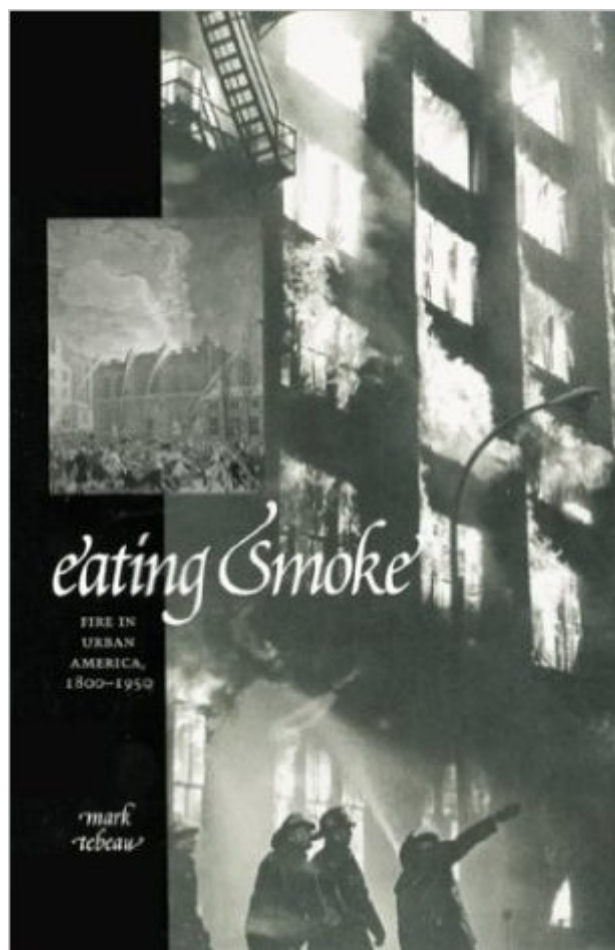


The book was found

# Eating Smoke: Fire In Urban America, 1800-1950



## Synopsis

During the period of America's swiftest industrialization and urban growth, fire struck fear in the hearts of city dwellers as did no other calamity. Before the Civil War, sweeping blazes destroyed more than \$200 million in property in the nation's largest cities. Between 1871 and 1906, conflagrations left Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, and San Francisco in ruins. Into the twentieth century, this dynamic hazard intensified as cities grew taller and more populous, confounding those who battled it. Firefighters' death-defying feats captured the popular imagination but too often failed to provide more than symbolic protection. Hundreds of fire insurance companies went bankrupt because they could not adequately deal with the effects of even smaller blazes. Firefighters and fire insurers created a physical and cultural infrastructure whose legacy—in the form of heroic firefighters, insurance policies, building standards, and fire hydrants—lives on in the urban built environment. In *Eating Smoke*, Mark Tebeau shows how the changing practices of firefighters and fire insurers shaped the built landscape of American cities, the growth of municipal institutions, and the experience of urban life. Drawing on a wealth of fire department and insurance company archives, he contrasts the invention of a heroic culture of firefighters with the rational organizational strategies by fire underwriters. Recognizing the complexity of shifting urban environments and constantly experimenting with tools and tactics, firefighters fought fire ever more aggressively—"eating smoke" when they ventured deep into burning buildings or when they scaled ladders to perform harrowing rescues. In sharp contrast to the manly valor of firefighters, insurers argued that the risk was quantifiable, measurable, and predictable. Underwriters managed hazard with statistics, maps, and trade associations, and they eventually agitated for building codes and other reforms, which cities throughout the nation implemented in the twentieth century. Although they remained icons of heroism, firefighters' cultural and institutional authority slowly diminished. Americans had begun to imagine fire risk as an economic abstraction. By comparing the simple skills employed by firefighters—climbing ladders and manipulating hoses—with the mundane technologies—maps and accounting charts—of insurers, the author demonstrates that the daily routines of both groups were instrumental in making intense urban and industrial expansion a less precarious endeavor.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 440 pages

Publisher: Johns Hopkins University Press (October 16, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0801867916

ISBN-13: 978-0801867910

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.4 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1 customer review)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,480,341 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in [Books > Business & Money > Insurance > Property](#) #896 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Civil & Environmental > Fire Science](#) #7776 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Social Services & Welfare](#)

## Customer Reviews

OK book on evolution of fire protection in cities. Very detailed concerning political and economic aspects, but less so on actual firefighting technology and procedures which is what I was looking for.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

Eating Smoke: Fire in Urban America, 1800-1950 Fire Stick: The 2016 User Guide And Manual - Learn How To Install Android Apps On Your Fire TV Stick! (Streaming Devices, How To Use Fire Stick, Fire TV Stick User Guide) Weber's Smoke: A Guide to Smoke Cooking for Everyone and Any Grill Smoke & Spice, Updated and Expanded 3rd Edition: Cooking With Smoke, the Real Way to Barbecue The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History, Vol. 2: Continental America, 1800-1867 (Paperback) Fire and Smoke: A Pitmaster's Secrets Where There's Smoke: inspirational romantic suspense (Montana Fire Book 1) Classic Candy: America's Favorite Sweets, 1950-80 Tampa Bay's Gulf Beaches: Fabulous 1950's and 1960's (FL) (Images of America) Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating: A Step-by-Step Guide for Overcoming Selective Eating, Food Aversion, and Feeding Disorders What's Eating You?: A Workbook for Teens with Anorexia, Bulimia, and other Eating Disorders Understanding Recovery from Eating Disorders (Teen Eating Disorder Prevention Book) Binge Eating Cure: Cure Binge Eating with Intermittent Fasting The Joy of Eating Well: A Practical Guide to- Transform Your Relationship with Food- Overcome Emotional Eating- Achieve Lasting Results The Urban Sketching Handbook: Understanding Perspective: Easy Techniques for Mastering Perspective Drawing on Location (Urban Sketching Handbooks) The Urban Politics Reader (Routledge Urban Reader Series) The Urban Design Reader (Routledge Urban Reader Series) Becoming an Urban Planner: A Guide to Careers in Planning and Urban Design The Urban Sociology Reader (Routledge Urban Reader

Series) The Urban Sketching Handbook: People and Motion: Tips and Techniques for Drawing on Location (Urban Sketching Handbooks)

[Dmca](#)