



Scientists and Swindlers: Consulting on Coal and Oil in America, 1820--1890 (Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology)

Paul Lucier

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In this impressively researched and highly original work, Paul Lucier explains how science became an integral part of American technology and industry in the nineteenth century. *Scientists and Swindlers* introduces us to a new service of professionals: the consulting scientists. Lucier follows these entrepreneurial men of science on their wide-ranging commercial engagements from the shores of Nova Scotia to the coast of California and shows how their innovative work fueled the rapid growth of the American coal and oil industries and the rise of American geology and chemistry. Along the way, he explores the decisive battles over expertise and authority, the high-stakes court cases over patenting research, the intriguing and often humorous exploits of swindlers, and the profound ethical challenges of doing science for money.

Starting with the small surveying businesses of the 1830s and reaching to the origins of applied science in the 1880s, Lucier recounts the complex and curious relations that evolved as geologists, chemists, capitalists, and politicians worked to establish scientific research as a legitimate, regularly compensated, and respected enterprise. This sweeping narrative enriches our understanding of how the rocks beneath our feet became invaluable resources for science, technology, and industry.



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