



The Search for the Ultimate Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Perspective (Technology and the Environment)

Joel A. Tarr

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Whether it comes by air, by land, or by water, pollution has long plagued the American city. And for just as long, the question of how to deal with urban wastes has taxed the minds of scientists, engineers, and public officials - and the pocketbooks of ordinary citizens. For more than twenty years, Joel A. Tarr has written about the issues of urban pollution. In this collection of his essays, Professor Tarr surveys what technology has done to, and for, the environment of the American city since 1850. In studies ranging from the horse to the railroad, from infrastructure development to industrial and domestic pollution, from the Hudson River to the smokestacks of Pittsburgh, his constant theme is the tension between the production of wastes and the attempts to dispose of them or control them with minimal costs. *The Search for the Ultimate Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Perspective* stands alone in its scholarly depth and scope. These essays explore not only the technical solutions to waste disposal, but also the policy issues involved in the trade-offs among public health, environmental quality, and the difficulties and costs of pollution control, and all this against the broader background of changes in civic and professional values. Any reader concerned with the interactive history of technology, the environment, and the American city will find in *The Search for the Ultimate Sink* an informative and compelling account of pollution problems from the past and a serious guide to urban policies for the future.

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