its curious definition has stimulated an examination of how forest age has come to be constructed over the period since the white invasion in 1788. The paper examines age as a parameter in colonial and recent science. It then recounts attempts to impose an ordered progression of age classes on the forests of Victoria and Queensland according to the classical principles of forestry transmuted through an imperial model. Forest age is discussed first during the boom period of the 1950s and 1960s, and then as an indicator during the environmental era of the 1970s to the present. Old-growth became an icon of environmental campaigns which had to be defined before it could be delineated. The final part of the paper reports the varying perceptions and values held in Australia about forest age. All rights reserved. © 1998 The White Horse Press

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