



## State, Science and the Skies: Governmentalities of the British Atmosphere (RGS-IBG Book Series)

By Mark Whitehead



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Utilizing environmental archival materials from the UK, *State, Science and the Skies* presents a groundbreaking historical account of the development of a state science of atmospheric pollution.

- Offers the most extensive historical and geographical account of atmospheric government and pollution in Britain, available today
- Presents archival material from 150 years of British history that represents an original contribution to our knowledge of the history of science and government
- Develops an innovative combination of Foucauldian history of government with a history of atmospheric science
- Raises crucial questions about the nature of state/science relations and the conditions under which environmental knowledge is produced

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“Mark Whitehead’s 2009 book *State, Science and the Skies* constitutes a compelling and important contribution to the RGS–IBG Book Series . . . This fascinating book is part of an increasing literature on a much neglected area of study: the role and importance of the atmosphere in our lives (e.g. Jankovic, 2000; Latour, 2003; Strauss and Orlove, 2003; Kessel, 2006; Thornes, 2008) . . . *State, Science and the Skies* should provide us with an important guide to the geographies of the atmosphere. It is especially helpful in order to cultivate some sense of relief to Sloterdijk’s (2009) emphasis on the air as a means of administering death through environmental means.” (*Geoforum*, 1 September 2012)

#### Review

*State, Science and the Skies* is a carefully researched and politically important work. Creatively developing Foucault's work on governmentality, it shows the complex interrelations of technology, policy and practice. Taking the atmosphere as an object of government, it insists on the essential vertical dimension of the geographies of the modern state.

— **Stuart Elden, Professor of Political Geography, Durham University**

*State, Science and the Skies* is a superbly crafted synthesis of the making of a modern climatological state. Whitehead follows the expert and the state in their creation of atmospheric government and its aerial responsibilities. Blending a robust historical narrative with thought-provoking analyses of atmospheric lives of boiler attendants, employers, government inspectors and housewives, Whitehead provides an important framework for thinking about the current concerns surrounding climate change and air pollution. *State, Science and the Skies* is bound to become a major reference in all future discussions about the scientific and political constructions of environmental life in modern Britain and beyond.

— **Vladimir Jankovic, Lecturer, Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine  
University of Manchester**

#### From the Back Cover

Contemporary concerns regarding climate change, the destruction of the ozone layer, and increased anxieties of the health risks associated with particulate air pollution, highlight the crucial importance of understanding what is happening in our atmosphere. This timely volume asserts that to comprehend contemporary atmospheric knowledge systems requires an examination of the spatial histories of the sciences and political regimes that have shaped systems of air government.

Focusing exclusively on the UK, the volume weaves together the tales of 19th-century urban smoke observers, early 20th-century visitors to clean-air exhibitions, and modern atmospheric scientists in order to reveal why we know certain things about the qualities of the air we breathe and how this knowledge has shaped collective relations with the atmosphere. In charting this history this volume combines Foucauldian-inspired accounts of the history of government with relevant works on the sociology of scientific knowledge. Utilizing extensive archival materials and informed by scholarly analysis, this groundbreaking work presents the first historical account of the development of a state science of atmospheric pollution.

## Users Review

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#### **Fabian Luton:**

This State, Science and the Skies: Governmentalities of the British Atmosphere (RGS-IBG Book Series) book is not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you obtain by reading this book is usually information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This particular State, Science and the Skies: Governmentalities of the British Atmosphere (RGS-IBG Book Series) without we know teach the one who reading through it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't always be worry State, Science and the Skies: Governmentalities of the British Atmosphere (RGS-IBG Book Series) can bring whenever you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even telephone. This State, Science and the Skies: Governmentalities of the British Atmosphere (RGS-IBG Book Series) having fine arrangement in word along with layout, so you will not feel uninterested in reading.

#### **Sandra Earnhardt:**

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#### **Donna Dalessio:**

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