

advanced segregation within their communities. Particular attention is devoted to Mayor Orville L. Hubbard of Dearborn, famously described in the *New York Times Magazine* (12 January 1969) as ‘a three-hundred pound Northern redneck’. Hubbard held office without interruption from 1941 until 1978; thanks to the author we now understand the impetuous wiles of his championship of segregation. It is the odious story about a bit player which surely should find its niche in the storyline of American urban history.

But there is a further dimension of this book underscored by Freund’s invocation of the term ‘state policy’ in its subtitle. In addition to its localized case studies, *Colored Property* examines the mutually reinforcing roles of the public and private sectors in perpetuating – indeed solidifying – discriminatory policies. While the author is not the first to uncover the foibles of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal in such affairs, *Colored Property* goes to enormous lengths to enhance reader appreciation of this narrative. Freund argues that ‘it was the promotion of this calculus by myriad local, regional, and national bodies, both public and private that made whites’ desire for racial exclusion both an enormously powerful political force and, in important ways, a largely invisible one’ (p. 230). However, as much as I appreciate the substantial achievement of this benchmark study, a coda would have proven instructive. In the very historical moment – the late 1960s – when Freund formulates his conclusion, consequential events entered into play in the realm of housing. In 1966 a momentous federal case, *Gautreaux v. The Chicago Housing Authority*, was filed, claiming intentional violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The outcome, favouring the plaintiffs, made provision for rent and construction subsidies enabling residents of public housing to relocate into largely white suburban communities where they occupied private-sector housing units. By the time that the court-mandated objectives were fulfilled in 1998 some 8,100 households had benefited. *Gautreaux* preceded the Mount Laurel decisions rendered by New Jersey’s supreme court (1975, 1983 and 1986) that required municipalities to provide affordable housing. Considered in tandem, *Gautreaux* and Mount Laurel fostered dispersed open housing on a much-enlarged geographical plane, in the former instance in the six-county metropolis of Chicago and in the latter on a statewide basis.

Unquestionably *Colored Property* is a most compelling volume to read and to contemplate. Its scholarship is prodigious. Its findings are searing. Surely this book is destined to exert enduring influence. It is required reading for a multiplicity of audiences, including historians, social scientists, legal scholars, journalists and policy makers. Undoubtedly David Freund’s *Colored Property* will also be cited in American jurisprudence.

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Gabrielle Esperdy, *Modernizing Main Street: Architecture and Consumer Culture in the New Deal*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. x + 307pp. 66 figures. Index. \$35.00.
doi:10.1017/S096392680800610X

On 4 March 1933 Franklin Delano Roosevelt was sworn in as the 32nd president of the United States and inaugurated a New Deal for the American people.

Roosevelt's administration introduced an alphabet soup of government-sponsored programmes to increase building construction. These included the Public Works Administration (PWA), the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC), the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), of which only the last still exists today as the Federal Housing Administration. Gabrielle Esperdy establishes the FHA as the protagonist of her wonderful book, in which she details its role in the modernization of the American Main Street.

Esperdy begins her investigation by exploring linkages during the 1920s between the idea of the American Main Street and notions of traditional American values that were reflected in both literary sources and in the quaint eclecticism of its architecture. Traditional American storefronts quickly faded from public favour when they no longer brought in customers during the Great Depression. The solution, Esperdy successfully reveals, was to recast or 'modernize' Main Streets across America with progressive new designs that were intended to breed economic optimism and stimulate spending. Storeowners, however, had to be convinced that such progressive modifications were financially and physically manageable. Esperdy details the economic mechanisms made available to store owners through programmes like the Modernization Credit Plan (MCP), and points out how this credit was used on Main Street modernizations. She analyses the FHA promotional brochures for storeowners and describes in detail the new building materials – for example, Vitrolite, Insulux and Vitrolux – that promised to thrust storefronts into an economically vibrant future. Main Street modernism is equated with communities unified by façades that have been resurfaced with new materials designed in the Streamline modern style. This new style was promoted by the FHA, introduced by national chain stores, supported by industry and endorsed by such well-known American industrial designers as Walter Dorwin Teague and Norman Bel Geddes. Esperdy dives headlong into the thorny question of façadism and its relationship to gender, psychology, urbanism, science and to the International Style, which was introduced by Philip Johnson at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932.

Perhaps the most striking revelation in this book, however, is the extent to which public agencies like the Federal Housing Authority were engaged with the private banks, automobile manufacturers, chain store owners and the other businesses they were set up to help. Such a reassessment of public and private during this period by architectural historians is much needed. Esperdy's book opens a large new window on the modernized American Main Street that gives us a fantastic view of the development of American cities during the Great Depression and beyond.

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Robert A. Beauregard, *When America Became Suburban*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 2006. ix + 271pp. 14 figures. 3 appendices. \$57.00 hbk; \$18.95 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926808006111

In this ambitious effort to provide a new synthesis of the United States' transformation into a suburban nation, Henry Luce of *Time* and *Life* magazines plays the visionary role occupied in standard accounts by automaker Henry Ford