

Introduction

The nine papers presented in this Special Issue are based on talks presented at a symposium on “Environmental Impact of Fossil Fuel Utilization” during the 216th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society, held August 23–27, 1998, in Boston, MA. The interest generated by the symposium reflects the continuing importance of fossil fuels in our industrialized society. A striking characteristic of the symposium was the breadth of the topics presented, ranging from sophisticated new analytical approaches for trace elements and organic compounds, to the intricate chemistry of fossil fuel combustion and emission control, to the forms and effects of fossil fuels in the natural environment. This diversity of material is a result of the many advances in our understanding of the effect of human activities on the environment.

As the new century begins, it appears likely that environmental aspects of fossil fuels will continue to be a dominating challenge for the scientific community. We look forward to the continuation of the intriguing research projects described herein.

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