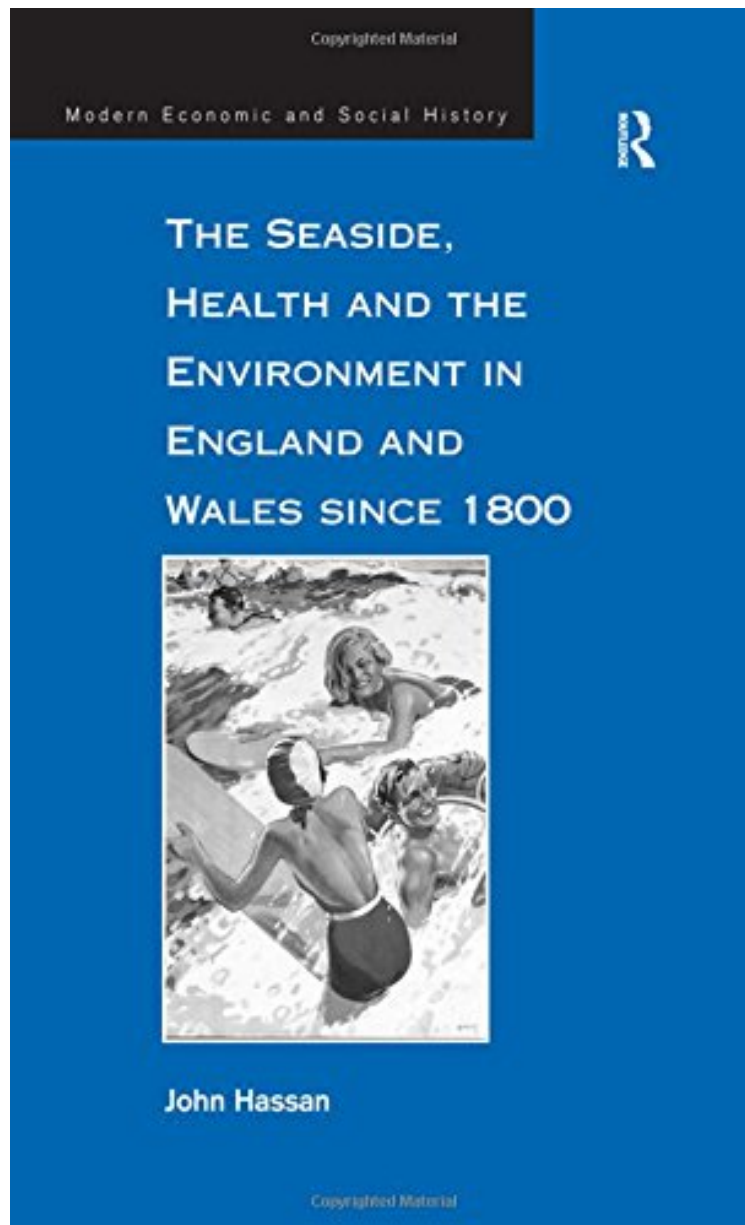


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The Seaside, Health and the Environment in England and Wales since 1800 (Modern Economic and Social History)

John Hassan

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The Seaside, Health and the Environment in England and Wales since 1800 (Modern Economic and Social History):

The seaside has always held a special position in British history as a place of rest, relaxation and recuperation. Over the last 200 years many have made their way to the coast, attracted by the long sunshine hours, the clean ozone-charged air and the opportunities for bathing in and even drinking sea-water. Although the early health resort ideal began to give way to more pleasure orientated themes in the nineteenth century, the seaside holiday was still regarded by many as a wholesome and invigorating break from inland urban life well into the twentieth century. Yet with ever increasing numbers of visitors and rising levels of coastal pollution, this was by no means a forgone conclusion. The Seaside, Health and the Environment in England and Wales since 1800 explores the ways in which English seaside resorts continually reinvented themselves to take account of contemporary trends in popular leisure and maintain their hold on the public's imagination. Particular account is paid to the interwar years when new obsessions with outdoor activities such as sunbathing and tanning were purposefully adopted by the industry to define the modern image of the resort holiday. For these and other reasons the seaside holiday reached new peaks of popularity in the 1930s and 1950s, yet, this very success placed enormous pressures on the environmental amenities that people came to enjoy. As this work shows, environmental stresses were manifold, particularly pollution of the resorts' prime assets, their beaches. As such, serious questions are raised concerning why it took such a long time for a determined effort to be made to reverse beach pollution, and the lessons to be learned regarding the impact of negative images of the coast as a zone of danger and infection.

'Hassan has read widely and carefully in the relevant secondary, as well as primary, literature. His standpoints on specific questions are thoughtfully elaborated, his acknowledgement of other scholarship generous. This book offers more than a modern history of the seaside; it is also a guide to the current bibliography, and to the issues central to the economic history of environments other than the coast of England and Wales.' *Economic History* '... the scope of the book is impressive if not encyclopaedic.' www.history.ac.uk 'The author has written a bench-mark work for future studies of the interrelated environmental, medical and cultural histories of modern Britain.' *Urban History* About the Author John Hassan, formerly Manchester Metropolitan University, UK