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## THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON PRESS PUBLICATIONS

*This paper has been withdrawn.*

### Energy and the Making of Modern California

[James C. Williams](#)

#### Description

In *Energy and the Making of Modern California*, James C. Williams has written the definitive history of energy development and use in that state, illuminating the forces that formed its culture and economy through the interplay of technology, population growth, human values, and the environment. From the fuelwood that warmed its early settlers to the nuclear power plants that run the air-conditioners of contemporary citizens, California has shaped itself by tapping available energy resources, in the process coming to learn the capacity and constraints of technology as it affects the environment. Always a land apart, California has also become an early model for the United States and other countries in both its voracious consumption of energy and its enlightened concern for the natural world. With its rich diversity of resources and its comfortable climate, California has attracted a steady stream of immigrants. As the population increased, so did its appetite for energy. A variety of resources--coal and oil, wind and solar heat, the fall of waters swollen by snowmelt--was harnessed to satisfy the growing needs of farmers and manufacturers and the ordinary citizens of small towns and sprawling cities.

Technological progress in energy development was essential to the good life that drew people to California in the first place. But the exploitation of those natural resources also made many Californians more aware of their environment. *Energy and the Making of Modern California*, in its vivid abundance of detail and its scholarly range, shows how California's complex and versatile environment constantly challenged technological inventiveness, making the state's experience with energy a superb case study that clarifies our changing values and our rising concerns about how we live with the earth we live on. "Energy and the Making of Modern California not only sheds light on the interplay between energy and society in the Golden State, it helps make more intelligible the broader modern world at large, particularly its values, institutions, and behavior patterns that involve energy. Williams's book is, in short, destined to become an important, standard work, indispensable to the complete study of California, energy, and environmental history in the twentieth century." -Richard Orsi