



BOOK REVIEWS

George Perkins Marsh: Prophet of Conservation, by DAVID LOWENTHAL. University of Washington Press, Seattle: 2000. xxv and 605 pp., illustrations, maps. \$40.00 cloth (ISBN 0-295-97942-9).

It is arguable that a discipline reaches some sort of intellectual maturity and acceptance when biographies of its practitioners interest a public wider than the subject itself. History, religion, politics, literature, and the arts and entertainment in their widest sense, provide the very stuff of biography and fill the shelves of private and public libraries, and the review sections of the serious newspapers. But the yield gets more circumscribed as one moves into the physical, natural, and social sciences; the ideas are more specialized, the actions less spectacular, and both affect a smaller circle of people. One has to think very hard of full-blown studies of people that we could claim to have professed to be closely, or even distantly, related to geography—von Humboldt, Emmanuel Kant, Gilbert White, Nathaniel Shaler, Patrick Geddes, Halford Mackinder, and Isaiah Bowman? There must be more, but this reviewer, at least, has to admit defeat and fall back on “practical” geographers such as explorers, empire builders, and imperial administrators to swell the list.

So, it is particularly welcome to review this new biography of George Perkins Marsh, who, though never a formal geographer, had a very clear idea of what geography was and that geography mattered. Marsh also has the distinction of starting a line of thought and inquiry in *Man and Nature* that is not only at the forefront of geographical and environmental thought today, but has a universal relevance.

David Lowenthal wrote a biography of Marsh in the late 1950s entitled *George Perkins Marsh—Versatile Vermonter*, so why should the same person write another one on the same subject? It is true that William Wordsworth has had five biographies in the last 50 years. But that is not quite the same, because each is by a different author, with different viewpoints and interpretations. The answers are many. First, Marsh’s concerns are more salient now than they were 50 years ago—a “devotion to the tangible sings of the past, to popular science, to women’s rights, to the career and meaning of words, to archaeology, and site protection, to public architecture and the arts” while “the conservation cause he pioneered is now global” (p. xvi). Second, copious new primary sources (the Hiram Power’s papers, the Crane papers—his wife’s family), and many new documents on his Italian and diplomatic work in the 1860s and 1870s have become available. Third, new historical insights have emerged on the manifold interests of Marsh, on language theory and practice, on race, national identity, religion, the different natures of America and Europe, Middle Eastern affairs, and the true nature of the Risorgimento, anything but a popular crusade and more an elitist adventure. Fourth, expectations of what a biography should be have changed. The new sources allow a greater insight into his mind and feelings. What made this ambi-

tious, industrious, and opinionated, yet humble, man, always in debt and yet traveling widely and accumulating a library of books and drawings equal to none in the mid-19th century, “tick”? Thankfully, such curiosity does not mean, comments Lowenthal, that one has to “pander to current taste for sordid trivia, let alone succumb to deconstructors who deny a life any coherent meaning” (p. xviii) for which we can be grateful. But, this is anything but an uncritical biography; in chapter 17, “Retrospect: Forming a Life,” we find this benign, tolerant, and kindly man consumed by hates and prejudices, sadness and remorse, pessimism and despondency. Fifth, there is the altered biographer himself whose growing maturity of style and knowledge has made parts of the original biography obsolete and even flawed, and in need of revision and reassessment. It is fortunate that he has had the time and energy to revisit his earlier endeavors. Finally, there is the mounting environmental understanding and concern that makes Marsh’s work more, not less, relevant than ever before. Not that his concerns are directly those of today, but he firmly put humans at center stage and posed the question that is contained in the penultimate sentence at the end of his great work—“is man of nature or above her?” It is, perhaps, the only and ultimate environmental issue.

All these are good reasons for revisiting Marsh, and what a feast it is, especially for a person interested in forests and forest clearing, which pervades so much of the book. But where can one begin to nibble when there is such a banquet on offer? Most geographers will probably turn to chapters 13, 14, and 18—“Man and Nature: The Making,” “Man and Nature: The Meaning,” and “Prospect: Reforming Nature” in which Lowenthal reassesses the impact and significance of *Man and Nature* in the light of new evidence from Italy and in the context of present-day concerns. But to leave it at that would be a great mistake. There is far more to Marsh than being the author of *Man and Nature*. His vast learning, enormous skill, range, and volume of writing; his intellectual influence; his penetrating insights; and his pithy phrases leave one with a kind of intellectual surfeit. Could one man do all this: master 20 languages and be the practical farmer, mill owner, and quarry owner that he was in early life, as well as ambassador for 20 years? It is all too humbling. I found chapter 6 on “Constantinople and the Desert,” and chapter 8 on “Dromedaries and Debts” some of the most appealing in understanding the range and enthusiasms of the man, while chapters 16 and 17—“Last Watersheds: Rome, Cravairola and Vallombrosa” and “Retrospect: Forming a Life”—the most revealing. Also, though one may be inclined to skip the hors-d’oeuvres of the first chapter on “Woodstock and the First Watershed” in order to get on to the later, juicier dishes, it would be a great pity. One simply cannot understand Marsh in isolation from the situation in which he grew up; the intensely religious, rural, post-Revolutionary life of early 19th-century New England—and Vermont at that—with its emphases on achievement, hard work, thrift, and family ties.

Besides *Man and Nature*, Marsh scored some other remarkable “firsts”: a precociously early awareness of the affects of human disturbance on vegetation succession (pp. 86-87); a crucially formative role in the founding of the Smithsonian Institution; writing a penetrating and far-reaching report on “irrigation” in the West; influencing the final form of the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. (pp. 344-455); his thoughts on deaf sign language; and many more. His judgments were acute and pithy.

To take one at random, he warned the United States government not to “dignify every case of resistance to the established government with the name of liberty” (p. 66).

The restless energy and day-to-day practicality of Marsh, coupled with an omnivorous curiosity, produced a man who could not follow any one line of thought with single-minded dedication—and we are the richer for that. Consequently, how difficult it is to typify a life in all its contradictions and paradoxes; we glimpse one aspect, think it the whole and say “so and so is...,” but how wrong we can be. Marsh may have been prejudiced, sad, remorseful, pessimistic and self-abasing, but he was also tolerant, delightful, happy, ambitious, and devotedly loving to his family.

Lowenthal has handled these contradictions and complications with consummate skill, deep knowledge, and not a little passion. This is a keenly felt and carefully written biography by one of our leading geographers, and the rewriting is more than amply justified. I have had occasion to write elsewhere that “every page, almost every line, of this remarkable book shines with the scholarship, learning, and insight of both the subject and the author. I don’t know whom I admire more—Marsh or Lowenthal,” and I have no reason to alter that judgment even after a more careful and closer reading of the work.

I am left with one nagging worry about the genre: how will this sort of work ever be possible in a future age of transitory and impermanent word processing files and e-mail. How will we ever be able to “form a life” like this of our contemporaries? Perhaps the “housekeeping” and tidying of hard disks should be banned and their deposit in libraries made a basic and legal obligation for intellectuals, or will “data protection” in this mechanically and moral “politically correct” world mean that all true opinions will have to be expunged in the interest of “data protection”?

—*Michael Williams*
University of Oxford



Reading the Skies: A Cultural History of English Weather, 1650-1820. VLADIMIR JANKOVIC. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000. xiv and 272 pp., illustrations, index. \$55.00 cloth (ISBN 0-226-39215-5).

This book is a good and an interesting one, but it is not well served by its subtitle. “Cultural” is a term that can be used so broadly as to be almost a synonym for “human,” as in the terms “cultural ecology” and “the cultural landscape.” A cultural history of the weather in this sense might investigate the relations between the weather and human activities and the ways in which they were altered by both climatic shifts and social change. Jankovic’s book is a cultural history of a much narrower kind. It does not deal more than incidentally with the great practical significance of the weather in 18th-century English life and livelihood—in agriculture and harvests, in transportation by sea and road, in industry, in human health. It is a history of thought about the weather and of meanings attributed to it. Even that field, though, is covered only in part. One must look elsewhere to learn about the uses of the weather in fiction, poetry, drama, and painting. An examination of climatic determinism and its political

uses and associations in 18th-century England would be of great and not merely historical interest to geographers, but they will find here only a few passing comments on the topic. Ideas about human impact on climate through land-cover change are not assessed.

Nor, finally, is *Reading the Skies* a study of the development of weather science as we know it today. Jankovic warns that "...the present work does not pretend to be a comprehensive account of 18th-century meteorological science" (p. 176 n5). Its focus indeed is not on the thought of the period, already well chronicled, that is most akin to that of the modern disciplines of meteorology and climatology. It is on another and, as Jankovic insists, radically distinct program of observation and interpretation. To name and define that program is to bring out perhaps the chief defect of the subtitle, for nothing is made clearer than the fact that its subject matter was not "weather" as the term is now understood. It was instead a "meteorological" tradition in a lost sense of the word that Jankovic does an excellent job of recovering and expounding. What he has written is a cultural history not of English weather but of the theories and practices of English meteorological inquiry from 1650 to 1820, a monograph rather than a survey.

A good monograph, as opposed to a survey, takes its structure from a problem or a question. The problem that shapes *Reading the Skies* is to account for the long dominance and still longer survival of a way of looking at weather events drastically unlike the one whose superiority we now take for granted. It is written from within the larger research program of the anti-presentist history of ideas. It seeks to understand past thought in its own terms rather than in its relation to the thought of our own times; it substitutes a close attention to social and intellectual context for an older tendency to look mainly for "anticipations" of present-day trends.

In the early chapters, Jankovic makes it clear with a wealth of documentation how different English meteorology well into the 18th century was from what the U.K. Meteorological Office and the American Meteorological Society now practice—and how much better a right to the name it possessed. For it was, as they are not, literally the study of "meteors." Defined by classical writers, and dealt with most authoritatively by Aristotle, meteors were sublunary bodies mixing the basic elements of matter and formed from vapors and exhalations. The "meteoric events" triggered by such bodies took in many phenomena not today classified as weather. They included volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, disease outbreaks, the northern lights, and shooting stars. Even among weather events, early meteorology was not concerned, as meteorology is today, with average or everyday conditions, only with extraordinary occurrences, such as great storms, extremes of temperature, droughts, and thunderbolts. It had little use for the steady collection of routine data. It was not, even in ambition, a predictive science. It sought, rather, to interpret meteoric events as unique and meaningful occurrences. Above all, they could represent special divine providences, warnings, and chastisements of both personal and public/political significance.

This view of meteoric history as a series of discrete events was grounded, Jankovic maintains, in one of space as a mosaic of unique places. A particularly interesting chapter, "Provincial Weather," documents the ethos of locality shared by many of his "readers of the skies" who were at the same time students and practitioners of topography in the old and correct sense of that much-misused word. Such observers were typically local notabilities—squires, parsons, physicians—whose interest in extraordi-

nary weather as a part of the human and natural history of their localities was at once an intellectual pursuit and a social-political statement in 18th-century England.

What undermined this tradition, Jankovic argues, was not the demonstrated superiority of a different way of looking at the skies, but changes that pushed the meteoric approach from the central place that it had occupied. Local observers chiefly concerned with remarkable events gradually lost their access to such outlets as the *Transactions of the Royal Society* with the rise in influence of a different set of authorities. They were London-based rather than rural, national or cosmopolitan rather than parochial in outlook, trained in scientific specialties, and often in government employ. They espoused a weather science that was quantitative, reductive, predictive, mechanistic, and focused on general patterns rather than unique events, and that substituted the notion of general providence for a belief in special interventions. The older tradition did not in all ways disappear by 1820, Jankovic notes, but it had ceased to be an intellectual force.

The book ends with the robust assertion that the older meteorologists cannot be written off as failures, for they were not trying to do what their successors wanted to do. That, in fact, is as much of a conclusion as the approach permits. For to try to derive any broader insights for the politics and sociology of weather in other times and places would violate the whole spirit of the project in which thought can be understood in its unique and non-repeatable historical setting. The ideas of one period have no meaning for another. Nor is it an approach that deals in terms such as correct and incorrect, useful and useless. Indeed, its immense tolerance and understanding in dealing with thinkers of the past, whatever they may have said, is not always matched by its forbearance toward present-day writers who dare to make such judgments, for reasons that remain obscure to at least one reader. In defending the meteoric tradition, Jankovic stops well short of asserting that the science that displaced early meteorology did not in fact do some important things better even at the time, or that the meteorologists were right in asserting that meteors exist or that particular storms or thunderbolts were in fact divine punishments. An approach that places a taboo on such questions and extensions impoverishes the discussion in some ways even while enriching it in others. One remains grateful for a fascinating and well-researched tour (almost 90 pages of notes and bibliographic entries to 167 pages of text) of a little-studied episode in the little-studied area of weather history, and one hopes that the author will go on to illuminate more aspects of it in works to come.

—William B. Meyer
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Cultivated Landscapes of Native North America. WILLIAM E. DOOLITTLE. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. xxv and 574pp., maps, diagrams, illustrations, photographs, tables, index. \$45.00 paper (0-199-25071-5).

William E. Doolittle, a geography professor at the University of Texas at Austin, has provided us with a most valuable and unique volume. With its focus on aboriginal North American agricultural landscapes and spatial and diachronic views of associ-

ated human-environment interactions, this book is true geography. Its scope and grasp are much too large to summarize adequately in a short review, but the following comments will provide an outline of one reader's impressions.

The volume's organization is straightforward. An introductory section clearly provides the parameters of the discussion to come and sets the focus on native fields rather than crops, hence the "Cultivated Landscapes" of the title. Doolittle concentrates on the tangible manifestations of botanical food production, e.g. field patterns, planting ridges, and irrigation canals, and the ethnographic and archaeological evidence for these features. Each is examined critically for clues of how, when, and by whom they were used. He then turns to the antecedents of the various field cultivation methods to be discussed. The husbandry of small herbaceous plants and large, and woody plants ("forest-farming") is thoroughly discussed, as is the development of household gardens. Following the lead of Clarissa T. Kimber, Doolittle brings to life household gardens; those small, rich jumbles of multipurpose vegetation. Aboriginal North America's cultivation systems are then divided into those with sufficient moisture, moisture deficits, and excess moisture, respectively, and discussion proceeds with each of these basic types. Commentary follows the rain-fed systems of plain fields in warm environments and ridged fields in cool environments; the dryland systems of dry farming, terracing, water harvesting, and canal irrigation; and the wetland systems of flood recession farming and draining and ridging. The volume's text concludes with a much too short (one doesn't want this discussion to end) region-by-region overview.

Throughout one is struck by Doolittle's refreshing common sense and lack of pretension (particularly for those used to reading an archaeological literature replete with "should-bes" based upon the current vogue in societal organization theory). Here, the stress throughout is on clarity in definition and use of terminology. For support, there is a wealth of data clearly presented in the numerous tables and maps and always tied to appropriate source. And, speaking of sources, the 87-page bibliography by itself is worth the price of admission. Doolittle examines the evidence, provides us with the specifics of the database, and comes to a conclusion. Or, in those instances where uncertainty exists (e.g., p. 14: "A Temporal and Spatial Disclaimer"; pp. 448-49: "What are Ridged Fields Doing in Georgia?"), he tells us so. This is good, as many of these topics have too often been subjected to the dangers of unsubstantiated speculation. For Doolittle things aren't what they should be, but what they are. If the documentary and field record demonstrates an occurrence contrary to perceived wisdom, so be it. Indeed, one senses that questioning the tenets of established orthodoxy is the first step of any investigation for this author and a field reconnaissance is *de rigueur* before final interpretation. For many an "informed" reader, his conclusions will often be surprising; e.g., those related to slash-and-burn cultivation or swidden agriculture in Eastern North America (pp. 174-90).

The author describes this volume as a primer, catalogue, handbook, and encyclopedia; at once both definitive and speculative (p. 17). It is truly all of these and more; absolutely a must for anyone concerned with the aboriginal crop production in North America. There's just nothing like it; so comprehensive in areal scope and at the same time focused on topic. It should be noted that this is the first of a much anticipated, three-volume set. *The Cultivated Landscapes of Native Amazonia and the Andes* by William M. Denevan (2001) and *Cultivated Landscapes of Middle America on the Eve*

of the Conquest by Thomas M. Whitmore and B.L. Turner II (2001) complete the hemispheric view of this epic series.

I have been lucky to know Doolittle and watch portions of this volume develop over the years through the course of numerous conversations, papers, and publications. At first, it surprised me that he would venture beyond his beloved drylands of the southwest into the moist, green spaces of the east. This really wasn't ever an issue though, as the same ingredients of water, soil, and sun were also present here and these coupled with a variety of crops and the ingenuity of their prehistoric cultivators produced an equally rich story of landscape transformation. And, who was better suited to tell it?

—William I. Woods

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Historic American Towns Along the Atlantic Coast. By WARREN BOESCHENSTEIN. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. xvii and 333 pp., illustrations, maps, index. \$39.95 paper (ISBN 0-8018-6144-6).

This book is a work of love of coastal towns on the eastern littoral of North America. The author, a professor of architecture, asks what are these towns' enduring qualities and what value are these enduring qualities for us in the contemporary world? Boeschenstein finds lessons and a vocabulary for contemporary community builders. At the same time, the book has utility for denizens of coastal towns, as they try to find a balance between traditional town character and their contemporary needs, and for educated travelers and tourists, who might find the book an effective trip planner. Indeed, the book is organized, and in places reads, like a relatively sophisticated travel guide, which is not a bad thing. But the effect of the book is to remind us of what we once had and will soon enough lose.

Central to the book are nine chapters each addressing a historic Atlantic coastal town: Castine and Kennebunkport, Maine; Edgartown, Massachusetts; Stonington, Connecticut; Ocean Grove, New Jersey; New Castle, Delaware; Edenton, North Carolina; Beaufort, South Carolina; and Saint Augustine, Florida. The array of towns is divided into three parts—northern, middle, and southern Atlantic coastal regions based on gross physical geography—and the author provides an overview chapter to introduce each of the parts. The overview chapters provide physical and historical description of the three coastal regions and portray a number of other towns along the coast that could just as well have had their own chapters. A lengthy introductory chapter and a brief conclusion frame the book's argument.

The nine town chapters, all fairly short but pithy, follow a common template and have base maps at the same scale and similar sorts of historical photographs and maps to make the point about common characteristics in comprehensible landscapes. The author relates the particular stories of these distinctive places along their different lengths of the coastline. Most were more planned than their inland neighbors, whether by Spanish or English colonists or by 19th-century speculators. All have survived physical and economic vicissitudes, and all have interesting stories. The still untold

history, at least in any comprehensive fashion, is that of discovery of these towns by summer people and 19th-century resort making all along the Atlantic coastline that ties these places together more than any other aspect of environment or historical context.

The overview chapters are the most informative but also, at least for me, the most problematic. Overviews reify a kind of elementary regionalization built on distinctive physical geographical features of each coastline—the effect of extensive glaciation in New England, extensive continental shelf with deep estuaries ocean-ward of the Fall Line from New Jersey to Virginia, and difficult geography of barrier islands and river deltas of the coastal zone of North Carolina to Florida. Each region is given its own independent treatment of European exploration and settlement. A very descriptive state-by-state geography establishes the historical context for the scores of coastal towns still extant and from which the nine detailed analyses are drawn for the town-by-town chapters. The author's seemingly serendipitous dependence on dated secondary sources and little application of regional and local historical and cultural geographies produced in the last few decades is startling. This bibliographic nearsightedness leads to a severe gloss of the economic and locational forces behind settlement patterns and changing fortunes. The author does make good use of Federal Writers Project guidebooks, Sanborn maps, and National Register nominations, but that may be part of the conceptual problem.

Boeschstein addresses many of the lessons to be learned right up front in the introduction, and nothing surprises the reader. Town settings and shared characteristics of form, style, building material, orientation, and social geography within each town have much to do with attractiveness of such places. Spaces for community, waterfront orientation, and common building vocabulary are important, as are shared beliefs and common sensibilities, which the author attributes to the nature of coastal towns, but which is challenged when summer people create their own public life in towns. Time, manifest in persistence and rhythms of life, has been important too. One-time poverty has preserved the charm of these towns, of course, with Beaufort epitomizing the salutary effects of being left behind. But what remains of the past landscape are the substantial dwellings and commercial buildings, not those of the working pasts in these places. Many also have new developments on their margins, erasing the surrounding historic natural landscape within which the towns developed in previous centuries. Finally, human scale is important—though, of course, places were planned, designed, and built in the first place at human scale because that was the only scale of which the builders were technologically capable. The overall density of activity in the towns studied is comparatively high, and the radius of activity is a quarter mile, or a walking distance of five minutes, which allows for considerable personal interaction. Beyond this attractive but limited pedestrian space, activities are much looser and more automobile oriented.

As Boeschstein notes in the conclusion, the majority of the American population lives within 50 miles of a coastline, and almost one quarter lives in close proximity of the places detailed in the book. To protect these precious places—double *entendre* intended—we must focus growth in the towns and not around them, support public and communal qualities focused on their waterfronts, encourage pedestrian use and scale, restrict automobile traffic, and preserve their integrity; in other words, stabilize what they have become. Still, natural forces have always had an impact on these places,

located as they are in unstable environments. Most daunting for the future, with equal effect on all, will be sea-level rise, from which these places, the author argues, must be protected.

I write this review not far as the crow flies from Edenton, North Carolina, visiting with relatives in the town of Corolla on the Outer Banks, a narrow barrier island landscape that looks nevertheless like it could be located in the suburbs of Atlanta or Columbus. Large, well-bedecked houses sit cheek-by-jowl with contemporary shopping centers on a grid of streets that ignores sand dunes and epitomizes the worst of suburban subdivision planning, including terrible traffic snarls during high season. No alien force created this recreational landscape, nor will an alien force obliterate the landscape of historic Atlantic coastal towns from which the author derives his lessons. Unfortunately, the lesson of Corolla—that people seem quite satisfied with recreational living in the equivalent of a modern middle-class suburban subdivision on the dunes—appears the more likely learned. Sea-level rise be damned.

—Joseph S. Wood

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Domesticating the Street: The Reform of Public Space in Hartford, 1850-1930. PETER C. BALDWIN. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1999. ix and 360 pp., maps, index. \$19.95 (ISBN 0-814-25026-2).

Peter Baldwin's *Domesticating the Street* tells the story of a series of reform movements in Hartford, Connecticut between 1850 and 1930 and their effect on the use of public space in the city. He focuses mostly on the years between 1880 and 1920 with a look in both directions to predecessors and successors to their efforts. In the process he leads us from mid-19th century romantic park planning in the tradition of Olmsted to the hard-nosed practicalities of zoning in the 20th century. It is an interesting story and Baldwin tells it well. He begins with the successful efforts of Horace Bushnell in the 1850s to turn a derelict industrial area near the center of town into a large public park that now bears his name. Baldwin sees Bushnell being motivated by a dual mission, to bring many social groups in the city together in one common space and to re-create a nostalgic image of a maternally domestic rural village environment, and sees him leaving an ambivalent legacy.

He follows the course of several succeeding reform movements that sought to impress a version of maternal domesticity on the urban environment, in trying to clean the city's streets, to eliminate prostitution, and to prevent girls from selling newspapers on the streets. Baldwin feels they were limited by an unrealistic assumption that all classes would share their largely upper-middle-class vision of domestic order. Instead he feels that the more effective reform movements were those that sought to segregate different activities in different spaces within the city: the children's recreation movement and accompanying changes in the park system, removal of street peddlers away from downtown to the immigrant neighborhoods, changes to the city's traffic system, and the beginnings of systematic land-use planning. He seems to feel that this was an inevitable, if regrettable course, given the sharp class and ethnic divi-

sions in Hartford at the time, particularly given the large influx of foreign immigrants. He pays particular attention in the later chapters to the spatial separation of activities in the city's park system and to changes in the street system resulting from the increased use of automobiles and concludes with the decline of the reform movements and the triumph of a conservative capitalist version of zoning in the 1920s.

Baldwin is very effective at taking the reader into the heart of debates and discussions in each reform campaign. He shows the interaction of ethnic, class, and gender issues and the differing perceptions and uses of public space among different groups. He makes extensive use of newspapers and meeting records to highlight the roles of leading individuals, even developing with novelistic skill our appreciation of the almost tragic qualities in one of them, George Parker, head of the city park system. When we first meet him, Parker is an advocate for providing parks for working-class neighborhoods as well as upper-class neighborhoods. He then is presented as the most important mover in the effort to develop separate activities in separate spaces, not just in the park system but as an early advocate of zoning. Finally, his tragic flaw is revealed to us in his racism—Parker was an enthusiastic supporter of zoning as a tool of racial segregation, not just in the arsenal of Jim Crow laws in southern cities but in Hartford as well. Other individuals are more sympathetic, but Baldwin gives a well-rounded portrait of each of them, which helps to explain the outcomes of many of the reform campaigns.

Domesticating the Street is more about the reform movements themselves than the public spaces they changed, but Baldwin does pay attention to the changes in physical form and texture of the public space—materials used in street paving and the size of perimeter hedges in the parks, to cite but two examples. His narrative leads ultimately to the domination of the city street system by the needs of automobile traffic and to the implementation of zoning, both of which did away with the teeming mix of activities that had taken place earlier on the streets of Hartford. His discussions of the differing ways that different groups used the streets and other public spaces takes into account not only ethnic, class, and gender issues but also technological, economic, and political changes that affected the outcome of each reform campaign.

The book, based on the author's dissertation, could have used better editing to eliminate several redundant passages dealing with children's recreation and the city parks, and it suffers from a serious shortage of maps to locate the many places mentioned in the text. It is, otherwise, an excellent case study of a period of American urban history in which the roots of much of our contemporary landscape began to grow. It is another in the *Urban Life and Urban Landscape Series* published by Ohio State University Press under the general editorship of Zane L. Miller. Baldwin is careful to site Hartford's reformers in the context of national trends and his book a useful introduction to its time period. The book also is the winner of the Best Book in Urban History award from the Urban History Association in 2000.

—Henry W. Lawrence
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An Ethnic Geography of Early Utica, New York. (Mellon Studies in Geography, 1). By ALLEN G. NOBLE. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999. viii and 88 pp., maps, index, illustrations. \$59.95 (ISBN 0-773-48046-3).

Allen Noble, who has written extensively on the cultural landscapes and ethnic and historical geographies of North America and other lands, has intellectually “returned home” with this slim monograph on the ethnic geographies of early Utica, New York. Having grown up in Utica and experienced many of the influences of a varied ethnic mosaic and heritage in a personal way, Noble herein presents an intimate and sensitive evaluation of how the ethnic fabric of Utica was created.

Utica, even within New York state, has of late been often overlooked and forgotten in both scholarly literature and statewide studies of the human geographies of New York. The importance of this city, however, in the development of central New York and many of the important post-Revolutionary systems of the state cannot be ignored. Called a “gateway” by Donald Meinig, Utica was an early jumping-off point for one of the early main pathways of migration in the northeastern United States after 1783. It grew rapidly at first as a commercial center, and then later as a canal and railroad town, which in turn stimulated extensive development of manufacturing (especially textiles and leather goods). Being well-connected to coastal ports also meant that various waves of foreign-born populations could (and did) migrate to the Utica area, and would become significant parts of Utica’s communities of people.

The earliest European settlers included Dutch from the Hudson Valley, English, and Scots from New England, who were attracted by good farmland and accessibility even before the Revolution. By the War of 1812, not only were there extensive agrarian settlements in the areas, but also small industrial mills using local water power and a growing network of transportation lines, including turnpikes. In addition to the mentioned groups, there came to the Utica area the first “additional” migration, by the Welsh during the first decades of the 19th century. The Welsh, with the pre-Revolutionary settlers, became the creators of Utica’s patterns of “first effective settlement.” They also eventually became a large part of Utica’s middle-class establishment, with their places on the beginning rungs of the social and economic ladders of Utica being taken by the Irish during the 1840s and 1850s.

The Irish of the Mohawk Valley first came in large numbers with the construction of the Erie Canal system (including such feeders as the Chenango Canal which joined the Erie near Utica) and railroads. The later development of more textile mills offered additional employment for the Irish. The Irish, however, were less rapid in a social melding within the community and did not truly merge socially until the 20th century.

Together with the Irish one other group came to Utica and the region—the Germans. Noble reminds us that Germany as a country didn’t exist until 1871, and that these immigrants were “Germanic,” and less “German.” Actually, Germanic people moved to the area well before 1776, mostly from the Protestant areas of the German Palatinate, and quickly merged with other groups. The “Germanics” coming in the 1840s and 1850s, however, were mainly Catholics looking for jobs, and were less than totally welcomed by older settler groups. Like the Irish, the Germans of Utica only merged with other socially powerful groups during the 20th century.

Two other ethnic groups came in large numbers to Utica during the late 19th and early 20th centuries—the Italians and the Poles. Both groups, identified by distinctive

social, cultural, linguistic, and even physical characteristics, entered the social ladder and system of the area generally at the bottom. Both groups were Catholic, but also were vigorously cohesive in their commonly separate neighborhoods, cultures, and social circles. These later neighborhoods tended to be “focused” by both social barriers and by natural and topographical features in Utica, and the surrounding landscapes, thereby continuing these enclaves well into the 20th century. Both Italians and Poles, as well, used the development of parochial schools, political activism, and unionism to further individual and group concerns until well after World War II.

Two other ethnic groups, the Syrian-Lebanese and Afro-Americans, were added to the ethnic “stew” of Utica mostly during the 20th century. Again, starting at the bottom rung of Utica’s social and economic ladder, and tending to remain in clear clusters due to low rents and non-discriminatory housing in specific wards, these last two groups remain as smaller “players” in Utica’s ethnic mosaic.

It should be also noted that Utica itself as a city and as a set of communities has greatly changed since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The Great Depression seriously depleted and weakened the manufacturing sector of Utica, reducing greatly its attractiveness for later migrants and existing residents. Much of the city’s textile factories closed, being outdated and no longer competitive with other producers. Migrants no longer came to this area of the U.S. from the traditional source areas after 1923, and new migrants were usually deflected to Sun Belt or large metropolitan sites for opportunities. From a population of over 100,000 before the Great Depression to approximately 55,000 today, Utica has become an example of what can happen in typical U.S. “Rust Belt” settings when the winds of economic change blow.

Noble’s examination of the ethnic geographies of Utica, New York, though presented in a modestly brief form (77 pages of text with numerous maps and charts) concisely captures the essence of much of the early human development of a regional city in central New York. Certainly, there is more than can be done on the geographical study of early Utica and the region in general, but this modest volume ought to be a starting point for such studies. Further, more in-depth statistical studies on employment and neighborhood structure and change can surely come from this monograph, plus even more sophisticated maps. Yet, after reading this, one comes away with a stronger understanding of Utica and its ethnicity. One also can anticipate that a number of further studies on the cities and regional economies of New York and the Northeast can be, and ought to be, stimulated by this volume.

There are some problems here, however. First, a conclusion that binds together the discussion and main points should be added. This could have enhanced some very positive insights offered here. Some of the charts were a bit unclear and hard to follow (e.g., p. 28). Maybe such are inevitable in such a brief work, but that would have enhanced the work done here. Additionally, the volume for its size is quite costly, and that might inhibit some from purchasing it. That would be a shame, because such people would miss a “good read” and lose an opportunity for both enlightenment and new ideas for their own work.

—*Thomas A. Rumney*
Plattsburgh State University



The Sanitary City: Urban Infrastructure in America from Colonial Times to the Present. MARTIN V. MELOSI. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. xii and 578pp., photos, tables, graphs, maps, illustrations, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$59.95 cloth (ISBN 0-801-86152-7).

Martin Melosi, professor of history and director of the Institute for Public History at the University of Houston, has devoted much of his academic career to the study of the creation and disposal of garbage, pollution, water, energy, and sanitation in urban environments. *The Sanitary City* builds on a distinguished career, which has resulted in the publication of several related monographs, including *Garbage in the Cities* (1981) and *Pollution and Reform in American Cities* (1980).

Melosi focuses on the evolving infrastructure of urban environments in the United States, large and small, from the 18th century to the present day. This involves the interplay between urbanization and economic development, the contributions of early practitioners of what is now known as the discipline of epidemiology, public health and local politics, civil engineering, and the environmental sciences. Because of the subject matter, it is difficult to categorize this book by academic genre. It is at once a work of urban history, of environmental history, of history of science and technology, and of history of medicine and public health. On the other hand, despite his attention to primary sources and use of tables and graphs to show trends over time, Melosi's work shows little evidence of the use of the methods of social science history. While not a work of historical geography per se, this monograph will prove very useful to those who wish to understand the relationships between water supplies, sewer systems and wastewater disposal, refuse disposal and recycling, and the growth of the North American cities during the 19th and 20th centuries.

The monograph is divided into three parts, with headings linked to prevailing theories of disease transmission and toxicity of industrial wastes. The first section, headed "The Age of Miasmas," chronicles the early development of waterworks and wastewater systems in the years preceding 1880. The perspective Melosi brings to bear on this topic combines civil engineering with prevailing theories of disease transmission. Students of the history of public health know that most of the improvements in life expectancy during the 19th century resulted from evolving technologies for managing water supplies and wastes, rather than from knowledge of the biological mechanisms of contagion and spread of epidemic diseases. Melosi reviews the developments in water supplies, including reservoirs, filtration systems, and pumping stations, that characterized the transition from protosystems to modern waterworks. During this period, far greater emphasis was placed in water supplies than on disposal systems. Of special interest are two chapters chronicling the emergence of the "Sanitary Idea" in mid-19th century England, and its eventual adoption in North America.

In the second section, Melosi examines the development of water-, sewage-, and refuse-disposal systems during the "Bacteriological Revolution" from 1880-1945. Here successive chapters focus on the gradual transition of water systems from private to municipal ownership and management, the evolution of sewerage systems and their management and financing, and the emergence of public-refuse disposal and new disposal technologies. During this period, the inability of the earlier protosystems to cope with urban growth and suburban expansion resulted in the need for massive capital outlays in many cities. During the Great Depression, improvements and expansion of water and

sewer systems were funded as public-works projects, but typically these projects were of smaller scale. This section concludes with three chapters focusing on the period from 1920-1945 that examine the federal role in establishing public policy concerning water supplies, wastewater management, and water pollution, the expansion of sewerage and water treatment systems, and refuse disposal as the “orphan child” of sanitary engineering.

The third and final section examines urban sanitation in the final decades of the 20th century, from 1945-2000. Termed the “Age of Ecology,” this section reviews the concerns of the public, conservationists, and environmentalists, and business in the numerous local and national debates that led to our current set of environmental policies and programs. Perhaps the most intriguing chapter is titled “A Time of Unease: The ‘Water Crisis’ in an Effluent Society, 1945-1970.” Other chapters examine the problems posed by antiquated sewers in ever-expanding urban areas, environmental policy since the 1970s, and the solid-waste-disposal crisis in the U.S. There is an interesting discussion of historical controversies in water treatment and wastewater disposal, including the fluoridation of municipal water systems beginning in the mid-1940s.

This monograph is well written, in an engaging style that is both informative and leaves the reader with opportunities to critique historiographic debates and form his/her own conclusions. While the text is profusely illustrated, many of the graphics and tables are repetitive, and often are limited to the narrow timeframe of the chapters within which they appear rather than providing a comprehensive overview. Often, illustrations are not referenced in the accompanying text, leaving the reader to make whatever connections seem appropriate. References are provided at the end of the monograph, together with a brief bibliographic essay.

Although this monograph is comprehensive, some issues receive comparatively little attention. While there is some discussion of the transition from animal to motor vehicle transportation, there is virtually no discussion of the problem of air pollution. Also, the discussion of sanitary landfills omits the recent innovation of building multipurpose recreational areas out of carefully constructed mountains of solid wastes.

From the perspective of the historical geographer, this is a useful introduction and summary of an area that is often overlooked. However, this monograph is not in itself an addition to the literature of the historical geography of North America. Melosi demonstrates an adequate knowledge of the principles of urban geography and the salient literature in the introduction, but fails to carry this theme forward throughout the book. Many of the topics discussed would benefit from a more geographic approach, and the urban and historical geographic literature could be better integrated into the text. Perhaps students of urban historical geography will use this monograph as a guide to new inquiries in this field, as there are many questions of historiographic interest begging for a spatial interpretation. Those interested in the infrastructure of urban environments will definitely wish to read this monograph, and libraries specializing in geography, American studies, and related fields should add it to their collections. As the topics covered here—sanitation, waste disposal, and water systems are not the sexiest topics for research—given the comprehensive treatment Melosi provides, his monograph will likely be the standard reference for some years to come.

—*Russell S. Kirby*

University of Wisconsin-Madison



Transforming New Orleans and Its Environs: Centuries of Change. CRAIG E. COLTEN, editor. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000. x and 272 pp., maps, notes, tables, illustrations, list of contributors, index. \$19.95 paper (ISBN 0-8229-5740-X).

The editor's introduction and 11 essays that constitute this book are thought-provoking and valuable works. They ask important questions and, in some cases, provide tentative answers. In other words, they stimulate further thought, not just about the emergence of New Orleans, but also about the ways urbanites interact with their environment. The book evolved from papers presented at a conference in New Orleans in October 1998.

"New Orleans and its Environs" means, according to the editor, New Orleans and the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge south. Indeed, six of the chapters focus on the river itself and its impact on the growth of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and the land in between. Other chapters also consider the river, though with less attention. Defining "environs" this way is both strength and weakness. It offers the reader insight about how the river and the human population have modified each other, for better or worse, but it largely downplays the role of New Orleans as the center of a regional economic, commercial, and cultural network that not only extends north and south along the river, but east and west along the Gulf Coast. New Orleans as the center of coastwise railroad and navigation systems, as a regional market, and as a home of Cajun and Creole cultures—those themes are rarely examined. Craig E. Colten calls this a "localized approach" (p. 3) in contrast to William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis*, which shows how the Chicago market modified nature all the way to the Rocky Mountains. Colten's explanation naturally begs the question of whether the development of New Orleans can be explained solely in terms of the great river that sweeps by it. The approach entices, but caution is advised.

Colten wisely chose to use the term "transforming" rather than "degrading" to describe human modifications of the environment, noting that human modification does not always lead to reduced value of environmental resources, and that many modifications may have both positive and negative impacts. The chapters are divided into four sections called "Transformation before Urbanization," "Environment in Service of the City," "Growing Demands of the City," and "Response to Environmental Change." Parsing the chapters in this manner is logical, but one might have wished for a more creative and analytical use of the term "transformation." When, if at all, does New Orleans—or any city—metamorphose from a habitat nearly completely dependent on its environs to one more or less in control of the environment? When, if ever, is human habitation no longer part of the environment but an environmental invader? Obviously, these questions require the normative judgment of the philosopher and the expertise of historians, geographers, and scientists, but they nevertheless are worthwhile asking.

Tristram R. Kidder in "Making the City Inevitable: Native Americans and the Geography of New Orleans" emphasizes the importance of Native Americans on the establishment of New Orleans, noting, for instance, that shell middens left by woodland peoples served to anchor oak groves and other vegetation that attracted the early Europeans. Christopher Morris discusses the transformation of swamps into pastures and rice fields in "Impenetrable but Easy: The French Transformation of the Lower Mississippi Valley and the Founding of New Orleans."

Turning attention to 19th-century New Orleans, Ari Kelman in “Forests and Other River Perils” tells a story that really has two parts. The first focuses on “the annihilation of time and space” (p. 50) with the coming of the steamboat, with special attention paid to New Orleans and the growth of its waterfront. The second shows how the steamboats’ demands for fuel devastated shoreline forests. George S. Pabis discusses the contributions of Louisiana engineer Caleb Forshey in “Subduing Nature Through Engineering: Caleb G. Forshey and the Levees-Only Policy, 1851-1881.” In contrast to those who called for mimicking nature and retaining the Mississippi’s natural outlets as flood-control measures, Forshey and others firmly advocated reliance on “levees-only,” a policy also embraced with somewhat less enthusiasm by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The essay is unfortunately marred by a confusing chronology that injects events that happened in the late 1850s into an examination of events occurring earlier in the decade.

Donald W. Davis calls the years 1750-1927 the crevasse period in his essay, “Historical Perspective on Crevasses, Levees, and the Mississippi River.” This essay, too, has stylistic and substantive problems that detract from an interesting examination of the relationship between levee construction and wetlands ecology. Contrary to Davis’ contention, Chief of Engineers Andrew Humphreys certainly supported the “levees-only” policy, and state rivalry, not just budget constraints, precluded federal funding for levee construction just after the Civil War. Humphreys recommended funds for Louisiana, but Congress withdrew all support when Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee sought similar construction funds. Also, the 1928 Flood Control Act—not subsequent modifications—authorized a flood-control plan that mixed levee confinement with controlled and uncontrolled outlets.

In “Perspective, Power, and Priorities: New Orleans and the Mississippi River Flood of 1927,” Gay M. Gomez fills in some of details surrounding the sacrifice of St. Bernard Parish by the New Orleans power structure when flooding in the city otherwise appeared inevitable. The author also notes the critical role of the Weather Bureau’s Isaac Monroe Cline in the deliberations. One point that needs some clarification: the author indicates that the War Department and the Army Corps of Engineers decided to cut the Poydras Levee in St. Bernard Parish. What Chief of Engineers Edgar Jadwin and the Mississippi River Commission told the Louisiana governor was that they “would interpose no objection” to the emergency break, hardly a ringing declaration of support. This part of the story is better told in John M Barry’s *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America* (1997), a book this article nicely complements.

Todd Shallat writes a deliberately provocative essay, “In the Wake of Hurricane Betsy,” showing how “good engineering can have bad consequences” (p. 123). It is more the story of how misconception, shifting values—in this case, more environmental sensitivity, and growing disenchantment with both elected and appointed officials combined to create vehement opposition to certain Corps of Engineers projects. The mistaken belief that the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO), finished in 1963, was a “hurricane superhighway,” in the words of the *Times-Picayune*, that allowed Hurricane Betsy to charge up the delta wreaking devastation three years later, expanded into more general opposition to the navigation project after passage of the National Environmental Policy Act at the decade’s end. The opposition stopped construction of what would have been the nation’s biggest ship lock, designed to allow MRGO to bypass the antiquated urban New

Orleans Harbor. Another project to build an enormous storm barrier to reduce storm surges in Lake Pontchartrain during hurricanes also met insurmountable opposition, helped by some questionable assertions in Corps of Engineers reports.

Editor Craig E. Colten describes a history of complacency and political myopia in "Too Much of a Good Thing: Industrial Pollution in the Lower Mississippi River." He shows that, because the Mississippi River is so huge, able to dilute an enormous amount of pollutants and, in some cases, take the material out to sea, no one expressed concern about its use as an industrial "sink" for a long time. The concern was elsewhere: to create a sound industrial base. In Louisiana at the beginning of the 20th century, judicial efforts centered on protecting industrial users, whereas legislative attention apparently gravitated to protecting agricultural interests. Perhaps in the future, Colten can more closely examine the pro-business role of the judiciary, paradoxically coming at a time (Progressive Era) of increasing political concern for protecting the public health and welfare of American citizens, including minorities. In Louisiana, industries heavily influenced the state Stream Control Commission, established in 1940. Only after massive fish kills, water taste problems, and a major cancer scare, did the Control Commission switch attention from protecting aquatic life to punishing industrial violators of pollution control laws.

A professor of city and urban planning, Raymond J. Burby continues some of Colten's themes in "Baton Rouge: The Making (and Breaking) of a Petrochemical Paradise." His is the story of the futile efforts of reform-minded planners to use land-use ordinances to confine and control the petrochemical expansion that political and business interests concurrently fostered. The environmental consequences of this expansion fell disproportionately on minorities. These included smog and air pollution and chemical explosions. Additionally, black residents living close to the refineries endured noise, dust, and other kinds of particulate fallout. Finally, hazardous-waste treatment centers usually were located in, or close to, black communities. Issues of environmental justice were pervasive. The lesson of Baton Rouge, Burby shows, is that planners have no chance against entrenched and powerful business interests.

The issue of environmental justice dominates Barbara Allen's essay, "The Popular Geography of Illness in the Industrial Corridor." Her concern is the impact of the petrochemical industry on communities—many black and poor—all along the lower Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, a strip of land and water variously known as "cancer alley" and the "industrial corridor." Allen's method is to examine the work "of several scientists in the corridor who have chosen informal or popular epidemiological methods to further cause of health in areas that surround the chemical industry" (p. 180). The people she uses as her eyes and ears are Florence Robinson, an African-American scientist at Southern University; Kay Gaudet and her husband, Chris, who settled in St. Gabriel after both graduating from pharmacy school, and Vivian Chen, an epidemiologist who became director of the Louisiana Tumor Registry in 1982, eight years after its creation to keep track of cancer rates and risks in the state. While looking at the work of these people to say something about the public health risks along the corridor, Allen raises important questions about both the strengths and weaknesses of epidemiological studies. She emphasizes that these kinds of studies are not just abstract problems but concern real communities and real people.

In "Fish Diversity in a Heavily Industrialized Stretch of the Lower Mississippi River," Henry L. Bart discusses the impact of human modifications on the fish popu-

lation of the lower Mississippi River. His study is based mainly on the fish collection of the Tulane University Museum of Natural History, which spans the years since 1956. He attempts to answer a good question: in light of the pollution and structural modifications of the river, how have fish survived at all? He answers by showing that the variety of fish in the river “is really quite remarkable” (p. 214) considering the extent of human intrusion. He examines the variety of fish habitats, the enormous size of the river, the transitional nature of the fish community, and the kinds of fish, and observes that fish may live partially in saltwater and partially in freshwater, but that saltwater fish are generally more tolerant of freshwater than vice-versa.

The authors of these essays represent many academic disciplines, including history, geography, regional planning, ecology, and anthropology. Together, they have provided a strong interdisciplinary overview of the environmental framework that both resulted from and contributed to the growth of New Orleans. Those interested either in New Orleans or in more general issues regarding urban development should read this book.

—*Martin Reuss*

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



The Creative Destruction of Manhattan, 1900-1940. MAX PAGE. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. xiv and 303 pp., maps, illustrations. \$20.00 paper (ISBN 0-226-64469-3).

During the first few decades of the 20th century, visitors to New York and city residents alike remarked in their diaries, postcards, and letters that the only constant aspect of New York was that it kept changing. Crews of workmen tearing down old and not-so-old buildings were familiar sights on the city's streets. The seemingly overnight appearance of new commercial buildings in the city's downtown confused infrequent visitors looking for familiar landmarks in the nation's capital of commerce.

Max Page sets out to document this period of rapid change in New York's built environment, employing Joseph Schumpeter's 1942 description of capitalism's *modus operandi*, “creative destruction,” as his litany. In a study incorporating social history, architectural and urban planning history, and historical biography, Page addresses his topic with chapters on real estate development on Fifth Avenue, slum clearance, historic preservation, the early years of the Museum of the City of New York, campaigns for street trees, and the work of architect, tenement house reformer, and local iconophile *extraordinaire*, Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes.

Page intends his book to be an attempt to move beyond city histories that describe the processes of urban growth as inevitable, organic developments. Page's analysis is more complex, showing how early 20th-century capitalism, changing cultural values, and concerns about cultural and historical legacies shaped Manhattan's development and meaning. As he states in his introductory chapter entitled “Provisional City,” he aims to show “how capitalism inscribed its economic and social processes into the physical landscape of the city, and then into the minds of city people” (p. 2).

Page's analysis is at its best when he focuses on material with which he seems most comfortable, such as his discussion of Fifth Avenue real estate, Lower East Side slum clearance, and the beginning of the historic preservation movement in the city. Drawing on the records of the Fifth Avenue Association, the real estate trade press, the writings of Jacob Riis and other tenement house reformers, and historic preservation groups, Page shows the complex relationship between these examples of the "creative destruction" of New York's physical and cultural landscapes. One of the most original contributions of Page's book is his discussion of the construction of history and memory through the city-building processes he examines. In explaining the relationship between the real estate battles of Fifth Avenue retailers and investors and the campaigns for slum clearance in the city's poorest neighborhoods, Page argues: "Just as the recalled and invented memories of Fifth Avenue were utilized to create an image of a successful, "good place" that had to be defended, the awful history of Mulberry Bend—the "foul core" of New York—was repeatedly paraded before the public to offer a diagnosis of a "sick place" that had to be eliminated" (p. 84).

Page argues convincingly that New Yorkers' interest in preserving their history—both in the form of objects and buildings—started much earlier than is commonly thought, and partly in response to the manipulation of history on Fifth Avenue and in the Lower East Side. Most historians of historic preservation in New York locate the beginning of the movement in the mid-1960s with the formation of the Landmarks Preservation Commission following the demolition of Pennsylvania Station. Page situates early preservation efforts at the turn of the century, with campaigns to prevent the demolition of City Hall in the 1890s and of St. John's Chapel in 1908. The preservationist ethos that developed in the early 20th century evolved beyond simple preservation of Revolutionary Era sites into notions about the continuing educational value of old buildings. As local statesman Andrew Haswell Green, a leader of the turn-of-the-century preservation movement argues regarding City Hall, such an old building could serve as "an object lesson to the people" and should therefore be saved.

Page challenges the conventional image of early historic preservationists by showing that the movement was begun and directed not by the disgruntled upper classes mourning the passing of "old New York," but by men and women of a broader class spectrum, many of them immigrants, who saw the city's physical past as part of the city—and community-building processes of the present day. But despite significant support for their projects, the efforts of these early preservers of the past largely failed, Page argues, because their "masterpiece theory" of preservation—saving and separating out a few examples of past architecture—never challenged private capital's power to commodify and shape the city as real estate.

While *Creative Destruction* is exceptionally well written and clearly well researched, I found the book's organization problematic at times. In his six case studies, the author repeatedly provides evidence for his "creative destruction" thesis. By the end of the third chapter I was convinced, rendering the following chapters less interesting in terms of the book's argument. One disappointing aspect of the latter chapters, on the MCNY and Stokes, is that Page seems to shy away from analyzing and situating in their historical context either the visual innovations of the MCNY's exhibitionary practices or the visual content of Stokes' *Iconography*. This is somewhat surprising since Page does, at least some of the time, try to incorporate the many images in the book into his narrative and argument.

These criticisms aside, Max Page has made an important contribution to the historiography of New York and to the efforts by cultural historians (mostly European until now) to move studies of the city away from narratives of urban development, and from social histories which neglect to engage with the politics and meaning of place.

—Angela M. Blake
University of Toronto



Manufacturing Montreal: The Making of an Industrial Landscape, 1850 to 1930. ROBERT LEWIS. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. xvii and 337 pp., figures, maps, tables, appendix, notes, index. \$45.00 cloth (ISBN 0-8018-6349-X).

In this fine book, Lewis argues convincingly that Montreal's industrial establishments began to shift to the city's periphery well before the 20th century. In doing so, he refutes conventional thinking that suburbanization of industry occurred primarily after World War I. He is not alone in arguing that industries began to move out of the confines of the built-up core in the mid-19th century, but most commentary on the subject has been suggestive. His careful, empirical analysis of the historical geography of Montreal's industries makes the suggestive conclusive.

Lewis uses a number of valuable data sources to show the pattern of industry in various periods of the city's history. Water tax rolls are a particularly rich source. Collected annually after 1847 to pay for a new municipal water system, they indicate the location of all firms. The rolls also record annual rents, which Lewis uses as a surrogate for the size and capital of the enterprises. By using these data he is able to reconstruct the industrial geography of Montreal at a fine resolution for any given year.

The book is divided by period into two parts, from 1850 to 1890, and 1890 to 1930. In separate chapters, he traces the development of manufacturing around the old harbor, and to the east and west of the city, which all had well-established industrial districts by the last quarter of the 19th century. He makes very good use of contemporary commentary to show that Montrealers began to recognize the decentralization of factories in the 1840s and took it as fact by the 1860s. In the second part of the book, he maps and explains the geography of industry after 1890 during the so-called "second industrial revolution." Similar to part one, he begins with a discussion of fundamental economic changes of the period, and then examines the particular circumstances of industrial clusters in the center, east, north, and west of the city. Shifts in scale of production and markets, he argues, encouraged the establishment of larger, horizontal factories on the city's edge. Infrastructural improvements, such as the streetcar, and rapid construction of worker housing, assisted the decentralization of industry while diminishing the role of manufacturing in the central city.

Lewis is interested primarily in the economic logic of industrial location. In a period of few land-use restrictions, firm owners were relatively footloose, choosing factory locations with economic considerations in mind. Although land-use controls were relatively weak, I found myself wanting to know more about the influence of politics and culture on industrial location. In particular, the impact of the "two soli-

tudes,” French and English, on industrial location is worthy of closer scrutiny. In 19th- and early 20th-century Montreal, the French elite were frequently drawn into English institutions, such as the Board of Trade, but the two groups had clear interests (if only to impress their constituents). The case of Montreal’s harbor, debated in the 1880s, is a good example. With generous support from the federal government, the Harbour Commissioners of Montreal planned a new harbor and floodworks that, as initially designed, would have served the primarily anglophone central and western parts of the city. Because the city had to contribute one-quarter of the cost, the city council, with a francophone majority, voiced its opinion on the design. One outspoken council member, Raymond Préfontaine, former mayor of Hochelaga on the east end and master of the francophone machine, insisted the harbor and flood wall be extended east of the downtown core. By blocking the referendum to raise the city’s portion of funds, Préfontaine brought the Harbour Commissioners and Board of Trade (*de facto* institutions of the English elite) to the bargaining table and managed to get harbor improvements and flood works built on the east end. In essence, language politics made the francophone east end more attractive for industry.

A second question that comes to mind is the uniqueness of the Canadian context. Lewis tends to lump Montreal into the North American city category. Other than a larger market in the United States than in Canada, what difference did the border make to the industrial geography of Montreal? Federal and provincial policies, and important cultural differences, surely helped to create an industrial landscape different from that in the U.S. Lewis touches on some of the differences between Montreal and other North American cities in the last few pages (pp. 262-63) of the book, but it reads as an afterthought.

I thoroughly enjoyed the book, and expect this to become a standard reference on the city’s early industry. Lewis makes formidable theoretical contributions to economic, urban, and historical geography. I will assign readings from this book for senior undergraduate and graduate classes on urban geography and would recommend it to others for the same purpose.

—Christopher G. Boone
Ohio University



Petrolia: The Landscape of America’s First Oil Boom. BRIAN BLACK. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. xii and 235 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. \$44.95 cloth. (ISBN 0-801-86317-1).

In *Petrolia: The Landscape of America’s First Oil Boom*, Brian Black examines how the rush to extract petroleum from the Oil Creek region of Pennsylvania overwhelmed most other human interactions with the natural environment and transformed the area’s streams, farms, and forests into components of a larger industrial system. As the center of America’s first commercial oil industry, *Petrolia* is important because its pattern of development set important precedents in the United States. In explaining why events unfolded as they did, Black points to several key factors—the realization that oil seeping from the ground could be refined to produce an illuminating oil; a

legal philosophy governing the extraction of oil that encouraged rapid extraction; the practice of separating ownership of land from the right to drill for oil; and a view of nature in which value is derived solely from what can be put on the market and sold. Black shows that when these factors came together in Western Pennsylvania, a dramatic change occurred in the ecological relationship between humans and nature.

In many ways, Black is describing the plight of any capital-poor rural area in which someone discovers a resource that has value in a national or even global market. In the absence of a strong community, outsiders with capital soon start making land-use decisions that benefit their ability to make a profit regardless of how it affects the rest of the community. In the case of Petrolia, the situation was made even more complex than usual. For the first time, entrepreneurs were competing to extract petroleum, a fluid mineral with the ability to cross property lines, and the rules governing ownership had yet to be worked out. In their scramble to secure this oil, participants—most of whom had no connection to the area other than an interest in making money—gave little thought to the long-term consequences of their decisions. In the end, the rules they established did more to reward greed than to moderate it. For one thing, they decided that whoever could extract oil from a well owned that oil, which simply intensified the mad rush to drill new wells. In addition, they traded the right to drill a piece of property as a commodity in itself, which facilitated the rapid subdivision of the region into numerous competing leases. These and other practices, Black argues, separated most participants in the world's first oil boom from any sense that they belonged to a geographically defined community.

The photographs in *Petrolia* demonstrate Black's point. The towns that quickly arose as drillers, laborers, businessmen, prostitutes, and speculators swarmed into the region exhibit little sense of permanence. According to Black, the region's new inhabitants hesitated to invest in any improvements that did not promise a return in the short term. For example, road maintenance, drainage systems, and methods of sewage disposal were ignored for as long as possible. In the end, many population centers failed to take root as social entities and simply disappeared with the oil, leaving behind a fragmented system of land ownership, some ecological degradation, and the scattered remains of industrial activity. The rise and collapse of a boomtown, Black suggests, is intimately connected to how participants in the boom view their relationship to the human and natural environment of the area.

Although Black uses the development of Petrolia to make larger points about how resource extraction changes ecological interactions, he is also interested in the region as a specific place with a specific history. He goes beyond existing histories of the early oil industry and brings original research and a fresh perspective to a story often told. Indeed, the local history component of this book represents as important a contribution as its examination of larger patterns. While other scholars have written about what happens when capital is used to extract a resource from one region for the benefit of another, Black tells the story of transformation in this oil-rich valley at a level of detail and care that is rich and interesting in its own right.

—Hugh S. Gorman
Michigan Technological University



The Courthouse Square in Texas. By ROBERT E. VESELKA; KENNETH E. FOOTE, editor. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000, xiv and 244 pp., figures, maps, tables, photographs, appendices, bibliography, index. \$25.95 paper (ISBN 0-292-78736-7), \$50.00 cloth (ISBN 0-292-78735-9).

The late Robert Veselka has provided us with a richly illustrated, detailed narrative, and inventory (Appendix 2) of the 254 county-courthouse squares and their concomitant land use in Texas. The monograph conveys his dedication to understanding the courthouse square in the historical geography of Texas through a syncretism of Sauer-school fieldwork and Clark-school archival research. In the last two chapters, Veselka deviates from the diffusionist Old School cultural geography approach of the first six chapters when he reflects on the social and political significance, flirting with approaches more widely associated with New Cultural geography, such as focusing on iconography at the courthouse square. Aside from the empirical value of the monograph, Veselka couches the findings of this centripetal element, the courthouse square, in the urban fabric in theoretical context building on the pioneering work of Edward Price and Terry Jordan. Price's classic 1968 article "The Central Courthouse Square in the American County Seat" provides the four prototypes of central courthouse squares in the United States, namely, the Shelbyville, Lancaster, Harrisonburg, and Four-Block square that is used as a point of departure for interpreting this phenomena in Texas.

The chapter structure of the book is logical and appropriate for conveying the results of the subject under consideration. The first two chapters set the stage for contextualizing the empirical findings presented in Chapters 3 through 8 before the summation in Chapter 9. In Chapter 1 entitled, "The Courthouse Square in Texas," Veselka chronicles the settlement geography of the state emphasizing Jordan's 10 culture areas largely determined by mid-20th-century town plans. He furthermore underscores that Texas was somewhat of a late bloomer in terms of urban development with "the primary periods of Texas settlement and town building [occurring] during the 19th century and well into the 20th" (p. 10) and that until around 1950, Texas was a rural state. Veselka's penchant for architecture is reflected in his treatment of the literature dealing with the courthouse in the United States, in general, and in Texas, in particular. His bibliography on the courthouse square is comprehensive and goes beyond the geographical boundaries of the southern U.S. providing a good start for scholars cutting teeth on this urban feature.

In the second chapter, "From Land Policy to County Seats and Squares," Veselka discusses the divergent land policies of the Spanish (1521-1821), Mexican (1821-36), and Texas state (after 1836) governments underscoring Anglo-American (76 percent) and Spanish and Central European (24 percent) precedents for the central courthouse square and plaza respectively. The chapter concludes with a ten-fold summary (five Anglo-American and five Spanish/Central European) classification of all 254 Texas county-square-block patterns that prepares the reader to navigate through the detailed empirical results presented in chapters 3 through 8. The Shelbyville (62 percent), Plaza (13 percent), and Railroad (7 percent) block patterns are the three most frequently found squares associated with Texas courthouses.

Chapters 3 and 4 and chapters 5 and 6 are paired because they chronicle Anglo-American and Spanish (and other) town-planning traditions respectively. In each of

these paired chapters, Veselka dissects the diversity of the square traditions in the first chapter followed by a discussion of precedents in the second chapter. In the third chapter, Veselka identifies 157 (62 percent of all block patterns) Shelbyvilles, 15 two-block (6 percent), 14 Harrisonburgs (5.5 percent), 4 Lancasters (1.5 percent), and 3 four-block (1.5 percent) squares—these so-called traditional patterns with Anglo roots. Because of their numeric dominance, Shelbyvilles are further classified as either prototypical, modified, or Shelbyville-related depending on their deviation from the prototypical pattern postulated by Price. Furthermore, the author asserts that in Texas the Shelbyville was first introduced in 1833; hereafter this block pattern was widely plated between 1840 and 1890. The roots for the grid-pattern plan and town square, employed by Anglo-Americans, are traced to the Mediterranean world and medieval southwestern France. More specifically, Veselka asserts that the Middle Atlantic culture hearth had the greatest impact on traditional Texas squares pointing to the urban fabric of New York (1785 and 1796) and Philadelphia (1682). Precedents for these urban places are traced to Northern Ireland (1620s) and London (after the Great Fire of 1666). Moreover, Veselka asserts that the lower-southern and plantation-planning traditions influenced the Texas rural county seats via Charleston (1672) and Savannah. Glaringly absent from the discussion on precedents is reference to Milton Newton's emphasis on the primacy of the county seat in his seminal article entitled, "Cultural Preadaptation and the Upland South" published in *Man and Cultural Heritage*, *Geoscience and Man* 5 (1974).

In Chapter 5, "Squares Derived from Spanish Precedents and Other Planning Traditions," the dominance of plaza (33 and 13 percent of all patterns) and railroad squares (18 and 7 percent of all patterns) is emphasized. The Spanish, Mexican, and German influence on the plaza pattern is reflected in San Antonio, New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Austin. Veselka's treatment of railroad-influenced squares incorporates and builds on J.C. Hudson's (1985), *Plains Country Towns* threefold typology, namely, symmetric, orthogonal, and T-town. Railroad squares were located on the periphery of the state with the T-town the dominant model after 1890. In Chapter 6, it is asserted that the precedents for the plaza pattern in Texas date to eighth-century Iberia. During the Spanish colonial enterprise, these regulations were codified in the "Laws of the Indies" (1573 and later revisions) that "...provided for a systematic process of settlement with rules for siting towns, laying out public plazas and streets, distributing lots, dictating land uses, and establishing governance" (p. 129). Mexico's *empresario* program after 1821 reinforced Spanish policy and the importance of the plaza pattern through the laws of 1824, 1825, and 1827. The plaza tradition was reinforced through the efforts of the Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Indianola, New Braunfels (1845), and Fredericksburg (1846) with Bern, Berlin, and Potsdam serving as models.

Chapters 8 and 9 consider the centripetal role of the courthouse square with emphasis on courthouse architecture, iconography, and social activities on the square. The classification of 139 squares where fieldwork was conducted as predominant (92), codominant (17), and subordinate (30) is based on the central role of the courthouse square in the community. The salient point stemming from this classification is the relationship between county seat population size and importance of the square—codominant squares with 25,001 to more than 100,000, predominant squares with 1,000 to 25,000, and subordinate squares with less 5,000. Moreover, the architecture

of predominant and codominant square courthouses tends to be more traditional than the contemporary style of subordinate square courthouses. Similarly, the presence of iconography is less important on subordinate squares (37 percent) than on predominant (48 percent) and codominant (47 percent) squares. The greatest strength of this book is the reliance on photographs and town plans that provide color to the narrative that explains dull quantified block pattern geographical distribution and frequency across the state. One is reminded of Benjamin Disraeli's axiom that, "there are lies, damned lies, and statistics." This is not to demean the monograph's valuable contribution to the existing literature but to alert scholars with a penchant for the humanistic flair that *The Courthouse Square in Texas* is primarily a quantitative beast woven around the diffusionist model, espoused by the Sauer-school of cultural geography, to explain precedents and existing courthouse square patterns in the Texas landscape. In conclusion, the study provides the raw material for scholars interested in a humanistic interpretation of courthouse square patterns in the vein of work like Richard Francaviglia's *Main Street Revisited: Time, Space, and Image Building in Small Town America* where the soul of the community becomes evident.

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Development Arrested: Race, Power, and the Blues in the Mississippi Delta. CLYDE WOODS. London: Verso, 1998. x and 342 pp., map, photographs, index. \$27.00 cloth (ISBN 1-85984-811-7).

Development Arrested: Race, Power, and the Blues in the Mississippi Delta is an explosive addition to study of the American South, and the South's celebrated regional archetype, the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta. Although the Mississippi Delta was one of the last Southern plantation regions to be settled in the 19th century, it rose quickly to be one of the nation's premier agricultural producers. Woods looks at this development from the point of view of African-American laborers who cleared the swamps and planted cotton to produce immense wealth for the region's white landowners. The book, published by Verso, is somewhat unique in the field of Southern studies, and stands out among the many volumes concerned with the Mississippi Delta. Its tone is unusually combative; its arguments often radical.

Woods contends that African Americans in the Mississippi Delta have consistently fashioned a cultural response to the oppression they endured at the hands of white elites. Blacks in the region, who in some counties outnumbered whites by as much as ten-to-one, responded to their political powerlessness by constructing an oral and musical tradition of resistance and social commentary that Woods terms an ethno-regional epistemology—the blues. It was a worldview that built upon an African agrarian tradition through explicit African cultural retentions.

In *Development Arrested*, Woods argues that a loosely organized political group of white planters, businesspersons, and professionals, referred to as a plantation bloc, has controlled political and economic life in the Delta since its settlement in the years before the Civil War. Woods points to the Delta Council, an economic advocacy and

lobbying group dominated by cotton planters, as the political embodiment of the plantation bloc. In reaction to the plantation block, Woods believes black tenant farmers built their regional epistemology, best expressed in Mississippi Delta blues music, creating a blues bloc.

A significant portion of the book is devoted to outlining a timeline of mobilizations, or development eras, executed by the plantation bloc in an effort to maintain their absolute political and economic control over the region. Within each of these development eras, Woods points to the type of resistance that the blues bloc presented to white supremacy. Woods' mobilizations can be divided into two main periods: a pre-Civil War period and its immediate aftermath, and a post-Reconstruction period. This section of the text is indicative of Woods' generally Marxian approach to explaining the region's political economy.

Woods describes one mobilization as the rise of capitalist slavery from 1837 to 1859. He argues that African Americans were the first great proletariats in the United States. He counters the myth that the pre-Civil War South was a feudal system with the critique that antebellum planters were, in fact, early capitalists, engineering a rural-based system of capital accumulation. Building on his notion that African Americans responded actively to each form of oppression, Woods points out that during slavery, the blues bloc resisted white domination through self-mutilation, escape, and subversively rebellious spirituals.

Woods' next account of a plantation bloc mobilization is the Redemption, a moment that marked the end of Reconstruction, or federal control of the American South after the Civil War. Woods calls its inception the Shotgun Plan of 1875. The author points out how Southern Republican rule during Reconstruction was defeated through a combination of terrorism, intimidation, and political machinations.

In the post-Reconstruction Plantation Era, a period that lasted from 1876 until the implementation of Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930s, Woods outlines the oft-told tale of white reclamation of Southern political power and the rise of sharecropping as a regional production system. During that era, African Americans lost many of the gains they had achieved in the two decades following the Civil War. For example, John Willis (2000) argues in *A Time Forgotten* that the four decades following the Civil War were years of immense hope for blacks in the South. He shows that post-war black farmers were able to parlay their farm labor into modest accumulations of wealth and land. In 1910, African Americans owned over two million acres of land in the Mississippi Delta, but by the end of the plantation bloc's mobilization in the late 1930s, black farmers had lost considerable ground, both literally and figuratively in the region. Debt peonage had risen with the consolidation of sharecropping in the Mississippi Delta. That Mississippi Delta blues music evolved in this era of vanishing hope is no coincidence according to Woods; this vernacular political art form was a rational response to increasing oppression and disfranchisement.

As economic historian Jack Temple Kirby (1987) has argued, the New Deal signaled the close of sharecropping in Southern plantation agriculture. The flood of federal dollars going to white cotton planters fostered a move toward mechanization, making millions of black—as well as many white—laborers superfluous to the region's economy. For Woods, the New Deal Era is an era that enabled white planters to rid themselves of the so-called "Negro problem." In fact, Woods terms the accelerating migration of African Americans out of the region as an expulsion. He argues that the

language of this migration, usually referred to as the Great Migration (or Great Black Migration) is poorly applied since the movement was part of a coordinated plan to make the region the sole domain for white planters and the small white middle class that served them. He points out that in 1933, the year that Franklin D. Roosevelt's Agricultural Adjustment Act was passed, 30 percent of black farm tenants were evicted from their homes.

In the conclusion to *Development Arrested*, Woods describes how the plantation bloc continues to work toward maintaining its position of supremacy at the expense of African-American gains in political and economic power. In this section he recounts the ways that former President Bill Clinton sided with the plantation bloc through his support of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission. In Woods' view of the commission, the effort was designed more to deal with a crisis in the plantation bloc's production system than to deal with poverty and social injustice among the black majority.

Development Arrested joins a long line of works based on life in the Mississippi Delta. Novelists, poets, journalists, academics, and local writers all have tried to capture the region's peculiarities and sense of place. Many of these works like *Forgotten Time* or James Cobb's (1991) *The Most Southern Place on Earth* have taken a critical view of the region. Both Willis and Cobb see the struggle for power between white planters and African-American laborers as a central theme. Perhaps no other work on the Mississippi Delta takes this theme to the lengths that Woods does. His critical view of the Delta's capitalist production system is as riveting as it is unrelenting. While other writers may have flirted with leftist language and ideology, Woods unabashedly embraces the Marxist critique of capitalist production while incorporating race theory and history as a means for dealing with the Delta as a unique locale for Marxist inquiry.

Ultimately, the qualities of *Development Arrested* that give the work strength and originality become its greatest weakness. Too frequently, Woods' passion for critical economic theory drifts into shallow invective. In his attempt to evoke the degree to which white elites in the Delta have prospered through—and at the expense of—African Americans in the region, he makes a major error. Woods projects a quasi-conspiracy where there is little evidence that one exists. No one can doubt that in the totality of race relations in the Deep South, great wrongs have been done, and continue to be done, by whites against blacks. Indeed, many of these are acts of evil. That Woods describes these historic developments as mobilizations implies conscious action and strategic implementation of policy objectives. If he were referring to an organic confluence of social relationships and political events, his observations would be incisive. By evoking the image of a plantation bloc, however, Woods reifies a process that is real, yet exists without a self-actualized body. Cobb, in his 1991 seminal work on the region, makes nearly the same arguments as Woods, but does so in a way that keeps judicious academic discourse as a polemic guardrail.

These remain difficult days for African Americans in the Mississippi Delta. The system of government payments to the poor are in a waning phase in the region just as white elites continue to hold and consolidate economic power. Woods, however, presents no evidence that these events and conditions are anything more than the parallel progression of events and policies. In addition, there is a cultural climate in the Delta that has traditionally held African Americans in a subservient position, and, with the

exception of the defunct Citizens Council, there is no indication that any organization in the Mississippi Delta is actively seeking the displacement and marginalization of African Americans. There need not be an organized and mobilized plantation bloc for African Americans to suffer in the Mississippi Delta. Culturally embedded racial attitudes and disconnected acts of discrimination yield the same results.

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The Banana Men: American Mercenaries and Entrepreneurs in Central America, 1880-1930. By LESTER D. LANGLEY and THOMAS SCHOONOVER. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994. 220 pp., map, photographs, index. \$17.00 (ISBN 0-8131-0836-5).

Currently, 221 Peace Corps volunteers work in Honduras, comprising the largest contingent working in a single country. Some 100 years ago, Honduras and its southern neighbor, Nicaragua, received a larger contingent of North Americans. However, in contrast to the volunteers who have answered the Peace Corps' call, machine-gunning soldiers of fortune flocked to the region a century ago to serve Central American *caudillos*, presidents, and revolutionaries, as well as North American fruit company owners. Through the auspices of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Peace Corps volunteers devote themselves to the adventure of community development. The mercenaries from north of the border sought adventure and fortune in the region's commercial development—specifically, the development of Central America's banana-producing regions by North American interests. In their book, *The Banana Men*, Lester Langley and Thomas Schoonover describe the crucial 50 years, 1880-1930, during which North American adventurers like "Machine Gun" Guy Molony, "Jew Sam" Dreben, and "The Incredible Yanqui" Lee Christmas helped Central American presidents and North American fruit-company owners to transform Nicaragua and Honduras into "banana republics." The economic patterns established during these 50 years persist. This is a condition, in this era of globalization hysteria, which makes this solid study particularly worthwhile reading.

The authors begin by placing their story in the broader context of competitive social imperialism in Central America. They employ core-periphery relations to demonstrate how the U.S. established authority over political and economic life in Central America, especially after 1880. This discussion describes how, in the face of resistance from the region's conservatives, 19th-century Central American liberals pursued material progress by the privatization of communal lands and granting of concessions to North American interests in return for infrastructural improvements, railroads, and ports. This course embedded the region firmly in the capitalist world economy and elevated the authority of foreign entrepreneurs.

In Chapter 2, the authors track the emergence of the region's "banana kingdoms." Readers familiar with the region will recognize this story's essential actors—Bostonians Lorenzo Baker, Andrew Preston, and Minor Cooper Keith who eventually formed the United Fruit Company and established banana plantations in Costa Rica, Honduras,

and Nicaragua in addition to Guatemala, Colombia, and several Caribbean islands; the three Vaccaro Brothers, three Sicilian orange growers from South Louisiana who directed their efforts to banana production on Honduras' north coast; and Samuel Zemurray, also well known in New Orleans as "Sam the Banana Man" and clandestinely in Lee Christmas' correspondence as "El Amigo."

This chapter also describes the complex and combusive political milieu in which these banana men operated. Government and rebel armies in El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua engaged in frequent domestic clashes and cross-border skirmishes. This military activity attracted North American mercenaries and their weapons to the region. And, in this chapter, the authors introduce readers to the more noteworthy of these footloose warriors, men like Christmas and Molony.

In chapters 3, 4, and 5, the authors track the military campaigns for Central America, Nicaragua, and Honduras. Their treatment follows, in occasionally rich detail, the individual troop movements, battles, and outcomes. Interwoven in this history are accounts of the exploits of individual North American mercenaries, highlighted by analysis of the inconsistent policies of the U.S. government that presided over the turmoil, often distressed by the activities of its citizens, but satisfied with the ultimate establishment of its authority over the region.

The authors effectively employ journalists' reports of the turmoil that were published in North American newspapers, especially the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*. Beyond providing basic information, this strategy also demonstrates the high level of interest North Americans had for developments in this region. The authors also rely on Christmas' correspondence and an earlier biography of this colorful character.

Chapter 5 is the book's climax. Here, the authors retell how, in 1911, Zemurray and Christmas engineered the return of exiled Honduran president Manuel Bonilla. After fishing him out of a New Orleans bordello, Christmas and Molony sailed with Bonilla to the north coast of Honduras in an armored yacht secretly provided by Zemurray. After reconnoitering in the Bay Islands off the north coast, the North Americans directed several successful attacks on ports while a U.S. naval vessel nominally officiated to ensure the appearance of neutrality. The authors' delicious account of this episode demonstrates how actors serving the forces of unfettered commerce effectively bypassed the U.S. government's half-hearted attempts at enforcing the conventions of diplomacy.

Chapter 6 and the "Epilogue" follow the lives of these actors and republics in the ensuing years. Bonilla regained the presidency but died two years after the North Coast campaign. Christmas faded into a penniless retirement in Guatemala before dying in New Orleans in 1924; Zemurray eventually assumed control and expanded the holdings of the United Fruit Company; and the banana kingdoms remain.

The book's collection of black-and-white photos effectively captures the character of the time and place. Of particular interest are the photos of Christmas in military dress uniform. His ornate attire suggests the authority that this errant general secured in Central America.

Basic geographical errors detract from this otherwise well-researched and well-written book and suggest that additional map work would have aided the authors. For example, on page six, they report that Cornelius Vanderbilt established a transit route that extended from San Juan del Norte on the Caribbean coast to "the Gulf of Fonseca on Nicaragua's northwestern frontier." Vanderbilt actually ran his steamship line from

San Juan del Norte across Lake Nicaragua and then to San Juan del Sur in southwestern Nicaragua where he built a port.

Readers familiar with La Mosquitia will frown on the authors' repeated use of the word "thicket," albeit in association with "swamp" and "savanna," to describe the region's vegetative cover (pp. 46, 61, and 78). The region certainly contains swamps and savannas. However, thickets—dense copses of small trees—are more commonly found in Nicaragua and Honduras' drier interior. The authors neglect to mention that La Mosquitia also contains tropical rain forests.

I suspect that many readers will wish that the authors had augmented their research by including several, detailed, large-scale maps. The map that appears in the introduction is useful for general reference. However, it lacks several places mentioned in the text and leaves interested readers wondering where exactly some events occurred. The list of companion maps would include one that showed the holdings of the various North American fruit companies along Central America's Caribbean littoral and including the ports and railroads that they constructed; one that showed Namisiqué, the site of the "bloodiest battle in history" where a Salvadoran-Honduran force of 4,500 fell to a Nicaraguan contingent armed with Maxim machine guns (p. 66); one which showed Juan Estrada's campaign for Nicaragua, focusing on his stronghold at Bluefields and extending to Rama; and finally, a detailed map that showed Honduras' north coast where Christmas led his campaign on behalf of Zemurray and Bonilla.

Despite these shortcomings, *The Banana Men* is a valuable addition to the bookshelf of scholars, tourists, or volunteers who wish to understand the economic and political forces, and North and Central American actors that created the region's banana republics.

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The Green Republic: A Conservation History of Costa Rica. STERLING EVANS. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999. xvi and 317 pp., maps, plates, tables, appendices, notes, index. \$18.00 paper (ISBN 0-292-72101-3).

Chances are that if you live in the United States you know someone who has been to Costa Rica. Though place names like Nicaragua and El Salvador may evoke images (however inaccurate) of guerilla soldiers and danger, Columbia drug runners or Haiti poverty, mention Costa Rica and people speak of beauty, nature, and the rain forest. In Central America at least, conservation and Costa Rica seem somewhat synonymous. As well, tourism, in particular the nature-based ecotourism that we hear so much about, has grown to be one of the most important sectors of Costa Rica's economy in the past several years. The Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve well illustrates this. Established in 1972, this 5,000-acre private reserve received 300 visitors in 1973. Within two decades, the number of visitors had increased more than a hundredfold to over 40,000 in 1991 and 50,000 in 1995. Sterling Evans' *The Green Republic* is an

effort to outline how and why the conservation that is the basis for this came about in Costa Rica.

Out of a maturing cultural ecology has arisen a political ecology that focuses, like its predecessor, on the human use of the earth. However, unlike more traditional cultural ecology, in particular some of the earlier works (Mikesell 1970), political ecology is characterized by efforts to understand how ecology and resource use are inherently tied to and affected by the political and economic articulations that characterize our modern world. In the Western Hemisphere, Costa Rica and the Brazilian Amazon may be the most publicized areas wherein tropical conservation issues are concerned. Hecht and Cockburn in *The Fate of the Forest* (1990) undertook to explain the differing perspectives and policies surrounding the increasing deforestation of the Amazon rain forest. Here Evans seeks to give Costa Rica similar treatment, although somewhat differently because of the different circumstances involved. In the Amazon, the focus has largely been on past, present, and impending destruction. Costa Rica, however, is a place where conservation, parks, and protected areas are the foci of the conservationist discourse.

Divided into two parts, *The Green Republic* gives a detailed look at how conservation got its foothold in Costa Rica and the figures behind it. Evans starts by recounting the history of land use and ecology in the country, which could so easily be the same sad story of many other tropical countries—the large-scale development of coffee farms in the early 1800s, banana plantations toward the end of that century, intense logging and cattle production more recently. These and the subsequent peasant settlement (*precarismo* in Costa Rica) that seems to be on the heels of any road construction in the undeveloped world, such as accompanies all of the above endeavors, combine to leave heavy impacts on tropical environments.

Evans seeks to locate and expose “[t]he point at which dependence on the natural environment becomes exploitation of the natural environment” (p. 33). Evans also does a good job of reminding us of the contradictions that often lie between philosophy and everyday life, particularly with such notions as conservation. For example, he approvingly quotes Vandermeer and Penchant’s observation “that with the ‘penchant for viewing the world in isolated little disconnected fragments, it is apparently difficult for us all to see the connection between the knife that slices the banana in our cereal and the chainsaw that slices tree trunks onto the rain forest floor” (p. 47).

The personal convictions of key figures in Costa Rican conservation and their often frustrating attempts to put those convictions on the ground in the form of policy and protected areas take up much of the text. Numerous political and ideological battles and their resulting legislation are recounted, yielding an excellent political environmental history of conservation in the country that surely deserves such attention. Men like Mario Boza, Alvaro Ugalde, and Dan Janzen among others appear throughout as facilitators of the development of Costa Rican conservation. However, one prominent figure in early conservation efforts may help to emphasize the importance and impact one person in an important position can have on large historical events. Karen Olsen de Figueres, wife of Jose Figueres Ferrer who helped lead Costa Rica’s 1948 revolution and subsequently served three terms as the country’s president, occupies center stage in Evans’ telling. He suggests she was a key figure in early Costa Rican conservation. Through her own conservationist convictions and her direct ac-

cess to law makers, she was able to aid Boza and other supporters in staving off political opposition and succeeding with early conservation efforts to establish protected areas despite poor odds and little support. Assuming that Costa Rica's current situation as a "green republic" rests largely upon these early successes, one has to ask whether or not any of this would have happened without Doña Karen. Evans implies that one person can have a significant impact in such struggles.

Most of the major players in the last half-century of Costa Rica's political history make appearances. These include Ronald Reagan, Oliver North, and Nicaragua's Somoza, among others. Evans is at pains to point out the connections that exist between Costa Rica and the U.S. On the positive side, the influence of American scientists, universities, and institutions such as the U.S. National Park Service and various non-governmental organizations have played major roles in conservation successes. Conversely, the machinations of the Reagan administration and the Central Intelligence Agency are shown to have been pervasive as well as perverse.

The second part of the book is a broader look at some key issues surrounding Costa Rican conservation—local movements, non-governmental organizations, environmental education, biodiversity inventorying, and ecotourism. To my mind it is the more interesting part of the book, because the emphasis is on the larger issues confronting conservation. The problem of economic development versus biodiversity conservation is one of these larger issues. As Evans points out, Costa Ricans are keenly aware that critics from the most developed countries make some of the loudest complaints about the rates of deforestation and landscape degradation. Yet somewhat paradoxically, Costa Ricans get high marks for the high levels of conservation awareness and support.

Evans might have included more discussion about the actual people on the ground in Costa Rica whose lives were directly impacted by conservation policy and the government's decisions to protect and regulate land, including removing people from it. On the other hand, the details of Costa Rica's legislative history may be a bit tedious for some. However, since this is the arena in which land is rezoned and land use is regulated, including this history is important to better understand the conservation process and events.

Though Evans could have devoted more space to the theoretical issues involved in conservation and development, *The Green Republic* is a success. Sterling Evans has produced a political-environmental history of Costa Rica that deserves to be read. Anyone with interests in Costa Rica or in the larger arenas of conservation and political ecology will find plenty of insight here.

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The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History, PEREGRINE HORDEN and NICHOLAS PURCELL. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000. xiv and 761 pp., maps, appendices, references. \$36.00 paper (ISBN 0-631-21890-4).

This impressive work synthesizes a vast amount of historical, geographical, archaeological, and ethnographic knowledge about the Mediterranean region. Potential

readers risk passing it by if they take the title too literally. The corrupting metaphor is overdrawn; the land around, not the sea itself, is its focus; and the themes dealt with go well beyond conventional historiographic practice. The dozen chapters cover the Mediterranean as a geographical expression, the historian's Mediterranean, agropastoral systems, urban tradition, connectivities, food systems, technology and agrarian change, catastrophes, mobility of goods and peoples, geography of religion, anthropological perspectives, and the notion of Mediterranean unity from a cultural point of view. Neatly crafted segments within each chapter inform the reader about such topics as settlement ecology, shipping lanes, the link between sedimentation and the origins of agriculture, the reception of innovation, history of the region's vegetation and the traditional concept of honor and shame as a Mediterranean form of social control. Most decidedly, this book is not a view of the Mediterranean dominated by elites, individuals, or events.

Horde and Purcell stated as their main aim to uncover this region as a "discriminable whole." Taking their cue from Fernand Braudel's monumental study of the 16th-century Mediterranean, they have sought to demonstrate a fundamental regional unity through the whole sweep of history. The sheer weight of the knowledge base may favor additional treatment of southern Europe, but the lands south and east of the sea receive a good deal of attention. However, Portugal, though clearly part of Mediterranean culture, is left out because its rivers do not drain into the Mediterranean Basin. Given the spread of the Roman Empire, regional coherence in the Graeco-Roman period is more convincing than for the Middle Ages. For the last four centuries beginning with the 17th, an encompassing regional unity emerges, but that is because the multiple forces of disunity are downplayed. Ultimately, the Mediterranean hangs together as a region because one wants to see it that way. For geographers, it is easy to see it that way. The basis of that unity is the nearly enclosed body of water at its heart, which makes it different from any other at that scale. By serving as a corrective to the post-modernist excesses of privileging the word games, the minutiae, and the fragmented, this work swings the pendulum back to a concern for the braudelian *longue durée*.

Rather than presenting a smooth-flowing chronological or areally-organized narrative, this volume presents incisive commentaries of particular patches of knowledge. Its critical tone arises from its origins as a series of seminar presentations in which participants critically dissected defined aspects of the Mediterranean past. Separate bibliographic essays for each chapter form a treasure-trove to those seeking the knowledge frontier. Evocation of misinterpretations or of gaps in the historical record, as well as special insights of particular authors, serve as a template for the current state of scholarship. The consolidated bibliography of more than 3,000 items signifies the level of scholarly attention to this realm. It also demonstrates the extent to which the study of the Mediterranean past has been a resolutely international enterprise whose results are recorded in five main languages. The accumulated depth of erudition about Mediterranean lands stands as a challenge to any one who wants to claim regional expertise.

Several other aspects enhance the value of this work. Conversant with the debates in other fields, the authors fearlessly cross disciplinary boundaries. Not for these authors is the naive trap of environmental determinism. A good deal of their sense of the region is derived from localities such as Gagliano a.k.a. Aliano (south of Rome) or

Tinnis (in the Nile Delta) or micro-regions like the Biqa in Lebanon. Drawing from those kinds of “little places,” a message is sent that there is much more to the Mediterranean past than classical Athens, imperial Rome or Byzantine Venice. Three dozen clear maps help the reader find the less-known locales mentioned in the text.

To avoid brain overload, the extraordinary array of ideas is best read in measured doses. The reader who succeeds in absorbing its rich content will have acquired a strong handle on a complex regional past. Nowhere else in the world do landscapes, customs and values owe so much to the long trajectory of civilization. At least two unanticipated benefits flow from this uncommon historical depth. One is to dissolve the ontological boundaries that humans have fallaciously tried to erect between themselves and everything else in their environment. Another is to provide the reader with a diachronic perspective on the same phenomena. Thus Etna and Stromboli were not the volcanoes we know them as today, but places where the overworld and the underworld were contiguous.

Horden and Purcell have promised another course in this intellectual feast. A companion volume in the works will cover climate, diseases, demography, and global contacts of the Mediterranean past. The strong conclusion lacking in this volume under review is programmed for the follow-up now in preparation.

—Daniel W. Gade
University of Vermont



On the Rim: Looking for the Grand Canyon. MARK NEUMANN. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999. xi and 373 pp., illustrations, index. \$19.95 paper (ISBN 0-8166-2785-1).

Mark Neumann provides a unique view of the Grand Canyon as he pursues the questions posed on the book jacket flyleaf, “Why do nearly five million people travel to the Grand Canyon each year? What are they looking for? Do they find what they want?” Through deconstructing the narratives and texts that have swirled around the Canyon since the late-19th century, he provides a counterpoint to the many sentimental depictions of this famous landmark, national park, and site of intensive tourist use. This book is based on the author’s dissertation research, and as such, reflects an extensive critical theory literature as well as in-depth field research.

In his introduction, Neumann states that his initial interest “was not so much in the Grand Canyon, but in tourism as a powerful metaphor for the broader character and conflicts of modern life” (p. 8). He came to see that the Grand Canyon “was a ‘natural’ site where the forces of modern life appeared as a dramatic and contradictory presence” (p. 8). He locates the current phenomenon of tourism at the Canyon in a late-19th and early-20th century bid to express an antimodernist longing for authentic experience, transcendence, a “transparent image of greater unities in its divided landscape” (p. 9). He ties these early social constructions of the “Grand Canyon” to a postmodern culture faced with a breakdown of unifying cultural narratives and struggle to make sense of chaotic contemporary life. He sees the Grand Canyon as “a place

where strangers and symbols circulate, mediating experience, knowledge, and memory in collective and momentary performances containing visions of self and culture" (p. 9).

Neumann positions his book as an examination of "the Grand Canyon as an emergent and residential site for the production of the zones of a social imaginary that reflect and contain the geographical and temporal dislocations of contemporary life" (p. 10). As such, it "offers many *theaters* or *stages* for social display, consumption, and production where people seek experiences at a distance from the routines of everyday life" (p. 10, emphasis in original). Ultimately, he sees the Grand Canyon "as a monumental space of public discourses spoken and written by planners, politicians, preservationists, institutions, artists, entrepreneurs, and commercial industries who treat the Grand Canyon as a tourist destination, a spectacle of nature, and a site for an expression of modern representational politics since the end of the 19th century." He goes on to note that the scientific, commercial, and aesthetic discourses over the past century have "framed and tamed the canyon's landscape for tourists" (p. 10) and "give meaning, order, and shape to the canyon's landscape..." (p. 10).

These discourses are not the whole story, however, for contemporary tourists tend to make the place their own through their personal narratives. Neumann explores the historical aspects of the social construction of the Grand Canyon in the early part of his book, then focuses on activities and accounts of tourists he encounters while at the Canyon.

Chapter 1 explores origins of the social construction of the Grand Canyon, focusing on the processes by which early commentators constructed discourses about the Canyon, and how it should be viewed and valued. Tracing the constructions superimposed on the Grand Canyon by railroad and hospitality entrepreneurs, Neumann reflects on how these entities invented a commercial-tourist framework based on appropriations of Native American culture and popular myths of the American West. In chapters 2 and 3, he examines the contests that arose between spiritual and scientific interpretations of the natural landscape. Chapter 4 reveals how the visitor's experience of the Canyon came to be transformed from one of individual witnessing of sublime nature to one dominated by a sort of "crowding," a blitz of interpretative information aimed at producing a proper (i.e., upper class) way of seeing and thinking about the place.

Chapters 5-7, in my estimation the best parts of the book, recount Neumann's encounters and conversations with a broad swath of tourists paying a visit to the Grand Canyon. Here, the contradictions between discourses that persist in constructing the Canyon as a natural wonder, devoid of human impact, collide with the reality of the Canyon as a crowded platform where familiar dramas and comedies of contemporary urban life play out. As Neumann illustrates, this is the Canyon that most people encounter and the one they continually reconstruct through their own actions and representations. Indeed, it is perhaps the one they are most comfortable with, for most are unequipped to handle the challenges of even the civilized routes to the bottom, not to mention the more remote, difficult back-canyon trails.

The Canyon the Neumann depicts is largely that of the heavily developed and utilized South Rim, not the remote North Rim, nor the portions of the park that lie adjacent to Native American lands. Perhaps this is just as well, given the tenor of his narrative, as discussed later in this review.

First, though, Neumann's book has much to recommend it. At the top of the list is the author's unwillingness to follow the well-trodden path of accounts extolling the Grand Canyon as one of the wonders of the natural world. Neumann's Grand Canyon is much more contested, constructed, and human. The subject matter of the book is long overdue. We need an unvarnished portrayal of what is, in essence, an urban center, a simulacrum of the trappings and narratives of "home." Some people find the Grand Canyon boring, a wide spot in the road; others are overawed. Many treat it as but one of many stops along the way. Neumann constructs these abstractions from the many details he carefully recorded from interviews as well as less-formal interactions with tourists and people who work at the Grand Canyon. He notes that Herb purchases a tape of Ferde Grofe's *Grand Canyon Suite* for his wife. Linney, Neumann discovers, packs the soundtrack to *Koyannisqatsi* all the way from Holland. He overhears a 12-year-old girl informing her mother that they are embarking on the "Brady Bunch trail" (Bright Angel Trail; p. 167) site of a widely known episode of the old television series of the same name. Steve arrives and departs on a Harley motorcycle; he worked at the Grand Canyon in 1969 and 1970, and notes a big change: "The place is full of Yuppies now" as he listens to Patsy Cline on the jukebox in the cocktail lounge of Bright Angel Lodge (p. 199). Each of these individuals blends his or her personal life, tastes, and expectations with their experience of the Canyon, thus creating their own unique and ephemeral performance.

Neumann's account of Danny Horning's escapades as an escaped convict and kidnapper at the Grand Canyon, which occurred while he was conducting research there, is fascinating and immediate in its impact. These and many other vignettes bring to life a side of the Grand Canyon that most of us more or less willfully ignore—that the Canyon is at the same time both more and less than the picture-postcard version transmitted by its keepers.

For all its resistance to canned narratives, however, the book ultimately falls flat for several reasons. First, the author's deconstruction of the narratives rapidly becomes intrusive. Whether restating the obvious, or stating as apparent fact what are clearly his own interpretations, the flow is continually broken. I do not believe that deconstruction should have been omitted, but that it should have been handled with more finesse. I would recommend to the author Robert Darnton's book, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (1984, New York: Basic Books) as one of many examples of readable deconstruction. Second, it is never clear who the intended audience for this book is. It is too elementary in many respects for critical theorists and other scholars. At the same time it descends too frequently into abstruseness to be recommended enthusiastically for general readers. It lacks the kind of strong focus needed to make it a good textbook, although the last several chapters would make good readings for classes focusing on contemporary cultural studies, human-environment relations, travel and tourism, and so on. Third, the book is regrettably lacking in detail about the context within which the Grand Canyon exists. Further, attention to Native American values and discursive constructions of the Grand Canyon is woefully insufficient. What of the constructions of place held by local ranchers, townspeople, and other tribes? The Kaibab Paiutes, for example, have cultural ties to the Canyon—which they regularly reinforce—that call into question the author's claims of ties to the Canyon forged in childhood. Fourth, there is more than a touch of superiority in the tone of this book: the author persists in holding himself

above the tourists he characterizes, the park, and even the landscape. In fact, in the end, Neumann announces that he is tired of the Canyon and wants to leave.

By this time, the reader may agree with this reviewer, and the author, that his departure would be welcomed. Skepticism is an important asset when conducting critical analyses, but when the skepticism lapses into cynicism, the dynamics among text, author, and reader can change irretrievably. Neumann widens this chasm when he fails to fully come to grips with the implications of the narrative he has constructed. Ultimately, I wondered if I even followed the author along his particular intellectual byways at all.

While Neumann illuminates some of the myriad reasons people visit the Grand Canyon, he fails to achieve his goal of building a convincing case for how analysis of tourism *in this particular place* enhances our understanding of tourism as a “powerful metaphor for the broader character and conflicts of modern life” (see p. 8). A more profound criticism, however is that, although he has succeeded in deconstructing the Grand Canyon into a pile of rubble, only in the very last paragraph of the book does Neumann attempt to put it back together again. It was too little, too late.

—Barbara J. Morehouse
University of Arizona



La Futura Revolución Española y Otros Escritos Regeneracionistas. LUCAS MALLADA, Introduction by F.J. Ayala-Carcedo and S.L. Driever. Madrid: Biblioteca, Collection “Cien años después,” 1998. (ISBN 84-7030-483-6).

To mark the centenary of the so-called “disaster of 1898,” the year when Spain lost its last colonies (Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines) after the short war against the United States, the works of the school of thought known as regenerationism have been resurrected. Regenerationists raised “the problem of Spain,” the causes for the decline of a country that had had such an imperial past. They sought both the reasons and possible solutions for this decline, or ways to “regenerate” the country, and put the creation of wealth and the improvement of public education at the top of their lists. Moreover, Spain was held to be an exceptional case, not comparable with other Western European countries, such as France and the United Kingdom, which they considered to be difficult examples to follow.

The collection “Cien años después” published by Biblioteca Nueva and directed by the historian Juan Pablo Fusi, has recovered, through careful editions, the main works of regenerationism. The volume reviewed here brings together several writings by the mining engineer Lucas Mallada (1841-1921), one of the authors of the *Geological Map of Spain*, as well as the great synthesizer of Spanish geology. The texts were originally published in different journals. The volume’s title *La futura revolución española*, is taken from one of the essays. The other essay titles are less emphatic, and include four main groups: “Las causas de la pobreza de nuestro suelo” (Causes of Poverty in Our Land), from 1881-82, together with “La riqueza mineral de España” (The Mining Richness of Spain), from 1882; “Reformas urbanas” (Urban Reforms), from 1887-89; “La futura revolución española” (The Coming Spanish Revolution),

from 1897; and “Cartas aragonesas” (Aragonian Letters), from 1905. Prior to this, Mallada’s writings were only partially available in reprint or difficult to access.

Several things recommend this volume to geographers as well as geologists and historians. First of all, Mallada recognized that Spain’s “problem” had both geographical causes and remedies. Secondly the editors, Francisco Ayala-Carcedo (researcher at the Spanish Mining and Geological Institute) and North American geographer Steven Driever place Mallada in context in their introductory essays. As Ayala-Carcedo shows, Mallada was a preeminent figure in Spanish geology, and Drieves deftly locates him with the intellectual and political currents of the time.

The main virtue of Driever’s introduction is to emphasize not only the keys of Mallada’s geographical and sociological interpretation of Spain but also its excesses. The “national problem” is explained by Mallada, over all, as a geographical problem—the poverty of soils, the dryness of climate, the large average of highlands, an adverse geological constitution, the lack of woodlands To these natural difficulties social faults are added. The report presented by Mallada before the Geographical Society of Madrid was so pessimistic that it invoked several replies from other informed members. This is demonstrated by critical comments of another mining engineer, Federico Botella, as well as Mallada’s reply. This exchange appeared in the leading journal of the movement for the reform of education. This is another strength of the volume—it brings key moments of the regenerationist debate back to life.

From a geographical point of view, the exchange of opinions between Botella and Mallada also shows their concordances—Spain *is* in a bad way but that can be changed. If, to a great extent, the causes for this decadence are of geographical nature, so the remedies might be. They argue that it is possible “to remake the geography of the country,” by means of hydraulic, forestry, and agronomic policies directed at putting all possible natural resources into production. Soils are infertile only by appearances, Botella says, and there will come a day in which “working the water that we will have taken advantage from the sun that favor us, our land will fully respond to whatever we require from it.” The uneven relief of the Iberian Peninsula lends itself to hydraulic development and the building of reservoirs. The state must promote afforestation, extensive irrigation systems, and doing the surveys and trial needed to exploit artesian water resources.

A hundred years after the controversy, beyond the pessimism or optimism on the geographical essence of Spain, it can be said that regenerationist program has been achieved; what is more, it has been achieved to excess, causing irreparable ecological damages. In this regard, Botella showed, in environmental and territorial terms, a more modern sensitivity than Mallada—contrasts and breaks in our land could be understood as one of its wealths, once obstacles were overcome.

The essays on “Spanish coming revolution” and the “Aragonese letters” may have less interest for geographers, though Driever also managed to provide the right context here; for Mallada, Spain’s condition was so bad, both socially and politically, that only a revolution “from the top” could cure it. He called for a leader able to clear the main obstacles to progress; namely, excessive centralization, the power of caciques on local institutions, and the corruption of the parliamentary system. With his intervention, Mallada joined a long tradition of analysts, starting with Jovellanos, who sought to specify Spain’s maladies.

The texts devoted to reforms in urban centers deserve a particular mention. As the expansions of Spain's main cities, such as those planned by Ildefonso Cerdá in Barcelona and Carlos de Castro in Madrid were being launched, old urban centers called out for improvements. Mallada championed this cause too, for him, *fin de siècle* Madrid had the sad distinction of being the beautiful capital in Europe. The downtown lacked air, light, and hygienic conditions; streets were narrow and tortuous, the overall texture much too complicated. In an area where he is not a specialist but has made radical proposals, he responds as an engineer—the old buildings should be removed, the straight line used preferably within the new designs, the infrastructure renovated, and the road links extended. His plan to open a large avenue through the center of Madrid, the so-called “Gran Vía,” eventually came to fruition, though not as he had envisioned; as a good arbiter, the engineer suggested this “opening” would be funded by the demolition of surrounding buildings and resulting land sales. In Driever's estimation the proposal was, all in all, less radical than others.

To reiterate this collection presents key texts of a fertile genre, one that reflects deeply on the essence of Spain and its backwardness. Was Mallada right when he emphasized and singled the “geographical evils” of Spain? Only as far as we want to insist on the “limitations” imposed by the environment to the development of productive forces according to the chronology established in Central and Western Europe. Only to the extent we compare the Spanish case with the standards of the center and northern sections of Europe, as it is often done with many other landscape and territorial ideas. But if we put it within its Mediterranean context, the geography of Spain, like its history, seems to be “normal.” Hence Mallada is, as Driever states, an “environmental regenerationist” because he confers environment its role at a given moment—in this case the intellectual moment in Spanish history known as *regeneracionismo*.

—Josefina Gómez Mendoza
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid



Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age. By JOHN A. JAKLE and KEITH A. SCULLE. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. xiii and 394 pp., photos, maps, diagrams, index. \$34.95 cloth (ISBN 0-8018-6109-8).

Repetition is seldom a prized characteristic of creative endeavors. After all, to be creative suggests a reasonable degree of originality rather than imitation. Endless re-makes of movies, designed mostly to fill corporate pocketbooks, hardly ever reach the quality standards of original versions. How many times do you want to put Frankenstein back together? Formula literature faces the same hurdles. James Michener's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Tales of the South Pacific* was never quite duplicated in quality by the numerous works that followed from his prolific pen.

Wariness of repetition is also found in the academic world. While we encourage beginning graduate students to replicate previous work, doctoral candidates are expected to strike out in new directions. Established scholars continually push back the

frontiers of knowledge with new research designs. Updated editions of earlier works, such as Zelinsky's revision of *The Cultural Geography of the United States* have appeared in geography. However, we do not have many examples in human geography of book following book with essentially the same research design.

John Jakle and Keith Sculle have collaborated on two previous books (in one case with an additional co-author) that deal with various aspects of roadside America—gas stations and motels. So, is this latest work on fast food establishments an example of a dreaded outbreak of academic formula writing? Happily, the answer to that question is no. With occasional adjustments here and there, the research design is familiar from their previous work. However, their topic is so yummy, that a reviewer is forced to admit that *Fast Food* is an important contribution to the literature. In addition, they're getting better and better at this type of writing. More about this representational form later.

Speaking of repetition, this reviewer has now written quite a number of Jakle-associated reviews. One credential that qualifies me to do this is that I worked as a "soda jerk" during college. At that time, men typically worked behind the counter and at the grill while young women waited on tables. On evening shifts, the guys, wearing aprons tied at just the right height for maximum appeal, would emerge from behind the counter to do a primitive form of 1960s-era line dancing. Laughter associated with those times, interaction with regular customers, and a developing sense that one was at an important focal point in the community, gave that establishment a real sense of place.

Place is an important concept in this book on fast foods. In their previous work, the authors have developed the concept of place product packaging. It's certainly a valuable approach to understanding patterns of locations to sleep and fill up the tank. With food, however, a full appreciation of the holistic dynamics of place comes through. Consuming food is often an especially meaningful family occasion. I used to pick up my father every Friday evening at the Pennsylvania Station in Baltimore, and drive him back to Westminster, Maryland. Then the whole family would immediately get in the car to head for a meal at Benny's Kitchen. Every time I pass that building, the restaurant is no longer there, but I think of those family times and how important they were to me. It's the kind of place that's often mentioned in this book.

Part of the Jakle-Sculle approach is to include significant sections of self-reference, far beyond the personal reference found in most academic literature. Sometimes it makes the reader a little uneasy, just like writing the personal references above have done to me. Maybe that's a hint of the importance of the work of these authors. If you can read this book without memories flooding your consciousness, then you probably didn't grow up in America.

There are 17 chapters in this book covering a history of restaurants, the impact of the automobile on eating out, the organization of chain restaurants, fast-food establishments of every variety, and a general spatial analysis of fast food through time in Springfield, Illinois. Maps and tables illustrate locations and rankings of fast food corporations. Short histories of the major players are included. It's well written and fun reading.

I'm almost tempted to say that this book qualifies for coffee table prominence. In other words, it's lively and entertaining enough that almost everyone will enjoy picking up a copy and scanning the old photos and stories of everything from mom-and-

pop cafés in small towns to chain restaurants along commercial strips. We've all felt that geographers know a lot that should be interesting to a broad range of citizens, but have never found the vehicle to widely represent our best stuff.

So, is this the type of book that will finally lead the plunge of geographic publishing into the mainstream of American public reading? Probably not, but it's getting very close. We haven't quite gotten over the hump to writing in that really free and entertaining way that most people enjoy. Jakle and Sculle may not be geography's version of Barbara Tuchman just yet. On the other hand, they've produced a really solid, entertaining book that's worth considering as a holiday present for friends.

—Ary J. Lamme III
University of Florida



Manufacturing Time: Global Competition in the Watch Industry, 1795-2000. By AMY K. GLASMEIER. New York: Guilford, 2000. xviii and 311 pp., maps, tables, index. \$42.00 cloth (ISBN 1-57230-589-4).

As high school students in the early 1980s, my biology lab partner and I—befuddled by those tiny buttons that appeared on the front piece of calculator-watches of the era—developed the pointy-finger theory of evolution. We hypothesized that amidst the increasing miniaturization of microelectronics, stubby-fingered people would continually hit the wrong buttons on their calculator-watches, as we had already demonstrated through countless empirical replications in class. We went on to posit that today's high school students entering faulty numbers in their lab reports would be tomorrow's adults making data-entry errors while attempting to balance their check-books. The result—stubby-fingered people would lose track of their finances, slip into poverty, and be unattractive as mates. Over several generations, as fewer and fewer stubby-fingered individuals reproduced, those possessing the pointy-finger gene would dominate, ushering in a new era of raptor-like humans...all thanks to major manufacturers.

Although I am not going to judge Glasmeier's book against the musings of a pair of adolescent proto-geeks, this story points to both the strengths and weaknesses of *Manufacturing Time*. On the one hand, I now know why manufacturers were putting calculators on watches then. (As Glasmeier explains, much of the technology in the early digital-watch era was driven by the success of the semiconductor industry, which was desperate for consumer applications. The first consumer adaptation was the pocket calculator. This application then was adopted, with a minimal number of modifications, to the electronic wristwatch.) On the other hand, mirroring the concern that my lab partner and I had for relating the development of wristwatch technology to evolution, I kept looking for Glasmeier to connect her history of the watch industry with evolutionary change. I refer here not to the evolution of the human finger, but rather to the social evolution of capitalism and the way in which it organizes and is organized by technologies of time. On this second score, she left this reader wanting more than she delivers.

In fairness to Glasmeier, she is explicit about the book that she did *not* set out to write. The book does not purport to unveil the history of time in capitalism as told through a history of the watch industry. Rather, it relates the story of the rise and fall of several regions (in particular, England, Switzerland, the United States, Japan, and Hong Kong), detailing how each region's fortunes waxed and waned due to a combination of internal industrial organization, corporate culture, trade policy, war, technological change, local expertise in related industries, and a host of other internal and external factors. By tracing several episodes in the history of the watch industry, Glasmeier successfully demonstrates that absolute proclamations about protectionism, path-dependency, or flexible specialization should be abandoned in favor of a perspective that analyzes the specific contingencies that limit the options for a given industry in a given time and place. Glasmeier's history is particularly provocative when she discusses the rise of the electronic watch in the 1970s, as this technology changed the watch-making industry from one of precision assembly (whether with hand-crafted or machined parts) to the simple packaging of another industry's core technology. Japan excelled in the first decade of this era while the U.S. faltered. The U.S. sought cheap, available displays that seamlessly linked with electronic technology. Thus, the first U.S.-made electronic watches featured digital-LED displays copied from calculators of the day even though this was an inconvenient watch design as it required the wearer of the watch to press a button every time (s)he wanted to read the watch. The LED display was followed by the more user-friendly but still not very fashionable LCD display. By contrast, the Japanese quickly recognized that most watch wearers preferred an analog "clock-face" display (the accursed LCD calculator-watch notwithstanding) and sales of the Japanese brand in particular soared. The Japanese ascendancy was short-lived, however, as the assembly of most electronic watches moved to Hong Kong and, more recently, China. Glasmeier convincingly argues that with the shift to the electronic watch, watch assembly is destined to become the exclusive preserve of low-wage countries, as U.S. and Japanese manufacturers tacitly have acknowledged. In discussing a Swiss watch as an exception to this trend, she feels that its viability as an alternative to cheaper Chinese imports is limited, and she implies that the Swiss should acknowledge that if their famed industry has any future at all, it lies only at the very upper end of the market. Glasmeier's history is one in which regions struggle, fail, and, occasionally, manage to pick themselves up. As Glasmeier's story unfolds, we see one watch production region after another "take a licking" and, for the most part, they fail to "keep on ticking."

Glasmeier's history is well researched and her emphasis that attention be directed to several intersecting factors that create the context wherein a specific industry at a specific time and place survives is well supported. Nonetheless, it is a shame that she stops her analysis where she does, for the watch industry is not just any industry. As she notes throughout the book, during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the watch industry was a lead "high-tech" industry, and communities went to great lengths to woo watch factories. Additionally, as she notes only in passing, the development of time-keeping and time-organization (including, or perhaps especially, at the level of the individual wearing a wrist- or pocket watch) has played a crucial role in the development of both modern capitalism and modern warfare. Again, Glasmeier's goal is to relate a history of regional competition in the watch industry, not to tell a history of

time and capitalism. But to fully tell the former story, the latter must also be engaged, for the relationship between the history of the watch and the history of time is recursive: changing needs of capitalism for organizing time have led to specific trajectories in watch technology that have led to further changes in temporal organization. The history of the “railroad watch” (which Glasmeier discusses extensively) is illustrative here. The needs of U.S. railroads to have a sturdy, reliable watch led the U.S. government to designate a railroad standard that evolved into a design that permeated all but the lowest rungs of the U.S. watch industry. This mechanization at a relatively high level of quality among U.S. manufacturers forced Swiss manufacturers to institute similar levels of mechanization, whereby semi-independent Swiss craftsmen were transformed into factory-working proletarians. As the craftsmen became proletarians, their freedom over their own lives—including, most notably, the organization of time in their lives—was diminished. In effect, both the production and consumption of time in Switzerland became routinized. Or, to bring up another example, noted—but not extensively developed—by Glasmeier, the invention of the chronometer (which was used to measure longitude on long-distance ocean voyages) was not just an important event in the development of watch-making technology. It also made possible a fundamentally new organization of space (and, thereby, time). Indeed, one can hardly think of another instance in which space, so literally, was annihilated by time.

This failure to theorize changes in the modern ordering of time has significant implications as one attempts to apply Glasmeier’s history to practical policy questions. Because Glasmeier’s conclusion is that one must emphasize the importance of the contingent intersection of contextual factors, it is not clear how one should apply Glasmeier’s case-specific insights. This is apparent in Glasmeier’s frequent reliance on “what-if” scenarios (e.g., would American protectionism have spurred instead of stifled innovations if there had been more flexibility written into the railroad watch standard?). To draw connections to other industries, in other times and places, one needs a framework with which to assess which of the factors at each point in the history of the watch industry were particularly important, and why. Glasmeier’s detailed stories provide us with clues, but in the end, her empiricism fails to equip us with the tools for extracting and applying her insights.

To conclude, *Manufacturing Time* presents a thorough history of an exceptionally volatile industry. Although the book could have benefited from a more complete analysis of the changes in the organization of time that precipitated and resulted from changes in the watch industry, the book is valuable for scholars interested in a range of topics in industrial geography, economic history, and regional development. In particular, readers are sure to gain an appreciation of the contingencies associated with a region’s changing fortunes as it pursues development via the nurturing of a high-technology industry.

—Philip E. Steinberg
Florida State University



Cultural Encounters with the Environment: Enduring and Evolving Geographic Themes. ALEXANDER B. MURPHY & DOUGLAS L. JOHNSON, EDS. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000. xii and 337pp., illustrations, figures, tables, notes, references, index. \$34.95 paper (ISBN 0-742-50106-X).

This collection of essays in homage to Marvin Mikesell attempts to impose order on the unruly mess that we call cultural geography in three distinct ways. First, the editors define four areas of inquiry: “the interplay between the evolution of particular biophysical niches and the activities of the culture groups that inhabit them; the diffusion of cultural traits; the establishment and definition of culture areas; and the distinctive mix of geographical characteristics that give places their special character in relation to one another” (p. 3). Second, the editors direct their attention to three contemporary foci of inquiry: “cultural values and ideologies, structures and institutions of power, and regimes of conflict” (p. 4). Finally, the editors identify three themes that dominate the papers in the volume: “a diverse array of specific case studies, each deeply rooted in and sensitive to historical process; the role of humankind in habitat modification and the human endeavor to control, remake, and understand its place in the natural world; and how places are claimed in different ways in a number of cultural settings” (p. 8). Such diffuse aims make the attempt to impose order difficult. The implication (p. xi) that this collection may be suitable for the Geography Advanced Placement project of the College Board is thus worrisome. Didactic aims for a high school audience, even at AP level, need to be clear.

The four areas of inquiry defined first above, although intended by the editors to represent a step forward from the aims of the Berkeley school as represented in Wagner and Mikesell’s landmark *Readings in Cultural Geography* (1962) seem more like a refocusing of those themes onto cultural ecology. The three themes seem equally attentive to Berkeley school themes, as does “cultural values and ideologies,” the first of the “contemporary foci.” The second of the other two foci, “structures and institutions of power,” was identified as early as 1975 by Wagner as a focus he and Mikesell had omitted in 1962, and “regimes of conflict” reflects Mikesell’s shift towards a more culturally constructed political geography. With these exceptions, the volume updates but does little to extend the work of the Berkeley school.

The individual papers chosen by the editors are both meritorious and variously interesting. Each reader will bring his or her own training and preferences to their interpretation and I will not presume to impose my own in this review. Overall, the papers perform as advertised, bringing meaning to the three themes around which the editors have chosen to order the volume. Nevertheless, the editors’ conclusion is telling: “a new community of understanding has not yet emerged in cultural geography.” The editors propose that four lessons may be learned from the disparate body of scholarship developed by cultural geographers since the publication of *Readings in Cultural Geography*: “that historical geographic scholarship does not simply offer insights in to the past, it provides important perspectives on contemporary dilemmas”; that “there is no substitute for meticulous empirical research”; that “values constitute the fundamental foundation upon which behavior is constructed”; and that “the distant and the near are inextricably linked, and no geography of culture can be complete that looks at just one or the other” (pp. 308-9). I doubt Carl Sauer would have disagreed.

It is thus left to Phil Wagner, in the “Epilogue,” to express some mild disagreement, or at least to imply some sins of omission on the part of the editors and authors. For this he looks back to his own *The Human Use of the Earth* (1960) and to the magnificent collection of essays edited by William Thomas, *Man’s Role in Changing the Face of the Earth* (1956). Wagner evokes Sauer’s natural conservatism (Hugill 1993: 4-5) when he notes that “the human use of the earth has acquired new and ominous dimensions; relationships between environments and peoples have entered a startlingly novel, truly global rather than regional phase; and cultural encounters with the environment will in future almost certainly decide the fate of humanity” (p. 311). The increasingly rapid rate of technological and institutional change has allowed our species to rise to “imperious ecological dominance” that we will abuse at our peril—in that regard “in the real world and in academic bastions cultural encounters with the environment are now potent factors in planetary physical events and bioevolution” (p. 322). This goes well beyond the editors’ theme of “habitat modification.” Wagner thus rightly pleads for us to study the complex interdependence of humans, their institutionally driven collaborations, as well as their conflicts. He pleads for a return to the fine-scale fieldwork beloved by many Berkeley students, certainly by Mikesell. He pleads for a “vernacular vision of functional place at the miniature scale” and, finally and centrally, for our complex and detailed understanding of “the constitution of place” (p. 316).

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