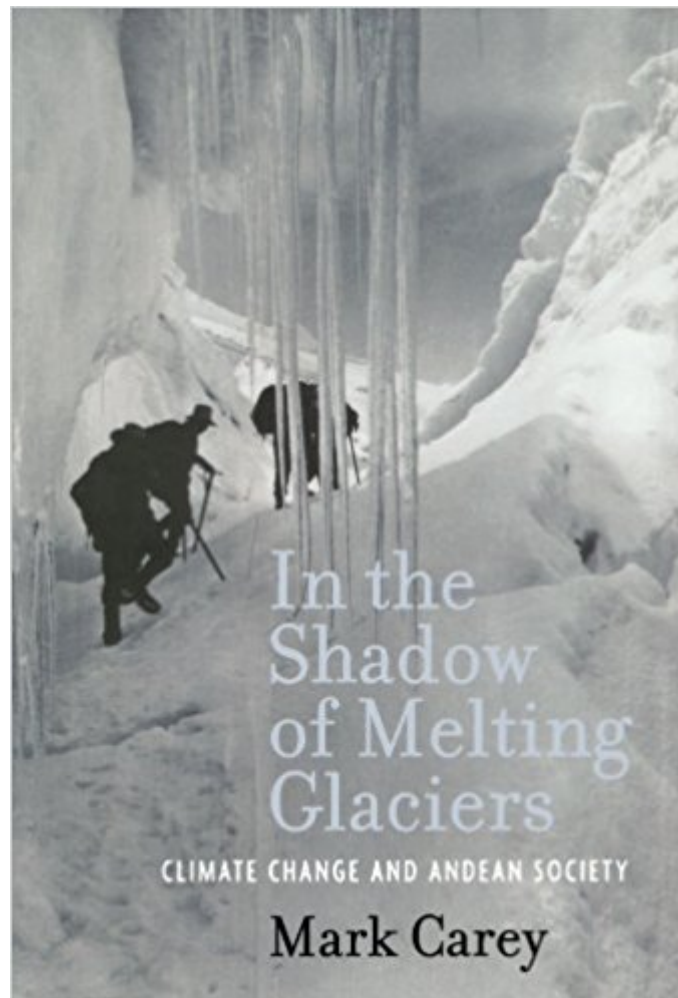




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# **In The Shadow Of Melting Glaciers: Climate Change And Andean Society**



## Synopsis

Climate change is producing profound changes globally. Yet we still know little about how it affects real people in real places on a daily basis because most of our knowledge comes from scientific studies that try to estimate impacts and project future climate scenarios. This book is different, illustrating in vivid detail how people in the Andes have grappled with the effects of climate change and ensuing natural disasters for more than half a century. In Peru's Cordillera Blanca mountain range, global climate change has generated the world's most deadly glacial lake outburst floods and glacier avalanches, killing 25,000 people since 1941. As survivors grieved, they formed community organizations to learn about precarious glacial lakes while they sent priests to the mountains, hoping that God could calm the increasingly hostile landscape. Meanwhile, Peruvian engineers working with miniscule budgets invented innovative strategies to drain dozens of the most unstable lakes that continue forming in the twenty first century. But adaptation to global climate change was never simply about engineering the Andes to eliminate environmental hazards. Local urban and rural populations, engineers, hydroelectric developers, irrigators, mountaineers, and policymakers all perceived and responded to glacier melting differently-based on their own view of an ideal Andean world. Disaster prevention projects involved debates about economic development, state authority, race relations, class divisions, cultural values, the evolution of science and technology, and shifting views of nature. Over time, the influx of new groups to manage the Andes helped transform glaciated mountains into commodities to consume. Locals lost power in the process and today comprise just one among many stakeholders in the high Andes-and perhaps the least powerful. Climate change transformed a region, triggering catastrophes while simultaneously jumpstarting modernization processes. This book's historical perspective illuminates these trends that would be ignored in any scientific projections about future climate scenarios.

## Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (April 7, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195396073

ISBN-13: 978-0195396072

Product Dimensions: 9.1 x 0.9 x 6.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #321,711 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #49 in Books > History > Americas > South America > Peru #168 in Books > History > Historical Study & Educational Resources > Historical Geography #238 in Books > History > Americas > Central America

## Customer Reviews

Carey the historian has brought a valuable insight into the way a society functions or malfunctions in facing up to the impacts of climate change. --Hot Topic: Global Warming and the Future of New Zealand Carey throws some comparative light and insight on how many communities world-wide will have to deal with either disappearing glaciers (Andes, Himalayas, Canada) or reduced snow-pack. --Acequias and Adjudication: A blog on water rights in New Mexico In the Shadow of Melting Glaciers shows us a region of the planet experiencing the effects of climate change and writes a fascinating, nuanced history of people trying to cope with the changes. --Social Science Research Council, IDRF Book Exchange If the characteristics of first-rate historical scholarship are solid primary research, rigorous analysis and masterful narrative, Carey has supplied them all in buckets. --A Contracorriente, A Journal on Social History and Literature in Latin America Mark Carey in this book has crafted a well-written narration of the history of glacial lakes and glacier-related hazards in the Peruvian Andes and their interrelation with socioeconomic development in the region. --Mountain Research and Development "Adds a significant dimension to Latin American environmental history. It is one of the first sustained investigations of the human and economic costs of climate change in the region, and numbers among a handful of studies to weigh the long-term implications of glacier retreat anywhere in the world." --American Historical Review "In the Shadow of Melting Glaciers addresses a topic that has been virtually unexplored in the historiography of the Andes and will be regarded as a significant contribution to the study of the historical construction of nature and disasters. In this original and beautifully written book, Mark Carey contributes to the study of Andean environmental, political, economic, and cultural history." -Carlos Aguirre, University of Oregon "Mark Carey puts local people at the center of his path-breaking historical analysis. Here, culture often trumps science in shaping human adaptations to global climate change." -Julie Cruikshank, author of Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, and Social Imagination "Glaciers in the Cordillera Blanca have attracted my scientific interest for more than twenty years. Still, I never got rid of a feeling that there is something behind the objectively scrutinized glaciers that we cannot understand. After reading Mark Carey's book all the interest of the people in 'their' glaciers, and even more their disinterest in them, became evident to me. I started to understand why our instruments have been locked away by local

communities for years, why regional policy makers listened to our accounts about dangers and threats from glaciers with apparently great interest but without any intent for taking action. In the Shadow of Melting Glaciers is highly attractive for scientists of all kinds by showing in an emphatic way how incomplete scientific results can remain without understanding the related societies' perceptions."-Georg Kaser, University of Innsbruck"This is a compelling, meticulously documented, and jargon-free presentation of the social changes a highly stratified, remote society has faced over the past 70 years. Highly recommended." -- CHOICE "A rigorous, meticulous, and engaging study...This is a book that should be required reading for anyone interested in environmental history or the history of science and technology in Latin America and beyond but it will also prove accessible to upper level undergraduate and graduate courses on Modern Latin America in general." --Contra CorrientesIn this timely book, Mark Carey explores this recent environmental history by examining not just the relationship between humans and their physical environment, but also that among the growing number of stakeholders involved in the mitigation process, including glacier experts, state institutions and scientific commissions, industry advocates and, above all, the Andean peoples themselves. Social HistoryA captivating historical analysis rich with insight into one of the more urgent topics of our time human response to climate change . In a world dangerously enamored with the promise of the amoral technological fix, the book also offers the important reminder that all scientific expertise is socially and historically constructed and suggests that seeing scientists and engineers as stakeholders rather than objective producers of information may facilitate the implementation of mitigation and adaptation processes that must balance the needs of diverse and oft-conflicted groups. Social and Cultural Geography

Mark Carey is an Assistant Professor of History in the Robert D. Clark Honors College, University of Oregon.

Remarkable book. Takes you right there and you shiver at the thought that all glaciers are melting. It ain't right.....

This new book is simply fantastic. It puts a real, human face on the complex abstractions we associate with climate change. The writing is sharp, alive and makes plain the author's authentic and deep understanding of his subject. Carey manages to make technical and historical matters not only entirely accessible but extremely interesting. The book reads like a story yet teaches like a text. I've read so much about climate change and I think In the Shadow of Melting Glaciers is the most

important addition to climate change work since An Inconvenient Truth. Can't recommend it enough.

In the Shadow of Melting Glaciers: Climate Change and Andean Society provides a strong survey of the science and social impact of melting glaciers, using Andean social experience as the foundation for this survey. How glacier melt affects real people on a daily basis is presented in this focus on how the Andean people have witnessed, experienced, and handled the effects of climate change and natural disasters for more than a century. College-level collections strong in climate change and South American experiences need this.

Quick service and item as described. Would recommend and use this provider again.

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