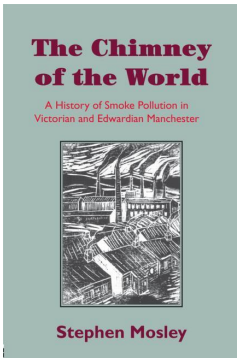
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The Chimney of the World: A History of Smoke Pollution in Victorian and Edwardian Manchester

Mosley, Stephen



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Mosley, Stephen. *The Chimney of the World: A History of Smoke Pollution in Victorian and Edwardian Manchester*. Cambridge, UK: White Horse Press, 2001.

Stephen Mosley examines three aspects of Manchester's smoke situation: its magnitude and impact on the town, the rhetoric and culture of smoke, and the (unsuccessful) campaigns to control it. Mosley rightly challenges the presentism of the question "why wasn't something done?" But he also challenges the common view of the Victorian public as environmentally unenlightened as well as the depiction by some historians that the period was one of pragmatic, slow problem solving—with regard to water quality or alkali wastes this might have been true; it was not for Manchester's smoke. The picture, instead, is one of impasse and deterioration. Mancunians acknowledged their situation as problematic, and yet that situation also seemed to them to be out of their control. A problem insufficiently prioritized was, as Stephen Mosley makes clear, simply a problem left unsolved. Manchester's smoke problem grew steadily worse during this period despite being recognized as an important public problem. Mosley has given us a beautifully crafted and well-researched book—a pioneering contribution that should certainly be considered required

reading for urban environmental historians. (Text adapted from an H-Net review by Christopher Hamlin .)

Further readings:

- DuPuis, Melanie E., ed. *Smoke and Mirrors: The Politics and Culture of Air Pollution*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2004.

Related links:

- H-Environment, H-Net Reviews, reviewed by Christopher Hamlin
  http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php
- Routledge featuring the 2008 paperback edition of this book
  http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415477673/

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