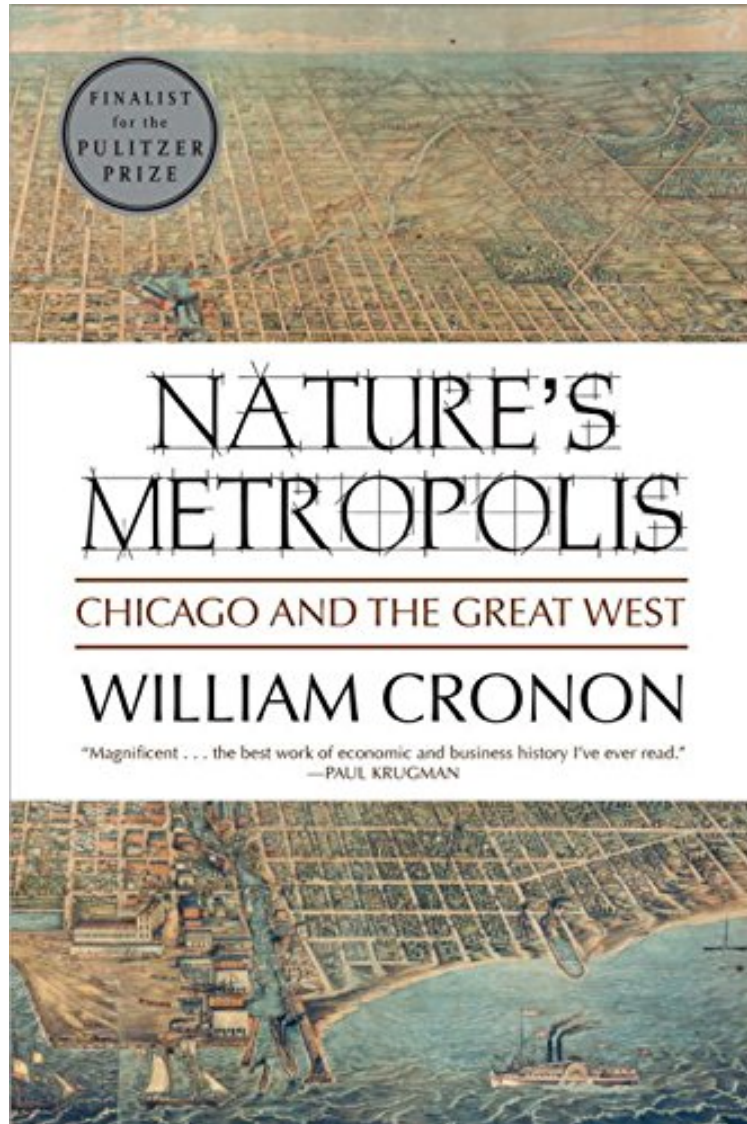


[Free download] Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West

Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West

William Cronon

ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#26253 in Books William Cronon 1992-05-17 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.20 x 1.60 x 6.20, 1.82
#File Name: 0393308731592 pages Nature s Metropolis Chicago and the Great West | File size: 29.Mb

William Cronon : Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A beautifully written book describing the rise of a great metropolis ...By c.larchA beautifully written book describing the rise of a great metropolis and its ability to exceed its boosters' wildest dreams. The intrinsic connection between city and country is one of the strongest themes of the book, granting credit to both country and city for the rise of Chicago. Additionally, the book surveys nature as found and man's

alterations to nature (termed 'first nature' and 'second nature', respectively), and its impact on the city's economy. This is a must-read for any person who desires to shape cities and who subscribes to the theories of landscape urbanism. Though it does not conform to the idea that cities are to be solely shaped around nature, the book does in fact support that geography and the inherent value of landscape is what brought greatness to Chicago and the Midwestern region.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Bulls, Bears, and Wheat: Oh My!By Taylor roseThe city of Chicago inhabits a unique location straddling several natural divides: between the watersheds of Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River; between vast grasslands on the Great Plains and dense woodlands around the Great Lakes. Appropriately, William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis* tells the story of the city's remarkable nineteenth-century rise as one of connections, both geographical and thematic: between east and west, water and rail, ecology and economy. But like the low, swampy ridge through which enterprising Chicagoans constructed the Illinois and Michigan Canal in the 1830s and 40s, Cronon's divisions are not so neat and tidy.Cronon begins with a delicate refutation of Frederick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis, arguing that cities "grew in tandem with the countryside" (p. 47). Rather than developing in isolation as the product of discreet urban economic forces, Chicago rose to power only as its rural surroundings became a hinterland of natural and agricultural resource production. And as more efficient and reliable transportation networks sprung up to support trade between, for example, cattle ranchers in Kansas or lumbermen in Michigan and the concentration of fiscal and manufacturing capital in Chicago, ties strengthened further, leading some boosters and twentieth-century urban theorists to espouse a certain "gravitational" (p. 38) argument for the city's success.Throughout *Nature's Metropolis*—especially in the three parallel chapters on grain, lumber, and meat production—Cronon proves that economic and environmental histories can (and should) be reconciled. Furthermore, Cronon writes with the clarity and color that makes this a truly engaging book. Indeed, his explanation of futures markets is as lucid as that of seasonal grain production—which says a lot, considering the disdain with which environmental historians often regard the mechanisms of capitalism. Though the last three chapters can feel a bit tedious and redundant—especially considering the book's length—*Nature's Metropolis* is a remarkable achievement and a benchmark for urban environmental history.58 of 58 people found the following review helpful. A review from an armchair historian.By frumiousbThere are going to be other reviewers who can provide more erudite reviews--reviews better grounded in the study of cities or economic history. I am nothing more than an average reader who enjoys non-fiction.First of all, potential readers should be aware that this is an economic history. It follows flows of goods and capital rather than following the lives and careers of the men and women of Chicago. I knew what to expect, but for people looking for a more standard history of Chicago this may make *Nature's Metropolis* difficult to engage.I really enjoyed reading the book. It stretched my understanding of the economic growth of cities and raised issues that I had not considered about the role of the city *in* nature (not as opposed to nature). The examination of elements that made Chicago into both a city and The City was fascinating. The chapters tracing grain, lumber and meat as goods were clearly written and underscored the central theses.I guess it goes without saying that *Nature's Metropolis* is far from a light read, but that does not make it less rewarding. As someone who does not have a background in history, I only longingly wished that the bibliography had been annotated to help support further reading.

A Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and Winner of the Bancroft Prize. "No one has written a better book about a city...*Nature's Metropolis* is elegant testimony to the proposition that economic, urban, environmental, and business history can be as graceful, powerful, and fascinating as a novel." ?Kenneth T. Jackson, *Boston Globe*In this groundbreaking work, William Cronon gives us an environmental perspective on the history of nineteenth-century America. By exploring the ecological and economic changes that made Chicago America's most dynamic city and the Great West its hinterland, Mr. Cronon opens a new window onto our national past. This is the story of city and country becoming ever more tightly bound in a system so powerful that it reshaped the American landscape and transformed American culture. The world that emerged is our own.Winner of the Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize

.com Cronon's history of 19th-century Chicago is in fact the history of the widespread effects of a single city on millions of square miles of ecological, cultural, and economic frontier. Cronon combines archival accuracy, ecological evaluation, and a sweeping understanding of the impact of railroads, stockyards, catalog companies, and patterns of property on the design of development of the entire inland United States to this date. Although focused on Chicago and the U.S., the general lessons it teaches are of global significance, and a rich source of metaphors for the ways in which colonization of physical space operates differently from, and similarly to, colonization of cyberspace. This is a compelling, wise, thorough--and thoroughly accessible--masterpiece of history writ large. Very Highest Recommendation.From *Publishers Weekly*In a fresh approach that links urban and frontier history, Cronon (*Changes in the Land*) explores the relationship between Chicago, 1848-1893, and the entire West, tracing the path between an urban market and the natural systems that supply it. Examining commodity flows--meat, grain, lumber--and the revolution in transportation and distribution, the book chronicles changes in the landscape: cattle replace buffalo; corn and wheat supplant prairie grasses; entire forests fall to the ax. Thus Wyoming cattle, Iowa corn and Wisconsin white

pine come together in Chicago. City and countryside develop in tandem. Cronon notes that gateway cities are a peculiar feature of North American frontier settlements and the chief colonizers of the Western landscape. He compares the world of rural merchants in the pre- and post-railroad eras, and cites the McCormack reaper works to illustrate the sale of manufactured goods to the hinterland. The culmination of this dynamic period is in the Columbian Exposition of 1893. Readers interested in the growth of capitalism will find this an engrossing study. Photos. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Cronon (history, Yale) investigates the relationship between Chicago and the rural areas that comprised its hinterlands during the 19th century in terms of commodity flows--grain, lumber, and meat. Although the focus is on Chicago, the economic transformations he describes took place in many areas. His analysis is at its clearest in relating how the building of railroads led to a revolution in the grain trade and to the Chicago Board of Trade's dominance of grain prices. Soundly grounded in original sources, especially the federal court bankruptcy records used to map capital flows, this well-written study is a significant addition to the literature on U.S. economic history and should be acquired by all academic libraries.- Stephen H. Peters, Northern Michigan Univ. Lib., Marquette Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.