

## Acknowledgments

Mercury is a slippery substance. It is difficult to control in its physical form; it is also an analytical and practical challenge to examine more than 8,000 years of human interactions with this elusive compound. In writing this book, we were fortunate to be able to draw on the support of many colleagues whose suggestions and comments greatly helped us in our efforts to trace the often surprising flows of quicksilver and its many impacts on the environment and human well-being through time and across all regions of the world.

Both of us, individually and together, have worked on mercury for more than 15 years, but we wrote much of this book while we were on sabbatical from Boston University and MIT, respectively, in 2018. We visited the Department of Thematic Studies, Environmental Change, at Linköping University in Sweden in spring 2018, fostering engaging and useful discussions on our analytical framework and issues of sustainability transitions and transformations, often over fika. We especially thank Björn-Ola Linnér for graciously hosting our stay at Linköping University, and for his insightful comments on early drafts, along with those of Olof Hjelm, Mattias Hjerpe, Julie Wilk, Henrik Kylin, and Joy Routh. Noelle also spent time at Stockholm University's Department of Analytical Chemistry and Environmental Sciences as a visiting professor while we were in Sweden, and thanks Matt MacLeod and colleagues for helpful discussions of chemical pollution and mercury science.

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in “Thunderclappers,” which we discuss in chapter 4. We express our apologies to Warner Brothers for borrowing from films in the Matrix franchise for our chapter title and section headings in chapter 8.

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At this point in the acknowledgments section, it is typical to thank one’s spouse for their support and encouragement. Many such acknowledgments reveal contributions to the research and writing process as well as manuscript preparation that ought to have been credited with coauthorship. We are, however, married to each other. We thus each thank our spouse for her/his contributions to typing, editing, and analysis during this book project. Accordingly, for any remaining errors, we blame each other.



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# Mercury Stories

## Understanding Sustainability through a Volatile Element

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