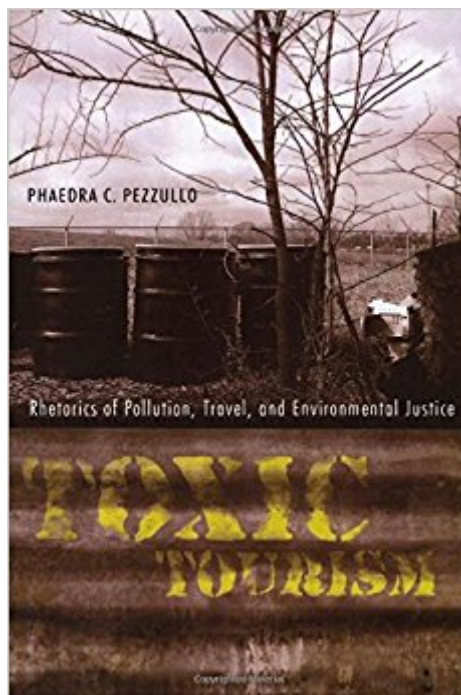


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# Toxic Tourism: Rhetorics Of Pollution, Travel, And Environmental Justice (Albma Rhetoric Cult & Soc Crit)



## Synopsis

Tourism is at once both a beloved pastime and a denigrated form of popular culture. Romanticized for its promise of pleasure, tourism is also potentially toxic, enabling the deadly exploitation of the cultures and environments visited. For many decades, the environmental justice movement has offered a "toxic tours," non-commercial trips intended to highlight people and locales polluted by poisonous chemicals. Out of these efforts and their popular reception, a new understanding of democratic participation in environmental decision-making has begun to arise. Phaedra C. Pezzullo examines these tours as a tactic of resistance and for their potential in reducing the cultural and physical distance between hosts and visitors. Pezzullo begins by establishing the ambiguous roles tourism and the toxic have played in the U.S. cultural imagination since the mid-20th century in a range of spheres, including Hollywood films, women's magazines, comic books, and scholarly writings. Next, drawing on participant observation, interviews, documentaries, and secondary accounts in popular media, she identifies and examines a range of tourist performances enabled by toxic tours. Extended illustrations of the racial, class, and gender politics involved include Louisiana's "Cancer Alley," California's San Francisco Bay Area, and the Mexican border town of Matamoros. Weaving together social critiques of tourism and community responses to toxic chemicals, this critical, rhetorical, and cultural analysis brings into focus the tragedy of ongoing patterns of toxification and our assumptions about travel, democracy, and pollution.

## Book Information

Series: Albma Rhetoric Cult & Soc Crit

Paperback: 280 pages

Publisher: University Alabama Press; New edition (May 10, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0817355871

ISBN-13: 978-0817355876

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #315,427 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #89 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Civil & Environmental > Environmental > Pollution #173 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Nature Travel > Ecotourism #743 in Books > Business & Money >

## Customer Reviews

Pezullo's topic and approach are as fresh as her subject matter is fetid. . . . Her exposure of corporate cooptation of environmentalism ('astroturfing') is eloquent. The discussion of AstraZeneca's manufacturing cycle of making cancer causing herbicides, cancer treatment drugs, and sponsorship of Breast Cancer Awareness is revelatory and awful. . . . Pezullo throws the political work of the tour into sharp relief, not merely toxic tours, but potentially all tours. This is excellent work because it points to the possibility of a more active and engaged type of tourism as opposed to a passive and alienated one.¶Dean MacCannell, author of *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*A very stimulating read. I find myself wanting to bring *Toxic Tourism* up in conversations, and I'm resisting the temptation to share chapters 2 and 3 early. . . . I can't think of another book that presents the modified ethnographic approach used by Pezullo so explicitly. It would be a wonderful textbook for a graduate course in qualitative research methods.¶Tarla Peterson, author of *Sharing the Earth: The Rhetoric of Sustainable Development*

Winner of: -The 2007 Winans-Wichelns Memorial Award -2007 Book of the Year Award of the Critical and Cultural Studies Division of the National Communications Association -2007 Christine Oravec Research Award of the Environmental Communication Division of the National Communications Association --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book provides excellent insight into the nature of the tourism industry as it relates to ecological awareness. Specifically, this book explores toxic tourism, or the traveling to areas that have been heavily polluted, as a form of advocacy tourism that also engages perspective, learning, and understanding about environmental pollution and its effect on various communities and the environment. In addition, this book is grounded theoretically in understanding tourism through the visual, but also other senses: the feeling of presence through smell, touch, bodily movement, and emotion. Pezzullo explains that the toxic tour often provides the embodiment of counterexperience to our everyday lives, which shapes our process of becoming. However, as Pezzullo observes in the conclusion, we also must remember that tourism, and especially toxic tourism, provides a learning experience, but does not necessarily clean up communities, nor does one actually know the experience of everyday life in toxic areas. In short, this book is insightful for not only those interested in environmental protection, but also those who are interested in tourism studies, advocacy tourism,

environmental communication, and an understanding of how our experiences shape what we learn and know about the world.

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