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(Berkeley Series in British Studies)

## **Governing Systems: Modernity and the Making of Public Health in England, 1830ndash;1910 (Berkeley Series in British Studies)**

*Tom Crook*

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#6329482 in Books 2016-06-14Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x 1.20 x 6.00l, .0 #File Name:  
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**Tom Crook : Governing Systems: Modernity and the Making of Public Health in England, 1830ndash;1910 (Berkeley Series in British Studies)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Governing Systems: Modernity and the Making of Public Health in England, 1830ndash;1910

(Berkeley Series in British Studies):

When and how did public health become modern? In *Governing Systems*, Tom Crook offers a fresh answer to this question through an examination of Victorian and Edwardian England, long considered one of the critical birthplaces of modern public health. This birth, Crook argues, should be located not in the rise of professional expertise or a centralized bureaucratic state, but in the contested formation and functioning of multiple systems, both human and material, administrative and technological. Theoretically ambitious but empirically grounded, *Governing Systems* will be of interest to historians of modern public health and modern Britain, as well as to anyone interested in the complex gestation of the governmental dimensions of modernity.

From the Inside Flap "Governing Systems is an ambitious, original, and stimulating book on a central subject of modern British history, indeed of modern history: the forces creating 'modernity.' Crook gives equal attention to local detail, variation, and contingency and to general principles and dynamics of social and administrative change. In sum, this is an important book that will spark debate and leave its mark on the subject." — Frank Trentmann, author of *Empire of Things: How We Became a World of Consumers, from the Fifteenth Century to the Twenty-First*

"Governing Systems is an absolutely excellent book: sophisticated in conception, tightly argued, brilliantly researched, highly polished, and beautifully written. It is restlessly unreductive in its analysis of government, technology, and health, and it makes much of the work in this area seem simplistic by comparison. It achieves this level of subtlety by being simultaneously empirical, theoretical, and synthetic — a rare combination. It truly captures the sense of government as something multiple, dynamic, frustrating, and contingent, by focusing on the mundane, daily, nitty-gritty acts of trying to get people (and technologies) to behave in particular ways to achieve certain ends." — Chris Otter, author of *The Victorian Eye: A Political History of Light and Vision in Britain, 1800–1910*