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Reviews of books

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Alan R.H. Baker and Mark Billinge (eds.), *Geographies of England: The North–South Divide, Imagined and Material*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xi + 216pp. 18 figures. 14 tables. Bibliography. £45.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806213725

The essays in this volume examine the material realities of the North–South divide in England, and the significance of the divide as a cultural metaphor in different periods of history. An introduction by the editors sets out the rationale of the volume, that each contributor will analyse the 'tangible', material geography of their period, the broad regional differences in population, economy, society, landscape, as well as the geographical imaginations of peoples in the past: 'the significance of the idea of the locality, of the region, of the province and of the nation at different times in England's history' (p. 3). Following Braudel's often quoted advice, the volume starts with the better documented present and works backwards. It opens with a chapter by Ronald L. Martin on the late twentieth century, and ends with a contribution from Bruce Campbell on 'North–South dichotomies, 1066–1550'. In between are essays by Danny Dorling, Philip Howell, Mark Billinge and John Langton on the periods 1918–71, 1830–1918, 1750–1830 and 1550–1750 respectively. Each contributor has a different set of emphases but there are sufficient common themes to draw some interesting conclusions about origins and durability of the divide, in material terms and as a cultural metaphor.

Martin argues that the re-emergence of strong economic indicators as well as a consciousness of the North–South divide since the 1970s is related to the shift to a post-industrial society and economy and to globalization. He argues that the 'post industrial, internationalised, enterprise oriented and consumerist-individualist south' was contrasted, especially during the Thatcher years, with an ailing 'industrial, labourist, and welfare dependent north'. He emphasizes the importance of the concentration of political and financial power in London and the political and cultural significance of the southern electorate and southern business now prioritized by Conservatives and New Labour alike. Although Martin mentions other cleavages, the North–South division appears to be the dominant divide, material and imagined. Dorling argues that although the divide

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became more obvious in economic terms in the inter-war period (as evidenced in infant mortality, unemployment and social class data), it went relatively unrecognized by political and other observers. He suggests that such recognition had to await the welfare analyses following from the 1931 census and welfare programmes developed in the decades thereafter. There was no stark divide represented in inter-war voting behaviour but Dorling perhaps underestimates the force of the literary and artistic iconography of the period seen in publications such as *Picture Post* and in a range of realist writers including Orwell and in painters like Lowry whose works gained widespread recognition in the inter-war years.

Howell's chapter considers the strength and political implications of economic regionalism up to World War I, and the geography of belonging as expressed in identities created by popular culture. He emphasizes the industrial roots of the North–South divide in the mid-nineteenth century but sees the development of metropolitan finance as vital in widening the divide, economically and culturally at the end of his period. He emphasizes the role of literary elites in affirming the inferiority of the North and the superiority of the South whilst each remained as different populist 'synecdoches', different polarized forms of English identity. Billinge claims that his period saw major transformations in ideas as well as technologies and that the vitality of the north and its new industrial political economy can be contrasted with southern (agricultural) stagnation and a society geared to a moral economy. However, he then looks beneath his own generalizations examining the relationship between London and the provinces, the mixed nature of the Midlands and the material and cultural gulfs between town and country which he argues to have been at least as significant as the North–South divide. He does, however, concede that ideas about North and South became more commonplace at the end of his period with the expansion of national communications and geographical knowledge.

Langton's fine chapter emphasizes the range of local and regional differences in everyday material life and culture in pre-industrial England. Mapping various demographic and economic variables reveals little evidence of a North–South divide. The written texts of his period and the flowering of cartography endorse the ideal of a unified England in the face of fractures caused by the Reformation, Civil War, Restoration and Hanoverian Succession. The 'other' against which the southern English ideal was pitted was not the North but 'heathen' Ireland and uncivilized colonies. Campbell's search for North–South dichotomies in the earlier period is similarly unrewarded. This was a period of growing national consciousness and a diminution of regional identities in his view. Although there were some marked differences in ecclesiastical administration, settlement patterns and agricultural systems, and the South was markedly wealthier than the North through the period, North and South do not appear to have been privileged above other spatial and regional differences and Campbell suggests a tripartite division might be more applicable, at least materially.

In conclusion, the editors emphasize that the North–South divide emerged both as a material reality and as a cultural metaphor with industrialization. But much of their final chapter is devoted to an analysis of the ways the divide has been invented and perpetuated. Certainly geographers, as well as social reformers, politicians and literary figures, have used the metaphor for their own purposes. Baker and Billinge thus suggest, despite some of the evidence of the essays, that

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the divide is 'a persistent cultural myth increasingly removed from social reality' (p. 183). This is a geographers' volume but historians will no doubt find it useful because of the long-run perspective and the focus upon both representation and reality.

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S.H. Rigby (ed.), *The Overseas Trade of Boston in the Reign of Richard II*. Lincoln Record Society, 93. Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005. £30.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806223721

Dr Rigby's edition of the surviving particular customs accounts and related controllers' accounts of Boston from the reign of Richard II, together with auxiliary documents relating to customs duties from the same period, will inevitably attract the attention of those who appreciate the importance of Boston's trade in the fourteenth century. On closer acquaintance they will find more than local detail to interest them. The edition's usefulness is enhanced by an introduction that discusses in a broader context the reliability of customs records as evidence of the volume and structure of trade, and describes widespread changes in customs administration in the early 1390s. Rigby's assessment of the accuracy of recorded trade as a reliable measure of the real total is cautious and balanced, rather than conclusive, but he is prepared to argue that the main source of evasion was the favour officials might show to local merchants. This implies that evasion could be expected to vary from port to port, and from period to period, depending on the personalities involved, and that it would be a mistake to try and identify some constant ratio between fiction and reality. In the body of the edition the form and structure of each document is noted in detail, with special attention to its bearing on the way customs were administered. Those studying the equivalent customs accounts of other ports in this period should be urged to read Rigby's comments closely. The volume also has a full glossary which will prove handy for the interpretation of records from other English ports. The period 1377–99, which preceded a prolonged decline of Boston's trade during the fifteenth century, has been chosen as one when customs records generally give an exceptionally comprehensive representation of overseas trading activity. They are calendared in translation, but in great detail, and the semantic losses this form of publication might entail are offset by Rigby's policy of using a unique equivalent for each Latin or medieval English term. These equivalents are carefully recorded in the glossary; 'scopes' and 'scop', for example, are both cross-referenced to 'scoop', and 'scoop' is cross-referenced to both 'scopes' and 'scop'. The edition benefits throughout from Rigby's unrivalled knowledge of medieval Boston and its inhabitants. This is most abundantly demonstrated in the quality of the prosopographical evidence, compiled in Appendix 3, relating to the 14 customs collectors of the period and two collectors of tunnage and poundage.

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Oliver Harris, 'The archbishop's town: the making of medieval Croydon', *Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society Proceedings*, 18, Part 9, 2005. 57pp. 8 figures. Available from the 'Sales Officer', CNHSS, 68 Woodcote Grove Road, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 2AD, UK. £2.95 pbk (£3.75 with UK postage).
Alan Rogers (ed.), *William Brown's Town: The Stamford Hall Book Volume 1: 1465–1492*. 2005. xii + 164pp. 1 table. 1 figure. Available from the Stamford Survey Group, c/o Stamford Museum, Broad Street, Stamford PE9 1PJ, UK. £10.00 pbk (£11.50 with UK postage).
doi:10.1017/S0963926806233728

Harris' short work on medieval Croydon represents an admirable exercise in using very widely scattered and disparate items of primary source material, both published and unpublished, to construct a synthesis image of an archiepiscopal town in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. Although Croydon did not receive a borough charter until 1883, Harris argues convincingly that an 'urban' entity of 'deliberate creation' (p. 245) existed at Croydon from at least the 1270s as a privileged local centre of administration holding regular markets and fares, as well as fostering a range of non-agricultural trade work. At the heart of this discrepancy between the town's vestiges of urbanity and its lack of constitutional development he places the archbishops of Canterbury, who as local landlords initially fostered urban development in the thirteenth century but later found themselves 'reigning back the freedoms of any town which threatened to outgrow the proprieties of the feudal order' (p. 271). Hence, whilst a good part of this study is devoted to the aspects of medieval urban planning and the town's place in regional trade networks, its unifying theme is the interrelationship between the archbishops and the town. Structured along lines similar to Richard Britnell's, *Growth and Decline in Colchester 1300–1525* (Cambridge, 1986), Harris tracks the life of the town chronologically, giving emphasis to its likely periods of expansion and contraction as well as its manorial context and some interesting notes on its prominent sons. On the whole this work emphasizes the manner in which strong historical argument and rich local history can be constructed through the skilful use of a wide range of primary source materials, even when faced with a near absence of one single and abundant source such as borough court rolls, surveys, or a town book.

It is an example of this latter variety of source with which this second half of the present review is concerned. The *Stamford Hall Book Volume I: 1465–1492*, edited by Alan Rogers and published by the Stamford Survey Group under the head title of *William Brown's Town*, is an abundant and chronologically intact record of the medieval borough's self-governance and administrative proceedings over a 27-year period. The short title *William Brown's Town*, somewhat veiling the broad range of information contained within, refers to the Calais stapler (wool merchant) who, along with his brother John Brown, dominated Stamford's borough council during this period, rebuilding the town church and founding/endowing a hospital. This volume has reproduced in English the full contents of Stamford's town book for the years specified, and has preserved something of the original arrangement. Of particular interest are annual lists of town notables and officers, the enfranchisement of new burgesses, warrants of peace, recognisances of debts, and various town ordinances from throughout the 'War of the Roses' period (the

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town sent troops and money to both the Lancastrian and Yorkist kings, Henry VI and Edward IV). Additionally, supplementing the contents of the *Stamford Hall Book*, some useful titbits from other primary sources in the National Archives and elsewhere, such as accounts of the election of MPs, have also been included where appropriate (extraneous information is clearly demarcated). Concerning presentation, the introduction is curt and somewhat inconsistent in coverage but does offer an interesting section 'Some suggestive lines of enquiry'. Also helpful are a full index and a page concerning editorial conventions, though this latter item might better have been placed at the beginning of the edited text rather than hidden away with the index. Generally speaking, this volume represents a very useful body of primary source material, sensitively handled, which will no doubt prove its worth to future historians many times over.

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Jean Passini, *Casas y casas principales urbanas: el espacio domestico de Toledo a fines de la Edad Media*. [Prologue by Pierre Toubert]. Toledo: Universidad de Castilla–La Mancha, 2004. xx. + 725pp. 624 plates and figures. Glossary. Sources. Bibliography. Indices. Summaries in French and English. No price stated.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806243724

It is hard to say whether the most extraordinary feature of this book is the research that made it possible, or the way in which the final results are presented. Regarding the former: in 1491–92 two canons and a notary drew up a list of the rents accruing to Toledo's Cathedral from 557 pieces of real property scattered among 64 locations in the city centre. The register proved to be remarkably precise in its measurement of these often very small spaces. It was equally exact in stipulating the boundary lines of adjacent properties. With this exceptional document in hand, Jean Passini began his exercise in 'archaeology without excavations'. He broadened his laborious reconstruction of these slivers of central Toledo through both forward and backward linkages, with the inevitably more incomplete and fragmented documents from earlier decades, as well as with the more voluminous records (including systematic mapping) from later periods. A decade of hard work – which, judging by his photos, involved much grubbing around in basements and clambering across roofs – has issued into a house-by-house survey whose splendid graphics include plans, elevations and visual documentation of the layout, spatial distribution and architectural features of much of the area surrounding the Cathedral.

Before research as taxing and detailed as this, you can only take off your hat. But once uncovered, you scratch your head and wonder what to make of it. In the last line Passini promises a future book combining 'properly historical discourse' with a broader comparative study. For the time being, however, the reader must do some archaeology of his or her own, and dig out the handful of general statements that characterize the transformation of urban space as the medieval Islamic city gave way to its Christian successor, and then the latter was rebuilt – only to a certain extent – during the early modern and modern eras. Piecing together these occasional breathing-spaces within the author's 'microhistory of

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the urban fabric' reveals several features of this transition. These include, first, the declining importance of several distinctive typologies inherited from the Muslim past. Foremost among these were the *alcaicerías* or closed markets; *adarves*, which were alleys or passageways closed by gates; and *palacios*, which were not 'palaces' but rather main rooms located on the ground floor of the closed patio that served as the vital centre of larger houses within the quarter. The modification of the Islamic legacy also involved a shift in relative weight from commercial to residential functions within the city centre. This was partly a matter of sharper differentiation, made manifest by increasingly 'bivalent' houses in which work was located on the ground floor and residential space on the upper levels. It also derived from the displacement of Muslims and Jews – that is, the area's major merchants – from the neighbourhoods around the Cathedral. As residential use became ever more important, average house size expanded as well. By the later fifteenth century it was in fact rare to find a one-storey house this close to the centre. The privatization of *adarves* led at the same time to greater attention paid to street doors. These not only grew in size, but also benefited from a shift in decorative emphasis from the patio to the façade, especially in the houses of better-off citizens.

Given its nature, it is unlikely that anyone would want to sit down and read this book from cover to cover. But one can hardly doubt its value as a reference guide to one of late medieval and early modern Europe's most important cities. It is also a monument to the contribution painstaking archival work, combined with wearing out one's shoe leather in situ, can make to the reconstruction of the micro-morphology of urban space in the distant past. And as readers await the more general analysis of Passini's future book, they can contemplate the ample proof he presents that much of late medieval Toledo had reached the late twentieth century surprisingly intact, and that to our shame, its destruction has taken place before our very eyes.

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Mireille Galinou (ed.), *City Merchants and the Arts 1670–1720*. Wetherby: Oblong (for the Corporation of London), 2004. xii + 228pp. 130 illustrations. 2 appendices. Bibliography. £16.50 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806253720

This attractive volume is the result of a most enjoyable conference at the London Guildhall in November 2002. Mireille Galinou and her contributors are to be congratulated on having produced this work in very good time, thereby providing an overview of an area in great need of further research. The major aim of the book is to bring attention to the ways in which wealthy businessmen patronized the arts in an age when they had both the opportunity and inclination for cultural display. Bringing together a wide array of experts working on the material arts in the Augustan age, this study will be of great interest to anybody working on London in the post-Fire period, and will provide much food for thought for scholars of early modern urban culture and society. The sheer richness of illustration is also to be highly commended, and makes the cover price very good value.

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The 13 articles are broadly divided into three main sections. The first is a scene-setter, analysing the social and cultural topography of the capital; the second focuses on private contexts for patronage; the third on more public environments for artistic display. Taken together, they provide a kaleidoscope of perspectives on how London's elite exhibited their wealth, both within the Square Mile, and in their suburban retreats. The collection is strongest on houses, furniture and paintings, although costume and funeral monuments are also covered. It ends with a most imaginative reconstruction of a day in the life of a prominent merchant taylor by Ann Saunders, which highlights how material culture can illuminate the workings of the City's social and commercial milieux.

All the papers have merit, and it is particularly pleasing to see such expert touches brought to each cultural specialism. The expertise required for an appreciation of each artistic pursuit has been the greatest obstacle to any general appreciation of urban patronage of the arts, and this volume does provide a satisfying overview of the manifold ways in which new money was spent. However, the beauty and interest of this volume is very much in the detail of cultural patronage, which throws intriguing light on the possible distinctiveness of City taste. The most striking examples furnished here are the fantastical panels adorning the walls of Edward Carleton's home in Botolph Lane, in which realistic depictions of tobacco production reflected the source of his considerable wealth. Appropriately, the book is dedicated to their painter Robert Robinson, one of the lesser-known artists supplying services to business clientele. Several contributors, including the editor, suggest that the business classes did not slavishly follow aristocratic taste, and were able to reflect their City outlook while employing fashionable artists and design. This theme deserves further research, and might be explored through other avenues for cultural patronage, such as performance art, literary interests, scholarly pursuits and gardening.

Hopefully, this collection will encourage other scholars to take City culture seriously, for we still need a more coherent view of the patterns and functions of artistic patronage within the business elite. The contributors frequently acknowledge the fragmentary picture left by their sources, and are left to ponder whether broader City trends can be adduced from particular examples. Considerable efforts have been made to integrate the findings of each article, but we still need a stronger sense of the scale and pace of change in the City's artistic development. To this end, the socio-cultural context in the opening section could have been more extensive, and might have provided a more systematic review of the commercial hierarchy of the City in this period. A more rigorous analysis of cultural patronage by occupation should also be attempted in future, for the 'merchants' covered embrace a wide spectrum of businessmen, from bankers to overseas traders to domestic retailers. From the evidence presented here, the bankers and financiers appear more cultured than the others, with the likes of Vyner, Clayton and Child recurring at regular intervals. Are their artistic pretensions a reflection of their gentle connections, or are there other significant differentials at work? Those attempting to answer such questions will be indebted to the contributors for the lively and scholarly platform provided here. Lorna Weatherill and Peter Earle have shown the rewards to be gleaned from their analyses of more modest middle-class life, and London's richest citizens deserve similar treatment.

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Susannah R. Ottoway, *The Decline of Life: Old Age in Eighteenth-Century England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xiv + 322pp. 11 figures. 21 tables. Bibliography. £50.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806263727

This is a thoughtful and thought-provoking book. At its core are two thematic strands. The first is a generalized discussion of the changing definitions of old age and variation in sentiments towards old people in eighteenth-century England. The second is a detailed micro-study of the experiences of the elderly poor in the small rural or rural industrial communities of Terling (Essex), Puddletown (Dorset) and Ovendon (a chapelry of Halifax parish in the West Riding). The two thematic strands do not always sit easily together. In the first 150 pages or so, the book engages with questions of the definition of old age, the societal role of the elderly and issues such as the residential experience of the elderly, at a very general level. We learn from pamphlets, literature, poor law records and other sources that those reaching the age of 60 were considered old by their peers and that there were strong cultural mores on how aged people should act or where they should live. Old age might be alternatively defined by loss of strength, the menopause, erratic behaviour or retirement, but in a collective sense the age of 60 figures strongly in the socio-economic and cultural production of old age in the eighteenth century. There is limited engagement here with the nuances of class or region, though concrete examples from the later micro-studies do help to provide reference points in what might otherwise be just another cultural history of old age, albeit for the under-explored eighteenth century.

The rest of the volume spins down to an excellent micro-study of just one sub-group of the elderly, those dependent upon poor relief. The transition is not an easy one. Perhaps inevitably given my background, I would like to have seen more of the micro-study work and less of the general background, for it is in the detailed case studies that the importance of this book lies. And we should be under no illusion that this is an important book. Ottoway's three micro-studies deal with the levels of relief, ages at relief, sex-distribution of relief, forms of relief and the character of indoor relief for the elderly poor of three very different communities. She engages powerfully with the literature on regional differences in the role and character of poor relief, demonstrating, for instance, that the elderly poor of Ovendon were both older when they received relief for the first time and received less than their southern counterparts. She also confirms the idea that dealing with the elderly and their needs remained the key task of local poor law officials throughout the eighteenth century. However, Ottoway also offers revisionism, arguing, for instance, that 'Focusing solely on poor relief to the aged allows us to see the fundamental similarity of the Old Poor Law throughout England' (p. 281).

Readers of this journal will not find any real urban focus in Ottoway's book. Nor are the lessons of her case studies easily portable to the urban situation in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. This said, the conclusion to the volume makes a powerful case that studying the elderly opens a window on a complex range of historical debates. By investigating the experiences of, and attitudes towards, the aged we learn much about inter-generational relationships, the nature of eighteenth-century communities, the history of the family, collectivism versus individualism, kinship, gender and the regionality of the industrial and

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agricultural revolutions. This important book deserves the attention of urban historians and hopefully will be the touchstone for detailed micro-studies of the elderly in eighteenth-century urban England.

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Jon Stobart and Neil Raven (eds.), *Towns, Regions and Industries: Urban and Industrial Change in the Midlands, c. 1700–1840*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005. xiv + 272pp. 7 figures. 22 tables. Bibliography. £55. 00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806273723

In focusing primarily on the Midlands, this book seeks to explore the dynamics of urbanization and industrialization in a regional context and to explore how the region came to shape those dynamics. The approach is a comparative one with case studies of different towns within the Midlands region and an introductory chapter that provides a regional survey and a broader European and theoretical approach in the final chapter. The Midlands as an industrial region forms the first theme in this volume. Neil Raven and Tristram Hooley use trade and commercial directories from the 1790s to argue for a new typology of industrial towns which can accommodate a greater variety of urban experience and in particular the degree of manufacturing in small towns. Andrew Hann explores the expansion of service industries, which often lagged behind industrial and population growth and were slow to develop in those towns that expanded quickly as a result of a manufacturing specialism. The role of women in business, and as labourers and consumers, is the subject of Christine Wiskin's chapter. Interestingly, she argues that widening economic opportunities did not necessarily benefit businesswomen. Neil Raven and Jon Stobart stress the importance of the highly developed network of road, river and canal transport to the Midlands region but also how this came to shape differences between industrial and urban development in the East and West Midlands. In Barrie Trinder's examination of manufacturing towns he demonstrates the importance of local and regional markets for the manufacture of consumer goods, as well as industry in providing economic opportunities.

The experience of industrialization provides a second theme with the initial focus on two wholly new urban communities, Burslem and West Bromwich. Jon Stobart and Barrie Trinder develop the earlier argument of Andrew Hann by showing how the trappings of urban status came first from industrial development and then from expanding service functions. While a sense of urban identity became important to these new towns, John Smith examines how industrialization in the more established town of Wolverhampton encouraged a new sense of civic consciousness and pride and how central the improvement commissioners were to this process. Joyce Ellis illustrates how important the regional context was to the development of Nottingham, arguing that one of the distinctions between the East and West Midlands was the continued prosperity and domination of established county towns in the east of the region. Peter Clark explores the fortunes of the old market town of Loughborough to determine the extent to which towns stimulated or limited industrial growth and what was the key to success. By contrast, Leonard Schwarz traces the relatively pain-free decline of Lichfield as it focused on the

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leisure market. Growing local demand for Lichfield's facilities was an indirect benefit from regional industrialization in the short term.

It is of course extremely difficult to isolate the regional variable in urban and industrial development, a point made in the final chapter by Steven King looking more broadly at the European perspective. The same point is made in Peter Clark's chapter in relation to Belgium. The essays within the volume show that the Midlands itself offered a variety of urban and industrializing experiences, with some clear differences between the east and west. Reflecting a more recent interest in urban and industrial historiography it is also clear that the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw considerable growth in the local and regional market which facilitated the growth of a wider range of towns beyond those which had developed an industrial specialism. Communication links were extremely important but so too was the dynamism of local entrepreneurs and businessmen and businesswomen. This volume provides some interesting case studies of towns in the Midlands and the varied response to the economic opportunities of the period, while at the same time illustrating the difficulty in isolating the relationship between towns, industry and regional economic development.

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Steven J. Salm and Toyin Falola (eds.), *African Urban Spaces in Historical Perspective*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2005. xi + 395pp. £50.00/$75.00.
doi:10.1017/S096392680628372X

Scholarship on African urban history has expanded substantially in the last fifteen years: the 1996 SOAS conference produced one major edited publication (David Anderson and Richard Rathbone's *Africa's Urban Past*) and inspired substantial further work, including Andrew Burton's recent edited collection. The volume under review is the product of a conference at Austin, Texas, in 2003; it adds to the quantity of scholarship, but I am not sure that it makes any very significant contribution to its quality, and as a whole the collection suffers from a lack of consistency and focus.

That deficiency is apparent from the introduction. Its author, Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, is a respected scholar with a record of publication on African urban history, and she offers some flashes of insight and cogent criticism, but the piece slips repeatedly into a sort of opaque inconsequentiality. 'Urban cultural processes probably are the most difficult to study, while they certainly were among the most decisive tools for change.' What does that mean? And work of this kind really should not contain elementary errors: the capital of Tanzania is not called Tema; there is no former industrial town called Jingani in Uganda. It seems curious that there is not even a cursory discussion here of the perennial definitional question – what makes an 'urban space' in Africa? It is more curious still that Eric Ross, in his intelligent and effective discussion of the autonomous Muslim towns of Senegambia, is the only contributor in the whole volume to even mention this question; the editors may well have felt this was not a helpful line of inquiry, but it would have been appropriate for them to explain why. The only clear messages from Coquery-Vidrovitch are that the colonial period marked a major

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shift in Africa's urban experience; that African urban spaces are centres of cultural innovation and that they should not necessarily be considered problems.

Almost all of the following papers do, at least, share the sense of the enduring significance of the colonial experience. Fatima Muller-Friedman offers an interesting study of the continuities in urban planning practice in Namibia, which transcend major discursive shifts associated with the rise and fall of apartheid, and which have locked official and popular ideals of the urban into a relentlessly 'modernist' mould. Two other papers, by Kefa Otiso and Maurice Amutabi, insist that the colonial legacy has condemned Kenya's urban areas to chronic conflict and decline. Their description of the exclusionary and exploitative nature of colonial urban policy is quite accurate; but Otiso's assumption that colonial policy 'thwarted' African urbanization surely understates the agency of the many ordinary Kenyans who for their own reasons sought – with some success – to maintain their stake in rural life. And Amutabi's account seems rather muddled, rooted in a teleology which assumes that urban life will break down ethnicity, yet offering a description of a small-town intelligentsia with a substantial investment in ethnic politics. His description of Isiolo belies his assertion that it is 'stuck in the colonial moment'.

Other contributions, less overtly concerned with the current implications of the colonial past, offer competent historical accounts of particular moments which tie in broadly with Coquery-Vidrovitch's comments. Godwin Murunga's work on plague and colonial town planning in Nairobi is considerably more nuanced in its consideration of colonial urban policy than Otiso; Jeremy Rich offers an interesting descriptive survey of the cosmopolitan nature of Libreville, in Gabon. But other contributions seem to fit only very loosely into any overall argument. The pieces by Wessel Visser and Corinne Sandwith are good pieces of historical writing, but they speak only indirectly to the urban theme. And there are other chapters here which seem to stray even further from the mark, and really have the form of student work in progress. Commendably, the editors have sought to showcase the work of students and less prominent academics, but to be really successful such a strategy would have required considerably more editorial input than seems to have been offered here.

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Robert Millward, *Private and Public Enterprise in Europe: Energy, Telecommunications and Transport, 1830–1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. xix + 351pp. 18 figures. 33 tables. Bibliography. £50.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806293726

In this remarkable book Robert Millward has produced a comprehensive economic history of the regulation of energy, telecommunications and transport in Western Europe between 1830 and 1990. By focusing on the 'infrastructure industries', Millward makes a major contribution to cross-European economic history, and his book will serve as a benchmark against which future comparative research should be measured. Millward demonstrates that the origins of government ownership and regulation date back well into the nineteenth century. Although private enterprise was heavily involved in the construction of almost all infrastructural networks, municipal and national governments played increasingly important

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roles in their management, whether through arm's length regulation (setting price controls for Victorian railways and gas supplies, for example), municipalization or state ownership.

Reflecting his vast expertise, Millward is at ease in part II when discussing the extension of government controls over Victorian utilities. In an analysis of the key economic determinants of municipalization, especially of water in the UK, he dispels the claim that socialist ideology was the main stimulus behind the phenomenal growth in council ownership. Instead he shows that private enterprise faced institutional difficulties in earning sufficient profits to deliver extended high-pressure supplies to a rapidly growing urban population. Huge capital costs, the limited availability of supplies, contested markets and price controls all weakened the market's ability to function effectively. Moreover, water's status as a natural monopoly, the niggling obstacle of rights of way in installing pipes and mains in publicly owned streets and acute public health risks meant that municipal ownership of water supplies was pervasive by 1914 across the UK, Germany, France, Sweden and even Italy and Spain. Although convincing, this argument understates the influence of socialist ideas during the later Victorian period in the wake of rising numbers of working-class voters and councillors. Socialism may not have been the initial cause of municipalization for gas and water, or even trams and electricity, but it was clearly a powerful force behind the spread of municipalization between the 1890s and 1914, while 'gas and water socialism' had a defining influence on municipal trading in Scottish cities, which were prohibited from using profits as rateable relief.

In part III Millward makes a strong case for seeing changes to infrastructure industries before 1950 as a product of the technological and economic weaknesses of transport, communications and energy networks rather than the impact of World War, depression and socialism. In a fascinating chapter on the regulation of electricity during the inter-war years, he stresses that national integration became more widespread as costs fell through the adoption of larger generating plants and alternating current, which rendered the development of long-distance transmission through a 'national grid' economically viable. These technological questions are relevant to urban historians interested in the decline of municipal autonomy, and this book provides a framework within which case studies might be explored.

However, the book loses some appeal to urban historians after part II. Although Millward concentrates on enterprises operating at the level of the nation-state during the twentieth century, and especially after 1945, it would have been interesting to learn how nationalization affected the status of municipalities and, more importantly, why municipalities were not entrusted to continue regulating natural monopolies. Millward states that municipal enterprise remained widespread in transport and water supply in the UK, Germany and Scandinavia, but more detailed explanation of this would be welcome. Why, in 1991, for instance, did over 50 per cent of electricity distribution in Sweden remain in municipal hands? How can we account for the persistence of joint municipal, co-operative and private ventures in Danish utilities? Having focused so strongly on the municipal/local level during the first half of the book, further consideration of the relationship between central and local government would have strengthened the continuity of the second half.

In his introduction, Millward expresses the hope that this book will be 'a starting point for others' in researching cross-European economic regulation. This book

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achieves much more than this, providing a stimulating history of governmental regulation of infrastructural industries over the past two centuries. In so doing, Millward identifies a number of intriguing topics for future research, including the relationship between technological innovations and economic performance, how far the role of socialist ideologies has been exaggerated in studies of public ownership and the changing relationship between local, national and transnational networks. Moreover, by assembling rigorous cross-European data on patterns of ownership and regulation, this book will doubtless act as a valuable data source for researchers.

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David Lloyd, Roy Payne, Christopher Train and Derek Williams (eds.), *Victorian Ludlow*. Bucknell: Scenesetters, 2004. 240pp. 186 figures. 23 tables. £15.95 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806303720

This book sits within the growing genre of scholarly yet accessible local histories epitomized by the new Victoria County History study series. Written by members of the Ludlow Historical Research Group, it focuses on a neglected period of Ludlow's history, the Victorian era, often overshadowed by the town's more glamorous past as medieval wool town and Georgian resort. The book aims not for comprehensive coverage of this period, but concentrates on a succession of themes – occupational change, suburban growth, retailing, domestic service, local politics, public utilities, poor relief, schooling and church reform – which demonstrate how the great social and political issues of the day were played out at a local level.

In chapter 1, David Lloyd traces changes in each sector of the local economy, linking this to national trends, such as the decline of domestic service. He argues that far from stagnating, Ludlow prospered as a market town, adapting itself to the changing economic circumstances. These themes of growth and transformation are reiterated in subsequent chapters, looking at the development of Ludlow's eastern suburbs (Train), and the expansion and diversification of retailing (Lloyd). Chapters on parliamentary elections, local government services, the union workhouse, out relief and schooling take a slightly different approach, exploring how central government legislation was implemented and interpreted at a local level. The final two chapters on mid-century life and church history are more biographical. The former draws heavily on the contents of three diaries to explore topics as wide ranging as faith and worship, entertainment and the coming of the railway; the latter provides a survey of change within the Anglican community by outlining the many achievements of the long-standing Rector of Ludlow, Edward ffarington Clayton.

The contributors are fortunate to have had access to a rich collection of source material, including the newly discovered diary of a local solicitor, Francis Southern. Indeed, each of the chapters draws on a wide range of sources, often used in imaginative ways. Lloyd, for instance, uses evidence from wills to measure the relative wealth of Ludlow shopkeepers. Each chapter has also, of necessity, to engage with wider academic debate, since events in Ludlow are viewed within a national context. Some do this particularly successfully: the occupational survey

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in chapter 1, for instance, is framed using the categories adopted by the University of Leicester's Small Towns Project, whilst Speight in his study of suburban growth adopts a similar methodology to that pioneered by Dyos. This sense of scholarly attention is reinforced by the use of endnotes. The book does, however, have some limitations, common to a work of this genre. In places the density of information detracts somewhat from the overall argument, and references to recent literature are relatively limited. More significantly the chapters are not particularly well linked together, giving the appearance more of a collection of papers than a single narrative, something that could have been rectified by firmer editing. That said, this is an important addition to local history scholarship. It not only fills a gap in the history of a particular town, but illustrates more generally how local history should be written. It will be of interest not only to the people of Ludlow, but to all those concerned with the history of small towns during the nineteenth century.

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Derek Vaillant, *Sounds of Reform: Progressivism and Music in Chicago, 1873–1935*. University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2003. 416pp. $19.95.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806313727

At the intersection of music exhibition and instruction in turn of the century Chicago, Derek Vaillant's *Sounds of Reform* attempts to revisit and rewrite the notably vexing relationship between Pluralism and Progressivism within the American democratic project. Pulling from Thomas Bender's optimistic Liberal notions of 'public culture', Vaillant takes the reader through the seemingly more democratic relationship between reformers and their immigrant subjects within what he calls 'musical progressivism'. He purposefully distinguishes the aims of musical progressives – to expand public services through a direct engagement and appropriation of local neighbourhood musical cultures, as opposed to an insistence, by 'the cultured generation', on reform through a strict adherence to cultivated European classical music. In doing so, *Sounds of Reform* challenges conventional representations of the Progressive Era. A close examination of public music projects in city parks, settlement houses, neighbourhood events and even post-war commercial dance halls and radio programmes, allows Vaillant to enact an infrequent conversation between American music history and histories of Progressivism. Furthermore, he claims that this era of musical reform foreshadowed and laid the groundwork for current theories that identify popular culture within the mass consumer marketplace as sites of civil democratic action.

To chart the reconstruction of 'music as a civic good', Vaillant retraces reformers' adventures out into local neighbourhoods where even the strongest attempts at a top-down civic acculturation were in some ways altered by local contexts (p. 7). *Sounds of Reform* is divided both temporally and conceptually into two parts split at the advent of a World War I era rise in a more nativist 'musical Americanism' and mass consumer culture (p. 164). Like the rest of American 'modern' culture, musical progressivism arose out of, among other things, anxieties over post-Civil War industrialization, crass materialism, racial (im)migration to urban centres, and disruptions of the gendered fault line between public and private. For Vaillant, the intimate relationships between the city's dominant industrial enterprises;

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semi-autonomous, multi-racial, working-class neighbourhoods; a philanthropically funded arm of settlements, social workers and sociologists and a strong machine of municipal governance made Chicago ripe for the musical progressive project.

The first half of the book offers a detailed examination of Theodore Thomas' 'Summer Nights' concerts, music reform at ceremonial public parks, Hull House music education programmes music exhibition at field house parks and even a revised reading of music at the World Columbian Exposition. Along the way, Vaillant uncovers rich and complicated contestations over the 'public good' through struggles amongst classical and folk/popular music tastes, White ethnic elites and 'city leader', instructors and students, American patriotism and ethnic national loyalties, and reform ideals and consumer patron demands. He does concede that one of the most glaring and consistent ironies of this democratic civic public was its continually uncivil construction of a multi-ethnic White noise built on the 'love and theft' of a Black musical dissonance. Yet for Vaillant, the co-mingling of European classical music (and its elite listeners), the cultural traditions of the German beer garden and the mixed-gender listening and dancing to more popular music at 'Summer Nights' demonstrates the manifestation of negotiated democratic ideals within elite projects of reformist acculturation. This struggle over the meanings of musical democracy was continued through Hull House instructors' use of ethnic folk songs for instruction and community uses of public field houses for popular music dances.

At the height of wartime American patriotism and racial violence, however, the wheel of the musical progressive machine was taken by community songs driven by a ban on European classical music and a rise in Tin Pan Alley compositions low on technical musical skill, while loud on White nationalist longings for simpler times replete with 'Negro dialect'. However, this period also signalled a challenge to bourgeois visions of musical tastes through a turn to the pluralist democratic possibilities found in mass consumer spaces, where what Vaillant identifies as the Progressive interface between civic politics and public music remained intact. Vaillant deploys the popular tactic of reading Juvenile Protection Agency (JPA) and 'Chicago School' reform investigations of beer permit dances, mainstream cabarets, black-and-tan cabarets, taxi-dance halls and even local radio programming against the grain. His approach offers challenging and provocative takes on the often-examined negotiations of race, gender and sexual identities in Chicago's commercial venues. Most notably, in his re-mapping of social relations at taxi-dance halls, Vaillant replaces a common story of racial inequality with a problematic class analysis. Thus he contends that within these spaces, for example, the wealth of educated Filipino men trumped even the racial status of 'poorer and undereducated Caucasian men' in the struggle over the propriety of White female companionship (p. 224).

Unfortunately, the dangerously limited equation between 'civic participation' and 'high-quality' music (that respectively denote Euro-American space and taste) in the first half of the book does not challenge but confirms charges levelled against Progressive-era pluralism. In his critique of the xenophobic censure of multi-ethnic European classical music during the war, Vaillant bemoans the loss in technical proficiency provided by the 'European masters' in exchange for 'easy-to-sing and tuneful airs' (pp. 166–7). In the quest to equate 'high quality' musical access, and concretized folk music content with civic participation and ethnic pluralism, Vaillant ignores the very real class and cultural hierarchies and local struggles over

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ethnic sound embedded in such formal projects. How did local elite and plebian contestations over musical tastes or pre-existing moments of inter-ethnic exchange outside the purview of Settlement houses alter what the author (or Progressive leaders) came to see as authentic folk culture? There also was no examination of Chicago's thriving Black reform musical culture of Sunday musicales with their concretized Negro spirituals or the important sanctified and gospel music programming within Chicago's aural public sphere. More than inclusive examples, at the very least, the consistent exclusion of Black people from the democratic public and their simultaneous creation of parallel musical civic cultures suggest that racism can no longer simply be ceremonially acknowledged as an outside blemish invading the pristine landscape of the democratic ideal. *Sounds of Reform* seems reticent to confront its own unintentional revelation, that the 'Negro problem' must actually be understood as clearly constitutive and not a deviation from Progressive pluralism's organization and maintenance in the Midwestern metropolis.

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Stephen Inwood, *City of Cities: The Birth of Modern London*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2005. xvii + 538pp. 41 plates. 12 maps. Bibliography. £25.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806323723

Some seven years after the publication of his blockbuster *A History of London*, Stephen Inwood has returned to the metropolis to write a book which, although covering a rather narrower time frame, is challenging in its scope. The central argument is that between 1883 and 1914 London underwent a fundamental transformation that not only impacted on all aspects of its life, but also created the first modern city. In support of this thesis, Inwood marshals a dizzying array of information. We thus learn how the impact of electrification, the motor car, socialism, immigration, new forms of retailing, suburbanization, mass culture and state intervention foreclosed the Victorian era and heralded a new age in the history of great cities. It is a compelling narrative built on a sure-footed sense for empirical detail. Much of this detail may be familiar enough – gleaned as it is from standard sources – but the pages are laced with the unanticipated. A chapter on the transport revolution, for example, includes the fascinating insight that many of the generation of promising writers started their careers in cycling journalism, that during the staging of the first London to Brighton road run in 1896 no less than 500,000 people lined the route from Whitehall to Croydon and that in 1910 more people were killed in road accidents in London than were in 2000. In what is the longest and probably the best chapter, such detail enriches. In less secure discussions, however, it can be a source of annoyance. The brief and unsatisfying chapter on industrial London rightly points out that London was the biggest centre of manufacture the world had ever seen. It is all the more curious, therefore, to find sections devoted to pianos, printing and sweated trades, with only passing mention of engineering, shipbuilding and chemicals which were far more significant in terms of the levels of employment and influence on the course of industrial development in the twentieth century.

By stepping back from the helter-skelter of the narrative it is possible to find clues to the book's insecure handling of arguments that need to be addressed in contemplating London's modernity. Here there were some unsettling and

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awkward silences. In the first place, the periodization is taken for granted. No doubt seduced by conventional wisdom, it was convenient enough for Inwood to locate London's emergence as a modern city within the period considered as the high point of modernity. And yet there is no obvious reason why this should be. Equally persuasive arguments could be made for placing London's modernity a hundred years earlier. This was the time, after all, when London first emerged as the great financial, commercial and imperial centre of the world, simultaneously heralding social improvement, profound changes in the political culture, new patterns of consumption and strikingly innovative ways of seeing the metropolis. Indeed, it is only when you begin to recognize the extent to which London's modernization depended upon its location at the heart of an extensive financial and commercial network that the insularity of Inwood's account becomes apparent. Apart from opening remarks on London's position in the world, and a chapter on Jewish immigration, his London is defined essentially by its administrative boundaries. There is simply no discussion of trading relationships, let alone of the extent to which London's distinct intellectual formation was created from the ready exchange of ideas around the world. Such recognition would also have helped address the thorny question of London's ambivalent location within modernity, and the peculiar forms of modernism to which it gave rise. Inwood is too good an historian to argue that London was unproblematically modern; indeed, he points to the fact that metropolitan modernity was impeded by an entrenched conservatism and timidity. But then we learn nothing about the roots of this anti-modernism or how it was played out.

An important characteristic of a city's modernity is its sense of being modern. Here would have been fertile ground to consolidate the central arguments of the book, for there can be little doubt that toward the close of the nineteenth century distinctly modernist perspectives appeared that attempted to grasp London's complex totality. The nature of this intervention, and the extent to which it represented a departure from earlier representational and surveillance modalities could have revealed much about London's tentative march into the modern world. It may seem churlish to criticize a book of 500 plus pages for a lack of ambition, but had Inwood adopted a broader perspective and paid due regard to recent scholarship, there would have been fewer of these troubling silences.

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Ann Durkin Keating, *Building Chicago: Suburban Developers and the Creation of a Divided Metropolis*. Reprint edition with new Introduction. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002. 230pp. 23 plates. 30 Tables. 12 maps. Bibliography. $15.95 pbk.

Robin F. Bachin, *Building the South Side: Urban Space and Civic Culture in Chicago, 1890–1919*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. 448pp. 71 halftones. $35.00.

doi:10.1017/S096392680633372X

During the 1980s, Ann Durkin Keating was among the first historians to examine seriously suburban development. Fortunately, her work has been reissued in

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a paperback edition that includes a new photographic essay of twenty-three images to accompany the numerous tables and maps of the original edition. In a brief introduction, Keating acknowledges that in the subsequent years she has 'become increasingly aware of the ways that visual images and physical places help us understand and make connections with our past' (p. xi). Robin F. Bachin shares these sentiments. Her recent work is a profusely illustrated account of the evolution of cultural institutions on Chicago's South Side in which she examines the 'connection between the physical landscape of the city and broader civic ideals, and the circumscribed place of commercial leisure within urban spaces' (p. 6). When compared, the two books suggest a great deal about the shifting interests of historians over the past two decades as they try to understand the spatial transformations that occurred in American cities at the turn of the twentieth century. *Building Chicago* remains a model of a well-conceived dissertation transformed into an excellent monograph that maintains its value because of its judicious insight and clear, concise prose. Keating argues that the evolution of agricultural land into residential and industrial suburbs required a transformation of local government in outlying areas of Chicago. The process began after 1865 when rail networks stimulated the growth of agricultural hinterlands and established greater opportunities for commuter settlements and suburban industries. Eager to fulfil the desires of manufacturers and individuals seeking residences, real estate developers promoted scores of new subdivisions in outlying areas of Chicago. Initially, no consensus existed regarding the provision of streets, sidewalks, water connections and sewers. Instead, developers catered to the specific demands of residents, a process which was complex since 'no absolute connection [existed] between high income residents and a high level of services' (p. 77). Indeed, a few industrial suburbs such as Harvey had full provision of services from the earliest period of settlement.

Financing the demand for water, sewers, streets and sidewalks became the dominant activity of Chicago government. This type of provisioning originated at the core of the city as Chicago's city-boosting founding fathers struggled to beautify the city and make it safe from infectious disease. Their actions resulted in an infrastructure revolution as individual houses became intimately and physically attached to the community around them largely through new underground utility networks. Prior to 1880, however, suburban developers and rural governments did not possess the authority or the capital to provide such services in scattered outlying areas. In fact, traditional agricultural settlements did not consider these services necessary since they did not fear for their health and safety. Even as outlying areas attracted a wealthier population of commuters, no consensus developed regarding the proper provisioning of settlements. Developers knew that a complete package of amenities made a few settlements especially attractive to some potential buyers. However, in many instances, prospective settlers could not afford or did not desire such a package. Consequently, improvement packages in the metropolitan region ranged from developments with a full complement of services to those with no services other than graded streets. The variations among developments effectively sorted the population as property values created a general homogeneity within most subdivisions. In effect, suburban realtors promoted an economically, ethnically and racially segregated landscape.

As the periphery matured, the process of segregation became formalized as incorporated township and village governments, rather than developers, played

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a critical role in providing services to suburban communities. To achieve their goals, outlying governments adapted to the needs of suburban development by increasing taxing powers, raising debt limits and facilitating the ability to finance improvements in infrastructure. At first, the process evolved slowly. As a consequence, the surrounding incorporated townships of Chicago found annexation to the centre city as the best and most cost effective action to secure better services. However, after 1893, annexation became uncommon as incorporated villages and towns established forms of government that could provide the services and the type of representation desired by their populations. These suburban governments institutionalized the forms of segregation established by developers, producing differentials in services which continue to raise fundamental questions about equity in American society.

In *Building the South Side*, Robin F. Bachin describes Chicago's South Side as similarly contested terrain, where a diverse population of native-born elites, middle-class professionals, immigrant workers and black migrants created cultural institutions in order to establish community identities in an era of rapid social change. The narrative begins in the 1890s with the planning and building of the University of Chicago. At its inception, a progressive spirit existed among faculty and administrators. They believed that the university should connect intimately with the life of the city that surrounded it because progress depended more upon scientific advances than traditional concepts of stewardship among a wealthy, commercial elite. Consequently, founders of the university hoped Chicago would become 'not a remote ivory tower, but rather an integral part of a rapidly developing urban center' (p. 27). The plan failed because the university adopted a Gothic design that disconnected the campus from its surroundings. Even more important, the university became an active player in local real estate using its wealth and authority to implement a buffer zone between itself and the African-American and white working-class neighbourhoods that surrounded the university. As landlord, the university maintained boundaries in order to protect its investment, encouraging segregation and insulating itself from the surrounding city. Under these conditions, the more socially activist elements of the university, as represented by faculty such as John Dewey and Marion Talbot and social settlement directors such as Mary McDowell, lost favour, allowing for an alternative model that moved away from 'direct civic engagement and more toward notions of scientific research and expertise that stressed neutrality, objectivity, and distance from larger political concerns of the day' (p. 75).

The second portion of the narrative covers the familiar territory of park design, contrasting the elitist ideal of Frederick Law Olmsted with the neighbourhood demands for parks that encouraged play and more strenuous activity. Bachin maintains that local parks in areas like the Stockyards accommodated the demands of the working class while also providing supervised activities that inculcated the order and discipline favoured by reformers. For local residents, the parks often served as spaces to celebrate ethnicity or unionism in a manner residents believed was not in conflict with the Americanization drive of reformers. Next, she discusses attempts to foster civic pride among Chicagoans by protecting the lakefront from commercial interests. These plans resulted in conflicts between elites who favoured a natural lakefront and those who favoured a lakefront with cultural amenities. The author sees Daniel Burnham's plan for the city as the most refined attempt to link beautification with civic promotion and commercial growth. She regards the

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plan as a corporatist effort to bring order to the city, 'signal[ing] a departure from the more localized efforts at reform that had characterized an earlier generation' (p. 201).

The book's third and finest section discusses the creation of Comiskey Park as a home for the Chicago White Sox and The Stroll as the heartland for jazz and nightlife in the city's Black Belt. Following the line of argument advanced by Roy Rosenzweig, Bachin shows how the immigrant and black communities developed notions of civic pride and co-operation by creating leisure activities that reflected desire for both commercialism and refinement. She maintains that architectural design and the built environment contributed to making what previously had been illicit working-class leisure behaviour respectable. In the case of baseball, a monumental stadium promoted more respectable behaviour among a diverse cross-section of fans and served as an arena where Americanism was negotiated. The Stoll functioned in a similar manner as a residentially restricted black population adjusted notions of respectability to accommodate both illicit, commercialized activities and middle-class behaviours in an environment that attracted white and black patrons. In both instances, the leisure spaces 'served as the focal points of community interaction, local identity, and civic debate' (p. 297). At the same time, they challenged the parochialism of ethnic and racial neighbourhoods by attracting outsiders into the communities. Bachin is most provocative when suggesting that leisure activities were effective in overcoming the type of segregation fostered by the patterns of residential segregation that Keating describes so effectively.

Bachin has investigated Chicago broadly, a practice common among recently trained cultural historians. While provocative, her work lacks the focus that makes *Building Chicago* so admirable and well suited for use in both graduate and undergraduate classes. Indeed, focus is a problem with many of the images in Bachin's profusely illustrated work. The reproductions of maps are often blurred or printed to a scale that makes details and legends illegible. Many images merely decorate the text rather than advance the argument, a quality that could be rectified if in the text the author referred to the images and explained their significance. Keating's work shares this failing, for she too does not incorporate images into the text. Given both authors' spatial interests, the flaw is serious and unfortunately not uncommon among urban historians.

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Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918–1957*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. xiv + 384pp. 15 illustrations. Bibliography. $29.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806343726

In *Queer London*, Houlbrook weaves together a rich diversity of material – oral and published memoirs, biographies, newspaper reports and opinion pieces, and a vast range of archival materials – into a compelling and thought-provoking narrative. He has already produced a guide to researching gay and lesbian history in the National Archives and *Queer London* reveals how much material shedding light

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into all sorts of unlikely corners can be found in public records: court proceedings, records of the Metropolitan Police, the files of government departments and committees, as well as records of the relevant local administrations, and of voluntary bodies concerned with public morality.

The diversity of queer culture during the period is foregrounded, with a variety of subcultures which did not necessarily interact. There were geographical differences, as well as distinctions of class, economic status, respectability and modes of self-presentation. These cultures also changed over time, in ways that were not simply about definition but in actual socio-cultural practice and presentation – from a popular perception of men who desired men as 'effeminate queans' to a concept of 'the homosexual' who might well appear conventionally masculine. There were also continuities, for example the persistence of the same sites as gathering places through various mutations, such as the opening of a respectable members' club at the site of the demolished Brydges Place cottage. Similarly, Houlbrook draws attention to the considerable variations both topographically and temporally in pro-active policing of homosexual activity, and demonstrates the extent to which this was often contingent upon other factors. He also provides a strongly revisionist view of the argument that the increased crackdown of the early 1950s came from the top-down as a result of the appointment of men with pronounced homophobic views to key government positions, arguing that practices such as the deployment of police *agents provocateurs* were in use well before that period and that the causes of the 'witch-hunt' (and its chronology) were rather more complex.

His account of the ways in which working-class 'rough trade' negotiated the business of having sexual interactions with men of higher socio-economic status while retaining self-identity as normal, manly and tough raises many intriguing questions, which could perhaps be productively generalized. Houlbrook himself suggests that the links between manliness, dominance and aggression were also played out in this group's relationships with women. He suggests that 'trade' was often actively complicit in engendering interactions, under the excuse of doing it for the money, but that the tensions created could result in violence or blackmail. This sensitive exploration of the ways in which lower-class men constructed their participation in queer urban culture is a salutary corrective to the othering visions of middle-class men of working-class male bodies as 'real men', 'more instinctive and spontaneous' than themselves, manifesting 'straightforward pagan coarseness' and 'earthiness' (p. 211).

Possibly Houlbrook, in an understandable desire to avoid the negative tone of standard narratives of homosexual life during this period and to accentuate the potential for more positive stories, glides too readily over the suffering, the perils of exposure and the suicides: such as that recorded by George Ives in his 1940 diary of a bank manager 'of the highest character', caught with a partner in a cottage in Hampstead and unable to face disgrace and the loss of his job. But this is a praiseworthy and extremely rich study of the extent to which men might create and participate in queer cultures in spite of the illegality of homosexual activity, the mechanisms of surveillance and pervasive societal hostility. It demonstrates the value of meticulous attentiveness to a specific geographical location during a relatively short period of time.

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Jon Hunner, *Inventing Los Alamos: The Growth of an Atomic Community*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004. 320pp. 34 halftones. 3 maps. $29.95.

Jennifer S. Light, *From Warfare to Welfare: Defense Intellectuals and Urban Problems in Cold War America*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003. x + 287pp. 6 halftones. 3 line drawings. $42.00 hbk, $25.00 pbk.

doi:10.1017/S0963926806353722

Adding to a growing literature on the effect of Cold War militarization on the American home front, two new books address the conflict's impact on urban life during the 30 years after the end of World War II. While very different in topical focus and execution, the books remind us that the influence of the Cold War on the American city went well beyond duck-and-cover civil defence drills and had some profound and lasting effects on urban governance and culture.

Jon Hunner's *Inventing Los Alamos* presents an urban place that was entirely a Cold War creation, built from the ground up during the war to house the laboratory and personnel that were building the atomic bomb. Located in a remote part of the American Southwest and populated by an international group of scientific elites and their families, isolation and secrecy shaped Los Alamos' social and physical development from the outset. As Hunner describes, Los Alamos residents and the government officials who led them tried to carve out an ordinary existence for themselves in this highly unusual place, while still trying to come to terms with the moral ambiguities of the project in which they or their family members were engaged. After the war, Los Alamos began a sometimes bumpy transition towards permanence, improving school curricula and supplementing jerry-built wartime housing with residential subdivisions that 'extolled the good life brought about by atomic living' (p. 226).

Hunner's book tells us plenty about Los Alamos and its early residents – providing a social history heretofore untold – but it does little to probe the wider implications of Cold War activities on cities generally. In approaching this as urban biography and community study, Hunner provides a wealth of detail about town affairs and gives his readers a revealing look into what it was like to grow up in this rather odd place. Yet this approach also means that this book is not the place to look for broader analysis of what influence Los Alamos might have had upon other communities, or deeper consideration of what Los Alamos' history can tell us about the policy goals or political motivations of the leaders who built it. Discussion of wider events comes from secondary sources; Hunner's original research tends to focus more narrowly on the people and local institutions of Los Alamos. The anecdotes that stem from his interviews (conducted in the early 1990s) with many children who grew up in Los Alamos during the early years give the narrative spark, although one wonders why Hunner did not interview more of their parents, who might have provided some different and important perspectives on everyday life. While not quite living up to some of its promises, *Inventing Los Alamos* is a solid work of local history that shows how the builders of the Bomb were community-builders as well.

Jennifer Light's *From Warfare to Welfare* takes a broader approach, focusing not on the ground-up experiences of citizens in a small 'atomic community' but on the topdown policy ideas and governance choices of the Cold War intellectual

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establishment in Washington and the nation's largest cities. Light describes how the scientists, administrators and institutions at the heart of the American military-industrial complex of the 1950s and 1960s were simultaneously applying their expertise to the questions of urban planning and development – both in the name of national security and in the name of community improvement and empowerment. She traces the connection between cold warfare and urban welfare from the 'urban dispersion' campaigns of the early Cold War – during which defence intellectuals and city planners joined in arguing that decentralization both made cities safer from atomic attack and improved the living and working conditions of their people – to the efforts to bring military technologies like satellite reconnaissance and cable television to bear upon the dire problems of the urban ghetto. In doing so, she documents a decades-long process in which a tremendous amount of talk amounted to very little action, and where the application of military strategies and technologies led to new investments in public administration but very little change at the community level. But the defence intellectuals, Light argues, left their mark on the way American cities are run today, not least in cultivating a fascination with new technology as a remedy for urban ills.

This well-written study introduces a new and important cast of urban decision-makers to the story of post-war urban America. Light shows the intricate institutional connections at work in these processes, and how the key organizations of the defence complex and those of the domestic policy world often drew from the same talent pool. She creates a vivid portrait of an era of tremendous faith in big ideas and in the national leaders who promulgated them, and shows the myopia that even these very smart people had about the nature of the 'urban crisis'. Although thoroughly researched, there are moments when this reader wished that Light had moved beyond discussion of the elites alone and injected fuller analysis of the experiences and opinions of the community members whose lives were to be 'improved' by these technologies. She might also have spent more time discussing the broader Cold War context better to illuminate some of the alliances described in her book. The escalating engagement of institutions like RAND or aerospace companies in domestic social initiatives, for example, seems to have been happening precisely at the time that military spending on Research & Development was declining, leading one to think that their involvement was spurred less by a particular political philosophy than by the economic need for a new clientele. Nonetheless, *From Warfare to Welfare* is a worthy addition to the literature and should become a useful reference for urban historians. It also should remind today's city administrators and think-tankers that faith in technology can be misplaced – and that bridging the 'digital divide' does not necessarily mean the bridging of economic and racial ones.

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Bruce Pennay, *Making a City in the Country: The Albury-Wodonga National Growth Centre Project 1973–2003*. Sydney: UNSW Press, 2005. xi + 387pp. 8 plates. 87 figures. 22 tables. Bibliography. $A49.95 pbk.
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The Australian Labor Party's victory in the federal election of 1972 rested, in part, on a platform of concern about the nature of Australian urbanization and the

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condition of the nation's cities. The post-World War II boom had seen Australia's population almost double, with most new jobs in services and manufacturing being located in a small number of state capital cities. The biggest, Sydney and Melbourne, were having to cope with high levels of traffic congestion and rising land costs. In new suburbs, the provision of services and infrastructure usually lagged behind population growth. The idea of decentralizing Australia's urban population enjoyed a high level of electoral support. Under the prime ministership of Gough Whitlam, a Department of Urban and Regional Development was set up to identify a small group of new growth centres located away from the capital cities, to plan their development and provide them with the infrastructure and incentives needed to attract employers. One of these growth centres was at Albury-Wodonga, towns on either side of the Murray River bordering New South Wales and Victoria, and located on the main road and rail corridor between Sydney and Melbourne. Bruce Pennay's *Making a City in the Country* is a commissioned history of the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation, the body set up by the federal and New South Wales and Victorian state governments to plan the project, acquire land for it and encourage employers to move there.

The growth centres generally failed to achieve the results expected of them. Some in New South Wales were hampered by a lack of effective co-operation with State government agencies and local governments; a project planned in South Adelaide was scrapped after slower population growth in Adelaide was forecast. Others grew more as new centres within the Sydney metropolitan area than as cities in their own right. Each of the growth centres was affected by policy changes brought in by less interventionist federal governments after 1975. Albury-Wodonga was the most successful of the growth centres, with the towns' combined populations increasing from 38,000 in 1971 to 98,000 in 2001. This figure was, however, well below the population target of 300,000 that had been set ambitiously for 2001. Funding for the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation was reduced progressively, the private sector and local governments were given greater responsibility for the development of the region, and the Corporation was finally wound up in 1995.

This history provides some valuable lessons for future policy-makers in Australia and overseas. Unfortunately, Pennay's book lacks the depth of analysis needed to set out what these lessons are. There appear to be two reasons for this. First, Pennay does not attempt to place the Albury-Wodonga experience in a sufficiently broad context. The history of the towns before 1973 is considered only briefly. We are not told whether the towns were growing or stagnating, or what their core strengths and weaknesses were before the growth centre project started. This makes it difficult to evaluate how the region might have developed if it had been overlooked as a potential growth centre. The experience of nearby Wagga Wagga, which grew strongly under the initiative of local government and private firms, is mentioned but not explored in detail. Pennay also fails to devote much attention to the issue of why popular support for government intervention in decentralization fluctuated in the period under review. Secondly, Pennay's method of tracking the changing circumstances affecting the project relies heavily on the use of quotations from newspapers, local councils and Corporation documents. He appropriately presents both sides of key issues, but usually fails to give further information that a reader would need to form his or her own judgment. Thus in the concluding chapter, Pennay cites several arguments from commentators about the success of the project, without forming clear conclusions of his own. The author does refer to the work of academics such as Peter Self and Mark Peel, which suggests that

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local governments and community groups may have played a crucial role in the successful development of areas such as Albury-Wodonga. But because his focus is on the Corporation and its work – there is a plethora of photos of men and women in business attire at board meetings and site inspections – the interplay between the corporation and its stakeholders is not followed up in detail.

Despite these criticisms, this will be a useful addition to the literature on the history of Australian urbanization. The documentation of the Corporation's work is thorough and suggests several potentially fruitful lines of inquiry for future researchers.

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