

*Laying Waste: The Poisoning of America by Toxic Chemicals*, by Michael H. Brown, Pantheon Books, N.Y. 351 pages. 1980.

Michael Brown, as part of his reporting for the Niagara Gazette, has documented the problems associated with hazardous chemical wastes, first at the area near Niagara Falls known as "Love Canal", but also further afield in Iowa, Tennessee, New Jersey, Louisiana, California, Michigan and Maryland. As a reporter and journalist his approach is, at times, emotional, but he has dug deeply into the story beyond the story and has presented a highly readable book. The book has been characterized by some as having numerous inaccurate statements and leaving false impressions. Because the whole subject of human exposure to chemicals does involve emotions, and is far from an exact science, this reviewer does not pass judgment. At the time of this review (June 1980), the whole story, even of Love Canal alone, is incomplete, and may require years to resolve. The book gives pause for concern, however, and will doubtlessly be cited and attacked for years. It makes for interesting reading.

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