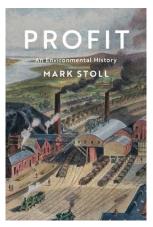


# Multimedia Library Collection: Books & Profiles

# Profit: An Environmental History

Stoll, Mark



Profit. Cover.

© 2023 Polity Press

The copyright holder reserves, or holds for their own use, all the rights provided by copyright law, such as distribution, performance, and creation of derivative works.

Stoll, Mark. *Profit: An Environmental History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2023.

Profit—getting more out of something than you put into it—is the original genius of homo sapiens, who learned how to unleash the energy stored in wood, exploit the land, and refashion ecosystems. As civilization developed, we found more and more ways of extracting surplus value from the earth, often deploying brutally effective methods to discipline people to do the work needed.

Historian Mark Stoll explains how capitalism supercharged this process and traces its many environmental consequences. The financial innovations of medieval Italy created trade networks that, with the European discovery of the Americas, made possible vast profits and sweeping cultural changes, to the detriment of millions of slaves and indigenous Americans; the industrial age united the world in trade and led to an energy revolution that changed lives everywhere. But when efficient production left society awash in goods, a new sort of capitalism, predicated on

Books & Profiles Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal Profit: An Environmental History

1 10 jul. 1111 Enteri on micritia 1113101 y

**Source URL:** http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/9686

Print date: 07 December 2025 18:42:55

endless individual consumption, took its place.

This story of incredible ingenuity and villainy begins in the Doge's palace in medieval Venice and ends with Jeff Bezos aboard his own spacecraft. Mark Stoll's revolutionary account places environmental factors at the heart of capitalism's progress and reveals the long shadow of its terrible consequences. (Source: Polity Press )

© 2023 The author and Polity Press. Used by permission.

### Download:

Download excerpt

https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key\_docs/pages\_from\_stoll\_9781509533237\_print-3.pdf

# Related links:

- Book profile at Polity Press https://www.politybooks.com/bookdetail
- Mark Stoll, "Rachel Carson's Silent Spring, a Book that Changed the World" (Virtual Exhibition) https://doi.org/10.5282/rcc/8842
- Mark Stoll, "Consumer Capitalism and the Environment" (RCC Lunchtime Colloquium) https://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/9687

# Websites linked in this text:

• https://www.politybooks.com/bookdetail?book\_slug=profit-an-environmental-history--9781509533237