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"Weeds, People and Contested Places"

Clayton, Neil

Clayton, Neil. "Weeds, People and Contested Places." *Environment and History* 9, no. 3 (Aug., 2003): 301–31. doi:10.3197/096734003129342863 . In the Western world weeds have been defined and redefined according to the cultural ideas and outlooks of peoples who have tried to compete with them for open places, over many millennia. Somewhere along the way 'weed' emerged as a concept, and became embedded in and expressed through language. In the first part of this synoptical essay some of the expressions of the changes in human perceptions of, and responses to, a group of plants with which people have had to contend for places, and the deeper cultural significances of the contest itself, are explored. In the second, the inter-societal relationships between weeds and humans are explored in the unique context of New Zealand's discrete landscape and the settler society which transformed it within the comparatively short period of two centuries. Possibilities for ongoing studies of the weeds-people relationship within New Zealand and other regional contexts are offered. All rights reserved. © 2003 The White Horse Press

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