

but also dwarfing the energy produced from peat in all Dutch cities combined. Yet by the late seventeenth century, 'smoke became an increasingly common and legible symbol of urban life' (p. 196), and by the nineteenth, it was almost a benchmark for other cities' modernization and industrial development. Early modern London may have been unique for its time, but it offered an enduring model for 'progress' that inevitably links economic growth and political power with environmental harm.

*The Smoke of London* will no doubt find undergraduate as well as specialist readers: it is snappily written, meticulously and helpfully footnoted and tackles historiographical debates in a range of fields with admirable clarity. A memorable anecdote frames each chapter, and gives a window into the breadth of research that sits behind the book's key arguments. Sensitive readings of literary sources are placed in a robust economic framework. Carefully explained statistics sit alongside weird and wonderful cases from the royal courts, in a potent blend of political, scientific, economic, industrial and social history, all under the 'environmental' umbrella. It is a brilliant book that deserves to be widely read.

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**Michael Carley, Robert Dalziel, Pat Dargan and Simon Laird**, *Edinburgh New Town: A Model City*. Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2015. 191pp. 20 b&w and 186 colour illustrations. Bibliography. £20.00 hbk.  
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This book provides an architectural exploration of Edinburgh's neoclassical New Town, arguing that the neighbourhood provides a model for town planners globally. The New Town's strength, the authors suggest, lies in its distinctive balance of design and adaptability, whereby the unified façades belie a range of internal designs and usages.

As a guide to the New Town's architecture, the book is exemplary, with an impressive array of high-quality images and an in-depth examination of design features from iron railings to corncicing. The attention to detail is, profitably, not limited to the buildings themselves, but extends to the urban fabric: we learn, for example, that New Town footpaths were paved with stones quarried in Caithness, whilst the streets were paved with Aberdeenshire granite (p. 49). The authors are careful to understand the shaping and control of the natural environment as a key element of urban design, explaining how plans of the New Town were influenced by Edinburgh's topography and considering how buildings and trees were counterposed in the original scheme deliberately to create or accentuate vistas (p. 146). Many of these elements are considered in comparison to London, Dublin and Bath, and the authors make a strong argument that the New Town possesses unique features: this is attributed largely to the effects of Scotland's different legal system (p. 117). This will surely make the book an especially helpful reference work in ongoing conservation debates surrounding Edinburgh's World Heritage Site status. The material presented in the main body of the book is complemented by a useful glossary of architectural terms, a typology of New Town housing and a suggested walking tour of the area's points of interest.

It is a shame, however, that the book does not address the issue of social and residential zoning that was afforded by the development of the New Town and is ongoing today. The New Town was built to provide Edinburgh's wealthy inhabitants with a rationally designed, spacious living environment – and, it was hoped, to tempt Scots back from London. Though the authors acknowledge this original lack of 'egalitarian intentions' (p. 149), there is little consideration of its effect, which was one of continuing social segregation and, as Irvine Welsh has written, the impression that 'Edinburgh was the first city to render most of its citizens invisible.'<sup>1</sup> The book's central claim that the New Town is now a 'model city' is amply supported by the wealth of architectural detail included, but there is little cultural or social justification beyond brief mentions of the New Town's modern 'mixed use'. The provision they cite of 'shops, schools, pubs, restaurants and community facilities' (p. 7) contributes, in practice, to little more than middle-class homogeneity: appealing to those who can afford it, perhaps, but far from socially inclusive.

In fact, Edinburgh has significant inequalities: the highest concentration of affluence in Scotland sits alongside the third highest level of income deprivation.<sup>2</sup> These social divisions can be seen in geographical terms, with an average of a nine-year life expectancy difference between the wealthiest and poorest parts of the city, and up to a third of children in the city's most deprived areas acknowledged to be 'living in poverty'.<sup>3</sup> The New Town, by contrast, is visibly exclusive: its gardens, for example, a 'powerful and satisfying design element' (p. 53), which amount to at least 27 acres of the city's green spaces, are fenced off and privately owned by surrounding inhabitants, with strict rights of use written into individual charters. These documents originally stipulated that even live-in servants were not allowed in the gardens, except in the case of female servants looking after the lady of the house's child.<sup>4</sup> This is reflected in the New Town's design: the tall iron railings, described by the authors so accurately in material terms, have a deeper social symbolism that is largely neglected here. More generally, it is clear that the broader social context of the area complicates its status as a 'model city'. This could have been usefully taken into account.

Overall, the book is undoubtedly valuable to those interested in the history and architecture of Edinburgh's New Town. Beautifully produced as it is, it could find a welcome home on a coffee table as well as a reference shelf. It is to be regretted, however, that it does not take a more nuanced approach to the social demographics of the area and their physical manifestation in the built environment.

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<sup>1</sup> I. Welsh, 'Flower of Scotland', *Guardian*, 23 Aug. 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government, *The Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan, 2013–2016*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> C. Byrom, 'The pleasure grounds of Edinburgh New Town', *Garden History*, 23 (1995), pp. 67–90.