Coal and the Environment


A short, essay about coal and pollution among others in this collection published by Resources for the Future (RFF) which is an organization that uses social science methodology in their analysis of current environmental and natural resource issues.


Two chapters of interest in this book are: “Electricity from Coal” and “Controlling Acid Rain from Coal-fired Power Plants.”


Mark Hertsgaard commented “Most people don’t know it yet, but whether the world can continue to burn coal is one of the most important questions of the twenty-first century. Big Coal is a major contribution to getting the answer right.” Elizabeth Kolbert endorsed this book to say “Big Coal should be read by anybody who owns a microwave, or an iPod, or a table lamp, which is to say everyone.”


Coal is on among many of the issues addressed in this issue.


Investigates the Apollo Project, solar energy, green collar jobs, wind energy and coal.


Scientists tell us we need to cut carbon emissions to forestall effects of global warming. Reducing fossil fuel use is the key, and energy experts are hard at work devising solutions to change the nation's energy sector to one that is clean and sustainable for the future…. This book tells this story, emphasizing that
energy use has always been based on cultural factors as well as technology. It relates how coal, oil and natural gas built the nation from its beginning and created today's consumer culture. It continues with the rise of the electric utility industry and its influence on American society. Finally, it explores the 1970s, when America woke to conservation and efficiency, and the renewable energy industries were born. It concludes with a look at the future possibilities for community energy planning and current trends in sustainable energy policy. (Publisher description)


Examines the Hopi view of a single water world under the land's surface that clashes with "western science." But water is scarce in the Colorado Plateau and water has been used to transport the coal causing lower water levels dry springs. Courts, politics, money all clash with environmental issues.


Main's essay was originally published in Fortune, February 21, 2005. Other alternative sources of fuel are discussed throughout the book.


Examines the environmental and economic impact of mountain top removal coal mining in West Virginia. Many disagree about mining jobs vs. low paying tourist industry jobs. The biotic diversity in Southern Appalachian forests by the filling of valleys with land removed during the mining process is described as well as the groundwater contamination.


Coal mining and mountain top removal on Kayford Mountains of Western Virginia has left the land bare with only 50 acres owned by Larry Gibson that still have trees. Gibson shows pictures of Kayford when it had homes, schools, five churches and a movie theater and states that mining destroyed a whole
culture. Local school children have traces of black dust in their lungs and lawsuits and legislation are discussed.


“Coal” is the topic of Chapter 4 which gives an overview of the history of Coal, types, the future of coal and the case against it.

Phillips, Jonathan D. "Impacts of Surface Mine Valley Fills on Headwater Floods in Eastern Kentucky."


26 June 2009.

A study in eastern Kentucky about using mountain top removal waste to fill valleys indicates that there is a clear risk of increased flooding and valley fills are more likely to increase rather than decrease flood potential.


Reece spent a year observing, hiking and recording the devastation to Lost Mountain in Perry County, eastern Kentucky. He interviewed people and recorded how a diverse forest became an arid lunar landscape, and he establishes the environmental effects of mountaintop mining. Wendell Berry wrote the foreword to the book.


Includes a chapter on coal, and discusses alternative methods of energy. The publisher's web site updates new technologies.


Coal is mentioned in many of the chapters of this book. “Energy and the Environment” addresses issues about reclamation of mined lands and coal cleaning and effects of coal on the environment.