Welcome to the new PAST!

Stained glass window from the chapel at the National Hansen's Disease Museum at Carville, Louisiana.

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edition of PAST for examples of the preferred editorial style. Manuscripts should be submitted directly to the Editor via email as Word attachments or via conventional mail on disk or CD-ROM as Word documents. Photos and illustrations should be submitted electronically as .jpg files. “On the Road” is an annual collection of photographic essays devoted to topics relating to material culture in the Americas, and the editor will consider submissions from any member of the Pioneer America Society. Address inquiries, including copyright permission, reprints, inquiries about manuscript and “On the Road” submissions, and letters, to the Editor.

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Echoes of the Past

Welcome to the new PAST! To say that there have been some changes may be a bit of an understatement; as no doubt you have noticed, PAST is now exclusively an online journal. Admittedly, the PAS:APAL Board of Directors made this move in part to save money. The elimination of a print edition of PAST eventually will eradicate the long-running budget deficits that have forced the organization to tap into its modest endowment, which—at least in 2008 and early 2009—was shrinking due to problems associated with the international economic crisis. Yet I also view the move in terms of the possibilities that online publishing presents to us. For example, we can now feature color photographs—and more of them; publish longer articles (and, consequently, larger issues of PAST); link to other web sites from within the journal; and make it easier to search issues.

This volume of PAST is the largest ever published: ten articles presented at the Baton Rouge meeting in 2008, thirty book reviews, and two On the Road features. Seven of the articles come from two paper sessions, both organized by Allen Noble, on material culture studies in various disciplines, while the remaining three offer case studies that nicely illustrate some of the concepts that Noble and others covered in their papers. In particular, pay close attention to the scholars cited by these authors, and you will find that several names come up again and again, regardless of the author’s departmental affiliation.

We also continue to publish book reviews in PAST in an effort to alleviate the backlog or reviews that we amassed for Material Culture over the last few years. Thankfully, with the publication of the reviews in this issue, the backlog is nearly eliminated, meaning future issues of PAST may not include reviews. (Then again, I also made that promise in 2006, so please don’t hold me to it.)

At any rate, enjoy the issue, and I hope to see you in West Virginia in 2009.

Scott Roper

Editor
Abstracts of Papers Presented

Architecture as a Second Language: Immigrant Homeowners and Historic Neighborhoods
*Catherine Barrier, Tulane University*

Much of the nation's historic residential architecture is located in lower-income urban neighborhoods. Educational efforts on the part of historic preservation non-profits and government agencies to assist lower-income homeowners in understanding appropriate maintenance and adaptation strategies for historic homes have become commonplace. In a number of urban centers, however, a new issue has come to the fore in the management of historic neighborhood fabric: increasing numbers of foreign-born homeowners unfamiliar with traditional American architectural idioms and with cultural assumptions about their homes and home life which may be at odds with those of their native-born neighbors. These cultural dissonances present new challenges to the management and preservation of historic neighborhoods and districts. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina a large population of Hispanic laborers in the construction industry has relocated to New Orleans on at least a semi-permanent basis. This paper attempts to predict the types of issues that potential homeownership by these populations may bring to the city's historic neighborhoods by examining examples of cultural misunderstandings and clashes in American cities already struggling with similar problems.

Milneburg: Federal Actions Bury a Recreational Landscape
*David Benac, Southeastern Louisiana University*

The first railroad completed in Louisiana and arguably in the Deep South was a line running from New Orleans to Port Pontchartrain, also known as Milenburg. This railroad, dubbed Smoky Mary, ran from 1831 to 1932. The lakefront terminus of this line is the subject of this paper. In its peak years Milneburg helped in the creation and evolution of jazz and witnessed a unique mingling of races and classes. Sharky Bonnano and Louis Armstrong were among the many luminaries who played the dance halls and saloons. The area also hosted restaurants, hotels, fishing camps, and rental facilities.

The focus of this paper is the decline of the community during prohibition. How did this socially diverse community with much to offer respond to its imminent demise? This denouement is directly traceable to federal actions. Prohibition destroyed the jazz scene and a waterfront reclamation project buried the previously off-shore community under a new beach. The history of this potentially significant community promises to provide insight into how a community was deemed dispensable and wiped off the map. This is a case of a landscape placed at risk and eliminated.

Hillcrest Building: A Case Study of the First Psychiatric Hospital for the Criminally Insane in America
What makes a building worthy of preservation? While aesthetics, landscape, and adaptive reuse issues are significant, the true nature of every historic preservation battle boils down to the ownership of the purported collective memories of our history.

The fight to save the Hillcrest Building, the first structure in the history of America to be designed specifically for the containment and rehabilitation of criminally insane patients, is an example of the litigious nature of the preservation field and shares a narrative of the ever-changing philosophies and challenges that influence the restoration politics of structures with contentious pasts.

Although noteworthy for its initially unprecedented mission, the Hillcrest Building could not reign in a consensus of its worthiness as a structure appropriate for preservation when it came under siege, especially due to its controversial role in servicing the “criminally” ill. It was ultimately razed in 2007, but the story of the Hillcrest Building (and its preservation campaign) serve as a case study of the rationale behind preserving contested structures and also as a report of the methods used in an attempt to save the structure and preserve its history.

From Mental to Material Pattern in Louisiana Boatbuilding
C. Ray Brassieur, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Hurricanes and coastal erosion accelerate the decline and loss of traditional boats and boat types within Louisiana’s coastal landscapes. But, if these artifacts are endangered, so are the traditional skills and techniques needed to produce them. This paper looks at folk boatbuilding processes, beginning with mental templates and proceeding to material products. Proportional models are employed in some cases, but often, more ancient processes of modeling-in-full, or “whole moulding,” are used. Some traditional builders refer to the latter as “building by hand and by eye.” An argument is made that the most valuable and endangered resource in the coastal landscape may be the intangible knowledge that belongs to the heritage of boat builders. Most examples described here derive from my personal observations of Louisiana boatbuilding during the past twenty-five years.

Light’s Out: The Rise and Fall of Red-Light Districts in New Orleans and Savannah
Kelly Bressler, Savannah College of Art and Design

It was not uncommon in turn of the century port cities to have large and often prominent red-light districts. These areas often had distinctive urban plans and architectural features. Vice districts contribution to their cities development is undeniable. New Orleans’ red-light district, “Storyville” and the district in Savannah, Georgia were both important institutions to their cities, and were both lost in the mid-twentieth-century. Women’s reform movements and the strict enforcement of laws lead to the dismantling and eventual destruction of these districts. In an effort to forget a “seedy” past both cities attempted to “erase” all traces of these districts from memory. The loss of these areas represents the loss of a slice of historic fabric, and represents the kind of editing that is unacceptable in history.

Row Houses and Shotgun Shacks; Two Different Ways to Solve a Similar Problem
Wayne Brew, Montgomery County Community College
The problem: how does one fit as many structures as possible on narrow urban lots with street access? Philadelphia solved this problem with row houses and New Orleans did it with shotgun shacks. These structures have very different origins and morphologies, but both solve the problem of fitting as many houses as possible on urban streets. This presentation will look at the origins, different styles, and diffusion of these buildings with an emphasis on stylistic changes. Since the morphology of these structures is set, changes in style must be applied to the front façade. Dating row houses and shotgun shacks using the visual evidence of style applied to the façade will also be explored.

Iberville, Louisiana: What Happened to a Rural Community When the Post Office Moved Away?
Marty Cannon, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Iberville, Louisiana was a small agricultural community straddling the railroad tracks along the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. The place was home to generations of different cultures that had one thing in common—the name of the local Post Office. Beginning in the 1960s, the Postal Service began streamlining its operations and in so doing closed smaller Post Offices which erased Iberville, Louisiana from the official list of places. This paper addresses the changes a bureaucratic decision had on a small Louisiana community and the people that called it home. Official United States Postal Service records, the Louisiana State Archives, and interviews of those residents that still live in what was formerly Iberville, Louisiana are used to tell the story of how a community disappeared when the Post Office moved away.

Using Clues from the Physical and Cultural Landscape to Aid in Geoforensic Investigations
George J. Castille, III, GEC

The physical and cultural landscape can be viewed as a three-dimensional, temporally sensitive puzzle and the more pieces that are collected the better we can understand what probably happened and when. As practicing geographers, we sometimes question whether basic geographical field methods are well suited for conducting the various types of investigations that we are engaged in. A review was made of a field book written during a geographical field methods course taken in 1971. The author attempted to determine how many of the observations and instructor’s comments have proven beneficial in various forensic investigations conducted in Louisiana over the last twenty years. Among the tools emphasized in the course were aerial photo analysis, historic map analysis, historic document research, reliance on field guides for identifications, on-site inspection, and on-site documentation of the local landscape. Several examples of forensic investigations are illustrated, including vegetation analyses to aid in identifying historic shoreline changes, examinations of old fence lines to locate claimed property boundaries, documentation of changes in cypress swamps that were logged many years before, location and identification of old plantation landscape features, and conducting interviews of old-timers to fill in the gaps that the historical record can not adequately address. Most of the methods that have proven invaluable for forensic investigations were covered in the basic geography field methods course.

The Changing Landscape of America’s Dairyland
John A. Cross, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

The farming landscape of America’s Dairyland is undergoing tremendous change. Wisconsin lost 32,000 dairy farms over the last thirty years,
and the character of the surviving farmscapes has dramatically changed. With the decrease in farm numbers, many barns have disappeared. Besides the abandonment and collapse of many traditional barns, there have been dramatic increases in size of many surviving dairy operations.

With the rise of megadairy operations, huge free-stall barns have been built and feed is often stored in bunkers. New ways of silage storage have resulted in the loss of silos but added giant plastic covered rolls of feed strewn across the farmyard. Many dairy operations, and all of the megadairies, house their cows indoors, with the grazing of herds in pastures largely confined to smaller family farms.

Urban expansion has resulted in the abandonment of thousands of dairy farms. At the same time rural areas have seen the arrival of Amish and Old Order Mennonite families. Together they now comprise one-tenth of all Wisconsin dairy farmers and have altered the dairy farm landscape. By spring 2007, Amish dairymen comprised the majority of all dairy operators in eighteen Wisconsin towns, five Minnesota townships, and 41 Michigan townships.

**Natchez: A Survey of Antebellum Plantation Cottages and How They Prosper in the 21st Century**
*Michael W. R. Davis, Eastern Michigan University*

In the decades immediately before the Civil War, profits from cotton-growing attracted investors, some even from Northern states. In the summer, low-lying plantation properties were dangerously infested with mosquitoes and disease, so the planters erected elaborate “cottages” high above the Mississippi River among the bluffs of Natchez, Mississippi, where they enjoyed busy social seasons. Northern architects and even construction crews were imported to build some of these structures, including a landmark octagonal house never completed when Secession intervened. The presentation covers a field survey of numerous examples of these magnificent, mostly Greek Revival houses and explains how—unlike those of Vicksburg, further north along the river—they survived the War. Today Natchez and its antebellum homes prosper in the 21st century as center of a “cottage industry” of re-creating mid-nineteenth century ball gowns, worn by hostesses for the city’s tourist-attracting semi-annual Pilgrimage House and Garden Tours.

**From High School to Office Building: The Fate of Oklahoma City’s First High School**
*Ajax Delvecki, Oklahoma State University – Stillwater Campus*

The 1970s version of urban renewal has come to symbolize demolition of historical properties. But what happens when an abandoned building is a state historical site and a fondly remembered school?

Central High School was located in downtown Oklahoma City and became a victim of urban blight. As Oklahoma City expanded, businesses and residents moved away from the urban center. Plummeting enrollment, a deteriorating building, and school mismanagement led to the school’s closing. In 1982, the building was entirely renovated by Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in a successful plan to couple historic preservation with the needs of a modern office. This presentation will focus on the multiple uses of the building before and after renovation.
Recent Trends in Material Culture Studies in Anthropology
Jay D. Edwards, Louisiana State University

In this review we shall follow some of the principal trends occurring in anthropological material culture studies over the last quarter century. In this period studies have begun to move away from the earlier contextual emphasis on artifact aesthetics and on charting the heritage and the meanings of artifactual materials. New concerns, include the social responsibility of material culture studies and their social and public policy implications. Studies are increasingly framed in the setting of ethnic and national political considerations. Nevertheless, the focus on relative power considerations, gender, social structure and ethnicity all continue to play important roles in both archaeology and in living material culture studies. Another interest which has arisen recently is the concern with globalization, set in the increasingly conflicted new paradigm of creolization studies and studies of the Atlantic and colonial worlds. A new interest in local community history views transformations in the uses of material possessions against a background of international and corporate dynamics, a broadened perspective on culture flows, and a more dynamic vision of culture change.

The Shotgun House in New Orleans: An Endangered Cultural and Historic Asset
Jay D. Edwards, Louisiana State University

Before Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans had more shotguns than any other urban place—over 60,000 shotgun houses. No less than eleven forms of shotgun houses, each represented by dozens or hundreds of surviving examples, are to be found in New Orleans. Shotguns were densely grouped into low-lying areas of the city. The loss of a large portion of the city’s most colorful and exuberant architectural legacy threatens to leave a major gap in the world-recognized toute ensemble of this cultural landscape.

Despite the fact that the shotgun family (including derivatives such as Doubles and Camelbacks) is the dominant form of architecture of Orleans Parish, no systematic study of the type has ever been undertaken. This lowly form of architecture has been poorly interpreted in the standard architectural histories of the city. Important unanswered questions in the architectural history of the shotgun house abound. For example, why did a tiny and temporary form of folk house which lay scattered around the peripheries of the city in the first decades of the nineteenth century suddenly rise to become the dominant house form in the Victorian period—a form adopted by people of every ethnic group and social class in the city? In this historical/cultural geography of the shotgun form, questions such as this will be addressed.

A Historical Geography of Pilot Whaling in North America
Russell Fielding, Louisiana State University

The practice of hunting long-finned pilot whales (Globicephala melas) by the technique known as a drive fishery existed in communities along the Atlantic coast of the United States and Canada from the time of first European settlement until the late twentieth century. Entire pods, or family groups, of pilot whales were herded at sea and driven ashore by men in boats working cooperatively. Once stranded, the whales were killed and processed for their oil and meat. Using data gathered from archives in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and St. John’s, Newfoundland, as well as first-hand interviews with former whalers in Newfoundland, this paper will present a historical geography of pilot whale drive fishery
in the U.S. and Canada and will explore the cultural, economic, and ecological effects of its closure.

**Risks Realized: the Aftermath of the June 11, 2008, Tornado in Chapman, Kansas**

*Russell Graves, Cameron University*

On June 11, 2008, an EF-3 tornado ripped a one-half mile path through the heart of my hometown, Chapman, Kansas. The twister destroyed approximately one-third of the city’s homes, as well as all three schools and the Methodist and Lutheran churches. Many of the historic homes and buildings damaged date to the 1890s through 1930s, and their reconstruction and restoration seems unlikely, as their limestone-block walls crumbled under the force of storm winds and fallen trees. Also, much of the damage zone lies within the floodplains of the Smoky Hill River and Chapman Creek, both of which submerged over one-half the town during the floods of 1993. Thus, those making the decision of whether to rebuild or not have to comply with updated federal rules regarding new construction in a floodplain. This paper will provide an overview of the tornado damage to historic properties in Chapman, Kansas, using first-hand accounts, interviews, and photographs. Additionally, I will assess the potential for restoration of the local cultural landscape in a town faced with multiple landscape risks.

**Whistle at Your Own Risk: The Changing Landscape of Music in New Orleans During the Civil War**

*Ralph Hartsock, University of North Texas*

In pre-Civil War New Orleans, a booming metropolis, several cultural activities flourished, including opera, symphony, and folk music. Classical performers from afar performed here, including Belgian composer Henri Vieuxtemps, and Norwegian violinist Ole Bull. The troupe, Theatre d’Orleans, led by John Davis, toured the northeastern United States from 1827 to 1833. The Classical Music Society was founded in 1855. The French Opera House, site of 17 American premieres of European operas, opened in 1859. New Orleans also had its own musicians of international stature, including Louis Moreau Gottschalk. At the beginning of the Civil War, brass bands and military music flourished in the city.

Publishers in pre-Civil war New Orleans included Paul Emile Johns, William T. Mayo, Philip P. Werlein, and Louis Grunewald. Beginning in 1860 A.E. (Armand Edward) Blackmar issued more Confederate music than any other publisher in New Orleans, including early editions of *Dixie*, *The Bonnie Blue Flag*, and *Maryland! My Maryland!* In 1862, General Benjamin Butler took control of New Orleans, and confiscated all music at Blackmar’s publishing venture. As he was escorted to jail, Blackmar whistled *The Bonnie Blue Flag*. Hence, singing or even whistling the tune would be grounds for a fine.

**Change and Adaptation among Alabama Gulf Coast Fishing Communities: Two Case Studies**

*Ginny Jones, University of West Florida*

In the late twentieth and early 21st centuries, fishing communities along the United States Gulf Coast faced drastic changes as they adapted to a number of internal and external influences. These influences included environmental legislation, labor shortages, urban sprawl, and increasing globalization. In the midst of the upheaval in these mostly small, insular communities, Hurricane Katrina again made change a reality in the
lives of the members of these communities. Hurricane Katrina only worked to greater illuminate the deep and complex issues faced by these small communities. This paper will provide the audience with a greater understanding of these issues as demonstrated in two Alabama Gulf Coast fishing communities. While this paper will only address a few of these issues, it will also discuss the roles that history and the environment have played in the unique evolution of each community and the factors that continue to influence the communities after Hurricane Katrina. Methods used in this study include field surveys and field interviews conducted by the author in the weeks and months immediately after Hurricane Katrina, technical reports written from before and after the storm, and finally, a variety of secondary and primary sources.

**Popular Culture/American Studies and Material Culture Studies**  
*Margaret J. King, Ph.D., Center for Cultural Studies & Analysis*

All cultural studies programs partake in various agendas based on political, aesthetic, social, and psychological approaches to the spectrum of cultural icons, ideas, artifacts, acts, and landscapes. Culture is the longest-running human invention alive: it embodies a evolving intelligence passed between generations. It is the shared brain that informs thinking and behavior for all homo sapiens since human history began. Within that system of interlocking concepts is material culture, along with the shared values that drive the technology, tools, techniques, and impulses to create and critique “culture made visible.” Material culture is considered from a set of values; the “art” approach distinct from the “anthropology” approach to selecting and studying icons. Authenticity, rarity, selectivity, and uniqueness compete with archetype, model, and “aggregate” artifacts. The theme park is a key case highlighting these differences as an icon central to popular culture studies.

Recent research based on cognitive science, evolutionary psychology, and behavioral science has opened up this art/anthro dualism by means of cultural analysis, a direct approach to studying cultural issues and ideas through material evidence.

**Louisiana Bousillage: Field Observations on the Permanence of an Impermanent Vernacular Building Tradition**  
*Heather A. Knight, Tulane University*

Bousillage is a vernacular nogging technique indigenous to Louisiana and other neighboring Gulf Coast environs. Liaisons between Native American, French, Acadian and African populations influenced its evolution. Bousillage can be comprised of mud, retted or non-retted Spanish moss, straw and prairie grass. It is packed in loaves over barreaux(lath) wedged between timber framing.

Bousillage is under siege as few practitioners remain. A primer for the conservation and maintenance of bousillage does not exist. Through the collection of field surveys and oral histories to research the regional variations of nogging, timber framing, protective finishes and barreaux placement, the author hopes to produce a primer with a colleague.

**Forgotten Pilgrims: The Impact of the Wends Upon the Cultural Landscape of Texas**  
*Matt Levenson, University of Georgia*
In December 1854, a party of 600 Wendish immigrants arrived at the port of Galveston, Texas. These immigrants—members of a small Slavic minority from eastern Germany—made up a separatist congregation which had left Europe in search of a place to prosper and to preserve their culture, identity, and traditional Lutheran religion. Over the following half-century, the Wends established an area of cultural influence throughout south-central Texas, anchored by the town of Serbin. However, by the mid-twentieth century the Wends had been assimilated into the German-Texan and American cultures—though not without leaving their distinctive mark on the Texan cultural landscape.

This paper seeks to demonstrate the impact of Wendish settlement upon the cultural geography of Texas. Drawing on religious statistical data, secondary historical and ethnographic sources, and the publications of extant institutions with Wendish Texan heritage, it aims to elucidate the historical geography of this influential but under-studied frontier ethnic group, and to analyze the enduring influence of Wendish settlement upon the ethnic and religious landscapes of Texas. Despite their small numbers and short-lived cultural independence, the Wends had a significant impact upon the ethnic and religious geography of Texas. Despite decades of assimilation, the legacy of the Wends is still evident in Texas today.

**Material Culture in Anthropology**
*Tom Loftfield, Barbados Museum and Historical Society*

Material culture is a misnomer, for culture is behavior, and materials do not behave, at least not on their own, usually. Nonetheless, any student of culture must address the issue of materials used to actuate and realize the needs of culture in the physical sphere. Anthropologists explore material culture from the perspective of idea-raw materials-manufacture-use-discard as evidence of how culture comes into being and re-invents itself generation to generation. Material culture can also assist in defining the boundaries between one culture and another, both across space and across time, and thus, by definition, can assist in determining patterns of population movement and the acculturation that often results from that movement.

**An Early Twentieth-Century Homestead in Northeastern Nevada**
*Marshall E. Bowen, University of Mary Washington*

The desert lands of northeastern Nevada are dotted with the remains of abandoned homesteads. One of the best preserved is the former home of George E. Wickizer and family, who lived south of the small town of Tobar from 1909 to 1913. By combining field work with archival research, it is possible to reconstruct the Wickizers’ lives before, during, and after their homesteading venture. This paper explains why Wickizer chose this site, describes the homestead and the activities that took place here, follows the family’s footsteps after they left the area, and provides a glimpse of what the place is like today. It shows that homesteading was not always carried out by people who originally came to Nevada’s new settlements with the sole intention of farming, that crop failure was often caused by more than inadequate precipitation, and that survival frequently depended on income derived from off-homestead employment.

**Letters from the Inside: One Man’s Perspective on the Louisiana Home for Lepers**
Claire Manes, Remington College

Before Carville, Louisiana, was a site for sprawling chemical complexes, it was the site of unstinting courage, painful isolation, and medical miracles in treating leprosy or Hansen’s disease. Some patient memoirs relate life in the United States Public Health hospital in Carville, but all are written in retrospect and none exist for the hospital prior to 1921 when it was the Louisiana Home for Lepers run by the Daughters of Charity under the state of Louisiana. Furthermore, none have been letters giving immediacy to life in the institution. The problem becomes one of recreating life at the home and the hospital from the viewpoint of the patients.

This presentation uses family letters discovered in 1977 from Norbert T. Landry, Carville patient from 1919-1924, to offer one man’s account of his life in the Louisiana Home for Lepers. A close reading of Norbert’s letters, supplemented with research from other scholars, gives this one man’s experiences in the facility which proved to be more home than hospital.

Uneven Justice in Louisiana
Chris Mayda, Eastern Michigan University

Justice across the American landscape has been uneven. Some places are more uneven than others. Louisiana is not necessarily the worst of the lot, but Katrina revealed a vulnerable underbelly and an historical geography that promoted uneven justice. The big picture story has to do with time, place, and a sustainable future.

The local picture that this presentation focuses on is about small Louisiana towns that continue to fight for environmental justice along the Mississippi River.

Nineteenth Century Industrial Buildings of the Teche Corridor
Robert McKinney, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Rural and small town nineteenth century industrial and agricultural buildings are endangered due to time and changing economics. This paper examines three culturally and architecturally significant structures that have been documented for the Historic American Building Survey. Each is located along the Bayou Teche corridor from Washington to New Iberia, Louisiana. Beginning with the Steamboat Warehouse in Washington, the Barn at the Academy of Sacred Heart in Grand Coteau and the Lutzenburger Foundry and Pattern Shop in New Iberia, Louisiana. Each of these masonry structures were built during an era when the prairies of Southwest Louisiana were being settled. The bayou was the main highway and the Teche corridor leading to Washington was the furthest west one could travel inland. A journey from New Orleans to Houston brought you through this corridor. The agricultural and industrial buildings of the past are at risk of disappearing as they become obsolete and fall in disrepair. These structures serve as markers in the history of the area recording building traditions and craftsmanship that contribute to an understanding of the area.

The Death Valley Shoshones and the National Park Idea: Building Toward a More Collaborative and Indigenous-conscience Approach to Landscape Preservation
The problem this paper addresses is how to best preserve national parkland environments in light of aboriginal land claims and traditional Native American land-use practices. The analysis focuses upon the Timbisha Shoshones, a small unrecognized tribe that lost its lands with the creation of Death Valley National Monument in 1933. It traces National Park Service efforts to curtail, and ultimately end, indigenous subsistence activities within the preserve and remove the people to nearby reservations. In methodology, the work utilizes archival sources, oral interviews, and secondary sources to examine the events leading up to the Timbisha Shoshone Homeland Act of 2000. This landmark agreement between the tribe and the National Park Service created a reservation within Death Valley National Park and allowed aboriginal land uses on federal parklands for the first time. The paper ultimately concludes the homeland act reflects changing notions of preservation, wilderness, and “natural” landscapes—one that acknowledges aboriginal land-use practices as compatible with the “national park idea” and environmental stewardship.

**Selectively Remembering Slavery in Paradise: Recreating a Historic Landscape through Loss in St. John**

E. Arnold Modlin, Jr., Louisiana State University

Significant historic structures in areas controlled by the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) in St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands are in danger of being lost forever. These historic locations have the potential to help us understand much about the experience of enslaved individuals in the Caribbean, as well as to help us understand the uniqueness of the slave experience for St. Johnian slaves, an experience that led some slaves to participate in one of the longest slave revolts in the Caribbean. The NPS with its limited resources faces what are at times conflicting goals—protecting certain flora and fauna while preserving historical and cultural assets in the park for future use. Presently, the NPS is focusing special care on certain historic sites such as the ruins at Annaberg Plantation, while letting lesser known—yet equally important—sites continue to decline. Using information gathered through onsite visual surveys, I highlight some of the historically significant sites in danger of being lost and how this landscape change could impair our understanding of the uniqueness of the slave experience in St John.

**Folklore/Folklife and Material Culture Studies**

Alice Reed Morrison

The origin of the discipline of folklore studies in the early nineteenth century stemmed from two separate areas: philologists like Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm studying oral folk narratives and collectors of rural antiquities in England. These diverse interests were both referred to as the study of folklore by the mid-nineteenth century. The term “folklife” emerged in the mid-twentieth century because some material culture scholars within the field felt that the study of oral literature dominated the discipline and that the word folklife better described the whole panorama of traditional culture. An exploration of the contemporary folklorist’s approach to material culture studies reveals certain central concepts originally derived from the study of oral folklore: variation within a tradition, continuity of traditional motifs and themes through time and across space, and the dynamic between individual creativity and conservative tradition.
Cultural Geography and Material Culture Studies
Allen Noble, University of Akron

One of the greatest rewards for a cultural geographer who works in Material Culture Studies is the interaction with scholars trained in other disciplines. However, geographers often employ the term “settlement landscape” rather than “material culture” to describe the scope of their research. Their work often focuses on the contribution of objects to the makeup of the landscape. The research of the geographer is quite often on a regional scale, rather than on specific and local objects. One vital consideration is a clear understanding of the differing research requirements of all scholars who study material culture. Several challenges arise out of these significant differences.

Outdoor Living: the “Rules” of Liminal Spaces
Jamie O’Boyle, The Center for Cultural Studies & Analysis

The domestication of the outdoors has been a prime project of professional and vernacular builders from the beginning of civilization, and is the act used to define it. The built environment mediates between the outdoors and the indoors and their respective demands and advantages. Americans today spend ninety percent of their time in working and domestic spaces, but liminal spaces (in-between states) are key for defining the functions of both inside and outside as interconnected domains.

Drawing examples from ancient to modern life, this cultural overview defines the basic decision-making principles that drive us in navigating in and out of nature. This navigation involves behaviors and values that must cross the many divides between public and private, group and individual, conscious and instinctive, and cultural and biological.

Working for FEMA in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina
Mary Ann Olding

On November 6, 2005, about six weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast, I began working for FEMA as an historic specialist. After a week’s training and badge clearance, I began a 60-day assignment that was extended until early March 2006. At first, we worked 11 hour days six days a week researching and surveying the damage and assessing the historic value of the structures in New Orleans and surrounding parishes. The assessment was necessary according to federal requirements for the release of FEMA funds. After teams of specialists were organized, the first buildings my team examined and recorded were those owned by the police and fire departments. Other teams focused on hospitals, government buildings, and utility departments still attempting to suck out the water that remained in low-lying area. Within a few months, our team was sent into the Lower Ninth Ward to assess the damage caused by the hurricane, broken levees, and smashed dreams. We were armed with FEMA badges, GPS units, maps, steel-toed boots, hardhats, and hand sanitizers.

After three weeks at home in March, a representative from the Dewberry Consulting firm from Fairfax, Virginia, called. I was deployed the first of April to the FEMA Biloxi-Gulfport office on the Gulf Coast where I stayed until May 10, 2006. There the 37-foot high surge destroyed the first four blocks along the 26-mile coast from Bay St. Louis, past Biloxi and Ocean City. On Sundays, I volunteered a half-day at the animal shelter relocated to a concrete building in a ruined shopping mall that was filled with scared animals and overworked rescuers.
presentation will cover notes from some of my experiences and observations gleaned from journal entries and digital images recorded during the six-month period in disaster work.

La Canna da Zucchero: Italians Immigrants in Louisiana Sugar Parishes  
*Ryan Orgera, Louisiana State University*

In the United States, we commonly associate Italian culture with New York or Boston, when in fact it existed on a large scale in Louisiana. Louisiana Italians played a role first as the laborer then as an entrepreneur. Their skills proved invaluable to the sugar boom of the 1890s. In the parishes of Iberville and Ascension, both sugar parishes, Italians arrived in the hundreds and thousands in order to work during the famed zucarata, or cane season. As census records reveal, many Italians called the sugar parishes home. This paper explores census data to determine the number of Italians who settled in these parishes, arguably having a greater effect on the cultural landscape of Iberville and Ascension parishes than more migratory workers. These contadini harvested and refined sugar year in and year out, eventually opening stores and businesses; Italian grocery stores, delis, and restaurants once peppered the banks of the Mississippi. Yet Italian culture never endeared itself to the landscape as it did in the North End or the Bronx. Few traces of the Italian immigrants remain save a few faded signs, ornate graves, and sparse surnames. This paper will also explore these cultural vestiges in order to explicate the disappearing Italian cultural landscape in South Louisiana.

Art/Architectural Approach to Material Culture Studies  
*Philippe Osuzciak, University of South Alabama*

Two approaches to the study of material culture in the fields of art and architectural history will be presented: the preparation provided to my generation, to which the greater part of this paper is dedicated. Secondly, the preparation provided to today’s students in these fields will close this study because the latest generation of students are receiving a broader coverage of architectural traditions than in my generation. However, both approaches still exist and advise to young students will conclude this essay.

Advantages and disadvantages in various fields will be compared to my training because art and architectural historians were left behind in the areas of folk and vernacular studies by the mid twentieth century with the pioneering efforts of Fred Kniffen and Henry Glassie, for examples. Furthermore, scholars of varied fields, such as Art History, Architectural History, Cultural Geography, Cultural Anthropology, Historic Archaeology, American Studies, Folklife Studies, Museology, Preservation, History of Interior Design, etc., sometimes have difficulties in understanding each other but Material Culture Studies have brought these fields together.

What’s Old is New: Preserving Ranch Community Landscapes Amidst Exurbanization in the Colorado Front Range  
*Chris Post, Kent State University–Stark Campus*

The Garden Park and Beaver Creek valleys of the Colorado Front Range have experienced tremendous amounts of exurbanization over the past dozen years. This development risks dwindling lands, financial security, and a special landscape for the valleys’ oldest ranching residents whose
families have been in the area for over a century. These landscapes at risk of survival—particularly vernacular cemeteries memorials and one-room schoolhouses that reflect the economies, social life, and values of the ranchers—are being actively preserved as a seeming statement of place, attachment, and identity. This paper utilizes landscape analysis, area archives, and personal interviews with residents from two primary social groups in the valley—ranchers and exurbanites—to synthesize the meaning of this preservation movement in the valley and what it means to these social cohorts as they define their place within it.

There’s No Place Like Home: Rebuilding Community in the Lower Ninth Ward
Amy Potter, Louisiana State University

In December of 2007, actor Brad Pitt made national headlines, announcing his plan to build 150 green homes in the Katrina devastated area of the Lower Ninth Ward through his philanthropic project called Make It Right 9. His efforts are part of a larger phenomenon taking place across the country in which areas destroyed by natural disasters are rebuilt using green architecture and technologies. This study seeks to understand through semi-structured interviews, service learning and archival research, how one neighborhood’s complex definition of community includes the built environment and how these philanthropic projects ultimately contribute to or work against the community rebuilding process, particularly in the Lower Ninth Ward. This paper will focus on the Make It Right 9 and Global Green Project in the Lower Ninth Ward, an area of New Orleans with traditionally strong communal bonds. I will conclude this paper with speculations on the future of this neighborhood in light of these “Green” philanthropic projects, showing that while many of these efforts have supposed good intentions to rebuild homes in the area, the building plans not only will erode the traditional architectural style in the neighborhood but increased property values could financially force out those families with whom they are trying to help.

Tennessee’s Log Buildings: A Legacy Lost?
John B. Rehder, University of Tennessee

In forty-one years of observation, I now have a data set of just over 4,200 log structures in forty-two Tennessee counties. Ironic, isn’t it, that the numbers are so similar and that I am lamenting the loss of log structures from such a huge inventory? But as I speak, Tennessee’s log buildings are disappearing at some undetermined rate. An estimated fifty percent loss since the 1970s in some counties has not been unusual. When I first came to Tennessee from LSU in 1967, Fred Kniffen warned me that our treasured folk structures were going fast. I did not believe him then; I do now. My paper briefly tells the story of this journey in fieldwork: some of my how-to methods, the spatial findings, and the vivid results of decades of observation.

Betwixt and Between: Threatened Creole Dancehalls in the Agricultural Landscape of Louisiana
Deborah Marcella Rehn, Historical Architect/Independent Scholar

The enduring heritage of live music and dancing as fundamental in the cultural life of Louisiana Creoles is widely recognized. It would follow that the material culture generated to house these expressions, the Creole dancehall, would be equally important. Suburbanization, cultural
shifts, aging owners, and absent family support are threatening the survival of these buildings and their settings. Understanding the meaning of these places and their significant place in history is a first step toward preserving them.

Over fifteen years of research, observation, and “fieldwork” at zydecos informed my reading on the history, culture, architecture and music of Louisiana Creoles. Oral history interviews with owners and musicians added primary contemporary focus. Investigation and analysis of specific landscapes, sites, and buildings, supplied geographical context and enlightened meaning.

Creole dancehalls are iconic places that physically express the continuity of colonial culture along with the social and economic circumstance of the Louisiana Creole people in the twentieth century. The two primary dancehalls analyzed are unique inventions that create a community space close to home, between historic house dances and modern night clubs or jook joints. Further study is proposed for a broader and deeper appreciation of this unique architectural composition.

**Poised Between Continuity and Vulnerability: New Orleans’ New Marigny Historic District**

*Bethany Rogers, Louisiana State University*

The New Marigny is a National Register Historic District in downtown New Orleans. Comprised of the Saint Roch and Seventh Ward neighborhoods, the New Marigny contains a notable collection of late nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth century buildings, mostly variations of the shotgun house type. This section of New Orleans is also significant historically, because it housed most of the city’s Creole and African-American architectural craftsmen. Despite this architectural and artisan legacy, the built fabric of the New Marigny has suffered severe decline over the last few decades and these trends have been exacerbated in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Through architectural documentation, archival research, and in-depth interviews, this paper will produce an outline of the historical and contemporary factors that have led to the vulnerability of the area’s architectural and historical resources, from outmigration starting in the 1960s to post-Katrina government assistance for housing demolition. Findings will also be presented on current strategies to revitalize the district and restore its historic housing stock, namely the consideration to instate local historic district regulations.

**Burial Landscapes of Colonial Dutch Settlers in Vermont**

*Scott C. Roper and Patricia van der Spuy, Castleton State College*

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Dutch colonists settled along New York’s Hudson River, eventually branching out and establishing communities as far east as Vermont. To date, only a handful of scholars has documented the landscapes left by the Dutch in Vermont, and an even smaller number has considered Dutch burial patterns in the state. Unfortunately, the passage of time and the tendency of Dutch colonists to bury their dead in family plots (as opposed to community graveyards) have led to the disappearance of many Dutch gravesites. As part of a larger project comparing the burial patterns of the “global Dutch” in colonial South Africa and the northeastern United States, and employing the identification system devised by Brandon Richards, we document remaining Dutch gravesites in eight Vermont towns. In the process, we also attempt to place these landscapes into the context of global Dutch settlement patterns in general.
History and Material Culture Studies
Keith A. Sculle, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

Traditional academic historians ironically paid little attention to material culture. Until recently, they have viewed the past as knowable almost completely through written and published records. The agents of events studied were usually individuals of the elite social classes perceived as leaders and the events affected were generally restricted to economics, diplomacy, and politics. Only a few historians touched upon material culture for subjects of interest to them alone and never became part of the main academic stream. Public historians, initially trained in traditional historical scholarship, forged an alternative in the last thirty to thirty-five years upon finding employment in historic preservation. Not until the comparatively recent turn to the role of common people and, even more recently, in the studies of culture has material culture gained some interest among academic historians.

This presentation outlines the reasons for traditional history’s tact. This presentation also broadly outlines the recent divergence, and admittedly, draws upon the presenter’s personal experience with interdisciplinary opportunities such as new-found organizations like the Pioneer America Society afforded.

Capital’s Frontier: Sawmill Townscapes in Western Louisiana
Dean Sinclair, Northwestern State University

As industrialization in America pushed westward towards the end of the 1800s and early 1900s, one of its major expressions, the company town, moved with it. Representing one of the most interesting of capitalism’s landscapes, the company town in America is most renowned for its textile mill villages in New England and the American South. As industrial capital pushed west, however, the economic rationale for the creation of company towns shifted from textiles to sawmilling. Sawmill towns tended to be ephemeral, based on a resource that turned out to be largely nonrenewable under the conditions of early twentieth century lumbering, and many sawmill towns were abandoned and subsequently disappeared once “cut-out” was reached. For several years Louisiana represented the western edge of capital’s frontier, and several sawmill towns from this period still exist. This paper examines three of these townscapes in western Louisiana—Fullerton, Fisher, and Elizabeth—exploring the visual remains and the historic importance of these townscapes left by the lumber industry, and the various efforts that have been made to preserve and protect these landscapes created along capital’s western frontier.

When the Village is Gone: City Planning, Heritage Politics, and Identity Transformation at the St. Paul United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas
Jodi Skipper, University of Texas

U.S. local, state, and federal government officials have historically redeveloped neighborhoods as part of urban renewal plans and efforts to remedy urban blight. Some of these actions have resulted in drastic changes to neighborhood landscapes, by removing entire communities and their historic structures. Within this framework, this paper examines the past and potential future implications of urbanization on The St. Paul United Methodist Church community in the Arts District of Dallas, Texas. St. Paul is the only active reminder of a traditionally Black
neighborhood, profoundly transformed by over one hundred and forty years of city planning, and the church building is one of the few remaining structures built by the North Dallas Freedman’s Community. Members of this church began to secure a place in their neighborhood by obtaining Dallas Historic Landmark status in 1982. They have more recently utilized heritage politics through their roles in the Freedman’s Cemetery Memorial Project and as a registered Texas state archaeology site. I will present my observations on the long-term effects on this institution and examine the diverse coping strategies utilized to assist the St. Paul community with its goal of becoming the most visible church in the Dallas Arts District.

**North American Cattle Ranching Frontiers: Views from the Pampas and the Caribbean**

*Andrew Sluyter, Louisiana State University*

Field and archival work in the Caribbean and Argentina elaborates on our current understanding of the trans-Atlantic hybridizations of open-range cattle herding and relationships to North America. Field observation of barely extant rural vernacular architecture and artisanal devices provided the initial stimulus in each of these cases. In the Caribbean, surviving examples and historic descriptions, both textual and oral, of the “Kitchen’ Pens” of Barbuda reveal the details of an open-range cattle herding system in, rather unexpectedly, the Lesser Antilles. Reconstruction of change through time, from the system’s heyday during colonial times to its current moribund state, suggests possible relationships to the South Carolina Cow-pen and avenues for further research. Similarly, in Argentina, surviving examples of mid nineteenth-century water-lifting devices on the Pampas and patent documents from both Argentina and the US suggest possible relationships during the decades before mass-manufactured windmills became dominant following the Civil War.

**The Milwaukee Road in Washington State: Rails to Trails... to Rails and Trails?**

*John V. Ward, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, and Nancy B. Hultquist, Central Washington University*

The Milwaukee Road was originally built for rail traffic in the early 1900s. By the 1970s a series of financial misfortunes led to its abandonment and acquisition by the State of Washington. Current non-motorized recreational use of the corridor is a result of state rail banking legislation formulated prior to federal legislation created with a similar intent: to provide for the continued existence of former rail corridors, allow for current non-motorized recreation, and keep open the possibility of an eventual return of rails. This legislation also calls for the creation of an alternative cross-state recreational trail to be established should the railroad return. We investigated the possibility of the co-existence of these seemingly non-compatible uses by researching the history of the Milwaukee Road, examining the state rail banking legislation, and utilizing geographic information systems technology to explore alternative corridor options. Our findings reveal an opportunity to preserve both the past and current use of the Milwaukee Road, as well as the history of this unique cross-state corridor, by providing for both rails and trails.
2008 Awards

Henry H. Douglas Distinguished Service Award
Honors an individual who has made significant contributions in furthering the goals of the Pioneer America Society
Marshall S. McLennan, Professor Emeritus, Eastern Michigan University

Fred B. Kniffen Book Award
Recognizes a best-authored book in the field of North American material culture
David Robertson, State University of New York at Geneseo, *Hard as the Rock Itself: Place and Identity in the American Mining Town*

Allen G. Noble Book Award
Recognizes a best-edited book in the field of North American material culture
No award was given in 2008

Warren E. Roberts Graduate Student Paper Award
Recognizes excellence in original graduate student fieldwork, documentary research, and writing in the area of traditional North American material culture
No award was given in 2008

Hubert G. H. Wilhelm Student Research Award
Awarded to an undergraduate or graduate student to recognize excellence in student fieldwork, research, and writing in the material culture of the Americas
Amy Potter, Louisiana State University, *There's No Place Like Home: rebuilding Community in the Lower Ninth Ward*

PAS:APAL Historic Preservation Awards
Recognize the preservation, interpretation, instruction, celebration, or exhibition of North American material culture

Historic Preservation Award
Southern Forest Heritage Museum, Long Leaf, Louisiana, a historic sawmill complex devoted to examining and interpreting the heritage of the Gulf Coast region’s forest industry
**Historic Preservation Certificate of Merit**

Recreation and Park Commission, Parish of Eastern Baton Rouge (BREC) and the Magnolia Mound Plantation Museum for their efforts to preserve, restore, and interpret the circa 1791 Magnolia Mound Plantation of Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Although originally attracted to physical geography, and considering myself an urban geographer upon completion of graduate study, it has been cultural geography that has provided my greatest intellectual satisfaction. Perhaps this results from my first career as a United States Foreign Service Officer during which time I lived in India and Brazil, and the opportunities I have had as a Fulbright Lecturer in Sri Lanka, and as Visiting Professor in Canada, Israel, and Finland. The specific area of material culture studies has occupied most of my research attention in the past, and continues to do so. At the same time, unfortunately as I believe, fewer and fewer geographers today seem to be drawn in this direction.

One of my greatest rewards is the interaction I find with scholars trained in other disciplines, in history, folklore, anthropology, archaeology, and several others. Geographers often seem to write only for other geographers, which may explain why we often have problems establishing our field and techniques of enquiry, and the uniqueness of our approach.

Cultural geographers have been among the most active students of material culture, although they often employ the term “settlement landscape” rather than “material culture” to describe the object of their work. This distinction helps to explain the orientation of much of our research. It is here that geographers make their most effective research efforts. The early frame of investigation for American geographers interested in material culture studies, especially vernacular or traditional building, was set by the pioneering address of Fred Kniffen at the Association of American Geographers annual meeting in 1965. His novel topic, entitled “Folk Housing–Key to Diffusion,” awakened active interest in the subject for a generation or more of American geographers, and helped establish material culture studies as a valid research branch of cultural geography. This sub-field of the discipline had earlier been evolved by Carl Sauer, Ellen Churchill Semple, and others, who viewed cultural research from different perspectives.

Because built structures, cemeteries, land-division systems, and settlement and field patterns are most conspicuous in the landscape, geographers have been preoccupied with these material objects, rather than with less visible phenomena, although these have not been entirely neglected. Examples of such latter studies undertaken by geographers would include the work of Malcolm Comeaux on the Cajun boats of Louisiana; Loyal Durand, Jr.’s study of mountain moonshining in eastern Tennessee; Terry Jordan’s sketch of early American windmills; my own look at later windmills; Stephen Jett’s outstanding article on Navajo games and amusements; Peirce Lewis’s fine article on illustrated children’s books; and by no means least, Cotton Mather and Fraser Hart’s classic “Geography of Manure.”
Nevertheless, dwellings, barns and cemeteries are the most likely subjects of research, but excellent studies of secondary structures such as smokehouses, domestic tankhouses, outdoor ovens, covered bridges, hop houses, corncribs, granaries, silos, and fencing are also encountered.

In all these works, there is a concern not only with the objects themselves, but also with what and how they contribute to the makeup of the landscape, especially that of the local area. Indeed, cultural geographers are often not especially interested in the objects for their own intrinsic worth, but see them primarily as opportunities to explain the patterns of the landscape. Thus, for the cultural geographer, the I-house, for example, may be significant only because it helps to reveal patterns of agricultural prosperity in the nineteenth century, and the routes of movement of the people who brought the idea of that house with them as they moved.

Hence, the research focus of the geographer is often on a regional scale. Cultural geography commonly defines space and unravels the threads of culture that make up a particular region, those things which give it character and meaning. It confirms oral history and augments cultural anthropology and archaeology.

Geographers also do not show much interest in the individuals who built the structure, a position which many others, particularly folklorists and historians, find strange to explain. In order to understand the position of cultural geographers, one must recognize that the focus of their discipline ultimately is upon how space is organized, and therefore, how space is differentiated. The built-form environment and the manmade settlement landscape are among the most important cultural elements providing an explanation for these concerns. However, because of the general lack of data on individual structures, geographers have, of necessity, devoted much time and effort in providing detailed analyses of particular structures. One senses, moreover, that such efforts are often merely to attain the more remote objective of being able to understand the differing approaches to organizing the settlement landscape by different groups with different ethnic origins and different life philosophies. Geographers rarely start out with the intention of examining a single structure or building complex, however interesting that might be.

Of course, we are also interested in how phenomena are diffused in space, and secondarily, in what changes occur in the phenomena themselves, or in their relationships to each other and to other phenomena. Up to the present time, not much has been done with these concerns, again primarily because of the lack of information on the various components of the landscape, and their impact on one another, but things are changing. The presence and existing description of just a few structures is not normally sufficient for the geographer who wants to draw larger conclusions about space, the behavior of individuals in that space, and the resulting spatial distribution of manmade objects or influences.

Also important for the larger intellectual community, is a clear understanding of the differing research requirements of those who study vernacular architecture, from those who concentrate on formal or academic structures. In the former instance there is much greater need, and at the same time, much greater difficulty to establish norms against which individual structures can be compared. The architect and the architectural historian start out with a clear knowledge of what the standard or norm for any style is and can discuss the implications of variations, or the challenge of entirely new styles. The initial task of the cultural geographer, in common with other scholars who examine
vernacular buildings and who deal with types rather than styles, is to determine what the standard really was, why that standard was adapted or evolved, how and why the structures were modified over time, and especially where the type and its modifications and variants occur.

Following this pattern, who built the structure and precisely when it was constructed are for geographers frequently questions of lesser interest and left to folklorists and historians. This is not to say that these concerns are not of importance, and of course scholars in all disciplines must never be limited by narrow research restraints, although they may have different emphases and objectives.

Since the term “material culture” covers such a world–wide range of research topics, we need to be concerned with the enormous variations in terminology from study to study and from one location to another. The problem is exacerbated by the number of disciplines contributing valuable research to the study of material culture. Only a standardized terminology, or least an agreed upon equivalency of terms, will lead to valid comparisons from place to place and between groups. Hence, geographers are in the forefront of those actively seeking a standardized classification and nomenclature for material culture studies.

Closely related to the problem of deficiencies in terminology is the lack of detailed classification systems that would provide a framework for relating various structures. Only recently has much attention been given to place existing studies from different disciplines into a coherent review. Such a gap probably results from the wide divergence and background of scholars working on material culture studies. At the same time, such divergence provides an opportunity for crosscurrent of ideas and fresh perspectives.

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing cultural geographers inclined to pursue careers in material studies is the time required to accumulate the perspectives necessary to appreciate culture in all of its ramifications, to understand the directions and the value of research produced by scholars in other disciplines, and to detect the often subtle differences and the nuances offered in different ethnic situations. To be such a generalist is the most difficult task of all. One must borrow from a host of other sources and at the same time retain objectivity and independence of thought, and not come under the sway of any particular ideological view, or methodological approach, no matter how attractive or popular it may be. The cultural geographer comes early to recognize that outlets for professional publication for material culture studies are limited, in part because of the fashions of the day. Perhaps most distressing to the beginning scholar is the recognition that most of their students, probably because of youthful age, and the understandable need to concentrate on career economic matters, may have scant interest in material culture.

**Notes**

1 This statement was originally presented in a different form in a symposium on cultural geography at the Denver meeting of the Association of American Geographers in 2005.
History and Material Culture Studies

Keith A. Sculle, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

Introduction
Despite my ability to speak as one historian, I cannot speak for historians everywhere—either the faculties of the academy, public historians, or the many times greater number of laymen who make up historical societies and the altogether unaffiliated. What I will attempt here is to reflect on my own experience in writing about material culture as a degree-holder from a history department who made the transition to “public history” subsequent to graduation. When I say hereinafter “history” or “historians” I mean academic historians and public historians. My concern here is to explain my use of material culture studies as it emerged from my education as an historian who embraced other disciplines in writing about material culture. Another disclaimer: you will not find here a discussion of any historian’s interplay with museums because that involves too extensive a topic be included with the one I address.

How Historians Came to Cover Material Culture
Let me try to explain how historians came to material culture. Professional history developed at the end of the nineteenth century under the Rankian paradigm and its dedication to his famous phrase “wie es eigentlich gewesen,” that is, the past “as it actually was.” The assumption was a “knowable history.” But it had restrictions due to the rigorous development of a coveted discipline. Carefully defined limitations became a matter of the discipline and historians concerned with the epistemology of their study developed and shared such studied insights at the foundation of their discipline. One key element was a rigidly scientific insight that insisted myth was to be avoided and facts—who, what, and when—were to be uncovered through the written, and where possible, the published record of eye witnesses to the events studied. Hence, archives comprised people’s (most often men’s) manuscripts and/or publications and became the historians’ mother lode. Questions of why things happened as they did were believed answerable by reading and analyzing the documents on paper of great men. What past was worth knowing awaited historians in written sources. The past was not an abstraction; it was a thing on which consensus could be achieved. Ironically, material objects themselves were fugitive in studying the past.

The visual, the hand-crafted, or the machine-manufactured—non-verbal forms of expression—did not reflect in meaningful ways about history, however much use historians might have found them of personal use in their private lives. History fell into a niche too comfortable over time: for example, politics understood as constitutional assemblies, executive decrees, legislative roll calls, and popular movements; battles, wars, and military exploits; diplomacy among the nation states; economics and business; and intellectual matters.

As a consequence of the rigorously yet narrowly gauged disciplined study of the past, historians rarely turned to the study of material culture. Early in the twentieth century, James Harvey Robinson’s call in *The New History* (1912) for a wider embrace of topics included what subsequent scholars have labeled “material culture” but only insofar as it advanced his concern with the broad subject of civilization’s progress.
Few adhered to the material culture component of the new history. A generation later, Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, however, assigned himself the whole scope of how the United States by the time of his writing came to be and addressed material culture because it had been underutilized. His research and publication underwrote the American establishment’s self-congratulatory creed at mid-twentieth century: self-reliance; optimism; and democracy. The nation’s political origins had been ably studied, he thought, but its arts, crafts, and architecture lay untapped for what they could reveal about the nation’s unique character. He set himself not only to read secondary but primary sources and look on the landscape at colonial America’s surviving material culture. He studied what he termed “the principles of transit” similar to the cultural geographers after Carl Sauer and Fred Kniffen in the phase before the emergence of the national melting pot and elucidated common principles at work throughout each colonial section, New England, the Middle Colonies, and the South. He would likely have been an interdisciplinary colleague except for the prevailing practice to hone one’s discipline rather than sharing. In the fashion typical of historians, Wertenbaker never mapped his material culture subjects, whose borrowing from abroad and adaptation streams throughout the colonies would have aided readers’ comprehension. Words described the routes but words again, not maps, themselves a material culture means. Still, though, his transfer of meaning from material culture to conventional historical subjects won no ready adherents.

Thereafter, a few historians eased out on their own terms onto the unfamiliar waters of material culture. They were not building the foundation of a new sub-discipline but following their private inclinations. Notable in this new eddy was Lewis Atherton’s *Main Street on the Middle Border*. Now regarded as something of a classic, although without influence on history’s development as a discipline, Atherton at the mid-twentieth century (1954) acknowledged forthrightly his roots as a son of the middle border, a place with a special sense about which he wrote from archived materials and also personal acquaintance. From his personal experiences, for example, he made mention of opera houses, but for their role as institutions where certain small town functions occurred, not how their architectural aspects reflected and reinforced those functions. Essentially, though, his material culture studies barely emerged when compared with their potential. Three years later (1957), Louis B. Wright included architecture and the decorative arts as part of general cultural life in his treatment of Colonial America and he even waded into debate over the log cabin’s origin, a subject later directing great scholastic energy among geographers. A channel had opened. Still, in the late 1960s the academy’s interest lay elsewhere, as in the president of the Organization of American Historians’ presidential address of 1968 about the dangerous mythmakers and the need to establish “a centralized Myth Registry.”

Many of the first historians to make material culture the focus and not an adjunct to bigger questions were scholars in historic preservation, an emergent field since the mid-1960s. Charles Hosmer, a member of the history faculty at a small school (Princippia College, Elsah, Illinois) led the way with his *Presence of the Past* in 1965. Yet, from the Wintherthur Museum conferences of 1981 and 1982 broadening the definition of material culture from the decorative arts and launching theoretical considerations, Hosmer was the only historian whose paper was among the fourteen published afterward in *The Colonial Revival in America*. Clearly, other disciplines were contributing significantly to the stream converging in a search for intellectual discipline and academic respectability. Archaeologists, however, had taken the longest lead among all the willing material culture scholars within a decade after the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 opened wide the chances for managing material
remains and newly minted historians took their place where they could.

I was one of those. My degree from the University of Illinois certainly equipped me to profess the discipline of history as it stood. My employment opportunity, however, came with the Illinois Department of Conservation with which I contracted to compile a survey from field work in 23 Illinois counties of historical places potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Several months after undertaking this unfamiliar but exciting new opportunity—both as an historian and as an historic preservationist—I had the extreme good fortune of meeting geographer John Jakle. My surveying skills benefited from working on several Illinois counties together and we quickly developed a friendship. The yield in my “day work” came next through field work with H. Wayne Price, a student of Illinois barns, whose archives of drawings and photography he eagerly shared with the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office.

New organizations responding to the growing field of “public history” provided a welcome opportunity for historians like me. In 1979, the Pioneer America Society, initially a populist reaction to urban sprawl near Falls Church, Virginia, witnessed historian Herbert Richardson’s paper on farm plans and building types in one New Jersey township which grew from a state-funded historic preservation project. Among the papers delivered at the Vernacular Architecture Forum’s first conferences (1981 and 1982) were four by public historians and none by representatives of the history academy. Three of the four public historians brought to publication information gathered for public or private projects, while one briefly summarized his master’s paper. To meet their constituents’ immediate needs, public historians eclectically brought to bear all the reliable insights material culture scholars in any field had developed. The newly founded Vernacular Architecture Forum, but especially the small scale of the Pioneer America Society, attracted me because of the opportunity to share across disciplinary lines, meet and talk with leaders in material culture studies, and present my own work in respected publications. H. Wayne Price and I co-authored numerous presentations at Pioneer America Society meetings on which we expanded in the society’s publications. John Jakle and I eventually set forth on a series of co-authored books on one aspect of material culture little approved much less understood by traditional scholars: the automobile road and roadside in America. These articles and books were the products of my private time, the excitement of contributing to a new field eventually having structured a good deal of my life.

Academic historians so long avoided material culture while other scholarly disciplines embraced it that one is inclined to search in history’s basal predilections for answers why this lag occurred. My puzzlement as to why historians had overlooked so rich a set of resources as material culture, led me to infer the following. Nowhere to my knowledge did any historian place on record any rumination about others’ work; rather, they went ahead with their own discipline.

A cluster of predispositions reigned among academic historians. “Antiquarianism,” they shuddered when they recalled how objects most often were treated by the educated, collectors and antique dealers being uppermost. They seem fixated on the objects themselves rather than their broader meanings. Historians also believed the qualitative nature of life was more revelatory than its quantitative aspects. Whereas, archaeologists and folk life scholars often measured phenomena, historians in colleges and universities persisted in their preference for verbal
documents. They judged archaeologists especially wedded to off-putting technicalities and dense description expressed in less than graceful prose. Successful material culture scholars also identified phenomena that seemed fixed in time by the very weight of description and less given to the theme of “change over time,” the concept by which historians proudly wished to distinguish their work. The attribution of transcendent cultural features to vernacular architecture in the school of geography after Carl O. Sauer and Fred Kniffen, academic historians would have found alien to their search for human agency in the past. Historians of the academy wanted to narrate the work of named individuals who effected change as opposed to ethnic group values. On matters of visual culture, they deferred to art and architectural historians. Not to be forgotten either is academic history’s conceptual mooring in verbal documents accessed in libraries and archives, not in uncovering significant new information accumulated through field work. Tellingly, when historians wrote of objects’ unrealized potential, they labeled them “documents.”

In the late-twentieth century, the separate turns toward semiotics and history written from beneath, or of the common man, gradually made objects more respectable for sources. Historians have come only lately to material culture studies. Not until June 1984, in the section entitled “Recent Articles” did a mainstay of academic history in its seventy-fourth volume, The Journal of American History, find a rubric for “material culture” and then it was shared in “Architecture and Material Culture.” In the December 1992 journal, the editors reversed the elements in the rubric to “Material Culture and Architecture.”

What, then, did academic historians make of material culture once it entered their ken? Rhys Issac’s study of Virginia from 1740 to 1790 employed the concept of “material life,” recently ascendant among historians of the Annales School, and in so doing achieved an early reputation for material culture; his book won a Pulitzer Prize in 1983. A decade later, Robert Freidel left his path breaking article in History from Things with the firm belief that important new messages would be discovered. An historian trained to the earlier standard but grown appreciative enough to write an entire volume applying material culture, Richard Lyman Bushman’s Refinement of America explained the workings, from 1700 to 1850, of a cultivated ideal expressed in houses. The chance acquaintance with the Winterthur Museum and doctoral candidates in the University of Delaware’s History of American Civilization Program had aroused Bushman’s new interest. Younger academic historians eclectically embraced various pedigreed material culture studies to address their topics as reflected in Robert Blair St. George’s edited collection of articles comprising Material Life in America 1600-1800.

Coming full circle from the Rankian dismissal of myth in the search for true history, in the late 1980s, the academy turned to the study of something called “memory,” group consensus of history constructed for each group’s contemporary use. Material culture, Michael Kammen understood, played a significant role in memory formation as a selective process supplanting the search for an objective past from the late-nineteenth century forward. The emergence of the concern for memory likely enabled the application of material culture studies. Within this twenty-first century trajectory of memory in material culture, Phoebe Kropp’s California Vieja well exemplified the primary use of material culture. For example, Kropp explained at length how Anglos’ memory during the late-nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century in Southern California employed Spanish colonial architecture to assert their regional hegemony.
Evidence exists to support the hope that academic historians will foster a growth of material culture studies. One example is in the budding field of tourism history, wherein Hal K. Rothman’s edited *The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture* included several historians firmly planting a role for material culture’s symbolic meanings. A. K. Sandoval-Strausz has taken a separate tack among academic historians in his work on a particular economic, social, and architectural institution, the hotel.

Public historians, meanwhile, thrive partly because of their eclectic use of material culture studies. Their challenge is one of riches. Unfortunately, much of their work remains unpublished, “gray” literature that is either ready or, in some instances, requiring only a bit of editing to be published for an audience beyond the scope of their project. Project funds do not often include the publication requirement. Public historians’ insights seldom have found their way into the academy’s publications. Public historians have advanced through their own schooling and organizations. At least one is persuaded academic historians have failed in their educational service for the very reason that they have avoided historic preservation in their local communities where the landscape’s physical existence is widely accessible and more visible than archived records; material culture trumps logo-centric history according to this charge.

Had material culture finally come of age among historians of the academy? My sense is that comparatively few academic historians have entered into this now established field. What work they do undertake is skewed away from the look of things, how they are built, and who built them. Very seldom do historians address the visible traits of material culture, preferring to find the meaning of objects after minimal description. Expressed cultural meaning less than the material means described have distinguished historians’ work down to the present, a profession moored yet mostly to archived words rather than things and hardly concerned to complement evidence through fieldwork.

**What Value in Sharing Material Culture Studies?**
Clearly, material culture projects could enrich many, as I think all good scholarship should. Reading integrated journals is essential. Better serving the public demands being a better informed public historian. Cross-disciplinary conferences like Pioneer America Society’s supplement my education because they open a human dimension to scholarship. My professional capacities and friendships with H. Wayne Price and John A. Jakle grew as we respectively found in the society a forum for presenting our findings about barns but most often appreciating from travel with them that learning from the landscape is rich: a never ending educational process and a path to a growing appreciation for the things around us, especially the commonplace. The yield from the material past is at least as great as that mediated through documents. As one of my fellow public historians where I work concludes, it keeps you “grounded.”
Folklore/Folklife and Material Culture Studies

Alice Reed Morrison

Folklorists have quipped that there are nearly as many definitions of “folklore” as there are scholars on the subject. The word itself (spelled “folk-lore”) was coined in 1846 by an English antiquarian, William John Thoms, who suggested it as a replacement for the clumsy phrase then in use, “popular antiquities” (Dorson 1972, 1). These popular antiquities being collected by enthusiastic amateur scholars included superstitions and beliefs, sayings, customs, stories, songs, arts and crafts, and farm tools of the rural lower classes of Great Britain. As the academic discipline of folklore formed at the end of the nineteenth century, the term “folklore” came to cover the study of such material as well as the material itself.

In continental Europe, meanwhile—and beginning a generation earlier—philologists and mythologists Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm were collecting traditional oral literature from German peasants: folktales, myths, and legends. Their interest was in tracing the German language back to its Indo-European roots, but their documentation of the many different variants of the same traditional tales in different regions demonstrated the concepts of variation within a tradition and regional adaptation which became central to future research in folklore of all genres.

Because of the term “lore” embedded within “folklore” and an emphasis in academe in the first half of the twentieth century on the study of oral forms of folklore (folktales, folk songs and ballads, folk speech, proverbs, riddles, jokes, superstitions, and other forms), the word “folklore” became increasingly associated with only such oral genres, especially among scholars in English departments (where academic folklorists generally dwelt) and in the concurrent-with-folklore forming academic discipline of cultural anthropology. The term “folklife” emerged in the mid-twentieth century because material culture scholars within the field felt that it better described the whole panorama of traditional culture, including the oral folklore as well as material forms. These include folk art, craft, architecture, costume, foodways, furniture, tools, toys, techniques of land use and other facets of agriculture and animal husbandry, customary occupations like fishing and hunting, and settlement patterns.

“Folklife” is a direct adaptation of the Swedish term folkliv and German term Volksleben. “Folklife studies”—Swedish folklivsforskning or German Volkskunde—is the analysis of a folk culture in its entirety, and by folk culture is meant “the lower (traditional or ‘folk’ levels) of a literate Western (European or American) society. Folk culture is traditional culture, bound by tradition and transmitted by tradition, and is basically (though not exclusively) rural and preindustrial” (Yoder 1990, 25). Traditional transmission is defined as by word-of-mouth and example, as contrasted with learning associated with social institutions such as schools, part of elite or upper-class society. The terms folk and tradition are also juxtaposed against mass-produced, machine-made, popular culture such as begin its ascendancy in the Industrial Revolution.
of the Victorian Era and spread its dominance throughout the next century. The birth of folklife studies is, of course, intimately associated with the social and cultural effects of such industrialization on folk communities. To quote Joni Mitchell, “You don’t know what you’ve got ‘til it’s gone.”

In the early and mid-twentieth century, Louisiana State University cultural geographer Fred Kniffen was also actively collecting folklore and folklife, documenting the folkways of the sport of hunting, geographical myths of Louisiana, the costumes of American working men, local foodways, agricultural fairs, folk crafts, covered bridges, and vernacular house types, among other topics (Vlach 1995). He was elected to serve on the Council of the American Folklore Society in 1951 and held the post for three years. His studies of folk architecture culminated in his influential article, “Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion” in 1965 (Kniffen 1965). One can recognize here those key concepts articulated by the Grimm brothers through their collection and analysis of folktales: diffusion of folk culture across space and through time, variation within tradition, and regional adaptation. Certain motifs and themes persist and reappear while changes are made to fit material to a region or community and per individual creativity. He articulated the close connection between cultural geography and folklife in “American Cultural Geography and Folklife,” a 1976 article published within a collection entitled American Folklife (Yoder 1976). Kniffen was a mentor to the young folklorist Henry Glassie, whose 1968 book Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States (Glassie 1968) inspired another generation of folklorists to begin documenting American folk material culture, region by region.

In the 1960s, Indiana University folklore professor Warren Roberts—who received the first Ph.D. in Folklore from Indiana University in the 1950s with an historic-geographic analysis of a fairy tale—visited Scandinavia and Great Britain and was inspired by their folklife museums and research. He eventually redefined himself as a folklife scholar producing masterful studies of log architecture, tombstones, furniture, hand tools, and German-American folklife (Roberts 1984; 1988).² Roberts defined folklife research as being “concerned primarily with the traditional society of the past, its persistence into the presence, and its influence of the present,” and that the study of traditional material culture belongs with such folklife research (Robert 1988, 19). If one is studying a material artifact such as a building, for example, one must also study the people who built it and who lived in it. That is the folklorist or folklife scholar’s approach to the study of material culture.

Henry Glassie’s 1975 book, Passing the Time in Ballymenone: Culture and History of an Ulster Community, adhered to the folklife model of research, intertwining material culture study of folk architecture, crafts, agriculture, geography, and settlement patterns with oral folklore, folk music, and community and social history. That year, 1975, was also the year I began my study of folklore, writing a senior thesis on fairy tales for my bachelor’s degree in psychology at Reed College in Oregon (coincidentally also Warren Roberts’s alma mater, where he wrote a thesis on ballads). When I entered Indiana University’s folklore department as a graduate student in 1977, Warren Roberts became my mentor and the chairman of my dissertation, which I modeled on Glassie’s Ballymenone study. Like Glassie, the term “community” was a central theme around which I worked, though in my case the rural community was one which had been uprooted from physical space twenty years earlier in order to create a huge, man-made lake, during the tail end of a century of such projects by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Mordoh 1986). I explored the concepts of sense of community and sense of place, documenting the role folk culture had in maintaining such seeming
ephemera, both before and after former community members were displaced and physically dispersed. As Glassie had noted in rural Ireland, “The landscape displayed no community. Before me, between tall hedges, a road lifted at a flat sky. Across the green, whitewashed houses scattered in no apparent pattern” (Glassie 1975, 13). And,

Serious study of a community’s history does not begin with a raid to snatch scraps to add color or flesh or nobility to the history of another community. It begins when the observer adopts the local prospect, then brings the local landscape into visibility, giving the creations of the community’s people—artifacts in which their past is entombed, the texts in which their past lives—complete presence (621).

In addition to documenting the material culture that remained on the ridges surrounding the river valley that had been a community of scattered farms and villages and was not Lake Monroe, I collected oral histories from previous residents, describing the farming, foodways, folk crafts, oral narratives, folk beliefs, and family histories. Old photographs helped recreate the cultural landscape now obliterated. I observed traditions that continued in spite of displacement: gardening and animal husbandry, familiar outbuildings and other structures beside new homes, quilting, visiting, foodways: traditional patterns that give meaning to human lives both in the past and present.

At this time within the academic discipline of folklore—the last quarter of the twentieth century—the question of the definition of the term “folklore” and the methodology and analysis of folklore research took a new direction. The examination of texts, in oral folklore, or artifacts, in material culture, was declared to have been over-emphasized to the neglect of the individual who was actually telling the tale or singing the song and the context of the event. Those who previously had been referred to as “tradition-bearers” were not called performers and the words “performance” and “communication” replaced “tradition” as central to the definition of folklore: “informal artistic performance within a folk group” and “the ethnography of speaking” became the central themes of the field. According to Bauman (1972, xi), “There is an emphasis upon performance as an organizing principle that comprehends within a single conceptual framework artistic act, expressive form, and esthetic response, and that does so in terms of locally defined, culture-specific categories and contexts.” Another key phrase was “dynamics of the folk group,” meaning “the nature of active traditional moments that occur between and among people” (Toelken 1976, 49).

These concepts are more readily applicable to documentation of oral and customary folklore than to material culture, though the folklife scholar’s emphasis on considering all aspects of the individual creator’s construction and use of artifacts and their role within the community would seem to cover such emphasis on performance and cultural communication. Bauman’s 1992 edited collection, Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainment: A Communications-Centered Handbook, is dominated by oral and customary examples, the former renamed “communicative media and expressive genres” (under which is included artifact, clothing, mask, and food as well as folktale, oral poetry, proverb, riddle, speech play, insult, gossip, oratory, song, music, gesture, mime, and dance). Custom is renamed “cultural performances and popular entertainments” and includes on material form, puppetry, along with ritual, festival, drama performance, spectacle, and tourism. Folklore departments became dominated by those with a performance-centered focus and research in oral and customary folklore
and the linguistic and behavioral dynamics of human interaction. Material culture and folklife scholars not already holding jobs within the academy were forced to move to the public sector for employment—historic preservation agencies and museums—which was certainly a boon to those fields.

It is interesting that this situation is reminiscent of Fred Kniffen’s decision in 1959 to resign his membership in the American Folklore Society, which caused MacEdward Leach, then secretary-treasurer, to write him in distress, inquiring why he was doing so. Kniffen answered, “My chief interest has always been in the material manifestations of folkways, such things as are of concern in the folk museums of Scandinavia. It appears that few members of the Society share any interest” (Vlach 1995, 330-31). He was unhappy with the dominance of oral folklore genres as subject matter for publication in the society’s Journal of American Folklore. The journal has continued to neglect work in material culture and folklife since that time up to the present.

Those folklorists already within academe in the 1970s sought to make their material culture research fit the new performance-centered analytical model. Folklorist Simon Bronner, a professor in the American Studies department at Pennsylvania State University, addressed this issue in his 1985 edited collection of essays by numerous material culture scholars, American Material Culture and Folklife: A Prologue and Dialogue (Bronner 1985a). In Bronner’s own contribution to the volume, he states that rather than treat an artifact as an object one must treat it as a “process related to influencing systems, which include social, political, psychological, and economic. We need to understand the artifact in light of its natural habitat and its makers and users. ... ‘Material culture’ hence describes much more than objects; it strikes deep into the relation of human existence and expression. It is a study of people and their wrought reality” (Bronner 1985b, 18).

This description is a restatement of Roberts’s and other folklife scholars’ dictum per the methodology required in material culture research. One of the articles in this collection, Bernard Herman’s “Time and Performance: Folk Houses in Delaware,” makes a direct attempt to force the research of historic architecture into the performance model (Herman 1985). Others claimed a shift in emphasis since the 1960s from what artifacts reflect of sociocultural matrix to how objects communicate and what they actually do in “exchange systems” and “the influence of interactional patterns—social, economic, residential, kinship—on both the consistency and the variability of stylistic features” (Babcock 1992, 212).

Henry Glassie, who at this time moved from a focus on folk architecture to folk art, continued with the folklife model of research and analysis, articulating the connection with performance: “Material culture is the conventional name for the tangible yield of human conduct. ...Culture is pattern in mind, inward, invisible, and shifting. Material things...stand solidly out there in the world. ...[T]he study of material culture uses objects to approach human thought and action” (Glassie 1999, 41). His subsequent ethnographic studies of folk art in Turkey, Bangladesh, and Japan from the 1980s to the present explore every dimension of the context and creation of the material artifacts (Glassie 1985; 1997; 1999; 2008).

After completing my dissertation in 1986, I continued my folklore research using the folklife model espoused by Roberts and Glassie. The use
of a particular local material for creating artistic landscape features and architectural elements available in the so-called “geode belt” running through southern Indiana intrigued me (Mordoh 1989). The variations within a local tradition of this folk art were apparent and documentation of the physical objects as well as observations of and conversations with their builders and users constituted my methodology and analysis. As Glassie states, “Neither tradition nor variability alone makes folklore. The key is their simultaneity, their interdependence. ... Folklore celebrates and symbolized the willing submission of individuals to their own cultures” (Glassie 1989).

I continued studying these themes of variation within a tradition, continuity of traditional motifs and themes through time and across space, and the dynamic between individual creativity and conservative tradition in my documentation of the farms just north of the Ohio River in the German-American settled region of southern Indiana near where Warren Roberts had explored (Morrison 2001; 2002). I was struck by the German Catholic folk beliefs and folk art exemplified in local Mary shrines and grottoes (Morrison 2004). Though the current buzzwords amongst academic folklife scholars are “social use and meaning of the built environment,” “production of locality,” and “communication of social values through material and verbal discourses and recurrent action” (Williams 1991; Roberts 2006, 1), it is the same folklife model being used in the investigation of material folk artifacts, rural custom, and regional identity.

Like most people in this audience, I am still always drawn to explore the local material culture and landscape wherever I go, and to document it if possible. In my current professional life, I have, curiously, returned to my earliest academic roots in psychology, becoming a Jungian psychoanalyst and psychotherapist. One technique of therapy I use is that of sandplay, which incorporates a tray of sand and hundreds of miniatures, material objects as symbols. My many years of collecting folk carvings and other artifacts, secular and religious, have been invaluable in this new profession.

Notes
1 “They paved paradise and put up a parking lot.” Joni Mitchell, folk singer, wrote these lyrics for her song, “Big Yellow Taxi,” which she released in 1970.

2 A bibliography of Roberts’s publications can be found at the end of the festschrift dedicated to him, The Old Traditional Way of Life: Essays in Honor of Warren E. Roberts (Walls and Schoemaker 1989).

References


The Art/Architectural History Approach to Material Culture Studies

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My casual observations entail two approaches to the study of material culture from my field of art and architectural history: first, the educational preparation provided to my generation during the 1960s, to which the greater part of this paper is dedicated; and second, the preparation provided to today’s students in the school of art and architectural history. The reason for dual observations is that both approaches are taken today. On the undergraduate survey level, both programs focus on a Darwin-like evolution of styles and technology in cultures and periods of western civilization. However, a major in American art and architecture provides a more pragmatic coverage of the arts and crafts, a material culture approach. The British colonies are emphasized and an evolution of styles and technology from vernacular beginnings to famous architects, artists, and movements of the twentieth century are introduced to students.

At the graduate level, I had training in both an art history department and the school of architecture and feel that I can briefly speak about different approaches that existed in the respective programs during the sixties. I noted that undergraduate students in architecture were exposed to the history of architecture to understand their historical knowledge of structural technologies as well as historical styles. Sigfried Giedion’s Space, Time and Architecture was a paradigm to illustrate how the technologies and historical styles logically ended up with the Modernist Style. With emphasis on modernism, the halls seemed to echo, “Form follows function” because modernism dominated design instruction in architectural school. In the age of “urban renewal” issues such as preservation and adaptive reuse had not been conceived in architectural educational programs.

One problem of the art and architectural approach during the sixties is that the focus of texts was too narrow by introducing students to only the greatest monuments and architects which actually comprise only about two percent of all existing buildings. A student was not prepared to research the real vernacular world. My master’s research emphasized buildings built by city and parish governments during the 1850s in Baton Rouge. Thus, I immediately realized that my knowledge of the great mansions and architects of the world were of little use to me other than recognizing revival styles, a major emphasis to the discussion of nineteenth century architecture at that time. In Baton Rouge, James Dakin is the only professional architect who was covered in textbooks with his design and construction of the Old Louisiana Capitol, 1847-52.

However, the art and architectural approach did prepare me adequately for the structural and stylistic analyses needed. I learned to measure and draw the plans of structures in the field and examine the details of materials and hardware. I was taught how to utilize the original documents of courthouses, state archives, church and civic board minutes, city directories, local newspapers, and architectural handbooks, among others. My research revealed names of local contractors, and builders who had become forgotten over the generations.

My personal career was launched by having excellent professors in art history and architectural history at Louisiana State University, both
knowledgeable about vernacular architectural traditions of Anglo and French Louisiana due to their active research in the Baton Rouge region. Their insights were not found in texts of the time and so my introduction to vernacular traditions came by way of two professors who gave me encouragement in my research. However, all scholarly fields in material culture rely upon the personal knowledge of professors to advance their students beyond the content of texts.

To be fair to students of American art and architecture, a major advantage in their training exists. Since the United States began with a series of European colony settlements, the Americanist always realized the importance to recognize ethnic traits in architecture and in all of the arts and crafts produced in the respective colonies. With the emphasis going to the British, students are exposed to differing regional traditions that developed in the Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Northeast colonies.

The dominant emphasis given to the Anglo colonies during the sixties also created a weakness, resulting from only about ten pages devoted to the Spanish efforts in Florida, Texas, New Mexico and California combined; about two or three pages to the French in the United States; and about the same to the Dutch and Germans. Scots, Finns, Swedes and other ethnicities were mentioned more as a marginal note. Unless a student specialized in British colonies in the United States, a researcher interested in any of the other ethnicities was left to his or her own resources because few articles were available. Those of us interested in Louisiana, for example, had to explore the entire cultural history through documents and books of other disciplines to become proficient in analyzing the few remaining surviving artifacts.

My interest in French Creole research began as a graduate student in Baton Rouge and my first teaching job in Natchitoches, Louisiana. I found the writings of Samuel Wilson useful; but interestingly, art historians and architectural historians did not introduce me to the writings of Fred Kniffen, Henry Glassie and other valuable researchers concerning folk house types. Their articles came to my attention through reprints in books and in bibliographies. The same is true for the late Charles Peterson, a historian who had articles and chapters in scholarly books, such as, *The French in the Mississippi Valley*, 1965. While architectural texts favor his 1941 theory about the evolution of French Creole housing in the Illinois, the texts do not openly credit him for his theory. These scholars and more guided my research in history, cultural geography, cultural anthropology, and historical archaeology and other fields to gain a rounded knowledge about the French Creole cottage. By the 1970s I generally regarded these fields to have much to offer in vernacular house research than art history and that a multi-disciplinary approach is the correct approach to the study of vernacular housing. I also learned that our vocabulary in the discussion of house types is sometimes different, to which I will devote a little time momentarily.

My final transition to a multi-disciplinary approach to vernacular architecture was made by becoming an NEH Summer Seminar fellow at the University of Texas, directed by John Vlach, an eminent scholar in the field of Folklife Studies. He expanded my knowledge of Folklore, Folklife, Vernacular Architecture to the point of inspiring me to conduct research in the West Indies. I discovered that Haiti was most important with my personal interests and I felt exhilarated about sampling Creole foodways, working with a Creole guide and translator, attending a Legba Voodoo ceremony, studying both urban and rural structures I encountered. After going to Haiti’s American Museum of Art, I
began collecting Creole sculptures, paintings, and crafts. I had always liked to cook Creole recipes but I took special interest in the ingredients, noting that a more African, spicy cuisine existed in South Haiti compared to a more French Creole cuisine in North Haiti that resembled a New Orleans style. Through the Haitian experience and the Folklife Seminar, I learned that the entire material culture of a folk tradition is important to absorb and to understand when studying a house tradition.

During the early 1980s I broadened my research to include Hispanic and British Caribbean influences on the Gulf Coast. The broader interests involve ever more complications in the creolization on the North Gulf Coast where the Spanish, French, British, and Native Americans “exchanged” ideas. These exchanges existed despite that fact that these Europeans were often enemies and officially told not to trade or make peace with their opponents. My studies indicate that they had an active black market trade and that ideas flowed from one colony to another. After Acadians and later Americans arrive, the “gumbo” became even thicker and spicier.

Earlier I mentioned that terminology differences exist between disciplines. To illustrate the point I wish to reveal an embarrassment that occurred at a professional meeting a quarter century ago. I was criticized for using the word, “creolization,” in my paper. Why? The word was not in a standard dictionary. Sure enough, the noun was not to be found in the dictionary and all that I was merely trying to avoid was a redundant use of the term, syncretism, in every paragraph. I borrowed “syncretism” from an article by the cultural anthropologist, Jay Edwards, “Simple and Complex Syncretisms.” I found that his interest in the study of Creole housing parallels mine in our search for the origins of Creole architectural traditions. I found it interesting that he used a term favored by the field of philosophy to explain the merging of different folk traditions in the Caribbean. I noted that other experts use other terms, such as amalgamation, a term favored in the business world. Sociologists like the term assimilation. It is worth emphasizing that all of these disciplines used the terms in discussions about Creole housing in their respective disciplines. By the mid-1990s (and to my delight), historic archaeologists were freely using the term, “creolization” in their explanation of Anglo-American structures and Afro American structures in the Southeast Atlantic states and in Jamaica containing Creole elements. I really feel redeemed that Jay Edwards acknowledged the word in A Creole Lexicon (Edwards 2004, 76). The lesson here is that all scholars who are pushing research into new frontiers, find situations that call for the creation of terms previously not used.
Sometimes, the different disciplines of scholars of material culture use different words for the same term which can be confusing, such as two rooms deep or double pile for an easy example; or a pent roof, also called a visor roof. At times, scholars of the same discipline but in different regions or countries use different terms for the same item. American Creole scholars like to identify a roof type (figure 1) as being a “gable-on-hip roof,” but in England, the same roof form is called a “hip-on-gable roof”; but the English also drive on the opposite side of the highway. One of my favorite discoveries is that one type of shutter (figure 2) found on postmodern buildings in Alabama that are top-hinged, are called “Key West” shutters. However, in Key West this shutter is called a Bermuda Shutter. Needless to say, in Bermuda, the locals refer to the shutter as a Demerara Shutter and refer to Barbados as its origin. At least we are getting closer to the truth, because in Barbados, the same term is used but Barbadians acknowledge the Demerara Province of Guyana as the origin for this type of shutter. One last quick comparison of terms also relates to Creole cottages. The integral gallery (figure 3) is also called: incised porch, recessed porch, or simply gallery, piazza, porch or verandah.
Figure 2. Demerara Shutter, Arlington House, Barbados, seventeenth century (for the house).
I have been discussing Material Culture Studies from my personal training in art and architectural history, followed by expanding my knowledge through other material fields and personal investigations. At this point I wish to make note of a newer approach to teaching American Art and Architecture. Present texts in American art and architecture are taking a broader, cultural approach, such as *American Encounters: Art, History, and Cultural Identity* (Miller et al 2008); and the new edition of *American Architecture: A History*, by Leland M. Roth (2001). A theme in Roth is devoted to “transplanted vernaculars” by Europeans in the New World. A long chapter is devoted to Native Americans. Each chapter of the Anglo developments now ends with vernacular themes, such as the rural landscape, the introduction of new vernacular house forms, and factories and factory housing, among others, in its search for an American architecture. A building is still seen as a primary document in research but not isolated by itself. The structure is a part of the built material landscape that mirrors its culture’s beliefs at a certain time period.

I believe one central reason that the American art and architectural curriculum has recently explored vernacular developments is the relatively new field of preservation. Today’s students are being provided with a more realistic encounter of structures in their built environment from pen houses, contractor-guide books, to factories and barns. I believe that all of the disciplines I mentioned share a similar interest to prepare their students for the preservation field. While a major in preservation was a rarity before our bicentennial year of 1976; today, every state has multiple programs from which to choose.
While there were always some American house style guide books, there are better and more reference books that include vernacular traditions as well as historical styles, such as Virginia and Lee McAlester’s *A Field Guide to American Houses* (1997), that are good for students entering the field of American architecture and preservation. Jan Jennings and Herbert Gottfried (1988), *American Vernacular Interior Architecture: 1870—1940*, is an illustrated handbook, divided by architectural elements, support systems, design systems, and building types. It is worth mentioning, the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, 1989, and Jay Edwards, *A Creole Lexicon*. While today’s reference books are preparing students for Material Culture Studies better than in the past, gaps still exist between the disciplines and that a multi-disciplinary approach. Many of the gaps are being filled in by expert researchers who are writing on subjects of material culture not touched before. Too numerous to list, I will mention a few publications by Vernacular Architecture Forum and Pioneer America Society members. Among them should be mentioned Allen Noble’s *To Build in a New Land: Ethnic Landscapes in North America* (1992), and the PAS multi-volume publication of *The National Road*, 1996, which investigated a cross-country landscape. John Rehder’s *Louisiana’s Vanishing Plantation Landscape* (1999) investigated a regional landscape and way of life which has continued to vanish. With pride, I can state that scholars of Material Culture and Vernacular Studies have produced many of the award winning, scholarly architectural books during the last quarter-century.

I end with a little advice. It is important for a student in any of the professional fields possessing an interest in Material Culture to investigate the vernacular interests of its faculty and to ascertain that the school of choice has individuals with expertise and interests that match those of the prospective student, and that the expertise extends beyond general textbooks. With this approach to finding the perfect graduate and post-graduate program, I feel that the generation entering our field today will be able to produce further achievements in the near future.

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Cultural Analysis: Material Culture as Body of Evidence

Margaret J. King, Center for Cultural Studies & Analysis

Technology is the instrumental ordering of human experience within a logic of efficient means, and the direction of nature to use its powers for material gain. But art and technology are not separate realms walled off from each other. Art employs techne, but for its own ends. Techne, too, is a form of art that bridges culture and social structure, and in the process reshapes both. - Daniel Bell, “Technology, Nature, and Society,” The Winding Passage: Sociological Essays and Journeys (1991) 20.

Introduction

Material expression operates as the body of evidence for culture. The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology defines culture in material terms: “The total of human behavior patterns and technology communicated from generation to generation.” The nearly one million artifacts in the museum’s collections describe the span of human history and explain it by inductive logic: researching evidence to construct the story of culture, the longest-running invention of humankind. A current exhibit, “Surviving: The Body of Evidence,” is a capsule of prehistoric material culture that serves to outline human origins and their first cultural expressions. The human body, and its change throughout evolutionary history, is the first showcase of material culture.

Culture embodies an evolving intelligence, expressed by artifacts of every type, passed between generations across thousands of years. Culture is also the shared brain that has informed thinking and behavior for all homo sapiens since human history began. It is the key to shared meaning, beginning with abstraction (and from that ability, speech), that unites the whole of human historical evolution and its bio-psycho-social development.

But of course culture, and its history over time, is fragmented. Making it whole, and integrating its various elements and aspects, as well as the scholarship about those many parts, is an ambitious project. Cultural analysis in its broadest sense (beyond the more limited political application, as in “culture wars” and cultural studies) seeks to locate those common threads that unite every culture, as well as define the singular attributes of the myriad ethnic, national, regional, and period cultures that constitute the widest cultural lens. It is a search for a general theory of culture, an ongoing and varied-method enterprise.

Within that system of interlocking concepts and expression is material culture, along with the shared values that drive the arts, technology, and their array of tools, techniques, and impulses to create and critique “culture made visible.” Material culture is considered from a set of values, from the “arts” approach to the “anthropology” approach to selecting icons for study and explication; material culture operates as an evidentiary narrative for a network of stories about invention, use, and thinking. This is a complex story rooted in both individual ingenuity and collective genius and creativity. At its elite levels, artifact study is focused on highly cultivated skill levels, rare materials or mastery, or...
exotic and difficult-to-access sources and circumstances. So authenticity, rarity, selectivity, and uniqueness intersect (and also compete) with archetype, model, vernacular, and “aggregate” artifacts with a common significance and meaning to the culture-at-large.

Figure 1. Cinderella’s Castle in The Magic Kingdom, Walt Disney World, Orlando. Photo by Jamie O’Boyle.

Recent research based on cognitive science, evolutionary psychology, and behavioral science has opened up this art/anthropology dualism by means of Cultural analysis as a direct inductive approach to studying cultural issues and ideas through material evidence. A key case to highlight these distinctions is the theme park, combining elements of both approaches, as an icon central to popular culture studies (figure 1).

While its contents are mass produced, they are also designed by Disney Imagineering, a highly creative team of artists and animators (and filmmakers and techno-crafts engineers rather than trained architects), resulting in one of the most culturally important built environments of the twentieth century. The material outputs of the theme park system include dozens of social and artistic formats, including the pedestrian mall, the stage-set iconography, and integrated streetscape design. In media, one of the leading series since 2000 is the CSI (Crime Scene Investigation) forensic science drama. The main draw, besides the high-fashion cityscapes, lab interiors, and idealized personnel, is the inductive reasoning process, which starts from material evidence at the crime scene to work out the crime solution. Numbers, another crime drama, uses the abstractions of higher math to detect systematic patterns as tools to describe and track the dynamics of human, cultural, and social dramas. These programs draw upon the power of material things and human behavior to explain our underlying motivates and values.

Cultural Studies
The Center for Cultural Studies & Analysis is a think-tank based in Philadelphia. Our mandate is to explore the dynamics of culture as it drives decision making and shared values. We have developed models of culture that cast it as a system and thinking and behaviors as outcomes of the values shared by Americans (as well as other cultural sets within and outside the United States). Cultural analysis in our work is a science-based endeavor rather than artistic or political—the interest is in cultural development over long time periods, which far outreach the transitory or political trends that change every year. In this sense culture has a small “c,” with “Culture” as an elite achievement is a small subset. We are informed by popular culture in its widest definition—over thousands of years of human history (wide time), extended back into pre-history. Ancient Egypt, for example, is a good resource for the founding of the first luxury culture for a sizeable upper class—the retainers of the ruling system—who were not royalty or rulers themselves—a parallel to the meritocracy within democratic societies. Culture is the shared creation of humankind, and can be studied as a prolonged process of creativity, from the first human insight that a bone can also be a weapon
to the ability to decode the structure of the atom. Stones became tools as well as weapons through the craft of shaping and striking them; in the same way, diamonds became world-class works of wealth as well as wearable symbols of enduring love bonds.

**Cultural Logic**
The outcome of our research is the sense and sensibility of a culture based on its operating assumptions and “prime directives” for a sense of cultural logic: how a group of people defines, approaches, and solves problems and directs their time and energy toward achieving goals. To arrive at the sensibility, which is always the core of thinking for a group of people (a sort of open-source system adaptable to local and present needs), it is necessary to appreciate what drives that thinking, and the “logos,” the collective mentality and assumptions, that drives that logic. Material culture—the visible iceberg tip of what we share in our heads—is critical as the evidence we can observe, describe, and analyze to derive the principles and rules of that system.

So landscapes, sculpture, architecture, cuisine, theaters, sports, and landscapes, though fascinating in their own right, are not just sought after as the objective of understanding, but as a means to it. They are a wide, complex, and interrelated set of clues to be scrutinized, assembled, and organized into a knowledge panorama to make cultural sense from many fragments of meaning.

The use of artifacts as a channel is summarized by Susan Glasser in a recent article in *Museum* (2008, 32): Most of us are in the museum field because we are addicted to the deep satisfaction derived from using objects for a deeper purpose—not merely to study them or preserve them but because of the life lessons, personal insights, and mind-clarifying insights we have had with them. Museum staff use objects as a means to an end. The real question is, how do we help our visitors have comparable experiences? How do we transform visitors into object users?

**Reading the evidence**
Cultural Studies does research, but beyond the dredging and surveying of the land for the end product of intelligence, posing the higher-order question: “What does this research mean?” Research is really raw material: it is there to be processed, for the insight it can yield. How does research then translate to knowledge to help understand and predict, and to explain other cultural aspects? Both in campfires (history) and boardrooms (present-day) and in our future, the challenge is to read from the evidence at hand the mind behind it—in the sense of the shared sensibility that is culture. This involves modeling the key cultural aspects that shape cultural production.

For that purpose, we have identified the main dimensions of culture that work as the key factors in the cultural system for any artifact, event, institution, practice, social bond, or concept. These concepts have then been applied to a wide range of cultural problems in the form of problem-framing and solution-finding over the past two decades.

Implicit in the cultural approach is the unified field theory of culture. Under this holistic vision, Cultural analysis defines culture with a small “c”—Culture (capital “C”) being a rarified subset: the province of fine arts, literature, music, and drama. Whole culture subsumes a unified
consciousness. It is the shared logos of a people, nation, era, ethnic base; the collective thinking and imagination passed down through the generations through time. From campfires on the savannah to the high-rise boardrooms of today, it is the longest-running human invention alive and thriving. And it is a fractal system in which any one part reflects the patterns of thinking and aesthetics of the dominant ethic. These major dimensions of culture are:

**Context:** place and its power to instantly set the agenda of thought and action; from public to private and in-between;

**Age-stage development:** the cognitive, bio-psycho-social, values shift from infancy through advanced age;

**Gender:** the sole biological difference that affects information processing;

**Community:** the group context of thought and behavior, scaled from family to nation to universal human; includes class and hierarchy.

### Deep Culture

Contemporary content, from music, pulp and electronic press, novel trends in dress and speech, diners, computers, B-movies, electronic arts, to theme parks, concerts, malls, fantasy game sites, et al., still belong to the contested (and still denigrated) lower terrain of popular culture. It was the mandate of popular culture studies in the 1960s to bring contemporary mass culture into focus under the culture rubric. However, despite the inroads made by popular culture study as an academic player since that time, American culture continues to split the screen between popular and elitist sensibilities, a legacy of our collective cultural inferiority complex from the European breakaway in the eighteenth century. It is ironic that our richest material treasuries--and considered as such in Europe itself--lie within these popular rather than the elite veins.

The outcome advantage of seeing culture as one unified field is that this is the complete database needed to devise the rules and values that drive human thinking, decision-making, and behavior; decoded from the body of visible and behavioral evidence; and, in turn, yield the deepest possible way to understand the deep cultural impulses embedded and concealed within the collective body of art and technology. This physical evidence includes cultural production in all aspects, material, behavioral, and cognitive: art and artifacts, architecture, crafts, landscapes, as well as the narratives and tales about these that comprise and inform material culture.

Material culture is the outcome not just of applied creativity but of “deep culture,” the collective impulse to seek expression of: Meaning—patterns of cause and effect in the human and natural worlds; Identity—who we are as groups by heritage and direction; Purpose—why we are here, and how we direct our thinking, energy, and talents to transform our surroundings and ourselves, and to create and discover meaning to close the cycle.

While the fields of American Studies and Popular Culture are both fairly recent in adding to the academic landscape of cultural topics, both are mandated to collect, research, document, and interpret the cultural record. For American Studies, the focus is on American civilization as
exceptional, in contrast but on a par with other civilizations, particularly the origin cultures of Great Britain and Western Europe. Object collection and stewardship, as in folk art and artifacts, point to the value of the underlying culture in its original popular forms from nationhood.

Popular culture entered into the cultural discussion in the mid-1960s to democratize mass culture, enlarging the study of culture to include all class levels and every means of production—at the electronic end of cultural expression, and, like anthropology, observing, documenting, and describing clinically, without judgment. Ethnography is the latest research method used by business for marketing applications, but it is more an extension of the focus group into home, work, and play settings than it is anthropological.

**Culture as Insight**
What does that research help us to analyze and understand (and even to predict, as in the science model of study)?

Research into any topic can be extensive and exhaustive as to content. But without any clear analysis of an artifact’s meaning against a wider cultural baseline, we have detailed information per se (as fascinating as it is for aficionados). But without a wider meaning that gives insight into other artifacts, those who made and used them, and their importance as clues to the mysteries of human thinking and behavior, this descriptive data is free-floating information, but not anchored to meaning. This anchoring is the real intelligence outcome of material culture studies.

A leading example is the discovery of grave sites in Europe and the Middle East. The attending issue is establishing whether Neanderthals actually buried (in the ceremonial sense) their dead in order to relate this branch of the human family to modern *homo sapiens*. The interpretation of the data, its implications, is the source of ongoing research to establish benchmarks of human thinking and limitations, and to make critical distinctions in our common ancestry (Dibble 2008).

In a contemporary example, the theme park genre was born with Disney’s creation in the mid-1950s. These public artworks are rich material distillations of cultural icons with core meanings that operate as shared values. However, until architects of the 1970s “discovered” theme parks as repositories of design intelligence, displacing the limited category of “amusement park” with its commercial and lower-market connotations, it was impossible to “see” anything they contained without a lens freed from the lesser category. With this category shift, theme parks have yielded a robust analysis once their code was broken. Deliberate creativity is about category-breaking and is the most difficult way to think, compared to straight deductive logic. It is also, of course, the leading source of breakthroughs in concepts in the arts, science, and technology—the watersheds of change that propel material cultural evolution.

The technique of cultural analysis is thereby best served by inductive reasoning—from the particular to the general. One reason for approaching cultural production by this route is to avoid the ‘category errors’ that crop up. There are many instances of whole classes of artifacts simply rendered invisible because they are classified as trivial, transitory, or failure to fall into any classification worthy of study.
Everyday behavior—especially important to understanding how people think and why they act—is the largest example of this category problem, because it falls somewhere between the material and mental, the concrete and the abstract. Again, the everyday is the province of what is always in sight, available, common, and therefore difficult to focus on as significant. This is the premise of many a mystery story, in which “trivial” artifacts or events are disregarded because they escape notice—yet emerge as the crux that cracks the logic of the crime.

**Material in evidence**
Among the first human artifacts, besides pottery, and perhaps even predating clothing, is jewelry. What can this decorative and valuable art tell us about ourselves? In a cultural sense, jewelry is important not because it was a carrying device for wealth—shaped by jewels and precious metals—which it was and still is. But of whatever materials – bone, bead, stone, claws, shells, hair, seeds – rings, bracelets, necklaces, and pins are capsules of relationships and rank between humans. These act as powerful symbolic markers of bonds between people, events that are important to those markers and that signify identity defined by membership, birth, loyalty, and love. An example is the wedding ring, invented, or at least popularized, by the Romans.

![Figure 2. The lawn serves to frame this Evanston, IL home. Photo by Jamie O’Boyle.](image)

At the other end of the human scale, lawns are not normally thought of as artifacts. But they are miniature landscapes that extend the domain of the house structure (figure 2). From the seventeenth century in France and England, lawns signaled establishment and then upward mobility and social attainment. Despite environmental concerns that now attend lawn watering and maintenance, new entrants to middle-class membership continue to plant lawns across the landscape (especially in the new edge cities) on a grand scale. When this artifact is expensive, time-intensive, and takes effort to keep up, yet still thrives as the standard backdrop to the cultivated residence, the cultural question is to
discover what benefits are being realized—as with smoking and its well-publicized health hazards.

**Figure 3.** Chinese vase; but why is it important? American Association of Museums, 2008; image used by permission.

Finally, Cultural analysis breaks out beyond the material culture description. A recent American Association of Museums publications guide features a cover photo of a stunning ornate Chinese vase (figure 3). The caption is a physical description, including information about ownership; the complete “story” consists of what it is and where it resides: “A Chinese celadon-glazed double-gourd-shaped vase mounted with French 18th-century gilt-bronze mounts. Courtesy of the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, California” (American Association of Museums 2008).

The larger questions of who created this artwork, when, for what purpose, and why it is important and how it operates within the dynamics of culture is not even hinted at to explain why this piece exists or why it was and is important today. The leading issues of cultural analysis ask for connections, for cause and effect, for parallels, metaphors, and webs of knowing. “Museum logic” underlying curation and preservation, as well as “interpretation,” still works largely to describe and identify rather than open any wider windows to meaning.

But culture is a dynamic system: any part of it reflects any other part, as well as the fractal whole pattern; pointing to the cultural “engines” of value and direction. These are the dynamic driving and giving meaning to material things. Objects are evidence in a much larger narrative: they construct the cultural logic. De-engineering from the specific to the general reveals far more than the sum of the parts.

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Historic Preservation and Material Culture

Marshall Seaton McLennan, Eastern Michigan University

Unlike the traditional academic disciplines, historic preservation is an applied field. It is concerned with evaluating buildings and properties in terms of criteria of eligibility and historic significance. At this point preservation has developed a limited theoretical foundation. It draws primarily upon the theoretical constructs of the academic disciplines. In essence it has a symbiotic relationship with the academic fields that feed properties to it for designation consideration.

By training I am a cultural geographer, having undertaken my doctoral studies at the University of California, Berkeley. As many of you are aware, Berkeley is where the eminent geographer, Carl Sauer, influenced the development of cultural landscape analysis as an important focus of study within the field of geography. Undoubtedly it is somewhat pretentious, but I occasionally enjoy making the claim, “I’m the last of the Sauerians.” I don’t make this claim simply because I went to Berkeley and approach geography and material culture studies from the perspective of the cultural landscape, but because I have a direct linkage to Carl Sauer through his protégé John Leighly. When Carl Sauer left the University of Michigan in 1923 to establish a new geography department at the University of California, Leighly followed him to Berkeley, where he became Sauer’s first doctoral student.

My interest in cultural and historic landscapes was first piqued by a seminar in settlement geography while I was pursuing a master’s in geography at San Francisco State University in the mid-1960s. The guest lecturer for the seminar was John Leighly, by this time an emeritus professor at Berkeley. Leighly assigned me to read, report, and critique Fred Kniffen’s classic paper, “Louisiana House Types” (Kniffen 1936). Today I look back and realize the naïveté I brought to my critique of that paper. I was fascinated by the concept of “house types” and the criteria by which they are identified and defined. But although captivated by the concept, I was frustrated by the many unanswered questions the paper raised in my mind about the specific house types Kniffen identified. As a green wet-behind-the-ears graduate student new to the study of geography, I expected the paper to comprise a definitive piece of research. I failed to realize that the significance of Kniffen’s paper was that it pushed open the door to a research focus heretofore largely unattended by geographers, a paper setting the ground rules for fieldwork by which that research could be pursued. His paper is recognized as a classic because it legitimized house types as a focus for study and provided an initial methodology for field research. His paper was the “alpha;” I thought it should be the “omega.” Other students in the seminar had presented descriptive reports on their assigned readings; instead I castigated the deficiencies I perceived in Kniffen’s paper—and, as it turned out, John Leighly loved it. Subsequently Leighly proved instrumental in my obtaining a scholarship to attend Berkeley.

Among those who subsequently amplified my interests in cultural landscapes and material culture during my Berkeley years were James Parsons, J. B. Jackson, and an anthropologist, James Anderson. During my last year, Jan Broek, a geography professor from the University of...
Minnesota and a Berkeley alumnus, joined the department as a visiting professor. In his dissertation on California’s Sta. Clara Valley (now vernacularly known as Silicon Valley), Broek developed an analytical structural technique for the study of his region called “sequence occupance.” He described how a sequence of different culture groups made use of the same region over time. Each culture group perceived the environment in the Valley to offer distinctly different utilization opportunities.

Many years later (1978-9), for a project sponsored by the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a colleague, Andrew Nazarro, and I used “sequence occupance” as the organizational tool to study the evolution of settlement patterns in Michigan’s Huron River Valley. The objective was to identify historic sites and relict features from past periods of occupance. Instead of a sequence of culture groups, “energy technology” provided our analytic variable. The sequential use of waterpower, steam power, and hydroelectric power gave rise to distinct settlement features.

Let me now turn to my involvement with historic preservation at Eastern Michigan University (EMU), and the interaction of that field with material culture. Faced with declining enrollments in the late 1970s, EMU began to encourage the development of applied academic programs. This shift in mission emphasis by the university coincided with a national blossoming of historic preservation activities and an associated need for preservation professionals. Only a handful of academic programs in historic preservation existed in 1978. The National Trust for Historic Preservation undertook to encourage the development of additional graduate programs to meet the need for professionals. My involvement with the previously mentioned Michigan SHPO-funded Huron River Valley project somehow led to my being placed on the National Trust’s mailing list, and I received notice of the competitive availability of seed money for development of a degree-granting preservation program. Nazarro and I submitted a successful proposal. The National Trust was intrigued with bringing a geography-based perspective to the training of preservationists. The historic preservation program that we developed offers a balanced preservation and architectural history curriculum, but the foundation courses draw from cultural geography—settlement geography, American cultural landscapes, American vernacular architecture, cultural landscape interpretation, and American material culture.

The objective of historic preservation in this country is to preserve properties of historical, architectural, archeological and cultural significance.

A property may consist of an individual building or structure, an associated set of buildings and/or structures, or an archeological or historic site. Clusters of contiguous properties sharing some thematic homogeneity may also be protected. These are called historic districts.

A governmental infrastructure for historic preservation practice and regulation exists at the federal and state levels, and in an ever-growing number of local communities. Property regulation is one of the responsibilities the Constitution reserves to the states rather than to the national government. Consequently, listing on the National Register for Historic Places gives legal protection to a property only from undertakings of federal agencies or projects involving federal funds. In other contexts, listing is simply honorific. Outside the context of the National Register, Congress has occasionally also designated “heritage corridors” and “heritage areas,” entities comprising a management
partnership between the National Park Service and local governments and/or groups.

Each state has identified an agency responsible for overseeing jurisdictional preservation initiatives, however the preservation powers and responsibilities of these agencies vary in terms of state-legislated mandates. The individual states also have the power to delegate property regulation, including preservation responsibilities, to local governments. Using these delegated powers, local governments utilize a variety of mechanisms by which to identify, designate, and regulate historic properties and districts.

Let us return to the federal role. To be listed on the National Register, properties must be determined to be of local, state or national significance. The key word here is “significance.” The National Register has established a sweeping set of criteria by which to evaluate the significance of a potential historic property. To mention just two criteria, one asks “is the building located on its original site,” and “has the architectural integrity of the building been maintained?” While state and local preservation agencies and commissions can establish their own criteria of significance, most closely model their criteria list after those of the National Register.

Many properties have been listed on the National Register because their significance is in some way unique. A historic event may have occurred at the site, such as Robert E. Lee’s surrender to General Grant in the courthouse at Appomattox. Alternatively a building’s significance may lie in its having been designed by an architect of some stature.

Material culture scholars, however, are concerned with what is “representative” of a culture. Fortunately, the National Register does provide for listing properties with “representative significance.” Individual buildings or even aggregate urban neighborhoods or farming communities may exemplify cultural landscapes that are representative or homogenous in a time-specific way, or they may be buildings that are associated with the material culture of specific ethnic groups. Still another link with material culture may be that an individual dwelling, barn or bridge may possess significance because it illustrates a method of construction technology characteristic of a bygone time. For such material culture artifacts to bear significance sufficient for historic designation, their cultural and physical integrity must be as little compromised as possible.

Historic preservation may be narrowly defined as the preservation of historic properties, or we may more broadly define the field to include the preservation and interpretation of material culture artifacts like those typically on display in historic museums. Our preservation program at EMU embraces the latter view of preservation and offers a concentration area in historic administration and interpretation as well as a more traditional concentration in preservation planning. Many of our graduates have been employed by or become managers and directors of historic museums and historic houses with their artifact collections. I like to think of this more inclusive approach to preserving material culture artifacts as “cultural resource management.” Admittedly this term has been preempted by archeological conservation programs.

Architectural conservation is another area in which preservation interacts with material culture. The EMU preservation program also offers a concentration in preservation technology. In addition to appropriate conservation courses, the program offers a summer field program in which students learn restoration skills. For several years students restored buildings at Fayette State Park, the site of a nineteenth-century
pig-iron manufacturing company town on the Big Bay de Noc in the Upper Peninsula, then at Bayview, an historic resort community on Little Traverse Bay, and more recently, the farmstead of a nineteenth-century German immigrant in northwestern Ohio.

I would like to finish by making a few comments upon the material culture/popular culture architectural dichotomy. Material culture comprises the physical products of a people sharing a common culture. In practice scholars have generally limited material culture studies to culture groups adhering to traditional folkways. Conversely, popular culture encompasses cultural fads and fashions in modern societies. If we set aside the one-of-a-kind architectural creations of architects, structures we identify as “high style,” the bulk of fashion-oriented buildings constructed during the twentieth century can be construed to be products of popular culture. Much of the nineteenth century may be characterized as a transitional period between folk and popular architectural expression. Before the Civil War, fashionable interior and exterior moldings embellished domestic structures laid out with traditional floor plans. It was only late in the nineteenth century that home designers realized that the combination of balloon-frame construction and new heating technologies freed them to innovate new and varied floor plans.

Although both traditional and popular forms of domestic architecture qualify under the aggregate term, “vernacular architecture,” since they both serve the common population, only the former is derivative of material culture. For preservationists, analysis of popular architecture demands a paradigm shift in how to evaluate architectural significance. House types and traditional farm buildings derive their significance because they are “representative” of a material culture tradition. This is not the case with popular vernacular buildings.

The usual threshold age criterion for listing a property on the National Register is fifty years. Today a great deal of extant popular architecture exceeds this age threshold. Except in the case in which one of these buildings can be argued to possess significance because of association with a famous historical figure or some other “unique” circumstance, there is no basis for historic designation. The primary way by which examples of popular architecture fifty or more years of age have been successfully designated is by aggregation in a “historic district.” Geographers are familiar with the concept of the *tout ensemble*. Neighborhoods possessing a high degree of architectural homogeneity and integrity can be evaluated as significant because they comprise a domestic landscape visually representative of a particular period of time and architectural fashion. Again we come back to the notion of “being representative” to justify National Register listing.

Although “material culture” provides the organizational focus for the Pioneer America Society, we have not been steadfast in our resolve. Our Society has occasionally accommodated papers devoted to some expression of popular culture. Historic preservation straddles both manifestations of vernacular architecture. We the PAS, have always been characterized by an informal membership and continue to tolerate and enjoy the occasional presentation venturing into the examination of popular landscapes. I anticipate that as time goes by, our annual conferences will see more such papers.

**Notes**

1 This is not the place to undertake a discussion of the nature of folk culture and its architectural expression, but the curious reader is encouraged to consider Redfield (1956) and Glassie (1968) as good entry points to the literature.
The intermingling of traditional spatial organization with contemporary decoration is a major theme in Marshall McLennan, “Common House Types in Southern Michigan” (McLennan 1987).

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An Anthropological Archaeological Perspective on Material Culture

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The Pioneer America Society is an organization devoted to the study of material culture, especially in the New World. This commitment presents certain problems for the anthropologist because the anthropologist is very likely to want to say that there is no such thing as material culture. Culture, as used by most anthropologists, consists in “shared, learned, behavior.” Here the operative word is behavior, and, by definition, materials cannot be self-motivated behavers, so there can be no such thing as material culture. Now, it is not intended that you should take this statement as merely a semantic argument, even though I think there is some validity to it. Instead, let us look at how anthropologists, or at least the portion of them that seem to make sense to me, will proceed to consider the role of material objects in the action of culture.

Culture, as indicated in the quick definition above, is learned, and it is also shared. At birth we, as humans, know how to do very few things. These natal abilities consist in breathing, sucking in food, and disposing of the end products of that food from the other end of the internal tube. Virtually everything else we do is learned. A somewhat controversial psychologist, Harry Harlow, discovered quite some time ago that if monkeys are raised in isolation from the troop, not allowed to even see adults or other juveniles as they grow to maturity, at maturity they do not know how to copulate. They get excited, they know something is supposed to happen, but without ever having seen adults do it they do not know just exactly what it is that they are supposed to do. Something that basic to survival is, in the primate order, apparently learned.

We learn the expected behaviors of our culture from other people around us; parents, siblings, friends, school, church, the man with the flashing red or blue light on his car who is there to remind us of various elements of our culture such as how quickly we are allowed to proceed down the highway. The process of learning inherently involves sharing the learned values. As one learns and shares, one reinforces the essential elements of one’s culture, and at the same time one helps to build and promote group solidarity, thus in a very circular way again reinforcing the essential elements of the culture. There is very little, if any, biological or survival value today to many cultural acts, such as cutting off the end of the male member, the eating or non-eating of particular foods, recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, or attending church. Yet, these cultural acts help to define membership in the cultural group. These acts of definition are critical to preserving the culture of the group, and, according to some anthropologists, thereby ensuring the survival of the group itself. And, because we as primates, and humans especially, are social animals, surviving as groups, the survival of the group ensures the survival of the individual. Individuals, therefore, learn culture, reinvent culture, carry culture, interpret culture, all for the benefit of the group, the survival of which ensures the survival of the individual. It is all so wonderfully circular, convoluted and chaotic!

In the course of practicing culture, changes inevitably creep in. Put crudely, 10,000 years ago the ancestors of all of us were making their living
by poking sharpened stones on the ends of wooden sticks into the sides of huge animals. Today, very few of us, anywhere, run around poking at huge animals with sharp stones on wooden spears. Very few of us, as in those reading these words, are in any way significantly involved in the direct obtaining of our food. Mostly we exchange weird little pieces of colored paper for our food in grocery stores, or produce weird little pieces of plastic that seem to have the same effect. It is more than obvious that cultures do change, and it is this change, and the mechanisms by which it is achieved that are of greatest interest to anthropological archaeologists.

The real purpose of culture is to allow us, as individuals, through the actions of the group, to extract the requirements of life from the raw environment in which we live. In the course of extracting those resources necessary to life we inevitably change the very environment in which we live. As the environment changes the mechanisms of resource extraction must change in ways that allow the continued obtaining of the necessities for life. Were culture to not so change the group would eventually become extinct as, indeed, has been the fate of many cultures across time that failed to make those necessary changes. While these changes mostly happen very, very slowly, it would appear that as culture is transmitted from one generation to another, it, meaning culture, is constantly, if slowly, being re-invented. So, while the overall culture tends to remain the same, minute little changes do appear, usually at the generational level, causing the ubiquitous “generation gap,” which can and often does create feelings of anomie, if not irritation, between the generations. I offer this insight to you to help you understand just why it is that your teenage children will, are, or were, driving you stark raving mad crazy.

In the act of learning the essentials of one’s culture, one also learns a set of values and meanings inherent in the culture. Claude Levi-Strauss called this set of deep cultural meanings “the structure of the culture,” hence our use of the word structuralism when referring to the notion that societies are driven by the deep, mostly subconscious, meanings and values of their culture. Structuralism, boiled down, suggests that people do things that “feel good” because they articulate with the set of values and meanings that were learned early in life, and that define the world-view of the group.

The anthropological interpretations of things material in culture, or material culture if one must, have changed across time as various schools of thought have been in or out of popularity. In the beginning, meaning in the first two thirds of the twentieth century, items of material culture were viewed as markers of specific cultures. In other words, any given culture could be defined by the presence of a specific set of artifacts with a specific set of attributes. While cultural anthropologists remained, indeed, more driven by observed behaviors in defining specific cultures, the influence of anthropological archaeology forced recognition of specific artifact sets as elements in determining the borders, boundaries, and geographical and temporal extent of particular cultures. This approach to artifacts and culture, called culture history, had spent itself by the end of the 1960s as it was recognized, finally, that ever longer lists of artifacts and attributes failed, somehow, to adequately define past cultures or to effectively model how and why cultures changed over time.

From the 1960s through the 1980s a set of archaeologists tried to investigate the actions of culture, including culture change, from the perspective of environmental adaptation. Calling on “Science,” these New Archaeologists, or “Processualists” as they came to be called, relied
almost entirely on the environmental adaptation model to explain culture, and essentially ignored the presence of people, as if culture somehow had its own set of rules and laws entirely separate from those people who learned it, carried it, reinvented it. Processualism, while very “scientific,” was also very sterile. While it often produced wonderfully insightful explanations of the relationship between culture and the environment, its ignoring of humans as the transmitters and translators of culture left its explanations ultimately incomplete in troublesome ways.

The processualist school of thought was eventually superseded by the “post-processualists” who called on Levi-Strauss and the notion of structuralism to put people back into the equation. It was recognized that ancient Hebrews and later Muslims did not eschew the consumption of pork because raising pigs was not viable in the environment in which they lived (which was definitely true), but rather, as a proximate cause, because God told them not to eat it, a notion from within the deep structure of their culture that was definitely not related to any environmental impact statement required by their government. Structuralists, then, put people back into the equation, producing explanations of human cultural behavior that were much more complete, fulfilling, and meaningful than those produced by either the culture historians or the processualists.

Artifacts do have, of course, functional uses. Examining and analyzing artifacts from the perspective of these uses was the goal of the culture historians of the first part of the twentieth century, and, when viewed as mechanisms of environmental adaptation, this same approach informed the cultural ecologists of the processual movement. As well, artifacts were used traditionally as markers of human population movement. If one follows the rather elaborate and complex rules of association between artifact and culture the system is still important, although genetic evaluation is becoming perhaps a more reliable means of understanding population movement.

From a functionalist perspective, an artifact begins life as an idea in the mind of the maker. A tool is envisioned to perform a particular function, either needed or desired. A mental template is created that informs the producer of the artifact as to what the end product should resemble, and what its attributes, both functional and aesthetic, should be. The producer then sets out to obtain the necessary raw materials, and physically creates the artifact. After production the artifact moves towards its intended uses and enters the realm of application. At some point the artifact ends its productive life. It may break, it may wear out, it may be lost, or it may simply go out of style. If lost, it immediately enters the world of potential archaeological finds. If it breaks, wears out, or goes out of style it may be discarded, in which case it enters the realm of potential archaeological recovery. Certain eighteenth and nineteenth century sites have been excavated where, from pits in the ground, complete sets of crockery were recovered, unbroken, undamaged, discarded simply because Wedgwood had introduced a new pattern, thus relegating the older sets to obsolescence. On the other hand, many artifacts are recycled, either directly or laterally. Direct recycling moves the artifact back to its original purpose, as might be the case with bottles that were extensively recycled back to the original owners for re-use in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when glass bottles were very valuable. Today we are trying to reinvent this process for our own extensive array of artifacts in order to spare the landfill. Alternatively, artifacts were often recycled laterally, meaning they were sent on to new uses. The archaeological record is replete with examples of broken crockery that was then used as scoops for grain or animal feed. No longer useful as a
bowl or cooking vessel, the larger broken fragments were often sent to the barn or granary. In extreme cases such broken pottery might even have been used in the field to help in grubbing fields by hand. The worn and smoothed edges of broken crockery so used give adequate testimony to this sort of recycling. Another use for broken crockery and bottles was in filling the pit toilets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in urban areas. It was recognized that the air spaces created by filling the toilet pit with broken pottery and bottles helped the subsequently deposited organic contents to bio-degrade. In excavating old toilet pits one frequently finds vast quantities of such broken materials leading to an initial interpretation of the use of the old toilet pit for refuse disposal. Deeper digging into such deposits, however, has shown that there are many references to the use of broken materials as described above, a valid form of recycling. Toilet pit cleaners then often removed the broken pottery and bottles in the act of cleaning the urban pits. The removed materials were usually taken to fields outside the city to be spread as fertilizer. In this way many rural sites came to resemble urban locations in terms of the artifact contents, confusing the lives of poor archaeologists trying to make sense of the discarded functional residuum of past cultural behavior.

Of far more interest to anthropologists, however, is the examination and analysis of artifacts, items of material culture, from the structuralist perspective. In the course of design, production, and use of artifacts, people endow these physical objects with deep structural and cultural meanings, values, if you will. Some values, such as status are more or less apparent on the surface of the artifact. A Mercedes, a BMW, and a Rolls Royce are taken to imply something about the purchasing power of the owner, and by extension in the western world, something about the relative status of the owner. Mercedes purposefully keeps its US prices high just to maintain that image of status. One can go to Germany, buy a Benz, and ship it home for far less than it costs locally. Volvo has cultured the image of safety coupled with high status, as evidenced by one colleague who some years ago went to Europe, bought a Volvo, drove it far enough to have it qualify as a used car, and returned home with said automobile at a cost far less than the local price; achieving in this way not only high status but a reputation for safety and sound economic thinking! Similarly there was a time when a hot rod was perceived of as a slick way to impress the impressionable young ladies. The hot rod automobile implied, perhaps, that the owner may have had a hot rod of his own. Of course values can change. Once, only real men drove Jeeps. Now every soccer mom drives a Jeep derivative without sacrificing her femininity, too much.

Our western culture invests a significant amount of meaning in our architecture. Our public/political buildings are almost entirely neo-classical in design. We understand this look to impart a sense of dignity, importance, and power. Any self-respecting southern plantation house has its main floor elevated above ground level. We understand this elevation to imply power and authority. One has no trouble imaging the “master” standing on the verandah with the slaves/servants looking up at him. The act of looking up we understand to be one of subservience. We regularly “look up to” political, moral, or other significant leaders. Many buildings manifest this notion of looking up to ones betters with elevated stages from which the betters can pontificate while looking down at the mere mortals. The gods reside high on Mt. Olympus, angels reside “on high,” we look up beseechingly to God, you get the point.

What is significant here is that not only do these artifacts reflect deep cultural values, they teach the same values, or at least they provide the classroom in which the teaching takes place. As youngsters we were all told to be quiet in the library, to mind our manners in the town hall or
court room, or wherever. The judge and the minister all occupy high places, figuratively, but also literally. We construct daises, pulpits, balconies, and other elevated spaces from which they look down and to which the masses look up, forcing them to look up, making the point and in the act reinforcing and perpetuating the deep cultural meanings.

In the most extreme cases artifacts can cause changes in cultural behaviors. The development of movable type led directly to standardization of spellings as well as type sizes and styles, while indirectly contributing to the rise of other standardizations that eventually gave rise to the development of Eli Whitney's interchangeable parts and ultimately to Mr. Ford's moving assembly line. Today, essentially all of our artifacts are identical, and we now pay more for individuality and flaws. The most valuable stamps in the collection are always those where there was a printing error.

Artifacts, then, play an extremely important role in the circular, convoluted, and chaotic process that we call culture. Artifacts are endowed with meaning, and they are then used to impart that meaning back to those who use the artifacts. If we see in an artifact only its functional value or immediate technical use we miss what is really the most important role of artifacts—media for transmission and perpetuation of deep cultural values and meanings that define, in the end, any particular culture. In our own culture, today, the automobile remains an especially powerful symbol of status, meaning, and value. In spite of, or perhaps more correctly due to, the rising price of gasoline, the car continues to be employed by people to express status and attract attention. We continue to rely on buildings, from the public ones to our own homes, for much cultural information. At a much less grand level the manner in which we use implements at table expresses our sense of manners and social status. Which hands one uses to hold the knife and fork speaks volumes about how much time one has spent in Europe or the Commonwealth. How we dress alerts others to particular sets of beliefs. Motorcycle gangs espouse a counter-cultural individuality, but dress in what comes close to being uniforms. The advent of the phony pony allowed bankers to enjoy their Harleys on the weekends while meeting the required expectations for use of the artifacts we call clothes during the work week and at board meetings.

These are but a minute drop in the bucket of the millions of possible examples that could be adduced to illustrate the use of artifacts to express and reinforce cultural values and meanings. Artifacts surround us constantly, and they constantly reinforce deep cultural values. The trick is to recognize or identify these values. Most are so mundane, so commonplace that we take them for granted, which is exactly how they are intended to be used. The messages are supposed to be subliminal, to quietly keep order and prevent discord. We are meant to move smoothly and seamlessly through our cultural world, guided, supported, controlled by the messages of the artifacts, the real meaning of material culture.
An Early Twentieth-Century Homestead in Northeastern Nevada

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Introduction
The dry valleys of the Intermountain West are dotted with abandoned homesteads that were occupied in the first years of the twentieth century. Those who come across vacant houses, caved-in wells, and remnants of cultivated fields rarely have much knowledge about the individuals who once lived on these sites, for the homesteaders and the people who associated with them have long since moved away, and in most cases are no longer alive. Questions about settlers’ origins, motives, and activities usually go unanswered, or generate only superficial answers, even from people in a position to know something about what took place in these out-of-the-way localities. Indeed, in describing the settlement of Tobar Flat, in northeastern Nevada, the former director of the local historical museum has written that about a mile south of the once-vibrant town of Tobar “are the concrete walls of one of the larger homesteads from the teens” (Hall 1998, 254), and leaves it at that. But through the use of published works, archival materials, and numerous other sources, it is possible to reconstruct the lives of the homesteaders, and to learn the details of how today’s relict landscapes evolved. This paper focuses on George E. Wickizer and his family, who lived on the homestead mentioned above from 1909 to 1913 (figure 1). It explains why Wickizer chose this site, describes his homestead and the activities that took place here, follows his footsteps after he left the area, and provides a glimpse of what the Wickizer place is like today, nearly a century after it was abandoned.
George E. Wickizer was born in May, 1871, in Missouri, and grew up on farms in that state and in Iowa. He attended school on an irregular basis until he was fifteen years old, and often worked as a farm laborer for his father, other relatives, and neighbors. When George was in his early twenties he secured a position as a Western Union lineman, which took him to many parts of the West, including Colorado and Utah. He returned home in 1907 to marry Gertrude Wilkins, a native of Iowa, and shortly after their wedding the couple moved to Salt Lake City, where George resumed working for Western Union. It was here that Gertrude gave birth to their first child, a son named George Everett (called Everett to avoid confusion with his father), in September, 1908 (Burgess 1983, 7-11; Troxel 1985; U.S. Department of the Interior 1880a, 1880b; G.E. Wickizer 1931, 3-7, 114).

**Site Selection**

By this time the Western Pacific Railroad was under construction from Salt Lake City westward, and soon after his return to Utah, Wickizer
joined a crew installing poles and telegraph lines along the new railroad’s right of way. The job was demanding, and many laborers, fed up with harsh conditions that included extremes of heat and cold as well as blowing alkali dust, and knowing that they would be laid off when trains began running, were on the lookout for better ways to make a living. Some men with farming experience thought that it might be possible to obtain homesteads near the railroad and settle down, but nothing that they had seen in the arid lands of western Utah and extreme eastern Nevada gave them any encouragement (Crump 1963, 22-26; Myrick 1962, 318-319; L.W. Wickizer 1985).

This began to change in the fall of 1908. As they pushed deeper into Nevada they could see the East Humboldt range, snow-clad in the winter and a sure source of water in the spring and summer, a few miles to the west. Soon, they spotted the channel of a stream called The Slough that delivered runoff from the mountains to land close to where the tracks would be laid. The Slough was dry right then, but the men agreed that with the return of warm weather it would probably carry enough water to moisten a considerable amount of farmland. Some individuals were skeptical about the quality of the area’s soil, but Wickizer, calling upon his experience on farms in the Midwest and believing that flat land was good land, declared that the country near The Slough looked more than adequate for crop production (L.W. Wickizer 1985).

A short time later, when crews of track layers and telegraph workers were gathered at a camp near the future site of Tobar, Wickizer and several other men took advantage of a brief respite from work to take a closer look at land between the camp and The Slough. The party covered several miles on foot, and during their expedition they visited a farm two miles to the west, where John C. Munson, a Utah-born freighter, had been producing satisfactory crops of grain, watered by natural overflow, since 1906. They also ventured to the south and southeast, and saw several sites where they thought it would be possible to match the success enjoyed by Munson (McDaniel 1979; Munson 1911; L.W. Wickizer 1985).

In November and December, 1908, Wickizer and five other individuals from the camp filed homestead claims on the land that they had examined earlier. Of these, Wickizer’s parcel lay closest to the Munson place, and consisted of a mile-long strip astride The Slough that he believed could be watered easily by overflow and seepage. Six months later, after passage of the Enlarged Homestead Act, he would claim another strip lying just north of his original entry (figure 2). Because of the geometry of the section in which these properties were located, Wickizer’s land covered only 316 acres instead of the maximum 320 acres allowed by the Enlarged Homestead Act (General Land Office n.d.; G.E. Wickizer 1912b; L.W. Wickizer 1985).
Getting Started
Wickizer spent the winter working along the line of the Western Pacific, but in April, 1909, in the company of three other men from the exploring party, he returned to Tobar Flat and put up a tent to protect him from the elements until he could build a more substantial structure. Just before this he had written to his younger brother, Theodore, who lived on a rented farm in Kansas, urging him to come to Nevada and informing him that land only a mile away, claimed by another member of the party, would become available because the man had changed his mind about living there. Theodore arrived about the first of May, and for more than a month the brothers stayed in George’s tent and began preparing his land for planting with the help of four horses that George had acquired and two that Theodore had brought from Kansas (Elko County 1909; General Land Office n.d.; Troxel 1985; G.E. Wickizer 1912b; T.F. Wickizer 1913; L.W. Wickizer 1985).

As summer approached, Wickizer started work on his house, assisted by his brother and Thomas J. Sweeney, a contractor from Salt Lake City who was building a similar structure on his own land two miles to the southwest. Wickizer mixed concrete in a trough, stirring it with a rake and carrying it in buckets to the house site, where he poured it by hand into wooden forms to create the lower story of what would become a six-room, two-storey structure. When this phase was completed, the men added a frame upper story, which they completed in November. Wickizer’s wife and son arrived from Utah during the summer, and after a short period of living in the tent, the family moved into its semi-finished house, which was located near the northeastern corner of the original entry (McDaniel 1979; Sweeney 1912; Teel 2005; G.E. Wickizer 1912b).

The Homestead
When completed, the Wickizer home measured 30 feet square, with exterior walls that were nine inches thick and interior walls of about half that thickness (figure 3). The front door, facing east, opened from a concrete stoop into a living room that was approximately 15 feet square, modified by a jog that served as an entryway and an indentation to accommodate the chimney. The parents’ bedroom, about the same size as the living room, occupied the northwest quarter of the house. A kitchen, pantry, and second bedroom completed the first floor arrangement. A door from the kitchen provided easy access to the family's domestic well, just steps away, which according to a land office inspector reached water at a depth of about ten feet. A root cellar occupied space beneath the kitchen, and was accessible from the garden via six concrete steps, and from the kitchen itself by a set of steep wooden stairs. The layout of the second story is less certain, but if the entire house resembled the Sweeney residence, as the present owner of the latter property maintains, it probably consisted of little more than an attic that was used for storage (Kingsbury 1913; Teel 2005; G.E. Wickizer 1912b).
The farmstead was simple and utilitarian (figure 4). A garden covering almost an acre was laid out behind the house, and could be watered from the family’s domestic well. South of the garden and southwest of the house stood a lumber barn with a dirt floor. The barn may have been about 40 feet by 50 feet in size, but since the structure never accommodated more than four horses and three milk cows, and stored only a
limited amount of hay, it is possible that it was not this large. It was certainly smaller and less elaborate than Theodore's barn, which had a solid wooden floor and was the scene of numerous dances and other social events in the fledgling homesteader community. Behind the barn was a fenced enclosure that resembled a Midwestern barnyard. The family's livestock werewatered from a trough, filled from a well at the northwestern corner of the barn, that ran the length of the barn and extended a short distance into the barnyard (Elko County 1910-1912; Troxel 1985; G.E. Wickizer 1912b).
Figure 4. The George E. Wickizer Farmstead
With the exception of the garden, all cropland was situated at some distance from the family’s dwelling, and was positioned to take advantage of natural overflow and seepage from The Slough (figure 5). Wickizer planted more than 20 acres of grain and alfalfa in 1909, and in the following years he expanded the amount of cropland so that when he proved up in October, 1912, he had 65 acres under cultivation, although not all of this was in crops that year. His largest and most frequently-used field began a few hundred yards southwest of the house, and was laid out in a way that would enable it to receive water from The Slough and, whenever possible, from a small runoff channel originating northeast of Tobar (G.E. Wickizer 1912b).

**Agricultural Failure**
Despite considerable effort, Wickizer’s crops did not do well. The first disaster occurred early in the summer of 1909, when cattle belonging to John C. Munson got into his freshly planted fields, which had not yet been fenced, and destroyed the crops. Determined that his first year of farming would not be a total loss, Wickizer acted quickly to get something from the land that he and his brother had prepared. As he put it, “then I done my fenceing [sic] & disked my grain up & sowed 13 acres of Turkey red Wheat & 13 acres of Winter Rye in september, 1909” (G.E. Wickizer 1912a). But these winter crops fared little better than those planted in the spring. When he harvested them in the late summer of 1910, he obtained only 67.5 bushels of grain, a disappointing average of barely more than 2.5 bushels per acre. Part of the problem was insufficient rainfall, but another reason was that by now Munson had built an earthen dam across The Slough, holding back some of the water that Wickizer had expected to receive (Munson 1908; Munson 1911; G.E. Wickizer 1912b).

Wickizer’s fortunes did not improve in the following years. He anticipated good crops in 1911, but a long dry spell in late summer doomed his grain, and he harvested only 155 bushels from more than 50 acres. The next year his winter wheat was almost completely destroyed by cold weather. He replaced the winter-killed wheat with oats and barley, but these did not do well, either, and had to be pastured. The closest approximation of success, and it was a small one, occurred in 1911 when he dug up 25 sacks of potatoes from a two acre-field (Nevada State Herald 1911a, 1911b; G.E. Wickizer 1912b).

Without good yields, Wickizer had no grain to sell, and was hard put to provide feed for his livestock. The family was able to survive only because its garden and potato patch were fairly productive and because Thomas J. Sweeney gave George occasional work on construction projects at the first Tobar townsite, located just to the north. He was a personable man, well-liked and respected by most of his neighbors, who elected him to a four-year term on the Tobar school board, but neither his popularity nor his position on the school board generated any income. His financial difficulties were compounded because he was obliged to send money to his elderly father, who was no longer able to work. It was clear that the Wickizers’ resources were being stretched to the limit, particularly after their second child, a daughter whom they named Eulah, was born in the spring of 1911. The combination of poor crops, too little money, and having four mouths to feed became an insurmountable obstacle, and in early 1913 Wickizer gave up. He disposed of his livestock and farming equipment, and once this was completed, he went to California to resume working for Western Union, leaving his wife and children behind in the care of his brother. Theodore Wickizer may have cultivated some of George’s land in 1913, but this did not last for more than one season, and by 1914 the house and fields stood completely abandoned (Elko County 1913-1914; Nevada State Herald 1911a, 1912; Olmsted 1911; Sweeney 1912; Troxel 1985; G.E. Wickizer 1931, 150).

**Afterwards**

Wickizer stayed in California for about a year, and was then transferred to Denver, where Gertrude and the children joined him. In 1916 George was promoted to the position of inspector, and by 1918 he was able to purchase a modest house in one of the city’s working-class neighborhoods. Unfortunately, marital harmony did not accompany economic progress, in part because George had to be away from home for weeks at a time and partly because Gertrude had become deeply involved with the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which George detested. The
couple separated in 1921, and after a bitter and sometimes violent battle over custody of the children and division of their property, they divorced. George rented a furnished room in downtown Denver, but he was often away from the city for extended periods of time, working in Utah, Wyoming, and Montana. By 1930, at the age of fifty-nine, he was back in Denver on a more or less permanent basis, living with his daughter, Eulah, and her husband (Elko County 1915-1930; Roberts, 1915-1930; Troxel 1985; U.S. Department of the Interior 1920, 1930; G.E. Wickizer 1931, 89-208; L.W. Wickizer 1985).

During these troubled times Wickizer wrote a book, published in 1931, that was essentially a religious tract but also included bits of information about his early life and devoted a great deal of attention to the circumstances of his divorce. The book said nothing about the family’s period of residence in Nevada. Gertrude Wickizer remained in Denver for the rest of her life, first operating a sewing machine at a dress factory and later working as a seamstress at home. Everett also stayed in the Denver area, usually living with his mother, until he was killed in a motorcycle accident in 1938. George retired from Western Union in the mid-1930s, and moved to Massachusetts to live with Eulah and her family, who had relocated to the Boston area, and it is here that he died in 1940 (Burgess 1983, 7-8; Manning 1940, 138 and 562; Roberts 1931-1935; Troxel 1985; G.E. Wickizer 1931; L.W. Wickizer 1985).

Wickizer retained ownership of his property on Tobar Flat until 1935, but in the depths of the Great Depression, at about the time he retired from Western Union and left Colorado, he defaulted on his real estate taxes and the land was taken over by Elko County. The county held it until 1947, when it was sold to a local rancher who was acquiring numerous abandoned homesteads in the area. The rancher leased the land to an oil company for exploration purposes in the mid-1950s, but nothing came of this venture, and since that time it has remained firmly in the hands of this man and his family. Cattle occasionally graze here, but for the most part the property lies untouched, the silence broken only by the wind (Elko County 1915-1935; Elko County 1955-2007; McElrath 1961; Pengelly 1982; Title Abstracts 1913-1955).

**The Homestead Today**
Figure 6. The George E. Wickizer Home. All photos by Marshall E. Bowen, 2006.
**Figure 7.** Window on north side of house.

**Figure 8.** Boot scraper on front stoop.
Although it has been unoccupied for almost a hundred years, this homestead site still yields valuable clues about a way of life that has disappeared from northeastern Nevada. The first story of the house looks very much as it did when the Wickizers lived here, with openings for the front door, kitchen door, several large windows, and a small pantry window clearly visible (figure 6). At some windows, the ledge and frame remain more or less intact (figure 7). A rusted boot scraper is embedded in the front stoop, conveniently placed where Wickizer would have approached the door when coming from his fields or the barn (figure 8). The entrance to the root cellar is well preserved, while the cellar itself contains both concrete walls and a wall of native rock (figures 9 and 10). Just beyond the kitchen door is the family’s domestic well, with a twisted old pipe emerging from the caved-in depression (figure 11). To the southwest lie the remains of the second well (figure 12), boards scattered about where the barn once stood, and fence posts that outline the size and shape of the barnyard. Disturbed land behind the house shows where the garden was once located and, farther away, similar scars support Wickizer’s statements about the location and size of his hay and grain fields (figure 13).
Figure 11. Remains of domestic well.
Conclusions
Three principal conclusions can be drawn from this study. First, by piecing together the life histories of ordinary people like the Wickizers, we can come closer to understanding what northeastern Nevada’s early twentieth-century homesteaders were like, why they chose to live in places like Tobar Flat, what the homesteading experience entailed, why they left, and what these people did with their lives after they gave up trying to wrest a living from such unforgiving land. Second, it becomes clear that while some homesteaders may have been fiercely independent and completely isolated from those around them, it is safe to say that most settlers, including the Wickizers, experienced close interactions with their neighbors, some of a positive nature and others less so. It is unlikely that the family could have settled in so readily, or remained on the land as long as it did, without the assistance that George received from his brother and from Thomas J. Sweeney, and the friendships that connected him with these and other neighbors. But it is equally correct to say that the Wickizers might have remained longer if their crops had done better, and that John C. Munson’s marauding cattle and his dam on The Slough were just as responsible for their failure as were drought and cold weather. Finally, the Wickizers’ house and other remnants of the homestead’s built landscape enable us to appreciate the efforts of the men who produced them, and to imagine the day-to-day lives of the people who lived there. The George E. Wickizer homestead provides a window into a nearly-forgotten dimension of western America’s past, and should be recognized as a valuable element of the region’s heritage.

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Whistle at Your Own Risk: The Changing Landscape of Music in New Orleans During the Civil War

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Since its founding in 1718, New Orleans has become a booming metropolis, with several cultural activities. During the nineteenth century, opera, symphony, and folk music flourished. Classical performers came from afar to perform here, including Belgian virtuoso violinist and composer Henri Vieuxtemps and Norwegian violinist Ole Bull, and singers Julie Calve and Adelina Patti. Theatre d’Orléans, founded in 1819 by John Davis (1773-1839), performed 52 American premieres in its first five years. (Joyce n.d.) The troupe toured the northeastern United States from 1827 to 1833, giving residents of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore their first hearing of operas by Daniel François Esprit Auber, François Adrien Boieldieu, Gaspare Spontini, Ferdinand Hérold, Nicolo Isouard and Gaetano Donizetti. James Caldwell, a rival, had opened the Camp Street Theatre in 1824, where he produced musicals and plays in English, and Italian operas in English translation. According to Susan Thiemann Sommer, author of the article on “New York,” in the New Grove Dictionary of Music, New York’s first opera house, the Italian Opera House at Church and Leonard Streets, opened on November 18, 1833 with Rossini’s La Gazza Ladra (Sommer n.d. 2008). The Metropolitan Opera was not founded until 1883. Thus, during the antebellum era, one was more likely to hear the American premiere of a European opera in New Orleans than in New York.

The Classical Musical Society was founded in 1855. In 1859, the French Opera House was built, and became the site of 17 American premieres of European operas. New Orleans also had its own musicians who gained international stature, among them Louis Moreau Gottschalk. At the beginning of the Civil War, brass bands and military music also flourished in the city.

Music publishers in pre-Civil war New Orleans included Paul Emile Johns, William T. Mayo, Philip P. Werlein, and Louis Grunewald. Paul Emile Johns (1798-1860), born in Krakow, Poland, had immigrated to New Orleans by 1820. By 1822 he had a listing as a piano teacher, and in 1823 the Paxton’s New Orleans directory listed him as a “pianiste” (Baron 1972, 246). Johns accompanied traveling virtuosi of the voice or instruments at concerts in New Orleans, performing at the Theatre d’Orléans. Known as Emile Johns in New Orleans, this Polish-born immigrant opened a retail shop in 1830 (Joyce), and began to sell music in New Orleans; he flourished as the chief representative in that city for the French firm, Pleyel and Sons (Ignaz Pleyel and his son, Camille Pleyel). In addition to publishing music, he sold and distributed music of other publishers, such as John Blockley’s List to the Convent Bells: it had the stamp or printing on the music “For sale by E. Johns & Co., New Orleans” (Blockley n.d.; Knight n.d.). Johns composed and distributed Album Louisianais, a publication of the Pleyel firm in Paris (Johns 1837).

Johns sold his firm to William T. Mayo (1807-1892) in 1846. Prior to this purchase, Mayo had forged connections with publishers in other
cities, Frederick D. Benteen and George Willig in Baltimore, Lee & Walker in Philadelphia, and Firth, Pond, & Co. in New York. He was listed as a secondary publisher in several editions of sheet music. One of his earliest independent publications was the Genevieve Waltz, by a Lady of New Orleans, a pseudonym of Marion Southwood (Southwood n.d.). Another early publication was a song about the War with Mexico, *The Victory of Monterey*, by John Thuer (Thuer 1845). From his office at 5 Camp Street in New Orleans, Mayo issued hundreds of other pieces of music over the next decade. (Strakosch n.d.)

Mayo sold his publishing venture in 1854 to Philip P. Werlein (1812-1885), a Bavarian immigrant known as the first Southern publisher of Dan Emmett’s Dixie in 1860 (Emmett 1860). Werlein continued to publish several songs that spoke to the South during the Civil War, such as Flora Byrne’s *President Jefferson Davis Grand March* (Byrne 1861; see figure 1).

Louis Grunewald (1827-1915), of German birth, immigrated to New Orleans in 1852, performing as an organist in several Catholic churches in that city (Abel 2000, 268; derived from Boudreaux 1977, 72). In 1856 he opened his New Orleans music publishing business on Magazine Street; his imprint was first used in 1858, and he became the most prolific of all publishers in the city (Baron 1980; Abel, 291). He also sold musical instruments, such as pianos, drums, and fifes, as exhibited by his advertising in the *Times Picayune* of January 26, 1861, February 6, 1861 (figure 2), March 6, 1862, and even April 23, 1862, after the Union’s occupation (see also Abel, 152). The store continued to operate into the 1970s. The publishing firm moved to 214 Constance Street (1859), 26 Chartres Street (1861), and 129 Canal Street (1863). Grunewald was not openly Confederate, as were Armand Blackmar and Philip Werlein, and his music was not overtly patriotic (Abel, 268; Schrenk 1861). Thus he remained open during the Civil War. Grunewald was a very successful businessman, who by the century’s conclusion, owned an opera house and a hotel, “The Grunewald” (figure 3). This hotel eventually became the Fairmont Hotel, but closed due to damage by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.
Figure 1. “President Jefferson Davis Grand March,” (Byrne 1861). Courtesy Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library.
One advertising tactic used by these publishers was to publish music that depicted their address. Louis Grunewald commissioned Charles Mayer (1799-1862) to compose the *129 Canal Street Quick March*, also called the *129 Canal Street Polka* (Mayer 1864). Edward O. Eaton composed the *199 Broad Street Polka* (Eaton 1864; see figure 4) for Blackmar and Bro. while they were in Augusta, Georgia. He later composed the *167 Polka* for A.E. Blackmar, whose publishing house was at 167 Canal Street in New Orleans (Eaton 1865; see figure 5).
Figure 4. “The 199 Broad Street Polka” (Eaton 1864). Courtesy Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library.
Dedicated to the Patrons of
BLACKMAR'S MUSIC STORE.

THE

167
POLKA

Edward O. Eaton.

NEW ORLEANS
Published by A.E. Blackmar,
310 Canal St.
**The Blackmars in New Orleans**

One publisher who took risks more than others was A.E. (Armand Edward) Blackmar. Harmon Edward Blackmar was born in Bennington, Vermont, on May 30, 1826, the son of Reuben Harmon Blackmar and Amana Cushman Blackmar; both claimed to be descended from Pilgrims. A younger brother, Henry Clay Blackmar, was born in 1831 (Mount 1896, 121). In 1836, the family moved to Cleveland, Ohio. Henry attended the old-time singing school, and later studied flute and violin. Paul Powell and other scholars have assumed that Harmon had received similar music education (Powell 1978, 5). Harmon then attended Western Reserve College in Cleveland (known today as Case Western Reserve University), graduating in 1845.

In 1852, Harmon moved to Jackson, Louisiana, serving as a music professor at Centenary College, remaining in the position until 1855. Powell speculates that it was during this period of teaching that Blackmar changed his name to Armand (Powell, 7). By 1856, he returned to Jackson, Mississippi, and opened his first piano and music store. He published no music, but he was listed as a subsidiary publisher to P.P. Werlein. In 1858, Blackmar established a second store in Vicksburg, and partnered with E.D. Patten, known variously in WorldCat (OCLC 1971; Waldauer 1858) as “Blackmar & Patten” or “Patten & Blackmar.” Powell spelled this as Patton. Here he sold musical instruments and sheet music of other publishers.

Beginning in 1860, Blackmar issued more Confederate music than any other publisher in New Orleans, including early editions of *Dixie*, *The Bonnie Blue Flag* (figure 6), and *Maryland! My Maryland!* Like Emile Johns and Louis Grunewald, a substantial portion of Blackmar’s business was publishing, but he also sold music from other publishers, and instruments. Back covers include advertisements for pianos, melodeons, organs, guitars, violins, flutes, and brass instruments (Powell, 17). In 1861, he married Margaret Meara, who had been born in Ireland. Their first child of four, a daughter, was named Louisiana Rebel, called “Lulu” by the family. This southern will had extended far beyond Blackmar, though. Early in 1862, as Farragut’s soldiers lowered the Confederate flag in New Orleans, a crowd marched to the river, led by a woman with a Confederate banner, and a fifer, playing the Bonnie Blue Flag and Dixie. (Hearn 1997, 69)
On numerous occasions, Harry Macarthy (1834-1888), the poetic creator of *The Bonnie Blue Flag*, performed at the Academy of Music in New
Orleans (Times Picayune April 21, 1862). The Irishman had dubbed himself “The Arkansas Comedian.” (Macarthy 1861) In September of 1861, Macarthy sang The Bonnie Blue Flag at the Academy, to a house filled with Confederate soldiers. Accompanied by his sister, Marion, this song caused great excitement among the soldiers (Rutherford 1907).

On May 1, 1862, Admiral David G. Farragut turned control of New Orleans over to General Benjamin Butler, who considered The Bonnie Blue Flag to be “seditious” (Abel). Butler fined Blackmar five hundred dollars, and sent him to a jail on Ship Island for a brief period; as he was escorted to jail, the publisher defiantly whistled The Bonnie Blue Flag. While Armand was in prison, Henry smuggled several music plates and other supplies out of New Orleans and took them to Augusta, Georgia. Butler later confiscated all remaining music at Blackmar’s New Orleans publishing venture.

So enraged by the hearing of The Bonnie Blue Flag was General Butler that he “issued an order that any man, woman or child that sang that song, whistled or played it, should be fined twenty-five dollars” (Rutherford, 254). But even these measures could not quell the hearts of those who sang what became the “Marseillaise of the South” (254).

Undaunted, in spite of his imprisonment, A.E. Blackmar remained in New Orleans, even after his release. He used various pseudonyms, including S. Low Coach, Ducie Diamonds, A. E. A. Muse, A. Noir, A. Pindar, Schwartz, The Voice of the South, and Ye Comic (Drone 2007). Blackmar had quite a sense of humor, that he transferred to his publishing business. Short Rations (figure 7), a song dedicated to the “Corn-Fed army of Tennessee,” had words concocted by “Ye Tragic” (John Alcée Augustin, 1838-1888), and music gotten up by “Ye Comic” (A.E. Blackmar) (Ye Comic 1864). He published Goober Peas under two pseudonyms: the words of A. Pindar, Esq., and music by P. Nutt, Esq. (Harwell 1951, 100-101; Nutt 1866; Powell, 36). For the 1868 presidential election, Théodor von La Hache (1823-1867) had composed a humorous song, Let Us Have Pease, Ha, Ha. In the background, a clerk is transcribing “Let us have peace,” a line from Ulysses S. Grant’s acceptance speech on May 29, 1868, at the Republican Convention. In the foreground, the line is “Let Us Have Pease,” as the general and others eat (La Hache 1868).
TO THE
CORN-FED ARMY OF TENNESSEE.

SHORT RATIONS
Not Satisfied.

WORDS CONCOCTED BY
MUSIC GOTTEN UP BY

YE TRAGIC YE COMIC

Published by BLACKMAR & BRO. Augusta Ga.

Entered according to Act of Congress A.D. 1834 by BLACKMAR & BRO. in the Class of the S. Dist. Ct. For the Souther Dist of O.t.
In the 19th century American musical landscape the piano became more common in parlors as families and friends gathered for the evening’s entertainment. Annual sheet music production increased from 600 titles in the 1820s to 5,000 in the early 1850s (Cornelius 2004, 18-20). Even during the changing landscape of music and musical purchasing in the Civil War, people still bought music and instruments, especially pianos. In 1866, Americans purchased 25,000 new pianos at $15 million. Boston publisher Oliver Ditson had an inventory of 33,000 piano pieces; by the 1870s this had increased to 200,000 (Blumhofer 2005, 151). Our publisher went on to San Francisco from 1877 to 1880, but returned to New Orleans in 1881. Publishing well into the 1880s, he died October 28, 1888, in New Orleans. During his lifetime, A.E. Blackmar exerted a large influence on music publishing in the South, producing almost one third of all sheet music published in the region. I conclude with this: in the 20th century, the musical The King and I featured the song, “I’ll Whistle a Happy Tune.” But in Civil War New Orleans, those who tested the limits in their society, particularly in music publishing, whistled at their own risk.
Orleans: E. Johns & Co.


Times Picayune (New Orleans, LA) 1861-1862.


Burial Landscapes of Colonial Dutch Settlers in Vermont

*Patricia van der Spuy and Scott C. Roper, Castleton State College*

**Introduction**

The year 2009 marks the four-hundredth anniversary of Henry Hudson's voyage up the Hudson River and the beginning of New Netherlands. A scholarly revision is under way, including in its purview “the transference and then adaptation of Dutch culture to the New World” (Starna 2007).

Despite researchers’ renewed focus on Dutch settlement in North America, the Dutch presence in Vermont has not been well studied. Much of the research into the meanings and persistence of “Dutchness” in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has focused on New York and New Jersey. Scattered internet sources refer to colonists from the van Rensselaer patroonship along the Hudson, Rensselaerswijck, settling in southwestern Vermont before 1730, as well as to an early trading post set up along Lake Champlain. Few traces of Dutch colonial settlement remain east of the Hudson— but enough to motivate the identification and preservation of such sites where they are found.

This paper represents our attempt to locate traces of Dutch colonial settlement in Vermont. Because graveyards are conservative, long-lasting material records of culture (Jordan 1982, 6-7; Hannon 1989, 237), we have chosen to search for, identify, and record existing colonial Dutch burial landscapes in Vermont. We describe our successes and failures in that search herein.

**The Global Context**

This project is part of a larger, long-term comparative study of Dutch burial patterns in Africa and the Hudson Valley, and represents our first attempt to undertake such analysis in Vermont. Our broader study seeks to compare the imprint of colonial Dutch material culture on the landscapes of South Africa with those in North America, beginning with Vermont and tracing our way back through New York and New Jersey across the Atlantic Ocean to South Africa, the site of the Dutch East India Company’s colony.

Striking similarities in the descriptions of colonial Dutch domestic or household culture between these far-flung regions led us to ask questions that might help us to trace the connections that may well have remained between the Dutch settlers in Vermont, and those back on the Hudson. The role of the Dutch Reformed Church seems to have been as strong in New Netherlands as it was in the Cape Colony, where it dominated the annual life patterns of boers/farmers/settlers who had moved away from the center of Dutch colonial culture, Cape Town. We found no Dutch Reformed churches in Vermont, but this does not necessarily point to an erosion of Dutch religious identity. In South Africa, it was not considered necessary to build Dutch Reformed churches in the hinterland (although some communities did), because one of the key functions of the Moederkirk (Mother Church) in Cape Town was to control the crucial life transitions of baptism, marriage, and death—or more specifically for our purposes, burial. Our research will examine the extent to which those who lived far from Cape Town were brought “home”
to die and be buried—we do know that there was an annual trek to town to perform the necessary rituals of baptism and marriage, as well as stocking up on provisions. Transferring this pattern to Vermont, we hope to be able to establish whether similar cultural ties existed between Vermont and towns on the Hudson like Kingston that retained a strong Dutch identity.

**The Dutch in North America**
The narrative of the establishment of New Netherland in the service of the Dutch West India Company in the early seventeenth century is well known. Patroon Kiliaen van Rensselaer, whose patroonship, Rensselaerswijck, extended to both sides of the Hudson River, encouraged Dutch agricultural settlement in order to support the soldiers and traders of the Company (Jameson 1909). As Donna Merwick put it, “[t]he men who were the tillers of the soil (the *boers*, the farmers) were adjuncts to the Company and its objective at the fort: trading. They were to victual whatever numbers of soldiers and traders might live within the fort. Little more” (Merwick 1990, 7). She continues:

van Rensselaer wanted his farms west on the bank and north of Fort Orange for the same reason that he wanted the majority of his settlers on the east bank. ... He wanted his farm established where his overseer could forestall furs being carried to the Company’s traders at the fort, while he wanted those of his artisans and farmers erected at a distance from the same trade routes. Poest’s farm was the northernmost area under cultivation on the east bank of the river. It was also arable land on both sides of a kill, but its occupancy also had to do with the fur trade... (11).

Although farms were established on the east bank of the Hudson during van Rensselaer’s tenure, nearly half a century elapsed after the English takeover of New Netherland (in 1664) before towns were founded in what is now Vermont. Prior to Vermont’s declaration of independence in 1777 (and its later incorporation into the United States in 1791), the southwestern region of what we now know as Vermont came under the jurisdiction of New York, as Albany County, though nearly all of Vermont was claimed by both New York and New Hampshire. In 1771, New York conducted a census of Vermont, finding that only 23.1 percent of the population of Vermont (estimated at 7,664) lived in Albany county (Holbrook 1982, i-iii).

Although the Dutch colonies of the Mid-Atlantic already had absorbed Norwegian, Danish, German, Walloon, and French Huguenot colonists when the British took control of them in the late 1600s, and the Lutheran Church was exerting a presence in the region, the Dutch carefully maintained a separate identity from other European groups (Richards 2007, 26; Venema 2003, 21, 101-103; Swierenga 1985, 3). A sense of separateness defined early Dutch settlement, and scholars debate the extent and timing of the process of Americanization, whereby “Dutchness” became a specifically American-Dutch identity, or a more completely assimilated “Americanness.” Scholars agree on the importance of the Reformed Dutch Church to the definition of Dutch ethnicity. Firth Haring Fabend notes:

The first permanent settlers to New Netherland, equipped with Psalm books, the Reformed creeds and confessions, and the Heidelberg Catechism, arrived in 1624, accompanied or at least soon followed by a lay pastor known as a ziekentrooster, or comforter of the sick. By 1628 an ordained Reformed Dutch minister had organized a congregation and was conducting worship services in a room constructed
for the purpose... Three hundred years later, in the early 1900s. H. L. Mencken and other scholars found Dutch dialects still spoken within the boundaries of the original New Netherland, Dutch material culture and folkways abundantly evident, and the Reformed Dutch Church flourishing on the banks not only of the Hudson River, but all over New York and New Jersey, as well as in the Midwest (Fabend 2000, 1-2).

Even if “the Dutch immigrants reluctantly had to adapt gradually to American religious practices in order to survive” (Swierenga 8), the Reformed Dutch religion held the key to “rates of assimilation, in-group marriage practices, language retention, literature and periodicals, and the survival of an ethnic identity in America” (5). Fabend makes the important point that the intersection between “Dutchness” and “Reformedness” must be established historically. She points out that not all self-identifying Dutch in America had any necessary relation to the Netherlands, or to Dutch ancestry. However, irrespective of ancestry, a strong connection did exist for many to the Reformed Church (Fabend 9). Our question is, to what extent did those relatively few, relatively isolated, Dutch settlers in Vermont partake of the “flourishing” of Dutch culture that has been identified with a persistent religious Reformed identity?

Evidence of Reformed Dutch churches, architecturally and in terms of documentary evidence of liturgical praxis, provides critical clues to the existence and changing nature of Dutch ethnicity. Locating church buildings offers the hope of locating the traces of Dutch identity expressed through burial practices. We know that the Reformed Church in Kingston, New York was built directly on top of the burial ground associated with an earlier Reformed congregation, when the site was named Wiltwijck and Rondout, the location of the first permanent Dutch settlement. The cemetery markers in that graveyard can be traced back to the seventeenth century.

Historians of the Dutch in New York and New Jersey tend to rely on both documentary and other material culture in order to trace cultural patterns in New Netherland’s history. These studies are richly resourced; however, when one seeks to trace Dutch settlement and, more important, the evidence for the sustaining of Dutch cultural markers in Vermont, the clues become sparse. Where few traces are evident in architecture, and where church records do not exist, a crucial, at-risk material trace may exist in grave markers.

Brandon Richards notes that “[t]he colonial era gravemarkers of the upper Mid-Atlantic states have been the focus of limited research to date. That which has been conducted primarily concerns the New York/New Jersey gravestone carving tradition, established prior to the 1720s” (Richards, 25). Early grave markers would have been made of wood, in which case they are unlikely to have survived, or they were “simple stone non-artisanal markers.” Richards’s research concerns the “rough-hewn stone traditions of colonial New York, New Jersey, and Delaware; more specifically, those markers erected by and for the descendants of the New Netherland colonists.” He points out that, despite researchers’ claims that the Dutch settlers did not use grave markers before the English annexation of New Netherlands, in fact:

centuries-old marker traditions were in use before English-inspired headstones were adopted. Unfortunately, most of the earliest markers have been lost over the centuries to development pressures, neglect, and misidentification. Because of this, the final resting places of many of America’s first colonists have been, and risk continuing to be, disturbed. It is therefore important that remaining early
For these reasons, and to contribute to the historical research into the “where” and “when” (or “how long”) of Dutch ethnicity in Vermont, our study extends the geographical reach of Richards’s research; by venturing into southwestern Vermont, we, too, seek evidence of “Dutch cultural area sites where there had been a history of cultural isolation” (25).

**Dutch Landscapes in Vermont**

Perhaps the best source of the colonial Dutch presence in Vermont remains the work of Stewart McHenry, who identified a possible Dutch presence in southwestern Vermont at least as early as 1724 (McHenry 1986, 118). In the absence of obvious Dutch landscape imprints, McHenry’s work was crucial in allowing us to narrow the geographical scope of our study. In his research, the geographer found a unique pattern of settlement and land subdivision among the Vermont Dutch. The Dutch tended to settle in floodplains and low terraces along rivers (115, 121). The irregularly shaped fields tended to be small (three to ten acres), oriented to rivers or adjacent roads, and uninterrupted by stone walls or tree lines (121). Ultimately, McHenry identified eight towns in which these patterns dominated and persist: Pownal, Pawlet, Rupert, Manchester, Sandgate, Arlington, Sunderland, and Shaftsbury, all near or along Vermont’s border with New York.

Based on this research and to better identify the locations of cemeteries, we consulted United States Geologic Survey 7.5-minute-series maps. Throughout most of region that McHenry identified as having been influenced by Dutch farmers, streams tend to flow westward, generally as part of the Hudson River drainage basin. Logically, Dutch settlers would have followed these streams and valleys into Vermont from the Hudson River, partially explaining the preponderance of Dutch farming patterns along the valley floors.

On the USGS maps, we noted remnant evidence of a Dutch influence in the region’s place names. For instance, the stream that flows through Manchester, Sunderland, and Arlington is named “Batten Kill,” and several mountains are called “Cobbles.” We also found at least two separate highland areas called “Dutch Hill,” and one road named “Dutch Lane.” On the basis of local place names, we added Poulney and Wells to our list of towns that may have been influenced by Dutch colonists. Other towns may have witnessed a Dutch presence as well, including Bennington, but apparently such settlement was too inconsequential to be “effective”—as in many other places, subsequent settlers from Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts obscured or obliterated earlier cultural patterns here.

With locations identified, we still needed to consider exactly for what we were looking. To date, Richards’s 2007 study is the most comprehensive research into Dutch colonial burial patterns in the upper Atlantic states. Richards has found indirect evidence suggesting that the Dutch used burial markers in present-day Albany “in some form” prior to 1664, when the region came under British control, as well as direct evidence of such use in the Netherlands prior to that time (26-27). He suggests that the earliest markers used in New Netherland probably were wooden, as they tended to be in the Netherlands (28-29).

By 1690, however, stone markers had appeared in Schenectady, and by the 1710s in Kingston, New York, usually in yards adjacent to Dutch
Reformed churches. Typically, these markers are slanted or curved at the top, with very little information on them: initials, death dates, and other varying information given in abbreviated form (31).

Thus, for this project, we searched the ten towns we identified as possibly having been influenced by the New York Dutch during the colonial period. We searched nearly every graveyard we could identify on topographic maps, hoping to find markers similar to those described by Richards.

Findings
Although we planned to limit our search to cemeteries in river valleys, we considered some upland graveyards as well, particularly those located in hollows near the New York border. We were unable to gain access to a handful of cemeteries, including one in Manchester on private land and one in Poultney that does not seem to exist despite its presence on a USGS topographic map. In the end, our search produced only three sites worthy of mention in the context of this study: one each in Pownal, Poultney, and Shaftsbury.

Pownal, the southwestern-most town in Vermont, originally fell within the van Rensselaer patroonship. Although settled from New York in the 1730s, gravestone evidence suggests that English-surnamed colonists from New England overran the township at an early date. We investigated four cemeteries, both along the floodplain of the Hoosic River. (We could not gain access to a fifth cemetery located on private land adjacent to an abandoned dog-racing track.) Overall, we found only one grave site which could be Dutch or Dutch-influenced, though the date on the stone (1822) would seem remarkably late. Still, the top of the stone is angled, though not quite as steeply as those identified by Richards, and the marker contains minimal evidence—the year of death and the deceased’s initials (BP) and age at the time of death (52; figure 1). For reasons explained below, however, we do not believe that this stone is Dutch.
Poultney falls at the northern end of our study area, near Castleton. We investigated several graveyards in the town, but found only one within a reasonable distance of a small brook which feeds into the Poultney River. Even that cemetery is located in an upland area—in Fennell Hollow—and contains a plethora of stones with English surnames. We found one stone similar to that in Pownal, with the initials “AF,” though the top is barely angled and no date or age of death is apparent (figure 2). Again, for reasons explained below, we believe this stone to be Anglo-American rather than Dutch.
Finally, we found one identifiably Dutch name in a graveyard in Shaftsbury. Lewis van Wuert died in late 1873 at nearly 89 years old (figure 3). Clearly, this individual's gravesite is too late to be a colonial Dutch grave site, besides which van Wuert's name does not appear on federal census manuscript sheets for Shaftsbury until 1860—meaning he probably arrived in Shaftsbury from nearby New York quite late in life.
With the exception of the Shaftsbury example, which clearly is not a “colonial” burial site and likely represents the final resting place of an American of Dutch ancestry, we determined that these examples are not remnants of “Dutch” settlement. Using manuscript sheets from the 1790 federal census, we found that identifiably Dutch surnames could be found in five of the towns in our study area, including Pownal, but not Poultney. Furthermore, Pownal’s Dutch population was vastly outnumbered by those with English surnames in 1790, and by 1820 had completely disappeared—meaning the 1822 gravestone is not likely to be Dutch. Thus, our search uncovered no colonial Dutch burial sites in southwestern Vermont.

**Conclusions**

Remnant Dutch colonial landscapes in Vermont are exceedingly difficult to find and identify. During our search for colonial Dutch burial sites, we also conducted an informal survey of the built landscape, paying particularly close attention to houses and barns. Our sense is that few, if any, truly “Dutch” buildings exist in Vermont today. We did find a surprising preponderance of English- and Erie Shore barns in western Vermont, many of which appear to have been built during the state’s changeover from a wool-producing economy to one based on dairy and specialty crops (figure 4). We found no identifiably colonial “Dutch” barns east of the Vermont-New York border (Noble and Cleek 2006, 107-108; 117-119). We were more fortunate in finding a handful of Dutch houses, some built of stone or brick and with side-gabled or parapeted roofs (McAlester and McAlester 1997, 112-119). All that we saw, however, date from the nineteenth or twentieth centuries, and provide no
evidence of a Dutch presence during the colonial settlement period.

Even so, Dutch settlement was substantial enough to produce the field patterns identified by McHenry, not to mention remnant Dutch place-names, and settlers with Dutch surnames did live in the region prior to 1800. Why, then, did they leave behind so few grave sites, if any? We could think of two possibilities: either the landscapes left behind by Dutch settlers have deteriorated and disappeared, or relationships between Vermont and parent settlements on the Hudson River were such that the Dutch did not leave any landscapes of death in Vermont.

Either option is possible. If Dutch farmers in Vermont traveled to established Dutch Reformed churches for important life (and death) events, as was true in South Africa, then many of their final resting places probably are on church grounds in New York. On the other hand, if settlers were buried locally, any wooden markers established in the humid continental climate of Vermont would have decomposed after two and a half centuries. Stone markers may have met the same fate as those on colonial English gravesites, where brittle stone had split and worn away. Furthermore, according to Richards, the earliest markers in the Mid-Atlantic states “have been lost over the centuries to development pressures, neglect, and misidentification.” If some of Vermont’s Dutch farmers were buried on their land, later farmers may simply have disposed of extant grave markers and plowed the burial sites under for crops, as occurred along the Hudson River (Richards 25). A future investigation of Dutch settlers’ relationships with the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa may provide a model for us to test in North
America.

Notes
1 Suzanne M. Sinke notes, “[t]he predominant form of Dutch American ethnicity that developed in the United States, and particularly the variety of patriarchy it entailed, came out of the Dutch Calvinist tradition” (Sinke 2002, 1).

2 We also noted that many of the valleys carry the generic stem “Hollow,” a place-name that is almost entirely absent in New England outside of southwestern Vermont and the Massachusetts Berkshires, but much more common in New York. However, most of Vermont’s hollows are named with non-Dutch specific stems.

Works Cited


Odds and Ends in Material Culture

by Wayne Brew, Montgomery County Community College

I am not a collector, but my father was. With a last name of Brew you could easily imagine that my father collected beer items, including cans, trays, tap-knobs, and patches. Over the years my father filled the basement with these items. I, on the other hand, am not a collector, so some difficult decisions had to be made when it came time for my parents to move to an apartment. After some negotiations I convinced my father to sell off the cans, beer tap-knobs, and pennies (he had a huge collection of wheat-back pennies). In return I would store the beer trays for him. They are now cluttering the crawl space of my basement.

I did keep some of the cans that had special meaning—for instance, ones with the word “Brew” on the label—or had some historic value, such as those with cone tops. But my favorite is a soft-drink can: Afro-Grape, the taste of freedom (the soul drink). This is a great example of material culture as a time capsule that tells a story and reflects social history.

Figure 1. The display of my favorite cans (and of course anyone would like their name on a beer tray). The Afro-Grape Can is the third form the left (see detailed photo below). The beer tray is from the Wayne Brewing Company which was located in Erie, Pennsylvania. I would like to think that the brewery was named after me or that I was named after a brewery. Neither is true; the brewery was named after “Mad” Anthony Wayne.

Figure 2. A closer look at the Afro-Grape Can. It is a deep purple in color and contains the captions “The Taste of Freedom” and “The Soul Drink.”
Recently I Googled Afro-Grape to find out more. The only direct link I found was a web page for attorney Tom Devine. Among Devine’s many business ventures, in 1970 he partnered with others to form the Afro-American Distribution Company. They produced three sodas that were distributed the New York City Metro Area: Afro-Grape, Afro-Orange, and Afro-Cola.

I contacted Mr. Devine, who now lives in Houston, Texas. The first thing he wanted to know was how I associated him with Afro-Grape (I guess he never read that part of his web page). He went on to relate in his email reply to me that he once had all three cans, but they were stolen by a cleaning person. He kindly offered, “I wish I still had my cans and I would be delighted to give them to you. These products were sold in the Big Apple, Sloans, and Safeway grocery stores in the New York Area.”

This can is a great example of how material culture captures a moment in time. I can not imagine a product like this being offered now; it may even be offensive to some.

Soap Lake, Washington

by Ralph K. Allen, Jr.

Prior to World War II, Soap Lake, Washington was a premiere spa destination for many who sought “the healing waters” which gave the lake its name and reputation. Originally utilized as a ceremonial, camping, and camus root gathering spot by Native American tribes, the lake’s peculiar chemical composition (only three lakes worldwide are similar) provided relief for a number of circulatory and skin disorders.

As the lake’s reputation grew, during the summer especially, trains would bring tourists and relief-seekers to the various sanitariums, hotels, and cottages which were rented out on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. The cottage districts (a function of location and early merging of three villages into the current city of Soap Lake) contained small, often one-room units which remain in various stages of reconstruction or disrepair today.
Figures 1-2. The Soap Lake Inn, formerly Thorson’s Soap Lake Resort and home of Thorson’s Soap Lake Products, estimated construction date 1905. Photographs by Ralph K. Allen, Jr.
Figure 3. The entrance sign to Soap Lake, showing the “healing waters” slogan.
Of the big resorts, replete with boardwalks, on-site soaking tubs, access to the beachfront and other pleasantries, the Soap Lake Inn currently stands out as a signature resort hotel dating back to original construction at the turn of the century. The building was constructed of round water-worn stones gathered locally by a real estate promoter named E Paul Janes. After his departure for Europe on a business trip he never returned. The building became well-known as a result of an enterprising woman’s, Roxy Thorson, penchant for mixing the mud from the lake into a series of balms, salves, and ointments as well as distilling the salts from the lake and selling the products as Thorson’s Soap Lake Products.

After World War I, a U.S. Army private from nearby Wilbur, Washington, came to Soap Lake in search of a cure for Buergher’s Disease. Over time, McKay’s condition improved and he was able to resume full use of his legs. His respite from the disease, coupled with efforts of the American Legion, local and state politicians, resulted in the development of the McKay Research Institute which became, officially, McKay Memorial Hospital in 1938. McKay had come to Soap Lake to live only an expected three-months but survived for seventeen years, bringing his message of healing to a growing number of veterans and others seeking relief from a number of other diseases.
Figure 5. Typical cottage with local stone, circa 1905-1930.
Figure 6. Members of the Colville Confederated Tribes at the celebration of the Healing Waters Sundial, 2009.
Figure 7. The Healing Waters Sundial, the world’s first human-statued sundial, at Soap Lake. The figure’s feathers point North and basalt columns around the face.
designate the hours.

Today, the hospital building shelters a nursing facility, with samples of the lake water and mud in its basement after numerous studies of its chemical composition have been conducted.

The city fell into decline after World War II and the subsequent mass usage of modern medicines and techniques. Many still come to Soap Lake, however as a vacation spot to soak in the mud and drink its water but the glamour days of Soap Lake are fading into historical memory even as the city wrestles with the problems and prospects as an undeveloped tourist center on an off-beaten path in north-central Washington State.
BOOK REVIEW

by Katherine G. Aiken

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005
296 pages
Illustrations and bibliographical references
$29.95 (cloth), ISBN: 0-8061-3682-0

In the search for ways to describe, explain, and give the significance of locations, the history of business enterprises is often marginalized. Idaho’s Bunker Hill by Katherine G. Aiken is a dynamic piece of scholarship. As the title states, it is a history of a mining conglomerate’s life—from reputed discovery as a function of a rather boastfully braying donkey and its stubborn owner to its corporate death in a slurry of business decisions of the late 1970s and 80s.

Dr. Aiken demonstrates her talent as an historian and storyteller throughout the six-chapter study. As an historical study, this book provides the reader with thorough acknowledgements, succinctly written introductory and conclusion sections, and a plethora of notes and bibliographic references. In fact, Aiken’s notes and references occupy over 60 pages of the whole text. The only shortcoming I care to mention is the perennial question of maps. Only one map is shown, yet numerous related communities are mentioned throughout the book and it might have presented a little better with additional mapping.

The book’s chapters present an historical line from Bunker Hill’s initial discovery in 1885 to its closure by Gulf Resources and the federal government’s EPA Superfund recovery effort from 1981. While true to the linear style of many historical works, Aiken blends not only the actual business progression as a management story and its violent labor struggles but also aptly describes the Bunker Hill Company as a major player in the nation’s metallurgical industry, a legislative powerhouse, historically large environmental degrader, and a community developer.

Chapter One sets the location in northern Idaho’s Silver Valley. Aiken factors in the relevance of the dangers inherent in hard rock mining in the 1880s, low working wages for miners, discrimination between management and labor as well as attitudes towards various national origins, all resulting in a sense of spirit and separateness in a rather isolated part of the West. Thus, location underlay many of the operational dynamics which developed, erupted, and bonded the Couer d’Alene mining region, and continues to have an influence today through EPA Superfund cleaning activities.

The chapter introduces management/labor conflict, strategies developed and attempted by both sides, the company’s relationship with State
and Federal government, and the two men who shepherded the company into a twentieth-century giant, Frederick Bradley and Stanley Easton. Both of these men were examples of college-trained engineers who were less “hands-on” in their management style than previous ownership and weathered the violence-prone period begun in 1885.

Chapter Two, covering the period 1903-1917, discusses the nature of the Bradley-Easton relationship, their remarkable ability to harness technology, politics, labor laws, mining claims, and to protect Bunker Hill as a physical asset and national investment. Aiken skillfully recounts the development of the Smelter and its component integration into the Bunker Hill operation.

This chapter expands upon the nature of Bunker Hill’s political clout on both the Idaho State Legislature and federal labor law. As an example, the struggle between union and corporate-supported legislation regarding worker’s compensation and safety programs demonstrated the nature of the differences between labor and management philosophies and needs. Additionally, the company’s efforts to consolidate mining claims and wrest control of the real estate involved in mining are well written and stimulate the “further research needed” questions which erupt as a natural result of this book.

The third chapter depicts the Bradley-Easton years following the opening of the Smelter in 1917 to the years of the Great Depression. Here, the success of both external economies and the company’s ability to integrate technology as well as management practices is examined from the perspectives of community development and support from Bunker Hill, the union, and extant management practices. The leadership provided by Bradley and Easton during this phase benefited the capital growth and profitability of the company and kept both Kellogg and its worker base employed throughout this period of economic disaster.

Chapter Four covers the time period of 1928-1949. The management/labor relationship between Bunker Hill and the various unions supporting workers or being supported, sub-rosa, by Bunker Hill—an on-going struggle often involving federal interventions—is discussed in depth and with considerable skill by Aiken. The personal sense of miners’ masculinity and the company’s perception of miners’ worth is well documented and adds greatly to the human experience of which she writes.

This chapter introduces the working woman in the mine and the impact of such decisions by employers. Those decisions reflect a lot of the tension introduced by World War II’s labor shortages and outcomes impacting the region directly. Differences between labor and management are clearly reflected in direct and tangible interpretations of law. As an example, Aiken addresses the cooperation which was supposed to be demonstrated by a “Labor Management Committee.”

Bunker Hill labeled these committees as “Management-Labor Committees” while they were usually referred to as “labor-management committees” (p.124).

The fifth chapter introduces what Aiken refers to as “New Realities, 1949-1968,” a period which significantly altered the company’s situation
and its relationship to the community itself. The 1950s were a transitional decade for Bunker Hill in terms of operations and personnel. The reins of management were handed to Frederick Bradley’s son John who married Stanley Easton’s daughter, with Frederick becoming the honorary chairman of the Board of Directors and John becoming the company’s seventh president.

The Cold War’s influence on the relationship between union members’ organizing efforts and management is discussed as a function of the threat of communism. The realities underlying the efforts by both union and management, often resulting in physical violence, are pursued in detail by Aiken.

Additional pressures on Bunker Hill’s ability to maintain production levels, bridge the several cost issues which accompanied management of resources, and the inevitable forces of declining demand and price for mining products resulted in worsening labor relations. The metal market and labor market had formed a darkening cloud of financial problems for Bunker Hill. These forces were brought to a head in the contract negotiations of June, 1959 and were exaggerated by the unexpected accidental death of the Bradleys in a car accident in the Bay Area.

In 1965 Bunker Hill was publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange and by 1968 Gulf Resources & Chemical Corporation of Texas had emerged as the owner through a hostile takeover of Bunker Hill. Bunker Hill was now a wholly owned subsidiary of a company with no real connection with the local community. This action changed the face of the community, the company, and even the State of Idaho. These changes, accompanied by changes in union negotiations through the merger of Northwest Metal Workers and the Steelworkers, signaled the shift from local to national and international scales.

Chapter Six analyzes the impact of Gulf Resources, the impact of OSHA, EPA and state environmental agencies upon the operation of the mining complex. The strains placed upon both the workers and management from health issues of pollution, degradation of water quality, ambient lead poisoning issues, and financial issues resulting from Gulf Resources decision-making set the stage for the closure of Bunker Hill in 1981.

Dr. Aiken presents a well-developed concluding chapter which succinctly recaps the Bunker Hill story and the continued community struggle with environmental factors (Silver Valley Superfund) and its future. This is a remarkable book for not only its clarity, but also the depiction of the personal, community, and corporate drama which still reaches from an origin over one hundred years ago. An excellent resource for scholars as well as people interested in regional history, the impact of mining management, unionization and community response, this book is a true vein of pure historical gold.
BOOK REVIEW

Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890–1945
by Charles F. McGovern

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006
xv + 536 pages. Notes, index, bibliographic references, and illustrations

In *Sold American*, Charles McGovern examines the rise of consumer culture in the United States from the Gilded Age through World War II. McGovern addresses the role of advertising as well as that of consumer protection groups. In detail, he explains how Americans came to equate Americanism and patriotism with consumerism.

The necessary precondition for a consumer culture is a populace convinced to abandon the old habits of thrift, the belief in products both durable and enduring. That abandonment occurred in the period between 1890 and 1930. In explaining how and why the change took place, McGovern tracks the rise of advertising, the advent of name brands, and the switch from local and regional loyalties to national brands. He also shows how an overwhelming array of goods with no discernible differences creates a consumer class totally lost about what value really is. The bewildered consuming masses are easy prey for companies that are no longer their own advertisers, but rather rely on professionals equipped with the latest techniques of persuasion. When every variant is pretty much the same, image—a compelling back story—provides a means of distinguishing one from the other. The ad men willingly draw the distinctions, tie a product to a nationalistic or domestic story; the manufacturers gladly put on a price tag to match. Even today, advertising relies on the back story rather than the merits of the product—and many consumers make their choices by reaching from a sea of sameness for the life preserver of a higher price tag.

While advertising altered local Americans, changing them into national consumers, progressive emphases on professionalism and science/technology were creating an ideal consumer of a different sort. This consumer eschewed the lies and distortions of the snake-oil salesmen. Rather, the goal of the informed consumer was on purchasing products based on specific knowledge and clear understanding of distinctions and relative worth of products. Part of this effort was scientific purchasing. The long-term impact was the rise of consumerism—particularly Consumer Research.

Consumer Research attempted to rise above brand names. It tested various models and published reports on what the best of a given item should have in it. It ignored brand ratings, expecting the informed consumer to examine labels (where labels had the information) and identify on their own the one best matching the highest rated item. Consumer Research failed as a mass manipulator, but its founder had no aspirations
to being the counterforce to the ad men.

McGovern deals at length with the rise of Consumer Research, its relations with government and advertising men, and its attitude toward consumers. He finds that the scientists at Consumer Research were similar to the ad men on Madison Avenue.

McGovern says that ad men regarded themselves as a class apart from those they sold their bills of goods and unrealizable dreams. He also shows the contempt that ad men initially held for the consumer. Like the Enron executives embarrassed by e-mails highly insulting to energy consumers in California, ad men for BBD&O were often blunt in their assessments of the average consumer’s competence and tastes.

On the other side were the consumer advocacy groups. Fighting to retain a historical, perhaps mythical, American devotion to quality, these groups sought to protect consumers from shoddy and fraudulently represented goods. They saw themselves as adversaries of the ad men. Yet while they regarded the consumer as being in need of protection, they also saw themselves as members of a superior class to the consumer.

When the Great Depression undid the smugness of the ad men and brought them closer to the consumers, both ad men and advertising symbols changed. World War II also brought new symbols into being, selling the message that the route to victory was through consumption—a message that Americans had internalized by that point. The third three-chapter section of Sold American deals with the consumer culture as it begins the flowering that characterizes the second half of the twentieth century.

McGovern’s work builds on those of previous authors, but it is new in that it takes the subject as its single focus rather than a part of something else. Most important, McGovern shows how advertising manipulated symbols. The author provides abundant illustrations—representative advertisements from magazines show the manipulation of symbols as well as the change in message over time. He also discusses corporate personae such as Betty Crocker and Aunt Jemima. Additionally, he discusses the creation of personae for company founders and executives—the fictitious biographies of perhaps predatory businessmen, precursors in a sense to Walt Disney, Dave Thomas, Victor Kiam, and the many others who, in the latter portion of the twentieth century, became the advertising face of their businesses.

The story told here is not new, at least in its outline. McGovern’s accomplishment is providing a stand-alone study of the rise of consumerism, showing its competing forms and explaining the victory of the patriotic consumerism that the United States “enjoys” today. The work provides abundant detail, appropriate anecdote, and the full panoply of scholarly attire. It is a nice addition to the bookshelf of anyone interested in how the twentieth-century United States managed to move so far from what it was at the turn of the century.

McGovern has written the defining text on the internalization of consumerism. Now, we need a study of the differing consumerisms of racial and ethnic groups as well as immigrant generations. When that happens, may McGovern do the writing.
BOOK REVIEW

Camouflage
by Neil Leach

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006
xiv + 289 pages. Illustrations, notes, and index of names
$24.95 (paper), ISBN 0-262-62200-9

In Camouflage, the British architect, curator and architectural theorist Neil Leach invokes the work of twentieth-century critical theorists from a range of disciplines and institutional settings in an effort to fashion a new mandate for architectural practice in a time when surface representation and branding have come to dominate the built environment. He uses the term “camouflage” to gloss a human tendency to rapidly assimilate to even the most unwelcoming environments—cookie-cutter hotel rooms, prison cells—and he enumerates three implications of this tendency for the theory of design. First, drawing on an essay of Gianni Vattimo’s published in Leach’s own edited volume, Rethinking Architecture (1997), he suggests that an architecture consistent with human cognition would be one of “background music,” “belong[ing] largely to our peripheral vision,” rather than of obtrusive “object buildings” (8). Second, and potentially in contradiction to his first thesis, a recognition of the ease with which human beings incorporate unfamiliar objects into their sense of home should encourage us to “challenge traditionalists who argue that technology is a perpetual source of alienation” (8). Third, architecture can take an active, practical role in facilitating this human tendency toward camouflage. Environmental design should incorporate a reflexive awareness of the ways in which, without really thinking about it and mainly through the soothingly repetitive enactment of intimate rituals of self-care (brushing teeth, laying out clothes), human beings come to feel at home in the most alien spaces. Alluding to McLuhan, he notes that “just as we learn to drive a car through that car,” so the novel technological paraphernalia that saturate and mediate contemporary experiences of the urban environment can quickly come to feel like “extension[s] of our bodies” (10).

Leach offers an aesthetics of hope, a counterpoint to his previous critique of contemporary design practice, The Anaesthetics of Architecture (1999). He suggests that the pessimism of earlier commentators, including Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno, but especially Guy Debord and Jean Baudrillard, as to the possibilities for authentic forms of human engagement with an environment dominated by the consumer indicia of late capitalism, was premature. “Rather,” he contends, “in a culture of branding, identities are themselves forged through that domain. ... It is precisely through the imaginary realm of representation that so-called ‘reality’ is acted out” (242). Leach’s effort to undermine media theorists’ nostalgic yearning for an imagined, ever-receding time before mediation is admirable, but his critique lacks substance. He invokes a psychological underpinning for the human experience of the environment only to the extent it supports his case for embracing “that domain” (the anaphor is vague—presumably he means “the domain constituted through a culture of branding”), without considering the ways
in which this historically novel domain has reshaped human social and cognitive life (see, for instance, Coombe 1998).

Throughout *Camouflage*, Leach’s use of critical sources is flawed by a lack of attention to the cultural and institutional contexts in which the authors he cites were writing. Even as he advances the proposition that an unchanging human cognitive tendency toward mimesis, assimilation, and adaptation should inform the design of the environment, he seems to subscribe to an evolutionist model of culture culled straight from the writings of nineteenth-century British armchair anthropologists such as E. B. Tylor and James Frazer. At several points he cites Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* authoritatively as a source of ethnographic data, notably on the role of sympathetic magic among primitive peoples. He summarizes Freud’s argument in *The Origins of Religion* that the history of civilization is recapitulated in childhood development:

Animism would therefore correspond to the autoerotic or narcissistic phase, religion to the period of object-choice, and the scientific phase to the final period of maturity. This attempt to link the development of civilization with the development of the individual is of crucial importance, for it immediately situates our inquiry within a temporal perspective in which one historical paradigm can be seen to differ from another. . . . [I]t is to some extent through the early development of the individual that we might attempt to read the early development of civilization (156).

Leach’s uncritical acceptance of the Tylorian scala natura is shockingly out of place. It reflects not an endorsement of colonial racism but simply an unawareness of the history of anthropology and a concomitant undertheorizing of his choice of critical interlocutors. Not once in his extended discussion of mimesis does he mention Durkheim’s *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*; he seems unaware that the meanings of mimesis, totemism and various forms of magical identification were hotly contested at the time Freud was writing (see Kuklick 2006). And he radically misreads Michael Taussig’s intervention in the theory of mimesis as a vindication of the Frazerian evolutionist scheme (57-64). This is too bad. Evolutionism saw its demise with the advent of extended, immersive ethnographic fieldwork in which the social theorist is forced to reflect on her own experience of adapting to an alien environment—the sort of process Leach would like to hold up as the basis for a progressive architecture.

Ultimately, Leach’s effort is marred by a seemingly arbitrary choice of critical sources coupled with an absence of concrete examples. His project--theorizing an architecture of positive identification, a way for us to be at home in a world of airport cities and ambient television--is important and long overdue (it has been thirty-five years since *Learning from Las Vegas* was published). We can hope that *Camouflage* represents an early experiment in theorizing an environmental design of postindustrial mimesis, with further iterations to come.

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BOOK REVIEW

After Collapse: The Regeneration of Complex Societies
edited by Glenn M. Schwartz and John J. Nichols

Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2006
Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliographic references, and index
$50.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8165-2509-6

The appeal is obvious: we have learned a lot about collapse, so it would be interesting to learn more about recovery. And indeed it is. Schwartz and Nichols have shepherded to publication a valuable collection, having fourteen essays by eighteen authors, almost all anthropologists or archeologists or both. After Schwartz's introduction, which includes some general theory, there are eleven essays on societies in specific places at specific times. The Middle East, Greece, the Andes, southeast and east Asia, and Mesoamerica are all represented. Some of those eleven essays also contain important theoretical arguments that Schwartz did not signal in advance. Two essays of reflection and comment conclude the book.

A recurring idea is social complexity: collapse is a loss of complexity and regeneration is a restoration of complexity. Schwartz mentions "complex societies" in his first sentence (3) and then often again. He defines the topic of the book, and the goal of the authors collectively, in saying “…the regeneration of societal complexity is a relatively neglected topic” (4). The reader will guess it is hard to define complexity precisely, though one can recognize it when one sees it—on the ground, and in the ground. Schwartz says complex societies means “societies with extensive populations, large-scale and often multilevel political organizations (states), large and hierarchical settlement patterns (urban systems), and (usually) socially stratified populations” (17).

Archeologists, of course, are interested in this topic, because detectives and interpreters working on collapse and regeneration must often rely greatly on nontextual artifacts. What the archeologist finds, and what she does not find, indicate a host of things: urban life, agricultural technology, surpluses, diversification of economies and food supplies, long distance trade, roads and other infrastructure, religion, hierarchies—in short, the quotidian logic of life. “Administrative trappings,” to use Lisa Cooper’s phrase (28), reveal something about complexity. On the other hand, many authors here can, and do, rely heavily on textual evidence as well.

However, not only archeologists will find parts of the book valuable. Any social scientist interested in social dynamics, theories of social institutions and elites, and human-environment relations will encounter ideas worth pondering.

A regenerated society is necessarily different from the collapsed one it replaces. However, the authors are careful to note continuities between the two. There are physical characteristics—geologic and topographic, though not always climate, since climate change may have contributed to collapse in the first place and more favorable climate to regeneration. There is location—location relative to other places, or “situation” as geographers call it—which is so important for involvement in trade. Infrastructure may have survived. Ideology may be a source of
continuity—as shown by Ellen Morris in Chapter Four on Egypt—as may be all kinds of memories.

The eleven essays that are the bulk of the book throw up many fascinating facts as well as bits of theory, and their variety is attractive. John Nichols and Jill Weber describe a regeneration in Middle Bronze Age Syria that featured the rise of a newly significant ethnic group and also reliance on an economic base of onager carcass processing (hides were used for leather harness and straps, waterskins, shoes, and other things needed by long distance traders). Ellen Morris says that while there were some social reasons for collapse in Egypt, “Far more damaging to any state, but especially to a sacred kingship, however, are extended bouts of ecological disasters” (60). Gordon McEwan mentions the same vulnerability in writing about the Incas (92). Ian Morris summarizes nicely Greek history from 1500 to 500 BC, and he has ten indices of social complexity based on evidence of urban centers and large-scale settlements, extraction of surplus from peasants, monuments, ruling classes, written records, long distance trade, “craft specialization and advanced art,” military power, and standards of living (73-81).

Based on research on the collapse of the Wari empire and regeneration in Nasca (Peru), Christina Conlee argues that we cannot understand regeneration unless we know how local societies functioned under the old imperial regime—the “intrusive state”—and “not just how the external state governed its territories” (102). Local styles in response to the old regime shaped how localities responded to its collapse. Continuing the theme, and also writing on Peru, Kenny Sims advances a theory of “administrative underdevelopment” (119) to help explain why regeneration might not occur. The Wari system did not provide opportunities for local elites to accumulate administrative experience and savvy, which made it hard for them to establish a new hierarchical administrative system after the Wari collapse (119). Sims also says that when collapse destroys existing complexity, the disruption at the local level will be the greater the more the locality was “directly embedded” (121) in the higher-level state. On the other hand, regeneration will be the easier the more local systems are separated from the top and have autonomy.

In a largely theoretical essay in which he notes some applications in Asia, Bennet Bronson offers the model of “stimulus regeneration.” In ideal type, it is the creation of a new state in a place where its creators claim there was some historical antecedent, but where in fact “no immediately antecedent complex society had existed [but] where a historical stimulus—the abstract knowledge that states had once existed among that people or in that place—was a prime cause of political re-formation” (139). The political entrepreneurs use fantasy or exaggeration to legitimize what are actually new borrowings—maybe even from enemies! They “make...centralization more palatable by wrapping it in the mantle of a glorious past,” even if the stimulus is “an unsubstantiated rumor that something used to be done in a particular fashion” (138).

Bronson also discusses the opposite, “template regeneration,” where revival is based on a real and well-documented model. China was a classic case: the template was known—indeed, known in detail from the written historical record—and leaders used it over and over again to construct a new system “very similar to the one that had preceded it a century or two before” (140).

I especially liked one of the two final essays, by Alan Kolata. Here again is a new model on offer. It is based on a theoretical continuum of political ecology, varying from “direct” to “indirect” rule. “Direct” means forceful exercise of political, economic, and military power; it means imposing “externally derived laws and regulations, cultural absorption of subject populations, and often a powerful, colonial ideology of a
‘civilizing mission’...” (210), and a centrally controlled bureaucracy. Forts and new towns demonstrate power, and of course the archeologist often can find them easily. It is “hegemony with sovereignty” (211). It transforms the historical consciousness of subject populations.

“Indirect,” on the other hand, means the exercise of “indirect networks of alliance, social exchange, and commodity circulation via trade and mutually accepted tributary or clientage relationships” (209); instead of detailed administrative regulation we find “demonstration effects of cultural superiority, awesome displays of material wealth....the co-optation of local institutions and facilities....” (210). “Daily social interactions follow familiar rhythms without the continual presence of foreign authorities” (211). It is “hegemony without sovereignty” (211). I find the uses of “hegemony” and “sovereignty” unhelpful, but the basic distinction is intriguing. Kolata also suggests “orthodoxy” and “orthopraxy” as labels for the corresponding relationships between belief and behavior.

Of course the point of all this is that the nature of regeneration will depend on where on the continuum the collapsed society was located. For example, “hegemony with sovereignty” and “orthodoxy” make Bronson’s template regeneration easier. The opposite region of the continuum may generate regenerations of a different character, but perhaps no regeneration at all.

The book has many virtues I have not yet mentioned. Almost all the essays are concise and commendably brief; the maps are helpful; the editing is careful; the bibliography extensive (over 700 items), which is important because the authors write concisely and rely greatly on previous literature for their theoretical ideas. Although I personally began to tire of reading about “social complexity” yet one more time, I accept the authors’ prerogative to use it as a unifying device, and heaven knows other collections of this type often suffer from not having a unifying theme!

One issue worth raising is that so many theoretical excursions are sprinkled here and there among the density of archeological facts that it is difficult for the nonarcheologist reader—and truthfully, he might not read the archeology diligently—to pick out, pick up, the theory. I myself got restive over that feature of the book, and I fear it will reduce the audience for it. On the other hand, I recognize another side of the coin, namely that it shows how theory can spring from observation. On balance, I think it would have been desirable for Schwartz to expand the opening chapter to include more theory, and for Kolata to present his continuum model in a chapter early in the book.
Anthony Wilhelm’s *Digital Nation* provides a critical analysis of the information society, digitalization, and the “digital divide” in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century. Wilhelm is provocative in detailing the social exclusion and the digital divide by pointing out the technological inequalities inherent in today’s society. With an analysis supported by concrete examples, he advocates the right for all to have access to the Internet, to benefit from the digital society from the perspectives of education, knowledge, health care, and government services, and to work for a better quality of life. The book reflects the contemporary landscape of information and communication technologies more within national borders than beyond them, though he does provide limited examples about linkages between countries.

*Digital Nation* is divided into seven chapters that are well written, concise, and accessible. The chapters range widely in subject matter and include topics such as e-government issues, paperless transactions, digital literacy, education, health care and telemedicine applications, surveillance society and freedom of information, social inequalities and divides, and e-commerce. Chapter One, “Digital Nation at a Crossroads,” presents the issues of information technology for the society by making clear that the book is “…a proposal to help decision makers and concerned citizens usher in a more productive and democratic society…” (2). Wilhelm looks at technologies solutions from the angle of political and social problems by insisting that to achieve the “digital nation,” there is a need to reconsider “the social contract.” In fact, he even proposes a “renegotiation” of that contract (8). Rousseau’s social contract certainly comes to mind in places where, historically, the government has had an important role in providing social services. Here, Wilhelm recounts an interesting debate pitting government against individuals in the United States, particularly relating to issues of information and communications.

Chapter Two is entitled “Everybody Should Know the Basics, Like How to Use a Computer.” Emphasizing that in the knowledge society “the ability to have access to information and to remain informed” is important (21), Wilhelm demonstrates that low literacy skills among “one-fifth of adults” in the United States is a major limitation (20). Access to Internet services, including high-speed Internet, still is a considerable problem. Giving the example of the telephone service that took over “eighty-three years after its invention...to approach universal levels,” the question is, from Wilhelm’s perspective, “how long it will take until the market serves everybody” (35)? Here and in other parts of the book he
does not mention that the cellular phone has become a technology that could help people gain access to information and could even replace the personal computer. Mobile Internet service is a case study worth considering, but Wilhelm does not cover it well despite the fact that he brings up the success of the Finnish model in reducing the digital divide (107). He might also have mentioned that Japan, in 1999, was the first country in the world to have developed the technology of the Internet mobile, and that Japan became a country where the population has largely opted for such technology over the Internet PC.

Moreover, the issue of the “digital divide,” which Wilhelm develops in several chapters in the book and is commonly defined as “the gap between haves and have-nots” (89), is one that many governments certainly have on their agendas. Chapter Four, “The New Frontier of Civil Rights,” emphasizes this point and advocates “the right strategies to gain entry to digital opportunities on a non discriminatory basis” (59). Although the author links the digital nation with an improved quality of life, he warns in Chapter Seven (“Wire-less Youth: Rejuvenating the Net”) that the development of a digital community could have dire consequences, asking the question, “what does this homogeneity imply for overcoming difference, encouraging tolerance?” (124).

Another important topic developed in the book is the digitalization of health-care services. It is well known that the health-care sector has been very reluctant to adopt information technologies. Today it is finally beginning to catch up, although for many hospitals and physicians there is still the cost to consider. Still, electronic health records and electronic medical records are moving toward “more real-time health services” at “a lower cost than traditional health care offerings” (49).

Unfortunately, because Wilhelm scatters the important health-care issue throughout the book, he gives the impression of being poorly organized. Clearly, this constitutes one of the weaknesses of the book. Meanwhile, the discussion of the ubiquitous network society, a society where it is possible to be connected to devices and computers anytime, anywhere, is not mentioned. The same applies to the issue of education. The topic is poorly covered in the book, but Wilhelm makes reference to its importance as a “killer application of the twenty-first century” in the Conclusion (134).

*Digital Nation* is certainly a useful book if one wishes to read an overview of the challenges faced as in our attempts to become an optimized digital nation. Although some readers may not agree with some of the arguments developed by the author, it is worth reading. However, because of the way the content is explained and organized this book cannot be used alone in the classroom. It is recommended as a complement to others more academic readings.
BOOK REVIEW

**Urban Guerrilla Warfare**

*by Anthony James Joes*

Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2007

232 pages. Notes, bibliographic references, and index

$35.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8131-2437-7

To the layman, the term “guerilla warfare” implies a man in worn-out fatigues, sometimes with a beret or cigar, fighting in the jungles of either Asia or Latin America, typically associated with some socialist or communist agenda. Fidel Castro and the popular image of Ernesto “Che” Guevara on T-shirts come to mind. As with all things, the reality of the guerrilla is more complex, different in time and space, and often not nearly as sexy a topic as portrayed by the movie and television industries. Castro and Guevara belong to the traditional mode of the guerrilla fighter. These men, agreeing with the maxims of Sun Tzu, Carl von Clausewitz, and Mao Tse-Tung, utilized the countryside to wage a conventional guerrilla conflict, a mode of fighting even seen in the United States at times. As the global population has continued to shift toward urban environments during the twentieth century, guerrilla groups have followed. Accordingly, this mode of warfare has changed to fit these new surroundings. Anthony James Joes, professor of political science at Saint Joseph’s University, continues his long-term study of politics, revolutions, and insurgency in *Urban Guerrilla Warfare*. Seeing a continued trend in global urbanization, Joes suggests analyzing urban guerrilla conflicts to build a new set of doctrinal rules for the counterinsurgency as the urban environment challenges traditional military responses towards guerrilla revolts. Using superb research and presentation, he observes that urban guerrilla groups typically fail to achieve their objectives. Moreover, the counterinsurgent forces do not always achieve theirs, either. Thus, engaging in urban guerrilla warfare or counterinsurgencies creates a dangerous, slippery slope that Joes thinks the United States should avoid at all cost.

Joes begins by defining the traditional approach to guerrilla warfare. This mode of war is the weapon of the impoverished that lack the training, weaponry, and fiscal support of conventional, established militaries. As a result, they lack the power to directly attack a regular force. Instead they rely upon stealth, ambush, intelligences, and mobility. Applying the axioms of Sun Tzu and Clausewitz, Mao suggested only attacking when and where the guerrilla chose, picking smaller, softer targets to prevent the conventional forces from bringing power to bear. Winning the trust of the local population, the guerrilla gathers needed intelligences and strikes the opponent at will. Furthermore, the civilians supply the guerrilla with morale, provisions, and fresh troops as the counterinsurgents often blindly grope at this nearly invisible force. Often, these guerrillas desperately need foreign assistance to support their movement. These insurgents often understand the forlorn reality of their actions, but engage in resistance based upon their convictions, believing that they are more devoted to their cause than the opponents, and in their minds they will win because they are right.

Along with the global trend toward urbanization, modern technology has made the use of the rural landscape difficult for the guerrilla. Satellites, night vision, heat detection devices, other surveillance equipments have eliminated much of the cover and concealment offered by
the hinterland; therefore, the guerrilla has moved to the urban jungles of the third world as well as other modern, industrial centers. This move violated every instruction from the guerrilla masters. As a result, all the urban guerrilla events Joes examines, Warsaw (1944), Budapest (1956), Algiers (1957), Sao Paulo (1965-1971), Montevideo (1963-1973), Saigon (1968), Northern Ireland (1970-1998), and Grozny (1994-1996), result in insurgent defeat. The author did not intentionally choose these examples because they failed. On the contrary, he made wise choices to vary his study. Using the twentieth century as his parameter, he made every effort to avoid similarities in chronology, landscape, culture, motives for insurgency, and group applying the counterinsurgent pressures. With this in mind, the outcomes should prove different and a trained eye should be able to detect the natural laws of urban guerrilla battlefield. Surprisingly, the outcomes were not different.

Joes found the urban setting did not support one guerrilla group over another. Sites of popular uprisings such as those in Warsaw, Budapest, and Grozny should provide advantages for the guerrilla because of the large population. Due to the oppression of the majority by an opposing force, these warriors should be able to use this population to garner better intelligence, widespread support from the populace, and move with stealth within the masses; however, they did not fare better than those started by a small, elitist groups seeking political change against the will of the majority. In places such as in Belfast, Sao Paulo, and Montevideo, these small groups lacked popular support and had to focus upon secrecy, thus cutting them off from a source of potential power, the people. Contrary to the conventions of guerrilla warfare, all the forces studied found themselves condensed in urban areas away from safe bases in the countryside where training and rest could occur. Furthermore, the guerrillas were too close to the counterinsurgent forces and away from easy, outside supply lines. Consequently, they could be enveloped and eventually defeated.

Considering the case studies, Joes strongly discourages the commitment of United States troops to counterinsurgent activities. While most counterinsurgent groups win, the struggle often is difficulty and bloody. Multiple soft targets in an urban environment are difficult to defend, combat occurs quickly, the confusing foreign environment works against quick response, and zealous opponents can inflict mass casualties on counterinsurgents or destruction upon their facilities. To counteract this, the United States military needs to continue building armies of overwhelming size to apply violent, devastating assaults upon the insurrectionists. Prior to military operations, the successful military planner must isolate the guerrillas from supply lines and reinforcements, gather real-time, verifiable intelligence, and make every effort to thwart the guerrilla’s political objectives through pinching some of the aims of the insurgents. Furthermore, the counterinsurgents must maintain a high level of professionalism and avoid unwarranted treatment of civilians, prisoners, and others that might provide the guerrillas with moral ammunition against the counterinsurgency.

A wonderfully crafted, comprehensively researched work, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare* proves to be a smart and insightful read. Joes, an apt wordsmith, meets the desires of academics for well-documented scholarship, but does not exceed the grasp of the common reader or, more importantly, bore them to death. Furthermore, his systematic structuring of the chapters and outstanding use of the statistics, political background, and geographic descriptions allows the reader to shift from Brazil to Chechnya, Vietnam to Poland without losing the overall point of the shift. Joes utilizes thorough endnotes for further explanation and documentation, provides a detailed bibliography for further
investigation, and presents a complete index of the topics discussed. Accordingly, this work will provide wonderful fodder for a classroom, a
book club, or the thoughts of an armchair general. With this said, only one suggestion could improve the work. The reader may benefit from the
inclusion of a few carefully selected maps to illuminate the occasional geographic question. Overall, Joes produced a fantastic work. It will be a
wise addition to any academic, general, and personal libraries focusing on the history of warfare.
BOOK REVIEW

A Hammer in Their Hands
by Carroll Pursell

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005
304 pages. Illustrations, bibliographical references, further readings, and index
$40.00 (cloth), ISBN 0-262-16225-3

In A Hammer in Their Hands, Carroll Pursell presents an interpretive synthesis of the history of technology and its particular connection to the African-American past. As a scholar of technology with over 20 publications, including Technology in America: A History of Individuals and Ideas (second edition, 1990) and American Technology (2001), he is the ideal candidate to do so. Wide learning characterizes this ambitious volume as Pursell directs the reader to a number of arenas within seven distinct periods in history, from the colonial era to the closing of the twentieth century. Pursell holds intellectual interest by supplying evidence of a significant and complex story. There is a time frame, a subject matter, or a voice from the past that will connect to every reader. He brings to the fore important figures, inventions and patents, technical drawings, and political, environmental and social commentary all of which contribute insights regarding African-American men and women and their longstanding contribution to the development of American technology.

Pursell states that the book was compiled to “emphasize the long experience that black people have had with technology in America and to clarify the meaning of that experience” (xi). As editor, he attempts to reposition this generally unknown narrative in a new light and with collective appeal. The volume fits comfortably among the extensive body of scholarship on African-American history that has emerged in recent decades. More so, it accompanies other modern works, by researchers such as Portia J. James, Neal V. Loving, Judith Ann Carney, Joel Dinerstein, Rayvon Fouche and Bruce Sinclair, completing a comprehensive collection that merges history, technology and the African-American experience.

Pursell indicates three goals for the volume: first, to demonstrate that both enslaved Africans and African Americans have always been involved in the creation and use of technologies and therefore must be included in this story; second, to present the chapter selections as illustrations of the wide range of sources available for future projects; and third, to offer the selections as starting points for scholars who may want to explore the subject further. Linked to these goals is Pursell’s examination of the role of race and gender in the history of technology. “Since it could be comfortably assumed that, almost by definition, no people of color or women had an important role in designing the built environment, they could justifiably be left out of the history of technology” (xiii). Pursell critically addresses such falsehoods and formally speaks to the other half of the history of technology—the half that has been consistently left out—the African-American population.
The book includes contributions from a range of historical figures and contemporary authors on subjects related to African-American skills, ingenuity, and technology. Primary documents, including runaway slave ads, articles, patents, letters, technical drawings and excerpts from biographies, demonstrate agency and the “refiguring of power relationships.” These historical elements all support a theme consistently developed by Pursell through the book which is that throughout American history, from the earliest of colonial times to the present, African-Americans have pursued technological knowledge, mastered technological skills and developed technological innovations. It is important to recognize this significant aspect of black culture and the black experience.

Certain parts of the book stand out, such as the “Colonial Era” which tells of African medicine in the New World and the contribution of technical skills by enslaved Africans as revealed through runaway slave ads. For the student of black colonial history, the correspondence between Benjamin Banneker and Thomas Jefferson is compelling.

In “Antebellum Years,” we see the important roles of African-American artisans, inventors and entrepreneurs in an emerging national economy. Agency takes shape for slaves who had mastered technical skills. In “War, Reconstruction and Segregation,” we see persistent efforts to participate in the new industrial order and the South’s struggle following the Civil War to “catch up” to the industrial development that had been taking place in the north. Though racist laws and customs persisted in an effort to enforce a tradition of economic and social exploitation, African Americans in the South and elsewhere continued to actively participate in the technological life of the nation.

“The Progressive Era” is marked by the recognition of black ingenuity through patent records and lists of inventions, and reports in the black press of successes in black business and manufacturing. Chapters such as “The Training of Negroes for Social Power,” by W. E. B. Du Bois, add to the theme of the power of education, the power of intelligent work and leadership and the power of technical knowledge. Also in this era, Pursell presents “The Colored Inventor: A Record of Fifty Years” by Henry E. Baker. Baker makes note of the 50-year anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and the “substantial progress” of black people including in the area of inventions. At least 800 patents were issued “telling a wonderful story of progress of the race in the mastery of the science of mechanics.” “World War II and The Cold War” takes us from postwar prosperity to the civil rights movement. War workers are provided industrial opportunities and in the post-war era, black workers are in closer contact with the emerging high-technologies. “The Movement and Beyond” carries the story to the end of the twentieth century with African-Americans positioning themselves with regards to the “rapidly changing technologies of power in America.” This insightful section also details black women as engineers and technologists, environmental concerns and the racial divide on the internet.

Adding strength to Pursell’s themes is the role of black women in technology. The reader is introduced to the inventor Clara Frye, the aviator Janet Harmon Bragg, black women in wartime airplane assembly, and black women engineers and technologists. Pursell emphasizes that women had a presence in this story that requires further illumination. In fact, his selections on the topic indicate that a separate volume covering the story of black women and technology could be assembled with little difficulty. In terms of weaknesses, Pursell has left little room. More illustrations by way of photographs and technical drawings would add texture to the readings. Curiously, there is no afterword or...
concluding notes, leaving the reader to wonder about Pursell’s thoughts at the end of this presentation. Finally, Pursell considers briefly how the fields of African-American history and the history of technology have become more complex, more theoretical and more radical “in the sense of looking at the social and cultural patterns that shape experiences and meanings we take from them” (xii). Further discussion of this subject matter would provide orientation for the researcher or academic looking at the book as potential source material.

*A Hammer in Their Hands* is a book of progress, power and ingenuity that recognizes and illuminates the rich history of skilled African-American artisans, engineers, designers and inventors. This is a story long ignored as stereotypes and damaging misconceptions of the unskilled and unknowledgeable African-American have been reinforced. The limitations of traditional methods of “doing history” have been removed. The general readership or the student of technology and/or African-American history seeking balance in the American historical narrative will find it here. A pleasure to read, *A Hammer in Their Hands* not only provides a tremendous launching pad for further research, but leads the way in this emerging field of study. This is a fine book that fits comfortably among one’s collection of well-thumbed African-American history texts.

**References Cited**

I went to England for several weeks during the summer of 2006 on an architectural-study tour. While I was gone my wife and children, upset that I had taken all of our vacation time (and vacation money), kept threatening that they were going to buy something really extravagant to get back at me. What they bought was a little full-bred Yorkshire Terrier that they named Attingham. I returned to find a new small puppy, with a huge sticker price, that is not happy unless he is on someone’s lap. He even sleeps in our bed each night, inevitably lying next to my head. Of all the things they could have bought, why a new pet?

Katherine Grier’s recent book, Pets in America, answers my question. Grier provides an historical explanation for our fascination with the house pet. Her book is a fantastic study of American culture and is easily readable and entertaining. Each chapter is dedicated to a particular theme, and though they work together, they are meant to be read “individually, as topical essays” (11). Chapter One describes the array of pets available throughout history; Chapter Two, family rituals of pet ownership; Chapter Three, the domestic ethos of kindness; Chapter Four, pet keeping; Chapter Five, the live animal trade; and Chapter Six, pet supplies and pet stores.

Pet-keeping developed from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century fascination with natural history. Pets came to America with the first colonial settlers. Keeping birds, squirrels, and small dogs was a routine part of colonial life. But the practice of keeping pets in the “home” was a Victorian invention and is the subject on which most of the book focuses.

Grier approaches this study with a background in Victorian domestic culture. This makes her observations about pets keenly fascinating. Showing how pet ownership stemmed from the “domestic ethos of kindness,” she adds an intriguing and insightful origin to pet ownership that allows a sense of continuity between Victorian domestic culture and child rearing today. This point can not be overstated, as Grier shows that the pet, as a living object, was part of the material culture of the Victorian home.

Between 1840 and 1940, a nationally marketed pet industry developed in the United States that commodified this domestic ethos of kindness.
When people bought a pet they were, in fact, “buying a relationship,” one that offered “post-purchase maintenance” (231). Prior to commodification, the maintenance required--in the case of dogs and cats--specifically prepared foods in the form of special stews and puddings made from table scraps or “dog meat” and “cat meat” from a local butcher (84). Prior to the commodification of the industry, people typically had acquired pets from the offspring of the pets belonging to family or friends. But by the middle of the nineteenth century, “small animals were also the objects of a slowly growing commerce supporting a community of entrepreneurs who often combined trade in animals with other kinds of work” (232). In the 1890s, the modern pet store could be seen in most major cities, supplying the animal and special supplies needed to care for an ever increasing range of small “pet stock” animals. This trade in animals grew, and as “consumers became more interested in European breeds and purebred dogs, some dog dealers became respectable importers,” as well (232). By the 1920s, the Victorian ethic of kindness, using pets to teach children kindness, became a consumer driven enterprise marketed to sell a “pet to every home” (233).

The book is full of narrative stories that make the work easy to read and popularly accessible. This is often the focus of most reviews, but frankly, this is not the importance of the book from a historiographical perspective. The book derives its importance from the themes presented above. The pet was firmly tied to domestic culture and the house, as an artifact of that culture. This association with the home is why we still have “household” pets today.

*Pets in America* is an excellent model of the diverse application of material culture studies. But Grier also provides a model I wish were duplicated by more authors of material culture. Grier acted as curator for an associated exhibit entitled “Pets in America.” This exhibit featured the artifacts and advertisements and places her historical research in a publicly accessible venue. The exhibit was created at the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina and will be traveling through 2008.
Commodification and Spectacle in Architecture
edited by William S. Saunders

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005
xviii + 122 pages. Notes and halftones
$69.00 (cloth), ISBN 0-8166-4753-4; $22.95 (paper), ISBN 0-8166-4752-6

Over the past decade, a substantive discussion on the relationship between late capitalism and the built environment has emerged within the pages of the Harvard Design Magazine: Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design and Planning. The trend in critical attention being paid to the subject was noticeable even before William S. Saunders, editor of the journal, cleaved a selection of articles free from their original context to concentrate them in a slim volume called, most appropriately, Commodification and Spectacle in Architecture. By gathering together ten essays written on the subject between 1998 and 2004, and adding to them an introduction by Kenneth Frampton, Saunders has heightened the critical impact of the collection. Taken individually, each piece could be dismissed as an idiosyncratic response to the latest and greatest design project. However, when read in sequence, the selected articles highlight the sometimes latent anxieties in the profession over the cooption of architecture by capitalist forces. The profession in its many guises is adequately represented here: in addition to the Marxist-inspired speculation by the always critically engaged Kenneth Frampton, we hear opinions penned by a well-balanced and well-published group of architects and historians, including of Luis Fernández-Galiano, Michael Benedikt, Michael Sorkin, Rick Poynor, Kevin Ervin Kelley, Thomas Frank and Daniel Naegele.

There exist some obvious threads connecting most of the essays together. For instance, Frank Gehry, Herzog & de Meuron, and Rem Koolhaas/OMA make an appearance, for better or worse, in almost every contribution to the volume. Clearly, “starchitecture” is the most obvious force against which critics can react; the buildings of the mundane, the spaces of quotidian life, play a smaller role in these examinations of free-market economics and conspicuous consumption. (Benedikt’s celebration of his firm’s design for a grocery store, and Naegele’s examination of Michael Graves’ theories of architecture as represented at the neighborhood Target are two of the exceptions to this generalization.) And, of course, all of the essays represent some engagement with the modern-day marriage of architectural practice to a globalized, neo-liberal economy. Few of the essays analyze closely the production of “spectacle” (summarized in the preface by Saunders as a design that seduces consumers with its “Wow!” value, only to then leave them disappointed and disillusioned after the mechanics behind the spectacle are revealed) in contemporary architecture, possibly because such an engagement would require a doubter’s eye be cast on the means of economic and architectural production. To really see the spectacular nature of Guggenheim Bilbao, for instance, the viewer must be intellectually available to the disenchantment following the flash of CATIA-warped steel against the retina. Following that eye-blink of experience with a thorough analysis of architectural spectacle would require, at minimum, a suggestion of skepticism directed toward the economy that enabled the spectacle. As Frampton notes in his introductory essay, most of the writers who contribute to this volume fail to
seriously challenge the complicity of contemporary architectural practice with a capitalist mode of production, opting instead to view the commodification of architecture as inevitable or, in at least one example, quite desirable. Intense scrutiny of the spectacle cannot follow from such positions.

The obvious exception to resigned acceptance is the essay written by Madrid architect Luis Fernández-Galiano, entitled “Spectacle and Its Discontents; or, The Elusive Joys of Architainment.” Fernández-Galiano mourns the loss of gravitas in contemporary design, linking “an architainment of fleeting images and flashing screens” with the emergence of a late twentieth-century mass dot-com culture. Noting that even when works of “tactile presence” are created (Herzog and de Meuron’s Dominus Winery, for instance, or Peter Zumthor’s Baths at Vals), they “[fall] prey to our voracity for images” in a matter of moments, becoming more notable for their association with fashion and advertising than for their own materiality (3). He argues that the dividing line between the architect that produces the material object and the mass culture that reduces architecture to consumable image is much finer than we would like to believe. As he points out, “the intellectual venture capital of many an architect has been invested in the new casino economy of fashion” (7). By partnering with the very industries that reduce their work to icon and image, architects are complicit in the dematerialization of their own creative work.

Fernández-Galiano’s argument is further supported by the ruminations of both cultural critic Thomas Frank and architect Michael Sorkin. Frank makes absolutely clear in his “Rocking for the Clampdown: Creativity, Corporations, and the Crazy Curvilinear Cacophony of the Experience Music Project” that the work of “name brand” architects sits precisely at the intersection of built form and a globalized market economy. For example, the Frank Gehry-designed Experience Music Project (EMP), funded in large part by the co-founder of Microsoft, Paul Allen, exemplifies the symbiotic relationship of the design profession with corporate monetary interests. Ostensibly an homage to the independent spirit behind rock music, the EMP can be read as a multi-dimensional testimony of the ability of the “New Economy” to nullify the politics of resistance that informed rock music through a careful packaging of the museum experience. Though Frank casts Allen as the cultural villain in this story, implicit in his discussion is Frank Gehry’s elevated position within the power hierarchy of corporate wealth. Although stopping short of Fernández-Galiano’s exhortation to his fellow architects to step away from free-market temptations, the author still suggests that the starchitects should re-evaluate their role in the nurturing of a free-market economy, particularly in light of developments at Enron.

A significant element of this re-evaluation should also include a critical analysis of the packaging of the architect as an individual product available for purchase. In “Brand Aid; or, The Lexus and the Guggenheim (Further Tales of the Notorious B.I.G.ness),” Michael Sorkin’s attempt to amplify the alarm over the commodification of artistic space, Sorkin the architect manages to simultaneously implicate both Frank Gehry and Rem Koolhaas in the crime of turning the museum, as well as the museum’s designer, into a brand-name product. The deliberate practice of branding by Rem “is a sellout in architecture, reducing [architecture’s] meanings to mere advertising, a fine obliviousness to the larger social implications of architectural practice” (31). While architects can pretend they are simply “restyling” concepts of identity through the creation of recognizable brands, they are actually deploying the brand as a controlling mechanism, distracting our gaze from the real issues of power inequalities behind the spectacle. Sorkin’s criticism ultimately focuses on Rem’s own branded identity. The Dutch architect’s
repeatedly successful product placement—employing himself rather than a building as the product—threatens to leach the substance out of architecture, leaving behind an hollow shell of representation in its place.

Is this substitution of image for substance or materiality a problem? Not according to Kevin Ervin Kelley, founding partner and principal of the Los Angeles/Charlotte firm of Shook Kelley. In his contribution to the debate, “Architecture for Sale(s): An Unabashed Apology,” Kelley demonstrates that he willingly pursues and even celebrates the replacement of building with image. Kelley views the architect’s job as producing something people want, not something they need. Or, to be more precise, the task at (his) hand is not even to create a desired object, but rather to manage the perception or the experience of the object. In Kelley’s description of the work produced by his firm, Shook Kelley, the designed space seems secondary to the image of the space being sold to the client (and re-sold to the client’s client, since Shook is designing grocery stores). Should Kelley, or the firm’s partners and principals, feel guilty about deploying their design skills to deliberately manipulate shoppers’ experiences, creating instances in which “the shopper’s fantasy of living better has become more important than the actual product”? (2) I suspect Fernández-Galiano, Sorkin and Frank would all answer that question in the affirmative.

However, Kelley is not alone in attaching increased value to the marketing of image. Michael Benedikt, Director of the Center for American Architecture and Design at University of Texas at Austin, follows a parallel line of reasoning in his essay, “Less for Less Yet: On Architecture’s Value(s) in the Marketplace.” Arguing that current design values are inadequate, Benedikt posits that we arrived at this moment of architectural rubbish through the failure of the architect to adequately valorize her or his work in a market economy. As he sees it, in a flourishing peace-time market economy, “People can get what they want; what they want depends on how successfully their needs and values are addressed by competing producers. With a modicum of prosperity, people have choices” (11). The trick, then, is to make people want good architecture. Unfortunately, architects have relinquished their role “in upholding standards and modes of discourses about design that ordinary people can understand and the produce buildings that people want to live and work in for reasons other than the fact that they are new” (11). Instead of complaining bitterly about the corrosion of design values in an era of global capitalism, architects should be seducing their clients, inculcating in them a desire to purchase not just new or fashionable architecture, but good architecture. Again, viewed from a post-Enron—not to mention post-Katrina—perspective, we might ask if Benedikt really intends that good architecture should only be made available to those with “a modicum of prosperity.” Is good design, however we want to define it, really to be withheld from those who cannot participate in a free market economy in a financially rewarding way?

This is not to say that all of the authors included in this volume follow Benedikt’s belief in the transparency of the market economy, or its necessity in the production of good architecture. In fact, many contributors criticize sharply the “selling out” of architecture to corporate interests (in addition to above-mentioned articles by Frank Thomas and Michael Sorkin, see both “Hyphenation Nation: Blurred Forms for a Blurred World” and “Inside the Blue Whale: A Day at the Bluewater Mall,” by Rick Poyner). However, even though the majority of authors protest the loss of design integrity, the erosion of artistic values, and the troubling connection between architectural production and corporate money, few seem to be willing or able to provide any means of ameliorating the problem. Poyner, for instance, editorializes nostalgically about
his earlier attempts at resistance design, yet fails to offers any workable alternatives for today’s professional. Even Michael Sorkin’s concluding essay reads like a melancholic eulogy for the irrevocable loss of principled architecture. Where are the dreams of self-sufficiency and equitable designs so visible in his “eutopian” imagined cities? Is architainment really inevitable? Must we accept image and representation in place of substance? Is there no such thing as an activist architecture?

It is impossible to know if Saunders meant this book to be read as an architectural call to arms, even if that is the tone set in the introduction by Kenneth Frampton. Intentionally or not, the final impression left by *Commodification and Spectacle in Architecture* is one of looming crisis, not just for the architectural profession, but for the society out of which building practices develop and grow. It probably is not fair to wish that the contributors to this volume had provided solutions to the problems they so keenly identified. Perhaps the best for which we can hope is that this book encourages discussion of the pitfalls of the commodification of architecture not within the hallowed halls the major design firms, but in front of the workstations in first-year design studios. If the critics represented in this volume are unable to re-imbue a representation with meaning and materiality, perhaps it is time we turn to the next generation of architects to see what kind of world they would imagine for the rest of us.
BOOK REVIEW

Secrets of the Sideshow
by Joe Nickell

Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005
xxi + 400 pages. Notes and index
$32.95 (cloth), ISBN 0-8131-2358-5

It is very apparent that Joe Nickell loves the sideshow, and in his new book, *Secrets of the Sideshow*, he does an excellent job of sharing that love with the reading public. Anyone interested in the popular-culture phenomenon of sideshows, circuses, carnivals and magic shows should definitely pick up a copy of this book. The first three chapters give a brief history of the sideshow from the earliest times to the present. Here Nickell briefly discusses early examples of conjuring, touring exhibits and itinerant performances that led to the creation of the genre. He also touches upon the influence of Barnum's American Museum, the Midway Plaisance, medicine shows and "Wild West" shows. While these chapters cover much the same ground as Joe McKennon's multi-volume work, *A Pictorial History of the American Carnival*, McKennon's books are out-of-print and sometimes hard to come by. It is great to have the information readily available once again in this new volume. Chapter Two is particularly interesting because it deals with the setup of the midway's games and concessions. Nickell reveals the way in which games are sometimes rigged in order to give a little extra "edge" to the house. The discussion is fascinating and details an area of carnival that is often not included in books of this nature.

In Chapter Four, Nickell launches into the heart of his material. Here he begins to describe the various acts that make up a sideshow performance. Nickell divides sideshow acts into three classifications—human oddities, working acts, and illusion shows—and discusses each at length. Chapters Four through Nine detail every kind of human oddity act imaginable, including those that are self-created (tattooed people, pierced people, etc.) and those that are gaffed (faked). Nickell not only relates how these acts functioned within the performance arena, but gives some factual information about some of the people who thus put themselves on display. He allows the reader to see these performers not just as "oddities," but as human beings. For example, Nickell explains some of the physiological causes of extreme thinness suffered by the living skeletons (104), and he takes care to describe the difference between dwarfs (whose body parts are disproportionate to one another) and midgets (who have normal proportions with all parts being equally small). Nickell's physiological explanations and his stories of the offstage lives of these people help the reader to see beyond their commercial value and to get a glimpse of the real lives that take place behind the façade.

Chapter Nine details the working acts that have appeared on sideshow stages throughout America. Working acts are those that feature such
things as fire eaters, sword swallowers, glass eaters, blockheads, snake charmers, and knife throwers. Nickell’s lively discussion of the history of these feats makes for fascinating reading; and what really makes this section stand out is that Nickell is able to add his own, personal anecdotes because he has performed some of these feats. For example, Nickell is able to provide a firsthand account of the mechanics of fire eating because he is a fire eater, having learned the technique from his friend “Pele the Fire Goddess.” The book even contains a series of photographs showing the author eating fire and performing a move in which he “trails” the fire along his arm (217-18).

In Chapter Ten, Nickell turns his attention to the illusion acts. Nickell describes the most popular sideshow illusions and provides information on how they were ballyhooed and presented. Here, readers can learn about the floating lady, the girl who changes into a gorilla and others. While the revelation of magic secrets may upset some of the magicians out there, in his defense, I must note that Nickell does not reveal anything that has not already been explained in numerous books and resources on the internet. Most of the illusions Nickell describes are well-known classics that the public is already familiar with and the explanations are readily available to anyone with the impulse to go looking. Nickell’s inclusion of this section really makes this book stand out among sideshow histories because previous tomes have most often concentrated on the human oddities and working acts, but have left out the illusion shows entirely. Chapters Eleven and Twelve conclude Nickell’s survey of the acts by examining those that do not readily fall into other categories. These are the animal shows (flea circuses, freak animals, etc.) and curios (“pickled punks,” shrunken heads, etc.) By the end of Chapter Twelve, the reader has been introduced to almost every kind of sideshow act imaginable, gaining insight not only about the performances themselves, but also about the inner workings and backstage elements that helped to support each performance.

The most notable thing about this book is Nickell’s ability to present the world of sideshow from the inside. Not content to just gather information from archives, books and ephemera, he has actually lived in this world, talking to the people that work the shows and experiencing firsthand what it is like to be a “carny.” Nickell has several friends that are sideshow professionals, and he has included interviews and oral histories as an important part of his research. Also, the text is enhanced by numerous photos from the author’s own collection (most, I assume, have not been published elsewhere) and these are truly invaluable. Much of the world that Nickell’s book chronicles, no longer exists, so it is nice to be able to vicariously experience some of the atmosphere and ambience through these photographs. This book is a wonderful compendium of definitions, illustrations, facts and stories about the sideshow. It brings together a wider array of material than that which has been contained in previous volumes. It won’t provide you much in the way of theoretical analysis, but if you’re looking for a thorough, well-researched resource on the “nuts and bolts” of carnival and sideshow life, you won’t be disappointed.
BOOK REVIEW

Architecture as Signs and Systems: For a Mannerist Time

by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004
251 pages. Photographs, line drawings, schematics; illustration credits, and index
$35.00 (hardcover), ISBN 0-674-01571-1

There can be little doubt that the art of illusion, the art of the television screen and of electronic fantasy, will play a considerable role in the architecture of the future, much as painting and sculpture did in the architecture of the past.


Architecture as Signs and Systems is an overview of the mannerist sensibility as traced through the extensive practice portfolio of Venturi Scott Brown, whose outlook on architecture as a creative enterprise has shaped the latter twentieth century and continuing. This record tracks the development of a sensibility focused on style and surface, conceiving architecture as a primarily visual medium—as signboard and image rather than as a pure method of building in 3D.

These are style architects who have left their signature mark around the globe for five decades, including the Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery in London, Franklin Court in Philadelphia, the San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art, and many others. From venerable old-school campuses like Penn and Princeton to cafes and gas stations (and a McDonald’s themed to Disney near Orlando) to government buildings in France and highrises in China, theirs is the mark of mannerism, perhaps the most important aesthetic operating in building design today.

Based on a series of lectures on American Civilization at Harvard in 2003, this book illustrates the changing ideas about aesthetic ideals that have shaped the built environment over time. An overview of Venturi and Scott Brown’s design careers and thinking across the decades since the late 1960s illuminates much about human and American values not just in design and building but in urban planning and global developments. These mark the current multicultural style of global metropolitanism.

These designers have treated tradition as the content of art, beyond style templates or models. Part of this renaissance is owed to new industrial materials that can replicate any era or construction method—themeing landscapes of urban and suburban spaces with art styles of the past as a way of giving new life to antiquated sensibilities. In this way their work focuses on adapting modes of feeling and seeing as well as building to problems of new building as well as updating and readapting old spaces to new uses.

Witness the strip-scape of Las Vegas as a visual experience. The city is a virtual world tour from New York City to Old Europe to the Middle


East and back to Paris and Italy (the topic of their book, with the late Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas*, in 1972). But the intent is not to rebuild blocks or cities in high gothic or beaux arts or even the international style, but to put those styles to work within a “scenographic” new order that references the catalog of older styles in a sophisticated re-viewing. Along with their accomplished projects, this fully illustrated overview also includes plans and proposals never built. This stylebook of designs and their theoretical genealogies offer options to evoke mood appropriate to the setting—a technique first used in full force at Disneyland in 1955 within a symbolic landscape designed not by architects but by filmmakers and animators.

Chapter Four on “A New Mannerism for Architecture as Sign” proposes mannerism as the key sensibility for the twenty-first century. Mannerism uses modernism et al. as its raw content but spins it in the direction of the popular arts—commercial, communal, technological, and graphically symbolic—and away from the purity of manifestos of originality. Mannerism embraces complexity and contradiction, enveloping any and all styles within its grasp of irony, rule-breaking, eclectic aesthetics. It works by analogy and juxtaposition from outside any single style, by wit rather than literal observance within the style limits. Mannerism acknowledges multiple and layered meanings as the outcome of reinventing the conventions of established styles, from simple to complex, abstract to symbolic, drawn from a multicultural database. The epicenter of mannerism is Times Square; as the Piazza San Marco was a style mélange for the Renaissance.

Chapter Five, “Some Ideas and Their History,” opening with the South African setting of Scott Brown’s youth, looks at the genealogy of meta-style as the current outcome of the history of design ideas richly informed by received concepts— from fields as diverse as folk art, social activism, urban planning, psychology, cultural geography, even theology.

The Venturi approach considers signs and symbols as place-makers in the mind, rather than building styles and materials outside it. The duo has formulated an architecture of communication—which is the way all great art has always had its effect on the collective mind. This challenging book raises questions about the purposes of architecture beyond containing space, but as a part of bigger systems like perception, community, urban living, the highway system, and artistic expression as a communication that holds the receiver as the prime player in the equation.

Communication by cultural iconography rather than simply a master-planning expression on the architect’s part, operates in the “impure” netherworld running below and beyond the fine arts: that of popular culture, advertising, mass media and manufacturing, signage, the roadscape, industrial/technological design, and vernacular symbolism.

Between the universe of serious high-architectural commissions and the commonplace of shared popular culture has grown up a creative crossbreeding of the most rarified fine arts with the most common shared signs and symbols of popular culture. A third vector is the dynamics of commercial space as the “experience economy” for which building becomes the creation of art spaces for behavior. VSB has long anticipated and pioneered this type of space, one designed to be experienced by reference to many other times and places—as themed space-making based as much on mental as on material models.
BOOK REVIEW

Technology Matters: Questions to Live With
by David E. Nye

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006
282 pages. Index
$27.95 (cloth), ISBN 9-262-14093-4

“Technology is not the mastery of nature but the relations between nature and man.” — Walter Benjamin

David E. Nye, Professor of American History at the University of Southern Denmark, has written a book that explores what technology is as a living thing; that is, the human/technology interface. His question comes alive within the avenues pursued specifically in this volume: exactly what the extensions of our powers as tools, inventions, and the command of nature mean to our thinking and behavior. Homo faber is the author’s subject, and how our history as makers of technology indeed defines us by a species-long record of toolmaking and using, beginning with the earliest known hand ax traceable to homo erectus 1.6 million years ago.

Since that time, we have lived with the question of how, once invented, our technologies take on their own lives in remaking us. But, Nye points out, as ingenious as we are, our ability to know our own creations is quite limited by comparison. Our tools and their outcomes are always far ahead of our ability to understand the technological drives that give rise to the enduring process of imagination, invention, effect, and response.

Technology Matters is a systematic response to the ongoing need to appreciate the effects of our works on ourselves, our decision-making, and our thinking and behavior. This is no easy project. Like the problem of consciousness and thinking in cognitive science, it is impossible to divide off our works as a realm apart from our nature. But Nye is adept at identifying the main issues that make this pursuit of intelligence doable and even urgent for the health and survival the human race and the planet earth.

To explore this question, Nye cites the poet Rilke’s entreaty to be “patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to live the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue . . . [to]live along some distant day into the answers” (x).

To follow this poetic-inquiry approach, Nye lays out a groundwork of provocative questions in eleven chapters that pose some ways of proceeding through the tangled web. These start with the definition of technology itself from its pre-historical origins. The path resumes in the interface of human works and science, logic, nature, economics, politics, values, decision-making, policy, risk-taking, loss aversion, cognition, change, opportunity, and adjoining fields on which our greatest ideals and worst fears are played out.
Throughout these considerations are interlaced discussions of such issues as jobs, computer games, progress, scientific inquiry, evolution, technological momentum, social control of innovation and inventions, and their evolution within culture and as cultural constructions. The human/technology interface is thereby conceived as a system to be understood as a self-mediating process. Culture is constantly being reinvented by its own productions along certain genetic lines of creativity and choice-making. The technology/human synthesis is the most arresting dimension of the author’s discussion. More attention to the cultural process, as the overarching system of collective thought and behavior, would extend the focus and improve this book’s explanatory powers.

Although we seldom think systematically about the world created by human ingenuity, as Nye points out at the outset, this is an important thing to do. “We live not merely in a technological world, but in a world that from our earliest years we imagine and construct through tools and machines” (ix). Virtually all our experiences are mandated by technology, or conditioned by its many demands and effects. This is not the same as determinism, Nye often notes, because cultural drives and priorities are always, however invisibly, the mediators in perceiving the advantage and setting the agenda for adoption. Our humanity becomes a technological question as culture has come to be about that subject. This fact makes analysis and assessment of matters technological all the more critical. We need to find ways into and through this daunting black box in order to arrive at a collective technological intelligence.

This is because technology implies much: skills, process and narrative, social evolution and transaction, roles adopted to fit technology, brain evolution, sensory ability, imagination, transformation, creativity, and our whole stance and relationship to the universe, past and future, through our repertory of tools. These topics demand a sweeping view and a grasp of the way everything around us funnels--both from and toward—the impulse to make and make over the human environment.

That built environment intersects everywhere with the culture concept, so that the human mind and motivation must be considered part of every invention, as writing, agriculture, fire, communications, the Internet, nanotechnology, and transportation are integrated into our cultural toolkit. Even the lawn, our link with nature, is problematic, since “a park is a technological artifact, especially if it has a lawn. Lawns are tended by machines . . .” (194). Man and nature are, within the cultural scheme, two aspects of one unified system.

Layered into the basic problem is contextualism: the concept of potentials versus actual usage. The way things are designed is typically only one limited aspect of the way they emerge to operate in real time with many human factors, on the ground, and with and against other technologies and over decades. Edison conceived the phonograph as a voice recorder for dictation, whereas its actual function turned out to be for music; a demonstration that “invention is often the mother of the unforeseen” (159).

Nye considers many systems of cause-and-effect, paradox, unintended outcomes, innovation, paradigm shift, efficiency, novelty, collectivism, and diversity . . . and what these mean to us in our life and work. The culture concept always in play in the discussion means that we have choices to make about our technologies; they are not fated or inevitable. No matter how difficult it may be to detect just when the turning-points in any technology’s history were, they once presented avenues headed elsewhere in other evolutionary directions. In examining farming,
the auto, electricity, the suburbs, clothing, the telephone, bicycle, department store, atomic power, business structures, congressional committees, patents, and environmentalism, the symbolic meanings and cultural drivers directing technology clearly emerge as the root system holding the many issues together.

So in the end, as at the prehistoric beginning, technology is at heart more than a toolkit. It is an index to our values and, constructed with many kinds of tools, from chisels to calculus, the culture (and the emerging types of multi-culture) that manifests those values.
BOOK REVIEW

The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture Volume 4: Myth, Manners, & Memory
edited by Charles Reagan Wilson

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006
xviii + 297 pages. Index

The original Encyclopedia of Southern Culture, encompassing some 1,600 pages, was released in 1989 to wide acclaim and quickly became the standard reference in the field of Southern Studies, featuring topical sections on history, agriculture, ethnic life, law, science and medicine, literature, violence, and more. However, even in 1989, the South was already undergoing tremendous demographic and cultural change, and the relatively new field of Southern Studies was adopting new analytical techniques that were leading to new insights into the culture and history of the region. It soon became readily apparent that this classic encyclopedia would need updating in order to remain a relevant resource for modern students. Rather than make an already huge volume even weightier with additional material, the editors decided that The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture would be comprised of individual, thematic volumes released separately. This allows for the expansion of articles to include recent developments or new scholarship, as well as the inclusion of articles that were not part of the original encyclopedia. Not only have the entries been updated, but so have the bibliographies, thus pointing the reader to the latest research and most comprehensive on any given subject.

Myth, Manners, & Memory, the fourth volume of The New Encyclopedia of the South, combines parts from the “History and Manners” and the “Mythic South” sections of the previous edition to provide a greater focus on how the South’s view of itself influences Southern custom and culture. The result is sure to be one of the cornerstone volumes of this series, covering a range of topics such as “Confederate Monuments,” “Romanticism,” “Sexuality,” “Fashion,” “Debutantes,” and more—the whole breadth of Southern social life and mythic consciousness. Among the entries new to this edition are “Clocks and Time,” “Etiquette of Race Relations in the Jim Crow South,” “Fatherhood,” “Ladies and Gentlemen,” “Tobacco,” “Victorianism,” and “Visiting,” as well as shorter profile pieces on subjects such as “Black Collectibles,” “Christmas,” “Graceland,” and “Trucking.” All of this is introduced by a short essay at the beginning looking at how mythology has played a role in the shaping of Southern identity and how manners and memory are linked to that mythology. One thing I most enjoy about this particular volume is that it examines those characteristics of Southern life so common as to be almost invisible, such as the simple act of visiting. The whole encyclopedia series does particularly well at not examining the South in isolation, and that is true for this volume, which features an analysis of
Northern mythmaking about the South as well as the stereotypes of Southerners held by those outside the region (there is, indeed, even a separate piece on “Mencken’s South”).

Working as I am on the second encyclopedia project of my career, I tend to be a bit sympathetic toward other encyclopedias I encounter, for putting one together is an exercise in imperfection. Encyclopedias are collaborative projects that may rely upon hundreds of authors scattered around the nation and the world, each with their own academic backgrounds and writings styles, as well as their own particular set of priorities, and it is the poor editor’s job to weave all the entries together into a seamless whole—that is, provided he can actually get them from the author. Where many critics see inexcusable gaps in an encyclopedia’s range of entries, I imagine a desperate editor yet again phoning an author who has long since stopped answering, trying feverishly to get something in before the deadline for publication.

That said, this is a book review, and there are some small omissions in the volume under consideration. Feuding is covered but not dueling, which was intricately tied up in Southern codes of honor and chivalry, and though no longer formally acceptable in the current school of Southern manners, it remains deserving of analysis. There is an entry on patriotic societies, such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy, but other women’s groups and aesthetic clubs were active in the “manners” department, if not necessarily the “myth” department. Finally, I was disappointed that there was not more on how myth and manners manifested themselves in the material culture of the region, such as the front porch of the house which was the site of much neighborhood socialization in times before air conditioning allowed people to remain indoors much of the time.

Overall, however, this remains a top-notch encyclopedia series. Compared with the volumes already published—Religion, Geography, and History—Myth, Manners, & Memory ranks as one of the more enlightening and satisfying books, and The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture deserves just as much recognition as its forebear received when it was released. In fact, the format of this edition, being released in separate, thematic volumes, means that it is likely to be more useful to a variety of readers. One can easily see this volume serving as a textbook in classes devoted to Southern Studies, sociology, and more. Anyone who has the slightest interest in the South would be well served by picking up this volume, for it excavates some of the core components of the region’s mindset in a way that is thorough and exciting.
BOOK REVIEW

The South’s Tolerable Alien: Roman Catholics in Alabama and Georgia, 1945–1970

by Andrew S. Moore

Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007
xii + 210 pages. Notes, bibliographic references, and index
$35.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8071-3212-8

The “Christ-haunted” South has not always been so simply divided between white and black, as a number of recent studies of race and religion in the South have shown. Eliza R. L. McGraw’s Two Covenants: Representations of Southern Jewishness (2005) demonstrates how the physical presence of Jews in the South, coupled with representations of Jews in the Southern Protestant theological system, effectively undermined the ability of the white South to portray itself as a monolithic whole, while Michael Phillips’s White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841–2001 (2006) details the means by which various non-black minorities—most notably Jews and Hispanics—struggled for the privileges that being seen as white would confer. In All According to God’s Plan: Southern Baptist Missions and Race, 1945–1970, Alan Scot Willis (2004) looks at how the duality of Christianity versus communism slowly moved to the forefront of the thinking of Southern Baptist leaders, even ahead of the traditional black-white dualism, much to the chagrin of some believers.

Adding yet another piece to our increasingly multifaceted view of this American region is Andrew S. Moore’s The South’s Tolerable Alien, which examines the place that Catholics held in the predominately evangelical Protestant world of Alabama and Georgia—a place that, ironically enough, was fairly precarious until the advent of the modern civil rights movement. But Moore’s study is not just a record of anti-Catholicism, for he goes deeper, trying to discover what being Catholic meant to those within this marginalized church, especially as reforms of the Second Vatican Council—and with them, new understandings of such stalwart concepts as “Church” and “justice”—found their way down to the level of individual parishes. This book proves to be a great contribution to the study of American Catholicism and Southern history, the intersection of which reveals the tensions of church and state, culture and conscience, that have been present all throughout the course of the American experiment.

Moore begins by examining the role of Catholics as an “other” in the South, noting that anti-Catholicism—which, in some respects, rivaled even anti-black sentiment—united “southern white Protestants and gave them common cause with non-southern Protestants,” thus creating “a Protestant heritage that transcended regional identity” and even denominational differences (11). In response, Southern Catholics “accepted
their outsider status out of necessity and drew on the traditions and doctrines they shared with Catholics everywhere to reinforce their religious identity” (17). Given this wider identification, the sacred space of the neighborhood parish never became as central to Catholic identity in the South as it was the North. As anti-communism rose as the rallying cry for American society, Protestants sought to equate the hierarchical Catholic Church with communism, given its supposed foreign allegiances and its anti-democratic spirit; in turn, Southern Catholics painted their theological nemeses with the same brush, labeling Protestantism a stepping stone to the secularism that pervades communist societies. Christ the King observances became focal points around which, especially in the 1950s, Southern Catholics could exhibit their patriotic and masculine spirit.

When the modern civil rights movement got underway, it brought, in the minds of many Southerners, a new “outside agitator” enemy to the region. “In such an environment,” Moore notes, “religious differences were muted in favor of a concerted effort to defend the South from federal intervention to force integration. Indeed, any Protestant attack of a Catholic was more likely to come in protest of support for integration than for Catholicism’s sake” (63–64). Three of the book’s six chapters constitute specific case studies of how the civil rights movement divided Southern Catholics: first, there is a brief account of Father Albert S. Foley’s career as an activist for social change, followed by studies of how the ecclesial hierarchies of Atlanta and Alabama typified opposite ends of the question of race relations and the Church’s role in society. Moore skillfully uncovers several layers of tension within the experience of Southern Catholicism. Often, white Catholics who had worked so hard to be accepted in a hostile society were resistant to any stance that would endanger their social gains and so defined themselves by culture more than religion: “As the drama of the black freedom struggle intensified in the 1960s, it was more important for many white Catholics that they were white and members of the majority who sought to defend segregation” (84). The idea of the unchanging Church as an agent of social change struck many Catholics as an alien notion, and a number could not comprehend why it was that achieving models of integration was no longer as good as simply having separate black parishes. Black Catholics, on the other hand, found they had brethren in other denominations participating more fully in the freedom struggle, thus reinforcing black over Catholic identity; many African Americans thus resisted merging their parishes with white parishes.

The last chapter looks at the effects of the Second Vatican Council on Southern Catholics. While the Catholic Church’s official embracing of the ideals of integration drove away some, the slow pace of achieving those ideals dispirited others, especially those charged by the excitement of Vatican II. Given new conciliar definitions of Church as the people of God, many religious people, both male and female, “pushed the challenge to accepted authority” to its extreme end, rejecting “the exclusive religious claims of the Roman Catholic Church” in favor of a broad ecumenism (148). Given their positions as appointees of the bishop, rather than as a selections of their congregations, many priests were protected from parish disapproval and so could more forcefully advocate for change than their Protestant counterparts—a situation which further affected the relationship many laypeople had with their church for good or ill. A number felt themselves beset by the forces of change in almost all spheres of their lives.

“The civil rights movement changed the South and the Catholic Church,” notes Moore. “It linked Catholics to southern culture in a way not
previously experienced, even as that culture was undergoing changes from which it would not recover” (161). *The South’s Tolerable Alien* is a record of that interaction between faith and the world at large as it affected a regional religious minority. It deliciously complicates our view of Southern history and gives insight into current religious and political trends, such as why the conservative realignment in this country has been predominately ecumenical, with Baptists standing alongside Catholics to advocate for or against certain issues. This is a brief but fantastic book that will shape our study of religion and regional culture for years to come.

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BOOK REVIEW

British Buckeyes: The English, Scots, and Welsh in Ohio 1700–1900
by William E. Van Vugt

Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006
xiii + 295 pages. Introduction, appendix, notes, bibliography, and index
$55.00 (hardback), ISBN 0-87338-843-7

In *British Buckeyes: The English, Scots, and Welsh in Ohio 1700-1900*, author William Van Vugt attempts to fill in a perceived gap in the historical record of immigration to Ohio. Other immigrant histories have focused on ethnic and/or linguistic groups moving into Ohio and other parts of the United States, but the British tend to blend into the immigrant record. This book focuses on the “hidden history” of British immigration to Ohio to round out the picture. Van Vugt sets up his text as more a history of Ohio than a history of British migration, concentrating on “the political, cultural, agricultural, and industrial development of the state” (ix), rather than on the effects of migration on either the migrants or their homeland. Published out of Kent State University, in northeastern Ohio, this book will have immediate appeal to anyone researching Ohio history.

First and foremost, British Buckeyes is a history book, written from the point of view of a historian, with all the associated advantages and drawbacks that such a viewpoint brings. The text contains a wealth of historical information gleaned from records in the vast majority of Ohio’s 88 counties and British sources. The information is presented clearly and is quite comprehensive in terms of breadth of topic – this is not a history of wealthy immigrants, a military history, or a political history. The book truly attempts to present the stories of all the immigrants from Britain to which the author had access. In this respect, British Buckeyes is a success. However, the nature of historical research means that certain stories are not accessible to the author, and therefore remain hidden from the reader as well. Van Vugt is conscious of this problem, acknowledging the shortcomings of the historical record on several occasions:

the people who appear in [the county histories] are not a true representative cross section of society. The poor, the failures, the shy, the unconcerned are not among them – though often we have glimpses of relatives who failed and returned to Britain, or immigrants who did experience failure and great hardship before getting it right. And unfortunately, far less is said about women than men (225).

Van Vugt includes the stories of several notable women in his text, but these stories seem to float outside of a larger contextualized narrative. This is a less a problem of the book’s presentation of women’s history than it is a problem of the book itself. The text moves from one historical vignette to another without making connections between the stories or connecting them to a larger picture of Ohio history. One paragraph gives the reader the story of James McTammany, describing his career repairing farm equipment and inventing a player piano, but the next
paragraph tells of milling, segueing into the brief story of James Martin complaining about the lack of a local mill (139). The reader is given access to an impressive array of individuals and their stories in British Buckeyes, but that breadth is not matched by much depth. The book feels very much like a narrative listing of Van Vugt’s source material—a letter in a county historical society becomes one paragraph, a record of a farm rental becomes the next. The lack of contextualization is often frustrating to the reader who seeks more than a historical review.

There are several instances where Van Vugt does contextualize the stories, if the historical record allows this possibility. The first chapter, which apparently draws heavily on military records, provides more information for constructing a historical narrative. Van Vugt at times slips too much into narrative mode, however, especially when discussing relations between European immigrants and Native Americans. The discussion of Robert Kirk tells the reader that a Shawnee warrior spoke to him “in broken English” (6), a detail that does not enlighten the history or the historical narrative. Such passages draw a picture of exotic, savage, or ignorant Native Americans, while not adding much to the stories of the British immigrants. Individual settlers for whom more information is available, such as Norton Strange Townshend, Arthur St. Clair, or even Simon and James Girty, are written of at greater length. The latter half of the book does more of this type of contextualization of individual histories, as well as broadening the history from the individual to the social and cultural level. Tantalizing tidbits of historical context do appear, such as in the discussion of the ceramic workshops of East Liverpool, Ohio:

A breakthrough occurred in the East Liverpool pottery industry in 1862, when the U.S. Congress slapped a 40 percent tariff on imported earthenware. This protectionism drove English pottery out of the American market and brought unemployment to many Staffordshire potters, who then migrated to East Liverpool . . . (137).

The book sandwiches this historical context between the stories of individual potters who migrated from Britain, creating a contextualized story which enlightens both the small scale of the potter Samuel Cartwright and the larger scale of East Liverpool, Ohio. This type of context occurs more in the last half of the text due to the overall structure of the book. Rather than follow a traditional chronological context more typical of a historical text, Van Vugt structures his work thematically. The first two chapters are basically chronological, the first focusing on immigration during the early part of the eighteenth century, while the second chapter concentrates on the nineteenth. Within these chapters, thematic elements do emerge as a matter of course. The first chapter recounts many stories of British immigrants during the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary War, and the War of 1812, bringing a military theme to the beginning of the book. The second chapter focuses on settlement patterns of the various groups in the different counties of Ohio. This chapter is heavy on statistics and distribution maps, showing for instance how many Welsh had settled in Auglaize County by 1850 (none, as it turns out).

The third chapter begins the shift to more narrative, more contextualized history. In this chapter, Van Vugt zooms in on individual groups of British immigrants in turn, including settlers from Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Within these groups, stories of individuals begin to connect with the larger historical processes of immigration. Chapter Four continues making these connections while shifting more strongly to a thematic focus. The final three chapters are more strongly concentrated on themes, with agriculture followed by crafts and industry, religion,
and finally professional immigrants. By focusing on these aspects of life, *British Buckeyes* more easily makes connections between the specific level of individuals’ stories and the more general view of an aspect of culture such as religious life. This thematic structure is more effective in the later chapters of the book, making the historical more human while making the human stories more historical. Structuring the book thematically instead of strictly chronologically has some quirky effects, though. Norton Strange Townshend appears in two chapters, under religion and agriculture. The separate discussions are certainly appropriate given Townshend’s great impact in both these realms, but the two discussions do not reference one another. It could easily be two different individuals with the same name under examination in the two chapters. Again, a little more contextualization would help enlighten Van Vugt’s discussion.

Overall, *British Buckeyes* is a useful book for what it is: a presentation of the historical record covering British immigration to Ohio. As an Ohio native, I was drawn to this book hoping for a more interpretive discussion of my home state. I did learn much about Ohio’s history which I did not know, but I found myself wanting more. Van Vugt approaches a culturally interpretive history at times, such as the point that the Welsh integrated less thoroughly due to language differences (a point he makes several times). If the book were to plumb these depths more often, it would be an invaluable resource. *British Buckeyes* is a book worth exploring, but readers wanting more than historical review may be left wanting.
BOOK REVIEW

Where the Ball Drops: Days and Nights in Times Square
by Daniel Makagon

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004
304 pages. Halftones, map, notes, and index
$29.95 (cloth), ISBN 0-8166-4275-3

Where the Ball Drops opens at a spatiotemporal apex: the "crossroads of the world" at the dawn of the millennium—in Times Square on New Year’s Eve 1999. Looking out at the Ball and down at the crowd from the thirty-first floor of the Conde Nast Building, Daniel Makagon is afforded a privileged bird’s eye view of the Square. Yet he is drawn to the streets below, torn between the distanced view of the observer and the desire to be part of the excitement and chaos on the ground. This dichotomy runs throughout the book, as Makagon balances his roles as detached scholar and engaged ethnographer.

Skillfully weaving together a rich historical view of Times Square with descriptive prose in which he serves as an embodied tour guide, Makagon offers insight into the political and cultural circumstances that shaped, and continue to shape, diverse views of Times Square. He describes a battle of images—both real and idealized—held by the business owners, politicians, residents, and tourists who have an interest in the Square. He notes that these “conflicting visions of the Square and expression of those dreams in the public sphere have remained a primary feature of Times Square’s culture” (71). As the Square has served as an iconic public space for more than a century, Makagon asks what Times Square represents, and for whom. There are various answers to these questions, and the multiplicity of meaning is perhaps the clearest answer to be found.

Underlying much of Makagon’s study is the question of whether one should lament the loss of the gritty, seedy Times Square and its replacement with a new kind of public space that is primarily driven by consumerism and the entertainment industry. Yet, as Makagon argues, the Square has always been a center of consumer culture and entertainment, and these are forces that motivate tourists to visit. The built environment itself provides evidence: “In fact, Times Square tells us why people come to the district. We see the reasons in the physical markers. People come for entertainment, to bathe in the bright lights, and to see and be seen. Democratic impulses rarely dictate who comes to the Square, when we arrive, or who we want to be once we get there. Instead, advertising shapes our sense of self” (8). Of course the neon-lit spectacle that is Times Square is inevitably formed by advertising. The consumer culture and entertainment that gives this space its iconic status draws tourists and residents alike. The powerful influence of advertising that we encounter in everyday life is heightened in Times Square, in part because of the enormity and ubiquity of advertising images that depict standards for beauty and pleasure. If one travels to
Times Square seeking an experience of the good life, one is surrounded by exemplary models of it.

*Where the Ball Drops* is a scholarly exploration with a journalistic style, reminding the reader almost nostalgically of Hunter S. Thompson or Tom Wolfe. As he points out in the introduction, Makagon is “working within a tradition of writing that strives to place the reader in the scene” (xx-xxi), drawing on the practices of New Journalism. It is not difficult, however, to find the acute observer and scholar in the author's self-presentation as “just a guy” on the street. This duality serves the book's project well, as a detached perspective would deny the reader access to everyday life in Times Square. Yet the casual man-on-the-street perspective can at times be off-putting. Each chapter begins with journalistic-style reporting from the streets, such as the description of a late night fight that opens the book’s introduction: “It was after 2 a.m. and I heard a sound from across the street: *puuhhhhh*. I looked up and heard it again. *Puuhhhhh*. A white man in his early thirties wearing a T-shirt and blue jeans punched another white man who was shirtless and wearing shorts” (xi). Such visceral descriptions indicate at times that Makagon is at his best as a cultural critic rather than a reporter.

In Chapter One, Makagon uses the New Year’s Eve celebration to lay out the conflicts that mark Times Square, particularly the desire to impose order and constrain the movement of people that is endemic to the New Times Square. Through the lens of his own experience, Makagon notes that these controls are marked by ethnicity and class, as the desire to create a glittering and clean public space entails efforts to clear out the presence of “undesirable” individuals and groups.

The second chapter, “Looking for Ghosts,” is primarily historical in nature, elucidating changes in the Square from the establishment of the theater district to the official naming in 1904 when the *New York Times* moved its headquarters to the new Times Tower, through the changes in Times Square resulting from Prohibition, the Depression, post-war affluence, the development of the Square’s sex industry in the 1960s, and finally the Disneyfication that turned Times Square into a family-friendly forum. Each of these transformations continues to influence how Times Square is perceived as public space, particularly in terms of the nostalgic sensibility that marks tourism districts with historical appeal.

Chapter Three looks closely at the recent transformation of Times Square. Interviews with members of the Guardian Angels, local residents and workers, and community leader Jim McManus, among others, are supplemented with archival news coverage and theoretical framing. The merging of ethnographic work and critical cultural research highlights the complex cultural practices of Times Square. Makagon argues that the New Times Square is “formed by an intricate relationship between the material (people, public parks, buildings, bridges, streets, and museums) and the symbolic (films, photographs, television shows, and advertising)” (99). As such, Times Square can be understood as not only physical space but also a rhetorical and ideological construction. The material transformation of the Square depends on rhetoric and ideology to draw visitors back to spend their leisure time and money.

In Chapter Four, Makagon interrogates Times Square’s status as “the crossroads of the world,” looking at historical and contemporary influences that contribute to the Square’s iconic reputation. He examines the flows of information into and out of Times Square that continually work to reinforce its cultural prominence. Of particular interest are the various ways Times Square is represented on television—by
networks who leverage the streetspace to demonstrate their cultural centrality, from the annual New Year’s Eve broadcasts to *Good Morning America*, and from MTV’s *Total Request Live to The Late Show*, where David Letterman lends celebrity status to some of the Square’s local characters. These deployments simultaneously affirm the significance of Times Square and the programs broadcast from it.

Chapter Five is aptly titled “The Vibe,” as Makagon works to articulate “the diverse and, at times, conflicting characteristics that contribute to the overall feel of urban life” in Times Square (162). What makes Times Square come alive, and to what ends? The combined effects of excitement and anxiety certainly contribute to the vibe, as does the diversity in age, ethnicity, and culture among those who occupy the Square. Makagon offers examples through a recounting and analysis of his experiences as a participant-observer in Times Square.

In the final chapter, Makagon returns to Times Square post-September 11, and stands with others on the first anniversary of the terrorist attacks to watch the reading of the names broadcast on the Astrovision screen at One Times Square. His interests here are focused on yet another shift in the nature of Times Square, and whether that moment of patriotic expression allows for the feeling of community he has always sought there. He concludes that there is “a new ground zero, and New Year’s Eve is no longer the most important date in New York City, but Times Square continues to be the place to look for clues about the city’s priorities and the methods used by individuals to continue the healing process” (199).

While primarily a focused study of Times Square, *Where the Ball Drops* is also an exploration of the cultural, economic and interpersonal forces shaping urban life in the United States. Makagon argues that Times Square can serve as a mirror for other cities and towns, yet it is a mirror that is always brighter, more crowded, and more diverse (156).
“The missions of Spanish Florida are one of American history’s best-kept secrets,” reads the publisher’s blurb on the back cover of Jerald Milanich’s book. While there is some truth to this grandiose, attention-grabbing assertion, it lamentably belies the impact of the sustained and fruitful labor that Milanich and many others have devoted to the field over the past decades.

Laboring in the Fields of the Lord was originally published in 1999 by the Smithsonian Institution Press. Only a thin updated preface and a short bibliography of some 22 articles and monographs that have appeared since then distinguishes this second edition from the first. That no effort was made to integrate recent scholarship into the body of this important survey is unfortunate, but this does not overly detract from the merit of reprint. Adroitly combining archaeology and history, Milanich recounts the story of the peoples and missions of La Florida between the founding of Saint Augustine in 1565 and the cession of the Spanish colony to Great Britain in 1763, though the chronological bounds are stretched to embrace the pre-Columbian past and the twentieth century.

Of particular interest to heritage-minded readers of Material Culture and PAST may be the book’s first chapter, which deals with the rediscovery of the Spanish missions during the last century. Scholarly and public interest in the Florida missions is traced back to the work of early historians of the Spanish borderlands, Herbert Bolton and Mary Ross, during the 1920s. The subject’s considerable romantic appeal led to the erroneous and occasionally fraudulent identifications of ruins and artifacts as remnants of the Spanish era. Serious archaeological fieldwork conducted by the Florida Park Services during the 1930s and 1940s began to uncover the remains of a number of mission sites. The task of correlating these sites and others with the names of missions recorded in historical documents proved to be an enduring challenge for successive generations of archaeologists. From the 1920s to the 1970s, argues the author, the study of the Spanish missions “evolved from an art to a science” (16). During the 1980s and 1990s, new sites were studied and new methods yielded fresh insights. Milanich, who currently works for the Florida Museum of Natural History at the University of Florida, was himself an actor-participant in this process.

Drawing the reader back in time, to La Florida’s pre-Columbian and colonial periods, the author then proceeds to describe the geographical and ethnocultural setting of the missions. The region’s Native populations—most significantly the Guale of the Georgia coast, the Timucua in northern Florida and southern Georgia, and the Apalachee of northwest Florida—shared a number of social and cultural similarities but retained some significant distinctions which were determining factors in the course of the colonial and missionary enterprises. (The
agriculturalist, politically and socially complex Apalachee, for example, eventually produced a particularly fruitful harvest of souls.)

The European explorations, settlement attempts, and resulting cultural and military clashes of the sixteenth century established La Florida as a fledgling Spanish colony. In 1566, the first missionaries, three Jesuits, arrived in the colony on the invitation by the governor Menéndez de Avilés. Throughout the period, Spanish missionary efforts were driven by three imperatives: the perceived legal and moral responsibility of converting the indigenous population to Christianity, the need to secure a labor force, and the need to ensure the protection of the colonists. Frustrated in their efforts, the Jesuits soon withdrew from La Florida. The Franciscans, the first of whom arrived in 1573, established with military assistance a more lasting missionary network of doctrinas (missions with churches and resident friars) and visitas (missions visited only periodically by friars). Over the next century, the network expanded from the province of Guale westward, into the Timucuan interior, and eventually into the populous Apalachee region. By the mid-seventeenth century, there were some 40 functioning doctrinas in La Florida, serving roughly 15,000 Natives.

While the influence of Spanish design was hardly discernable in the villages themselves, mission compounds demonstrated a hybrid mixture of new and old beliefs and practices. As a result of the missionaries’ Christianizing and civilizing efforts, the Guale, Timucua and Apalachee embraced a new faith, a new language, they adopted new tools and plants. On a large scale, they were integrated into the colonial economy as bearers and laborers, and drafted as defenders of the colony in times of crisis.

Labor drafts took their toll on the indigenous population, as did periodical epidemics, uprisings and reprisals, forcing a mid-seventeenth century reorganization of the missions. In the ensuing decades, the mission province of Guale was further beset by pirates and Chichimecos (a generic term used by the Spaniards to refer to hostile borderland raiders, in this case Westos from Virginia, armed by English traders and pointed southward). By 1684, the missions of the Georgia coast were abandoned. Some refugees, including confederated remnants of Georgia and South Carolina Indians who became known as the Yamasee, migrated south; others chose to escape the Spanish sphere of influence.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Apalachee province was “the only bright spot in the colony” (175). La Florida was becoming a prominent pawn in imperial games. Raids conducted by Carolinians, and by increasing numbers of former Indian allies who had cast their lot with the English, brought about the demise of the Spanish missions. Over the first half of the eighteenth century, several hundred Christian Indians sought refuge in a series of towns just outside St. Augustine’s north gates. Yet by 1759, only two of these missions, Tolomato and Nombre de Dios, were left serving some 95 individuals, a disparate mix of Yamasee, Timucua, Guale, Costa, Chiluque, Casipuya, and Chicasaw. In 1763, when Spain relinquished its colony to Great Britain, the 89 Indians remaining withdrew with the Spanish colonists and were resettled in the Cuban town of Guanabacoa.

Anyone interested in the history of the Spanish colonization of the Americas or in Southeastern archaeology should appreciate Laboring in the Fields of the Lord. That said, some of its author’s assessments are bound to leave discerning readers unsatisfied. In light of the currently prevailing tendency among ethnohistorians to probe the ways in which indigenous peoples retained a measure of agency—of inventive
independence—within even the most rigid colonial structures, Milanich’s claim that Native Floridians became “faithful Catholic subjects” laboring for Spanish overlords “because that was what mission Indians did in La Florida” (3-4) will come across as overly simplistic. Though the historical and archaeological record may be far too limited to allow the writing of a wide-ranging history of the Florida missions “from below,” additional insights into their complexity could be garnered by adopting a suggestive, comparative approach.
President Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to office in 1932, as the devastating impact of the Depression was being felt on a personal level by a tremendous percentage of the American public. Defining the economic emergency as an American problem with American solutions, he put his brain trust to work to develop a series of federal agencies and projects designed to provide relief and foster recovery. While scholars disagree about the economic impact of these New Deal programs, the success of the New Deal can be measured in two ways. First, the New Deal helped re-imagine the federal government as an intimate friend rather than a distant manager. Second, the New Deal fostered the creation of a truly national history and landscape by documenting and preserving vernacular traditions, local places and indigenous practices as essential to American identity.

The Civilian Conservation Corps, perhaps the most popular of the New Deal programs, contributed significantly to both of these processes. Between 1933 and 1942, the CCC employed roughly three million young men on thousands of conservation projects across the country. By the time the program ended, the CCC had built 46,854 bridges and 126,000 miles of roads and trails, and implemented hundreds of thousands of environmental conservation projects on federal lands. From the perspective of most visitors to National Parks and Forests, the CCC may be best remembered for planting well over two million trees, and for building comfort stations, fire watch towers, and visitors’ centers. It is not a stretch to say that the CCC is responsible for the creation of a modern infrastructure for both recreation and conservation in America’s National Parks and Forests. Given the enormous breadth of CCC projects, and their measurable impact on the national landscape, it is surprising that synthesizing literature on the corps remains somewhat thin and dated.

The best recent work tends to focus on the ways in which CCC projects and workers affected local landscapes. Two examples—The Civilian Conservation Corps in Nevada: From Boys to Men by Renee Corona Kolvet and Victorian Ford and The Civilian Conservation Corps in Arizona’s Rim Country: Working in the Woods by Robert J. Moore.
Arizona’s Rim Country: Working in the Woods by Robert J. Moore—demonstrate both the enormous value of this local-history focus and the ways in which such an approach can limit our ability to recognize the significance of the CCC as a whole.

I first became interested in the CCC when I was conducting research about the philosophical origins of the profession of public history. When the National Park Service established its History Division in the 1930s, it created a formal tie among federal authority, historical narrative, conservation and recreation, setting in motion a series of complicated relationships that public historians are still untangling. In this context, the CCC is significant as an avenue by which young workers participated—however unselfconsciously—in structuring the ways in which most Americans experience the past, the landscape and the nation. I mention my work here because it colors my assessment of the value of each of these works.

Robert J. Moore’s Working in the Woods is most useful as a study of memory. Moore is a high school history teacher who works as a seasonal interpretive ranger, planning historical displays for Mogollon Rim Lakes Visitor’s Center at Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests in Arizona. His interest in the CCC began when he and his students developed a small series of signs describing the work of the CCC in the area. Realizing that the signs described the CCC in the most basic terms, Moore set out to humanize the corps experience by identifying and interviewing men who had worked for the CCC in Arizona. With what he describes as reluctant assistance from the National Association of CCC Veterans, Moore identified just a handful of men. Six informants were particularly valuable to Moore, and their voices dominate this slim volume.

Although Working in the Woods is light on analysis, Moore’s description of camp life is rich with first-hand accounts invaluable to future scholarship. Moore has reconstructed the histories of 13 CCC camps in Arizona, and his work documents in some detail the day-to-day labor that ultimately improved recreational facilities and helped build a tourist infrastructure. Perhaps more importantly, the details he has selected also document the ways CCC workers in Arizona both participated in and were transformed by a larger cultural process of national-identity making.

Most of the young men who came to Arizona were transplants from other regions. Units from Texas and Pennsylvania confronted their own regional differences and biases. Richard Thim recalled a unit from Texas who seemed uncomfortable in Arizona, “They must have been homesick, because after the first month, about fifteen or twenty of them went over the hill and started walking for home. Down at the Blue Camp, you are surrounded by mountains and you don’t really see out. Those boys from Texas were used to the wide open plains, and I suppose just couldn’t take it there on the Blue” (116). Charlie Pflugh commented on differences in perception between himself and his fellow enrollees in a unit from Pennsylvania: “Those fellows were Pennsylvania men like me but they were from the eastern part of the state, around Philadelphia.” On the surface, recollections like these seem mundane, but they hint at the ways in which the CCC experience helped transform individual idle workers into active American citizens. This process was, to some extent, transparent. Blue Camp commander, Ernest Massad, described the ways in which the CCC had transformed its workers in his March 1940 comments to departing workers:

I know that there are many things including trades and professions that most of you men have learned since you first joined the Civilian
Conservation Corps … You are leaving and going into your communities to become part of that community and will take the places of the leading citizens of that community (121).

*From Boys to Men* by Renee Corona Kolvet and Victoria Ford is a useful companion to Moore’s book because it demonstrates the ways in which first hand accounts can support a broader analysis of the social and cultural significance of the CCC. Renee Corona Kolvet is an archaeologist who had excavated CCC camp remains in remote regions of Nevada. Working outward from her discovery of material remains, Kolvet identified relevant archival collections in museums, historical societies and other repositories that enabled her to map the locations of all 59 CCC camps in the state. Her co-author, the oral historian Victoria Ford, had an experience similar to Moore’s in that she was only able to identify a handful of Nevada CCC alumni willing and able to serve as informants. However, rather than situating their memories as central in the book’s narrative, they serve as a meaningful complement to archival and physical evidence.

While Robert Moore humanizes the CCC experience, his book’s emphasis on memory tends to overwhelm his efforts to explore the specific impact of the CCC on the state of Arizona. In contrast, Kolvet and Ford provide a detailed and analytical description of the specific impact of the Depression and the New Deal on the state of Nevada. In 1930, Nevada was the least populated state in the Union, and it did not immediately feel the impact of the Depression. However, the completion of the Hoover Dam in 1935 meant that several thousand workers were laid off and the state’s unemployment rate rose steadily. By the late 1930s, the mining and ranching industries in the state were faltering and company towns were profoundly affected. The great majority of CCC workers in the state were employed not in the field of recreation (although there was some work in Nevada’s parks and forests) but in the arena of land conservation through the Division of Grazing. Twenty-six of the state’s camps were engaged in the rehabilitation of rangelands.

Kolvet and Ford integrate a variety of sources and informants to document the significant impact of the CCC on Nevada’s industries. While *Working in the Woods* is organized around the narratives of individual workers and the history of specific camps, *From Boys to Men* analyzes the types of work accomplished by CCC workers in Nevada. Chapters analyze the impact of the CCC on wildlife management, irrigation and erosion as well as on tourist infrastructures. Ultimately, Kolvet and Ford argue that it is difficult to measure the success of the CCC programs in Nevada because their economic impact on the state was more of a by-product than a goal of the program. However, because the goal of the program was to provide immediate relief to unemployed young men, CCC records carefully document the ways in which participation in the CCC improved the physical health and job-preparedness of its workers. Kolvet and Ford add to this analysis a thoughtful discussion of the ways in which interactions between transient workers from the North and South and native Nevadans transformed the social, cultural and economic landscape of Nevada, providing further evidence of the lingering significance of the New Deal in shaping American identity.

Both *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Nevada: From Boys to Men* and *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Arizona’s Rim Country: Working in the Woods* provide ample evidence of the historical significance of the CCC. Robert Moore’s work contributes a human dimension to our understanding of the CCC. The work of Renee Corona Kolvet and Victoria Ford demonstrates the usefulness of incorporating a variety of
historical resources and analytical tools for measuring the program’s long-term impact.
BOOK REVIEW

Gehry Draws

*edited by Mark Rappolt and Robert Violette*

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005

544 pages. Illustrations

$55.00 (cloth), ISBN 0-262-18241-6

Drawing is at the heart of the creative process that Frank Gehry refers to as “thinking aloud,” which gives us the title *Gehry Draws*. Immediately following the editors’ introductory note to this liberally illustrated volume are three short essays by Horst Bredekamp, Rene Daalder and Mark Rappolt.

Recognizing that Gehry’s designs could not be built without computer technology, historian Horst Bredekamp acknowledges that the kinetic process of drawing may be essential to Gehry’s creativity (24). While linking Gehry’s drawing to sixteenth-century traditions, Bredekamp appreciates that Gehry’s is a methodology of expressive abstraction rather than carefully delineated scale elevations and plans, and the precise architectural drawings we are accustomed to expect.

Rene Daalder is an apologist eager to establish Gehry as a trailblazer in the digital age (29). He considers him “a defining architect of our historical moment, a man who is intuitively in touch with the future as it is implied by the present” (32). With reference to Gehry, Daalder points out that people outside the profession “…have a much deeper connection to the building than to most other architecture they have encountered” (30).

Mark Rappolt remarks, “…that the oddity of architectural drawing is actually that it is not the same as building, that it is not the three-dimensional, multi-sensory experience that architecture should be about.” Furthermore, “…many of Gehry sketches…remind us that what’s fun about drawing and perhaps the process of designing a building as well is engaging with that measure of uncertainly…” (41).

Following the essays, twenty-nine projects are presented in roughly chronological order. All but the first (The Winton Residence Guest House 1983-1987) were undertaken within the past twenty years. Gehry’s increasingly flowing organic aesthetic is evident in the numerous illustrations provided with his cooperation. Approximately half are un-cropped drawings. Many of those drawings are reproduced near actual size. The remaining are photos and models.

Ranging from six to forty-two pages, each of twenty-nine chapters begins with a short text that describes the purpose and location of the project. Analyses of how each project interacts with pre-existing features that may provoke particular or peculiar design considerations is briefly discussed. Illustrations follow. Selection of illustrations was made in collaboration with certain staff at Gehry Partners LLC. Such
cooperation is essential to providing a comprehensive view of Gehry's working methodology.

Occasional commentary by Gehry or by longtime Project Designers Edwin Chan and Craig Webb is inserted among the illustrations. A final chapter cites the team that worked on each project. Of the twenty-nine projects, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, California 1987-2003 (Project 19) is the subject of the longest chapter and contains sixty-five illustrations. Other proposals range from the un-built Lewis Residence, Lyndhurst, Ohio 1989-1995 (Project 5), to the much published “Fred and Ginger”, or more formally the Nationale-Nederlanden Building, Prague, Czech Republic 1992-1996 (Project 04), to the modest 2,150 square foot cancer care center Maggie’s Centre, Ninewalis NHS Hospital, Dundee, Scotland 1999-2003 (Project 16).

Maggie’s Center is a small cancer center inspired by Gehry’s friend, landscape architect Maggie Keswick Jencks, who died in 1995. The exterior design of this small place exhibits a tower with an adjoining multi-gabled asymmetrical roof motivated by lighthouses and the shawl of a woman in a Vermeer portrait.

Gehry has referred to the six-year-long design process for the Lewis Residence as equivalent to a “study grant” (102). Techniques that have been used in subsequent projects were initially elaborated while working on this venture. Craig Webb who assisted with the design relates that he translates Gehry’s drawings into models after Gehry indicates whether given drawings are exact or simply efforts to catch the “energy of a design” as they work from original drawings to model, then from more drawings to additional models to usher a plan forward (126).

Like the designs within, this volume is carefully crafted from cover to cover. The unobtrusive red title stamped in twenty-four point bold Arial on the light brown paper bag cover opens to reveal titanium endpapers and red binding. What is contained within the covers is carefully contrived and could not have been assembled without cooperation from Gehry. While all that is presented is useful and truthful, a reader has no way to know what has been omitted. Though he has provided information that would not be available without his permission—because Gehry controls what has been made accessible and, therefore, controls the information that informs the story, enhancing what is basically a brand, and reinforcing notions of creative genius—the constraints of mediation result in an aspect of “vanity book.”

Still this is an important book in view of the fact that drawings and models are as useful as actual buildings to furthering knowledge of architectural theory. Furthermore, Gehry is a seminal figure who has been continuously relevant over decades. Innovative throughout his career, more assured as he has matured, his current style is leaving deconstruction and post-modernism behind.

Gehry has said, “I spend a lot of time looking. Looking at the space between objects” (218). Folks who are interested in understanding the novel and personal architectural vocabulary of Frank Gehry will spend a lot of time looking at these 534 pages.
BOOK REVIEW

Testimonios: Early California Through the Eyes of Women, 1815–1848
by Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz

470 pages. Illustrations, appendices, notes, glossary, bibliographic references, and index
$27.50 (cloth), ISBN 1-59714-032-5; $18.95 (paper) ISBN 1-59714-033-3

These thirteen entrancing interviews procured by Herbert Howe Bancroft and his staff during the 1870s will interest casual readers, scholars, and descendents of the interviewed. In addition to introductory foundations and translated interviews, the authors of this work generously provide pertinent illustrations and informative appendices that include a chronology of early Mexican California events, two interviews in original form, and over two hundred brief biographical sketches.

From Henry Cerriti, a member of Bancroft’s staff, we learn that when Bancroft sought to write the history of early California he charged his team with obtaining original documents, and with interviewing every settler (white man) living in California prior to 1850 and all native Californians above sixty years in age (322). The conversations offered in this book provide considerable knowledge of California history, personalities, and customs during the Mexican period.

Several informants recited the battles that resulted in independence from Mexico. When the Americans took San Diego, Apolinaria Lorenzana and Felipa Osuna both resided nearby. Each knowledgably related an independent account of events. While many natives throughout Alta Californian disapproved of statehood, when asked about the change of flag from Mexican to American Maria Antonia Rodriguez generously allowed, “It is the law of nature that the poor should steal from the rich. We Californians in 1846 owned every inch of soil in this country, and our conquerors took away from us the greater part. The same thing, I suppose has happened over and over again in every conquered nation” (45-46).

Other voices further enrich understanding of events. Angustias de la Guerra said:

The taking of California was not at all to the liking of Californios, and least of all to the women. But I must confess, California was on the road to utter ruin. On the one hand, the Indians were out of control . . . . On the other hand, there was discord between the people of the north and the south. In addition, both north and south were against the Mexicans . . . “ (265).

Dorotea Valdez was more direct. “. . . [I]f the Americans had not taken the country in 1846, by 1847 every Californio would have been killed in a civil war ...” (40).
Since some material available in Testimonios has not been previously translated from Spanish to English, portions of these stories have not been generally available to a large audience. Catarina Avila’s account of the December 1848 robbery and murders at old Mission San Miguel, supplemented by the authors’ remarks, is perhaps the most complete first hand version ever published (83-93).

Apolinaria Lorenzana offers considerable insight into management of the Franciscan missions (163-92). Lorenzana, an orphan abandoned in infancy in Mexico City, was transported to Spanish California when she was seven. She lived first with a chaperone who accompanied her, then with an assigned family, and as an adult she was placed with a newlywed couple. When she became ill she was taken in by missionary Fathers. Upon recovery she became occupied with administrative tasks and also taught girls to read and sew. When the missions were secularized she continued to devote herself to serving an impoverished clergy who expressed gratitude by granting mission lands to her. These lands were taken from her through a series of legal actions which Apolinaria Lorenzana did not appear to understand. As a result, during the final years of her life she depended upon the charity of friends.

Isidoro Filomena of the Churucto tribe was the widow of Chief Solano. Her husband was allied with Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo in campaigns against various northern California Indians. In a stunt designed to intimidate Mexican authorities Vallejo was accompanied to Monterey by Solano during the 1840s. Dorotea Valdez who was in Monterey at the time of the Solano visit and all others who mentioned the incident remarked unfavorably (36-37).

Throughout this book readers will encounter knowledge they have not found elsewhere. The words of many interviewees are refreshingly straightforward. Furthermore, because the authors are talented translators who also provide contextual background and reflect upon how Bancroft’s interviewers may have mediated the words they transcribed, it is difficult to find fault with this book.
Mauro F. Guillén’s *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical* is an accomplished work that will be valuable to scholars of Modernist architecture in several disciplines. Guillén teaches International Management and Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School. In exploring how, in the early decades of the twentieth century, predominantly European architects absorbed and then reworked the American engineer Frederick Winslow Taylor’s ideas about industrial efficiency into aesthetic principles, Guillén takes a decidedly businesslike empirical approach to an area of study usually addressed in more qualitative terms. His methodology pays off in adding needed substance to our understanding of machine technology’s aesthetic and cultural influences. The book’s only slight drawback is, at least to a more humanities-based scholar like me, a tendency to misrecognize what contributions it actually has to make.

*The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical*’s great strength is in providing an exhaustively researched, holistic synthesis of the cultural, economic, and ideological climate surrounding the most influential architects of Modernism. Guillén not only does so regarding the well-recognized Modernist design schools of Germany, France, Russia, Italy, and Brazil, but also Modernism’s less-often considered development in Britain, Spain, Catalonia, Mexico, and Argentina. Overall, he is less interested in breaking new theoretical ground than in conducting rigorous archival research to test out the truth of some of the reasons previous scholars have offered to characterize Modernist architecture’s rise: it rejected stultifying received tradition, it grew directly out of industrialization, it arose out of a period of ideological upheaval, it represented the concomitant rationalization of design standards and class politics, and so on.

After establishing the outlines of his investigation at length, Guillén provides a chapter on Britain, France, and Germany, which finds that the pronounced differences in Modernist architecture’s development in these countries were due not to varying levels industrial growth but of state support for design institutions. Another chapter follows on Italy, Russia, and Spain: the central facts in all three of these countries, Guillén suggests, were political revolutions that briefly encouraged, but ultimately suppressed, Modernist architectural innovation. A third chapter considers Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina, concluding that they were ultimately sites of “a frustrated modernism” (104) stymied by both inconsistent levels of state support and cultural preferences for tradition and eclecticism (especially in Mexico and Argentina), as well as relatively less developed industrial sectors and limited resources. (To back up these points, Guillén cites one recent scholar’s finding that in these places, “to the present day about 60 percent of all dwellings are erected by their own occupants, and no more than 10 percent are designed by architects” (92). He also discusses the United States at points throughout, suggesting that its institutional architecture tended to forego adopting the International Style in favor of continuing with more traditional monumental or decorative styles. Modernist architecture
would only arrive in America “after its major postulates and institutional blueprints had been developed in Continental Europe” (108). It finally came to prominence in the United States with the arrival around the time of the Second World War of such displaced European Modernists as Josef Albers, Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, Martin Wagner, and Josep Sert.

The breadth of Guillén’s research is impressive. He works out complicated criteria for identifying the leading Modernist architects in each of ten different countries, a task that requires him to correlate information from dozens of histories, encyclopedias, journals, and other sources. Granted, some of the tables of figures his studies generate may appeal only to rarified segments of the book’s audience: “Table 2.2: Correlations of Citations between Pairs of Histories or Encyclopedias of Architecture (N=100),” for instance, would seem to veer off into fairly esoteric disciplinary terrain, especially considering that its data are “Significant at the 5 percent level or better based on a chi-squared test for the phi or Cohen’s correlation coefficient between two dichotomous variables” (18). Other charts, however, such as one comparing income figures, automobile ownership, railway track mileage, steel and cement production, and other indicators for all the nations examined in the book between 1890 and 1939 (112-13), are both accessible and genuinely illuminating.

Given this research methodology, *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical* ends up being less of a sustained in-depth study of how Modernist architecture represented a form of Taylorist practice than an evenhanded look at all the factors that could have generated the Modernist architectural aesthetic. Guillén most prominently concludes, in fact, that while no single factor may be understood as solely determining, recurrent trends point to Modernist architecture’s having arisen out of the ferment of “relatively small groups of architects and designers versed in engineering and with an exposure to the world of industry” (132).

There is, though, more to be said about the evidence Guillén’s labors have unearthed. To me, his findings effectively demonstrate that Modernist Architecture developed most fully in places where intellectual and cultural climates encouraged Taylor’s ideas to be taken not empirically but as abstractions—places where the messianic notion that modern methods would transform the world by eliminating waste could be transmuted into the equally messianic notion that modern methods would establish new forms of beauty. Guillén does indeed suggest this himself at points, as when he asserts that “The European architects and designers turned the mechanical into a metaphor for beauty and form as well as order and function” (11). However, he tends to drop the point in favor of resuming his focus on institutional support, industrial conditions, and political upheaval. One might well recall here that Mies’s phenomenal Seagram Building (1954-58), which Guillén cites only in passing as “a masterful integrated and ‘ultra-practical’ design” (129), was, at the time it opened, the most expensive skyscraper ever built. (It cost so much mainly because of the costly tinted bronze facings the great architect had specified to “express” the hidden structure within—the fire code would not allow the actual load-bearing steel frame to remain exposed, due to its low melting point.) Taylor, one suspects, would have been aghast: his ideal of the building-as-efficient-machine had lost all practicality in become the expensive building about the idea of cost-saving structural unadornment.

The importance of these distinctions perhaps comes more into focus when we recall that a messianic, state-sponsored machine aesthetic of
structural design born of Taylorist ideals did develop in North America, the United Kingdom, and France during the period Guillén studies, only it was less an architectural movement than an engineering one. In the post-industrial revolution “gear and girder era” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, people saw not curtain walls and structural expressionism but steel-girder construction and exposed machinery as visionary emblems of building for a better world. Moreover, a long line of American engineers and engineering-minded architectural critics, from Montgomery Schuyler in the nineteenth century to David B. Steinman later on and David Billington at present, have argued that the most elegant designs come not only from sheer efficiency but from aesthetically aware engineering that solves technical problems with “pure structure.” Some comparative consideration may therefore be in order: what we appear to be dealing with is not a question of a country either accepting or not accepting Modernist design principles, but rather one choosing between competing Modernisms, according to differing systems of cultural value.

I hasten to add, however, that such consideration is not necessarily the job of a book like The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical itself. Rather, these concerns arise in the properly interdisciplinary discussions of how spatial design changed, and was changed by, the twentieth century that resonate throughout a great many academic disciplines. On the whole, Guillén’s own disciplinary perspective leads him to offer a unique, well-developed, and entirely welcome contribution to this broader field.

RETURN TO CONTENTS
BOOK REVIEW

Edible Medicines: An Ethnopharmacology of Food
by Nina Etkins

Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2006
xi + 301 pages. Tables, maps, notes, bibliographic references, and index
$50.00 (cloth), ISBN 0816520933

Food, we are told by Nina Etkins, is as much values as it is vitamins; as much culture as it is carbohydrates. Etkins’s Edible Medicines: An Ethnopharmacology of Food is a fascinating and highly original exploration of the complex and evolving relationships between peoples, places, and foods. In it the author attempts to deploy a biocultural perspective “which views health as affected by both the ideational elements that shape human-food interactions ... and the biological consequences of food consumption” (4). Etkins weds the social and the pharmacological constitution of medicinal foods to illustrate what she suggests is a coevolutionary relationship between medicinal foods and the humans that eat them. Thus this book is above all an attempt to bypass reductionist arguments that have attempted to delineate the social construction of medicinal plants or offer a strictly scientific assessment that treats the human context as incidental to medicinal value. Edible Medicines instead portrays the medicinal properties of foods and their social lives as mutually constitutive. Blending equal parts biochemistry, anthropology, history and sociology, this is a book that, if at times difficult for non-specialists to follow, offers a unique multidisciplinary survey of global ethnopharmacology which promises to interest and educate readers from any number of academic backgrounds.

This is a remarkably difficult book to classify as it deftly and routinely crosses disciplinary and geographical boundaries. Edible Medicines is essentially a review of extant research in quite disparate fields around the globe and yet, by consulting an impressive selection of secondary sources and her own research into the Hausa people of Africa, Etkins is able to position herself to successfully facilitate a long overdue dialogue between the social and natural sciences on the question of ethnopharmacology. With a clear commitment to develop the historical, anthropological and biological components of her story fully, Etkins’s Edible Medicines covers a dizzying array of topics in chapters that nonetheless shine in their own right. Her introduction, for instance, provides a quick survey of allelopathy and the study of the alkaloids, phenolics, and other phytochemicals that provide medicinal plants with their distinctive properties. At the same time, however, her exploration of the organoleptic (sensory) properties of plants and human interpretation of particular sights, smells, and colors situates phytochemicals in a distinctly human world and ensures that this book is something more than a simple characterization of chemical traits. In later chapters Edible Medicines continues in its attempt to wed social and pharmacological descriptions of medicinal foods. “Food in the History of Biomedicine”
offers a brief survey of western approaches to medicinal food from Hippocrates to Endocrinology; “The Lives of Social Plants” briefly highlights the social and medicinal significance of plants such as Khat, Coffee and Yerba Maté; “Medicinal Qualities of Animal Foods” briefly shifts the focus from plants to include the medicinal use of insects. Thus while particular chapters might place more emphasis on the sociology or history of medicinal foods, the anthropological and pharmacological facets of Etkins story are never overlooked.

In the end, however, there are limits to what can be taken from this book. With a gaze that manages to juxtapose everything from Hippocrates and present-day Fijians to Christopher Columbus and phytochemicals, it may not be surprising that those looking to Edible Medicines for depth in any one area will leave disappointed. This is a book whose strength is its wide coverage, its broad conclusions and its impressive bibliography but whose weaknesses include a tendency to skim such subjects as the Columbian Exchange or the Galenic medical system in but a few short pages or even paragraphs. What Etkins includes is invariably valuable and meticulously researched but is often just a taste of fascinating stories that inevitably leaves the reader wanting more. What the average reader will be able to draw from this work is lessened still by a reliance on an often arcane and frequently frustrating technical vocabulary that seems unwarranted in a work aimed at a broad audience. The repeated use of words such as “organoleptic,” and the use of phrases such as “At present, most attention is paid to the positive effects of people-plant proxemics via passive-visual and participatory-cultivating-cooking interactions” (41), frequently left this reader at a loss.

Additionally, the author fails to adequately engage with issues of intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples and the recognition of indigenous medical knowledge. While contending, for instance, that the medicinal plant Kava is vitally important to Pacific Islander ritual and social life, she only cursorily describes how this same plant was adopted by settlers in the area and, at the same time, spread throughout the world with diasporic communities of Pacific Islanders. Similarly, the processes by which tea was transplanted throughout European empires in East Asia are summarized in little more than a few lines. In her discussion of the diffusion of spices Etkins suggests that novel plants “were more than simple introductions and substitutions; they were further transformed in their cultures of destination” (95). In what follows, however, whether an account of the connection between Chinese five spice and cosmology or an explanation of the antimicrobial properties of spices, readers are given precious little insight into how these plants were spread, how knowledge of their properties was maintained or transformed and why these particular plants became relevant to the spiritual and medical lives of the peoples around the globe. In effect, the diffusion of knowledge is frequently treated as an event rather than, as an emphasis on coevolution might suggest, an historical process.

In retrospect this flaw seems part of a larger failing to adequately consider the impact of globalizations and colonialisms on the diffusion of medical knowledge and a reluctance to discuss the political dimensions of medicinal foods in the modern world. Aside from vague descriptions of “political economy” that pop up throughout the work, there is little explicit attention to the asymmetrical power relationships that affect bodily and mental health, relationships with and access to natural environments, and the survival of religious and ritual life in colonized communities.

Ultimately, and in spite of some very real flaws, many scholars will find this book a welcome addition to their collection. Whether interested in
the history of botanical exchange, the cultural significance of medicinal plants or the chemical characteristics of everyday foods, there are few readers who will not gain something by reading this well researched and fascinating book.
BOOK REVIEW

Workin’ on the Railroad: Reminiscences from the Age of Steam
by Richard Reinhardt

327 pages. Illustrations, glossary, footnotes, reading list, and index
$19.95 (paper), ISBN 0-8061-3525-5

For many years as a child, this reviewer rode the Erie Lackawanna from Meadville, Pennsylvania to Kenton, Ohio. That childhood experience cemented a passion for “riding the rails.” Alas, her knowledge about railroading history remains limited. Reinhardt helped to fill in the gaps and provided concrete facts. Depending on readers’ backgrounds, the preface to each chapter provides the background or history to better understand the following tale. Reinhardt’s information at the beginning of each chapter also pushes the reader to consult other sources for more information or to check the facts included by the author. Workin’ on the Railroad does an excellent job of informing the reader about the first century of the steam engine and the early railroads. The author capably keeps the reader’s fascination and interest with his portraits of the courageous and hard working railroad men.

In his introduction Richard Reinhardt cites the dearth of the railroad man in literature, writing that “the railroad man, for all his historic importance, his archetypal stature, and his economic power, has achieved only a minor position in American literature (14). Workin’ on the Railroad adds to the literature with first-hand accounts and resources for further reading about the men who worked on the railroads in the Age of Steam. This title brings the human side of steam powered railroads to the bookshelf. Reinhardt draws in the reader with his historic information in the Introduction and continues to educate with the segments that precede the actual accounts. The readers will learn about all aspects of the age of steam. If we were already fascinated by the railroad, Reinhardt’s book will reinforce that fascination. For the rest, we will learn and laugh, or cry, with each selection. After reading the book, the lonesome whistle or a thundering train will bring visual images of the men working on the railroad during the beginning decades.

The Introduction provides vital historic information from the beginnings of the Age of Steam in 1829 to its demise in 1934. These facts and chronology of events emphasize the trials and tribulations of the first steam engine. Upon reading the Introduction, readers may be surprised at the chronology of the railroads in the United States. The first chapter, “Three Witnesses at the Birth of the Iron Horse,” gives dates, locations, and the people involved, as well as the names of the three earliest engines, Stourbridge Lion, Rocket, and Tom Thumb. The chronology for the early railroads leaves no questions as to the first successful run. As Horatio Allen stated, “I had never run a locomotive or any other engine before; I have never run one since; but on that eighth of August, 1829, I was the first locomotive engineer on the
continent--and not only engineer, but fireman, brakeman, conductor, and passenger” (24). Learning that the Baltimore and Ohio was not the first railroad was somewhat of a surprise; however, it does have the distinction of being the first westward bound railroad. Reinhardt’s detailed history adds to the knowledge of the steam railroad era, setting the stage for the oral history of the men who worked during the Age of Steam.

Two valuable additions to the 2003 edition are the glossary and index. These two additions add to the book’s value as a research tool. For those readers who are less familiar with the history and terms used in railroading, the glossary, “Reading on the Railroad,” provides essential information for each section. The glossary provides a quick reference point for those terms coined by the railroaders themselves. For Chapter Six, entitled “Hogger at Work,” the glossary defines hogger as “the engineer on a heavy-duty freight engine [who] took his name from his machine, the hog” (319). The reader would benefit more from the index if there were more consistency. As a case in point, the Delaware and Hudson Canal is found under the name Delaware and Hudson Canal; however, the story on the Baltimore and Ohio is found under “Baltimore,” not Baltimore and Ohio, which is the correct name of the railroad. The many locations mentioned throughout the book in the index are in alphabetical order by city or town under “Place names.” Finding a certain city or town would be easier if the index used the name of the state and then the cities or towns.

Reinhardt follows a specific chronology in the order of the chapters. He begins with “Three Witnesses at the Birth of the Iron Horse” for the history of the early railroads. The author uses the seventeen chapters to cover many aspects of railroading and to initiate the non-railroader into the mystique and pull of the railroad. Chapters address subjects including technology and its foibles, weather, rogues and cooks, professional advice from the old-timers to the new men, locomotive firemen and engineers, locomotive mechanics, railroad towns, removing snow from the tracks, telegraph operators, track labors or section gangs, mail service, feeding the passengers, switchyard and its dangers, conductors, Pullman service, and derailments.

Chapters often include more than one vignette. At the start of each, Reinhardt provides the reader with historic facts for each of the personal memories included in that segment. Reinhardt’s historic or geographic background provides the visual images for the readers as they read the words of the railroad men themselves. Added to the visual image the words create is the author’s selection of original illustrations used throughout the book. These illustrations aid the reader in visualizing the dangers, variety of jobs, and working conditions for the railroad men. All illustrations are from the period and include the caption, source, and date for each illustration.

The chronology of the first steam engine, along with the breakdowns and frustrations, add credibility to the men’s stories. The readers quickly realize that the evolution of the first steam engines and railroads were not without disappointment and exhilaration. These are not tales of fiction but the reality of the early railroaders. The various chapters read like oral history or reminiscences of the railroad workers. Although some readers may feel that this is not an authentication of history, others will find satisfaction in reading how things really were instead of the more academic side of railroading. These “histories” tell the story of working on the early railroads; the loneliness, the dangers, challenges of the work itself, the excitement when riding the rails, and more.
BOOK REVIEW

The Delaware Valley in the Early Republic: Architecture, Landscape, and Regional Identity
by Gabrielle M. Lanier

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005
xviii + 250 pages. Maps, measured drawings, photographs, appendix, notes, bibliographic references, and index
$46.95 (cloth), ISBN 0-8018-7966-3

Gabrielle Lanier is deeply immersed in the architecture of the Mid-Atlantic region as a result of her graduate studies at the University of Delaware and because of the extensive field research she conducted there beginning in the 1990s. One product of that immersion is an ingrained familiarity with her environs. Another is the descriptive field guide she co-authored with Bernard Herman that is a coalescence of their observations, drawings, and debates about date sequence and layers of occupation revealed in the artifact--the everyday buildings--they studied (Lanier and Herman 1997). Lanier draws on her understanding of the region’s architecture in the book under review here, The Delaware Valley in the Early Republic.

The buildings Lanier recorded are notable in that they survived. Their physical presence on the landscape rendered the buildings points of reference--directional and cultural--then and now. To interpret these structures, Lanier turns to her field observations for material clues gleamed from exterior appearance and internal floor plan. She mines documentary sources like travel journals including Johann Schoepf’s and real estate assessments from 1798 and 1815 for descriptions of the places as they were, and how they were valued. Photographic collections become a comparative resource revealing what the buildings looked like a century earlier. Lanier then extrapolates from these pictures the sites that generation thought important, thought worth memorializing. Geography, the cartographic as well as the cultural of folklorists, informs her study. Similarly, social history fleshes out the context for the architectural landscape of the Delaware Valley as Lanier and her predecessors encountered it.

Extant architectural features, such as the bank-barns, patterned brickwork, and even the floor plans Lanier documented in the Delaware Valley, speak to shared characteristics or at least to communication between social groups and communities throughout the region. Proximity to markets in Philadelphia and to transportation routes facilitated this exchange. Lanier’s work is significant in that she looks beneath these surface patterns. She finds no neat synopsis of the Delaware Valley. Instead her work taps into varying, at times conflicting, perceptions of the region and its inhabitants. Through a series of case studies, Lanier distills drawings, photographs, and field notes of and about the Delaware Valley into poignant reminders that regional identity can be an artificial construct and sometimes that the identity of an area comes out in terms of “difference” as much as of “commonality.”
The core of her book concentrates on three areas: the mainly Pennsylvania German Warwick Township in Lancaster County, the Chesapeake-influenced border area of North West Fork Hundred in Sussex County, and the English-Quaker stronghold of Mannington Township in Salem County, New Jersey. With these case studies Lanier highlights the ethnic, social, religious, and economic crossroads that was the Mid-Atlantic. Throughout the book, she explores the notion of a regional culture, delving into perceptions of its boundaries, interpretations of ethnic and religious identity, and attitudes to place. Defining regional identity as cultural construct applicable to the Delaware Valley proves elusive, however. In the “Motley Middle” Lanier calls upon those who came before her in the fields of folklore, cultural geography, and vernacular architecture to help make sense of it, and of the cultural landscape she studies.

For the first case study, Lanier extracts descriptions of the landscape from historical accounts written by travelers and the 1798 direct tax lists. The reminiscences balance the somewhat artificial uniformity of the real estate assessments by adding intangibles—the sights, smells, and experience of the various places and reactions to the customs of the inhabitants—and the region is revealed as a “patchwork of localized landscapes” with different settlement patterns and building types. It is the discrepancies and convergences of these two sources that Lanier examines to decipher the boundaries of ethnic landscapes as they were perceived and experienced. She selects rural Warwick Township because the appearance and conditions of the Germans’ farms elicited commentary from their peers and passers-by in the historical record. The personal accounts, however, did not correspond to those reported in the tax records and so effectively illustrate the pitfalls of equating ethnicity with socio-economic status.

Surviving physical evidence added another dimension to that told through the documents, revealing an Anglo-German creolization that occurred during the process of acculturation in Pennsylvania-German households. Lanier discovered that the houses they built began to resemble Anglo-influenced or Georgian designs on the exterior, whereas the interiors continued to follow a more traditional German plan. It is through this discussion of Warwick that Lanier advocates for an inter-disciplinary approach to the study of the past, cross-checking documents and artifacts to mitigate against taking the perception of difference, of ethnicity, of status as conveyed by the writer as the region’s actual identity.

Moving south, Lanier concentrates on the border settlement of North West Fork Hundred at the confluence of the Chesapeake and the lower Delaware Valley. She recounts the crimes committed by Patty Cannon. Lanier employs this infamous tale as an avenue to discern what people in the past thought about where they lived. Moreover, the events chronicled in the Patty Cannon affair happened in a specific place, and it is the place that concerns Lanier. Located on the edge of civilization, North West Fork Hundred was shaped by the patterns of slavery, land speculation, and impermanent building traditions of the Chesapeake. Yet, unlike the Chesapeake, North West Fork Hundred was oriented to the urban markets of Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore. The boundaries, therefore, assumed greater importance as distinctions between white and black, slave and free, affluence and poverty hardened in the early nineteenth century.

The landscape of this outpost was one of contrasts with uncleared forests abutting farmland. Outbuildings, including barns, were largely
Tenant farms abounded. The material surroundings were in various states of decline ranging from run-down to dilapidated, as noted in the property descriptions of the Orphans Court records. Social ills, such as economic disparities in wealth and the hierarchies of land ownership, accompanied the deteriorating, cultivated landscape. Moreover, the inequities faced by African-Americans were far greater because of the danger of slipping from freedom into bondage, a tenuous legal position exploited by Patty Cannon.

The Cannon legend was repeated by George Alfred Townsend in 1884 and by R. W. Messenger in 1926. For them, the bleak setting occupied a conceptual space on the margins of civilization, circumstances echoed in Frederick Douglass’s writings on his experience in slavery nearby. Ultimately the sense of place conveyed by the Cannon crimes, historical writers, and court scribes is, as Lanier demonstrates, both “actor and stage.”

The last case study looked to Mannington Township to see if Quakers did indeed define the community as they were reputed to do. For this exploratory effort, Lanier categorizes the buildings captured on film by Thomas Yorke in the 1880s and by Joseph Sickler in the 1940s. Their subjects were made primarily of brick; many had patterned gable ends or other decorative masonry. The buildings were tied to leading Quaker families.

To expand the historic landscape beyond these buildings, Lanier sought documentary evidence to contextualize these houses, symbols of affluence then and now. Owners of these dwellings had more assets at their disposal than did their neighbors. They controlled land, livestock, and waterways. But the patterned brick buildings were not the only structures still standing. Frame buildings were present, but these were unwelcome in latter-day pictorial presentations of the township.

Landscape, Lanier says, is artifact and place. For Mannington Township, the artifacts of the eighteenth-century past selected by the photographers defined, in their present, the place. Already old by the time of the revolution, these structures exuded age and bequeathed authority to the community. Younger generations saw them not only as reminders of their builders’ social, political, and economic clout, but of theirs as well. By the late nineteenth century, antiquarian interests were encouraged by the Colonial Revival and the buildings acquired an additional layer of meaning. The resulting perception of regional identity, the association with a few English Quakers, and a few two-story brick dwellings, took hold.

Lanier cautions against applying a regional-culture label, like that of Quakerism, to the Delaware Valley. The localized character of Warwick, North West Fork, and Mannington, for example, belies any sweeping generalization. Lanier’s Delaware Valley lacks cultural cohesiveness or a discernable identity. Its cultural borders are fluid. Tellingly, the Delaware Valley and the vitality of the folk traditions flourishing within it gave rise to Fred Kniffen’s strongest cultural hearth in his map tracking the diffusion of building types westward from the Atlantic.

While it may have far-reaching influence as a cultural touchstone or base, the Delaware Valley, as Lanier discovered, is a cross-roads of building traditions, ethnicity, land-use patterns, and material culture. Local characteristics lend the Delaware Valley a patchwork quality, each
community co-existing with and distinct from the others, and each part stitched into a greater whole. Regions, as Lanier successfully illustrates, are both actual and conceptual.

Students who embrace a material-culture methodology, as well as those from the disciplines of folklore, cultural geography, vernacular architecture, and even social history, will appreciate the depth of this book. Measured drawings and photographs helpfully illustrate the text, while statistical figures that support Lanier's analysis are included as an appendix. Its overarching value lies not just in the detailed research but in the lesson that sometimes the evidence disproves an initial thesis or goal—here constructing a regional identity for the Delaware Valley—only to make for a stronger argument about the interactions of people and buildings and the intersections of cultural forces in an era when the nation itself was seeking a national identity.

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BOOK REVIEW

Louisiana Sojourns: Travelers’ Tales and Literary Journeys
edited by Frank de Caro, with Rosan Augusta Jordan, associate editor

Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005
second printing – originally published 1998
581 pages
$47.95 (cloth), ISBN 0807122394

“Picture to yourself this great inland sea, mile upon mile of muddy water, with never a bit of dry land anywhere; houses askew, roofs fallen in, and the water filled with dead animals. ... Abandoned dogs bark[ing] pitifully from housetops --.” Lyle Saxon wrote this passage about the flood of 1927, of the stranded refugees waiting, sometimes surrounded by “their meager household treasures,” for rescue (38-45). Saxon’s words sound familiar today, for he could have been describing New Orleans in September, 2005. During that time, hurricanes Katrina and Rita blew through the Gulf Coast and into the Bayou State and neighboring Mississippi with devastating effects, and scenes such as those portrayed by Saxon became common news talk. Silent, yet equally poignant, were the accompanying photographs of desperate people left in the disaster’s wake and hoping for help, of the rubble left in lieu of neighborhoods, and of the grim realities slowing determined efforts to build communities anew. The second printing of Louisiana Sojourns, therefore, comes at an opportune time.

The editor of Louisiana Sojourns, Frank de Caro, paused in May 2004 to reflect on what it meant to live in a place whose economic livelihood depended on tourism, wherein the tourists zip in and out on airplanes, on cruise ships, and to a lesser extent, in automobiles. One goal, he said of Louisiana Sojourns, was to offer a point of entry into Louisiana for such modern-day travelers. To afford his intended audience a glimpse into Louisiana, he compiled what some of their predecessors thought about the place, to give them an historic reference or two to consider before, during, and after their visits in hopes of connecting them “intellectually and emotionally with what has been here in the Bayou State and what, in ways, still is here” (xiv-xv). In that, Louisiana Sojourns is singularly successful. Moreover, the images of Louisiana conjured up by the traveler-writers’ prose are supplemented by a sampling of historic photographs or drawings sprinkled evenly throughout the text. The illustrations are drawn from books as well as collections, such as Harper’s Weekly, Scribiner’s Monthly, and those at the Library of Congress including images from Dorothea Lange and Marion Post Wolcott.

As Louisiana Sojourns conveys through text and illustrations, the vibrancy of Louisiana’s diverse culture as well as the racial divide persists, and has for centuries. The damage inflicted by the hurricanes of 2005 caused many to mourn the loss of the former and shocked them with the
revelation of the continued presence of the latter. The social and economic divisions fed Louisiana’s religiosity from Catholicism (and the corresponding carnival season from Epiphany to Ash Wednesday) to voodoo to the more staid Protestantism in the north, as well as encouraged the jazz, zydeco, soulful songs, and legendary cuisine attributed to, and attracting visitors to, the place. These traditions reflect a social structure with understood cultural lines arbitrarily dividing degrees of black from white, Cajun from Creole from Anglo, and free from slave. *Louisiana Sojourns* reminds its readers that such distinctions have always colored Louisiana, however inequitable or unjust. It also concentrates on the water, a force tamed for commerce and transportation, and yet still unpredictable. The Mississippi River shaped the lives and livelihood of black and white, rich and poor, explorer and settler alike with its levees, steamboats, urban ports and plantation docks, and by its sheer power.

Beginning with the traveler-writers’ encounters with the Mississippi, *Louisiana Sojourns* is divided into eleven thematic sections. The first, which addresses the river, includes entries from a sixteenth-century explorer as well as Eddy L. Harris’s canoe trip in the 1980s, and many literary snapshots in-between. The section on the Mississippi concludes with an early 1990s road-trip down River Road, or the “chemical corridor,” by B. C. Hall and C. T. Wood wherein the water was obscured from view by levees, but the impact of industry on the landscape was clearly evident. Following the entries about the Mississippi are those describing New Orleans, a tourist destination for architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe in 1819 and William Faulkner among others attracted by its urbanity, architectural character, hints of decadence, and cultural diversity then as now. Subsequent sections are also place-driven, and so appealing to the cultural geographer. Topics discussed include the Louisiana plantations between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries or, as de Caro suggests, the whole agricultural enterprise with its haunting legacy of the slave system that had sustained it. Also addressed are the Cajun country or Acadia; the lesser-known central and northern parts of Louisiana characterized by hills and piney woods; and finally the bayous, marshes, and wetlands that are often thought of as Louisiana’s only ecosystem. Complementing the swampland of popular imagination are the book’s entries about wildlife and the natural environment, aspects of Louisiana that give it the moniker “a sportsmen’s paradise” today. African Americans from John James Audubon’s runaways to John Steinbeck’s story of school desegregation receive attention, as does the Civil War. So do festivals, most notably Lyle Saxon’s description of Mardi Gras, and “the world of spirits” touching on Louisiana’s varied religious practices.

In each of the eleven sections about Louisiana places, people, and customs are a range of travel stories and personal diaries, written by those traveling to or through the state or by those writing about Louisiana and the impression it left on their fictional characters. The editor expands the book’s audience from the tourist trade by drawing on passages written by notable figures such as John James Audubon, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, and Frederick Law Olmsted; the authors Kate Chopin, William Faulkner, Zora Neale Hurston, Henry Miller, Walker Percy, John Steinbeck, and Mark Twain; and Native-American poet Joy Harjo. Dates of the traveler-writers’ narratives vary from sixteenth-century explorers to the end of the twentieth-century providing different perspectives on the everyday occurrences and everyday life in Louisiana. The breadth of the accounts presented by the traveler-writers make the volume collectively valuable to social and cultural historians as well as to the causal tourist or to those with a literary bent. Especially useful for the students of material culture are the “travel updates” that conclude
each section, providing additional bibliographic references and noting what is extant of the things the travelers’ saw and about which they commented. And for those who merely watch, read or listen to the news, *Louisiana Sojourns* captures the essence of the diverse, culturally rich place so ravaged by the hurricanes, and gives hope that the communities will come back again.
MINNEAPOLIS
& THE AGE OF RAILWAYS

BOOK REVIEW

Minneapolis and the Age of Railways
by Don L. Hofsommer

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005
xiv + 337 pages
Photographs, maps, notes, and index
$39.95 (cloth), ISBN 0-8166-4501-9

Minneapolis and the Age of Railways is a history of the tangle of routes and rates that grew up in Minneapolis during the heyday of this industry, 1860-1920. It is a line history of the first modern business and the largest business enterprise in the world, one which transformed the United States into an urban, industrial nation. The settlement and development of the upper Midwest, its important crops and commerce, and the rivalry among competing cities (St. Paul, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Rock Island) drove railroad expansion. This large and impressive book, which is filled with wonderful old photographs, concentrates on the Minneapolis and St. Louis, which was eventually absorbed by the Rock Island Line.

If you like your business history straight, which means driving single-mindedly ahead like the industry it describes and carrying a bewildering freight of local detail, then this is the book for you. It does well all that it sets out to do, but what it sets out to do is all too limited in its sense of history. This reviewer wanted something else.

If Hofsommer’s book is a fair example of the genre, business history seems to have remained untouched by any of the debates that have scored the discipline of history in the last half-century. Hofsommer’s narrative harks back to an earlier mentality when the object of history was a sanctified entity—like the hero, king, or nation—that always did the right thing. Anchored in Benjamin Franklin’s America, Minneapolis and the Age of Railways is an account of thrift, industry, and sharp practices in both good times and bad, a naïve account of robust and heroic masculinity and its favored activity, empire-building (“business imperialism” is one of its recurring phrases; among its metaphors are “muscle,” “cardio-vascular,” and “weapon of choice”).

Hofsommer’s business history has completely lost sight of any of the railroad’s “others.” Its only horizon is the financial market; its only actors are the railroad managers (Washburn, Pillsbury, Hill, Hawley). The age of railways was a heroic endeavor done in by base-born villains, “government” and “labor,” who remain too amorphous to be particularized or rationalized. The author offers us a narrative view of an America where government is the enemy of the corporation: a counterintuitive history of a financial institution unreasonably attacked by government. Government intervention is always either “well-intentioned (but)” or “wrong-headed,” never a proper response to abuses on the part of the railroads—the author makes the political dimension a matter of shifting (and irrational) public opinion rather than entrepreneurial behavior. We read of governmental regulations spurred by anger and fear of big business, but the author never explains why this might be. In fact, the
railroads soon came to dominate the regulatory commissions, and this was the rule, not the exception, for industry regulation. There is no discussion of the large-scale bribery of congress and state legislatures. Hofsommer makes no ethical assessment of America’s largest corporations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but surely this part of their “history” needs telling as much as what routes were proposed and then abandoned.

Business history is apparently only management history; to talk about workers you have to write something else called “labor history.” This seems like a good way of disabling our sense of the past. *Minneapolis and the Age of Railways* is a history of accomplishments by an enthusiast who does not regard the human fabric of those endeavors. The men and women who worked for the railroad are barely mentioned. Railroad workers and their wives and children first appear (marginally, as they lived) in a caption to a photograph on page 132 that shows their homes, and they appear thereafter tucked into the shadowy word “labor.” (On page 219, the author criticizes labor for demanding legislation for an eight-hour day!) Hofsommer never considers Henry David Thoreau’s (2004) admonition in Walden:

Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon (Thoreau 90).

There is no mention of the great labor agitation at the turn of the century, nor the great railway brotherhoods.

Finally in regard to the discipline of history, there is no critical weighing of evidence: the quoted material consists almost entirely of public-relations announcements from the railroads themselves or “puff-pieces” from local newspapers. The prose is sometimes lush, as in “harsh climes and difficult terrains” (13), and too often journalistic. A writer who can still use the word “balderdash” (21) is particularly equipped to extol business enterprise.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Interventionists: Users’ Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life, second edition
edited by Nato Thompson and Gregory Sholette

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005
154 pages. Illustrations
$30 (cloth), ISBN 0-262-20150-X

Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey and Elsewhere
by Ann Reynolds

364 pages. Illustrations
$43.95 (cloth), ISBN 0-262-64155-2; $26.95 (paper), ISBN 0262681552

The “stuff of everyday life” and “material culture” are hot phrases once again in the art world, even if they are pinned to such extremely rarified objects as nickel surfboards and a marble chaise longue, bizarre artifacts featured in the designer Marc Newson’s exhibition in the Gagosian Gallery in New York City (February 2007). The transposition of this vocabulary from the world of dissertations into gallery releases and advertisements deserves consideration. The movement indicates increased porosity in the categorization of art and design in multiple levels of mass consumption. However, while the conceptual frameworks of material culture studies (or at least a superficial mention of the phrase) are in vogue in contemporary art practice, they are only beginning to be integrated into the curriculum of academic art schools. As an historian of decorative arts and design who teaches in a school of art and design, deciding how and when to teach material culture as a subject and/or a theoretical perspective are questions that prompt much text-searching in addition to soul-searching. Two recent publications, The Interventionists: Users’ Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life and Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey and Elsewhere, are worth noting and comparing especially because of their relevance to contemporary interpretations of “everyday life” and material culture in studio art practice. They were intended for different audiences and juxtaposed they document the enigmas in defining “everyday life” in relation to fine art. In our era of globalization, and increasingly ubiquitous commodity culture, it is especially unclear what constitutes the “everyday.” The terminology has a long provenance in Marxian history and criticism (most notably Henri Lefebvre, Fernand Braudel, Michel De Certeau, and Raymond Williams) as an alternative space to the canons of Western culture but remains enigmatic. Is it a classification of space outside of cultural labor or in antithesis to it? Can the “everyday” be
invoked with consensus or does it fragment along issues of race, class, and gender?

*The Interventionists* is a manifesto for the rights of diverse expressions of political art. Its editors, Nato Thompson and Gregory Sholette, are two artist-provocateurs with distinguished careers as educators in a variety of institutional settings. The text served as a catalogue to accompany their exhibition, *The Interventionists: Art in the Social Sphere* at MassMoCA (May 2004–March 2005), where Thompson is an Assistant Curator. Masquerading tongue-in-cheek as an instructional booklet, the artful design is a humorous conceit. The didactic tone of the catalogue intentionally alludes to radical utopian Modernism and other periodic flowerings of politicized art movements, but is also ironic and self-deprecating. The layout of colorful banners and multiple fonts emulate the lurid hucksterism of commercial mass-mailings as well as intentionally alluding to bold revolutionary designs. Die-cut thumb tabs for each of the four thematic sections summon Lissitzsky’s design for a booklet of Mayakovsky’s poetry. Typographic icons that indicate thematic categories are a stylistic nod to Bayer, but also draw on witty postmodern uses of associative ornament. For instance, the icon for an interview is a retro circa 1940s microphone.

The artists included in *The Interventionists* are an energetic and inclusive assortment, with women and minority artists represented in larger numbers than usual. Several are collaborative groups concerned with politics, such as the issues of identity, the workplace, and the governance of public space, health care, and homelessness. In addition to tackling the issues outside of aesthetics, much of the art consists of proposals to resituate cultural labor outside the gallery system and on the streets. Looking at the catalogue, one of my students explained to me that such “political art” was a “fad” of the 1990s that he was glad was “over,” a comment that crystallized my own appreciation for *The Interventionists* as an attempt to reclaim political art. The exhibition is an anomaly these days, when real war has dematerialized the “culture wars” over free speech and government funding for the arts. Some of the art is not new, such as Krzysztof Wodiczko’s *Homeless Vehicle* (1987-88). This shopping cart transformed into a shelter was called “political art” in the 80s. In *The Interventionists* the *Homeless Vehicle* now suffers the fate of being described as “interrogative design” for “urban nomads.” The latter is a peculiarly disconcerting euphemism that obscures the issues of class and race informing homelessness in America. The “art” that really awakens my students with fear, self-loathing, and compassion—AIDS activist-driven posters by Gran Fury—is absent from the catalogue. In the past, many of the artists included in the exhibition, such as the Chicago collective Haha, have tackled AIDS, but the absence of the issue seemed to confirm my student’s assumption that the crisis was someone else’s other than his, a piece of a prior decade. To be fair, the curators seem to have consciously sought issues and expressions that cultivate dialogue instead of diatribe. Most of the artists work in more subtle and less confrontational ways, a trend that I see as being indicative of a widespread hesitation to forgo the umbrage of the fine-arts orientation, both by the artists and MassMoCA.

The use of “design” as a term to describe Wodiczko’s work pointed to a lack of clarity in the curators’ criteria. Why do the sculptural installations and performative works so squarely stay in the turf of “art” and not the expanded field of design? Surely there are commercial retailers who are producing goods worthy of inclusion in this show, whether they are t-shirts or bumper stickers. Instead of including DIY designs on sale on eBay and the Web, we get fairly arty examples of intervention. Inflatable housing units by Michael Rakowitz, Wodiczko’s student at MIT, that parasitically connect to HVAC exhaust systems, are beautiful for their sensation of transitory time and their efficiency of
materials, but, simply to press the point, couldn’t the exhibition have strayed into the self-conscious commodity a bit more? The graphic works that are included, from the collections of stenciled and printed posters amassed by the God Bless Graffiti Coalition to Haha’s animated messages on taxis, are not especially convincing, at least as catalogue entries. Rubén Ortiz-Torres’s logos on baseball hats scramble the cultural identities of minority groups so that “Malcolm X” and “Mexico” are a new hybrid, but why and how these particular designs are more valid than others is unclear. Why not include really clever advertisements by MoveOn.org? Lucy Orta’s “body architecture” and Rakowitz’s work are notable for their success as sculpture and design. The two were recently featured by the Design Department in the Museum of Modern Art in the exhibition “SAFE: Design Takes on Risk” (2006). Whether such a confluence of selection reflects unanimity in what is “museum quality” or some other factor is worth pondering. Herbert Simon, computer scientist, has optimistically cast the meaning of the verb “design” as a broad to our lives as social, tool-wielding animals, in his opinion that “Everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones.” In contrast, this catalogue chooses to frame its field of inquiry mostly as “art,” an odd decision if a confrontation with “everyday life” is what is sought.

The theoretical framework of the catalogue is more problematic than the individual art works because the essays fail to satisfyingly define “everyday life.” This might seem like an ill-advised request, the telltale sign of an academic writing from within the ivory tower, but is essential if artistic intervention is to be distinguished as “alternative.” In cities of insidiously commoditized environments, and with a Web full of indigestible amounts of information about personal lives, the differences between public and private space and “everyday life” and other space is confused. For instance, how can a reading group comprised of individuals, such as “16 Beaver” which meets in lower Manhattan, be differentiated as art apart from any of the many other reading groups across the world? I am not questioning their integrity but their “situational” position, and their designation in relation to the broader context. Is their address of Beaver Street in New York City a credential in “everyday life” or in the world of today’s art market? A more self-critical essay would have been helpful. Michel De Certeau’s The Practice of Everyday Life, published in 1984 (English translation 1988), is central text for Nato Thompson’s definition of art in relation to “everyday life.” Whereas the French philosopher was intent to frame individual autonomy and free-will in relation to hegemonic power structures, and created a binary opposition between an individual’s evasive “tactics” and societal “strategies,” Thompson uses the terms “tactics” and “strategies” to discuss how an artist might interface with “everyday life” so as to effect social change. He asserts that artists are no longer working in “isolated actions” but are now collectively promulgating their own “strategies” through multimedia connectivity. This extrapolation of the terms is not wholly convincing, for no artistic collaborative can establish the Foucauldian regime that De Certeau was trying to find a way to undermine. It is hard not to see artists as having a broadcast network that consists of anything more than sporadic and peripatetic tactics.

Sholette’s essay ruminates on whether there “can be revolutionary art without the revolution” (133). He suggests that Rodchenko’s slogan of “art into life” is being retooled by media-savvy artists, so that contemporary information-based work slides “art into business” (139). Again, the enigmatic lack of definition of “the everyday” hinders an understanding of what qualifies as “intervention” or “revolution.” Sholette uncritically sees early twentieth-century Modernist revolutionary artistic strategies as if the utopian strategies of the 1920s were not without their dark
side. He also seems a bit too sure that twenty-first century “Interventionists” are continuing a long-standing legacy of counter-capitalist insurgency. His is an exuberantly optimistic diagnosis of the times.

Of course, this publication was not intended to be a scholarly argument about the “everyday” but to open a still recondite mode of making art up to a broader public. Sholette and Thompson have gathered much evidence that working outside the “white cube” of the gallery space still remains fertile ground. Perhaps only academics will care that Engels is misspelled as “Engles” (134); artists should care more than to spell “Suprematism” as “Supremitism” (137). It is a pity these errors linger in the catalogue’s second edition. As I watch colleagues assign the catalogue to their students, I cannot help but worry that arriving at a more rigorous theoretical definition of “everyday” using material culture would have provided a more disciplined argument. For that exhibition, other anonymous artifacts would have been required. These would have diluted “fine art” but more convincingly discussed what constitutes an intervention and/or the everyday.

The strength of Ann Reynolds’s Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey and Elsewhere is that she documents the full coarse stew of Smithson’s daily life as an engagement with science and pulp fiction, and his incorporation of the materials of mass culture into intellectually rarified spaces and places. An enigma is that the perspective of the professional art historian is still the primary text: we return to Clement Greenberg to work out the battles over “abstraction” and perception and the author assumes that Roger Corman’s 1963 work X: The Man With X-Ray Eyes is a simple narrative. This revision of a 1993 dissertation has not shed its origins as an academic debate. However, it is pleasantly atypical for work on Smithson because it bypasses Spiral Jetty (1970), Smithson’s earthwork that has become an icon of Post-minimalism and Postmodern art, in favor of a more expansive survey of projects.

The book takes its title from Learning from Las Vegas by Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, and Robert Venturi, the 1972 architectural treatise that urged architects to reconsider the strip mall as a vernacular worthy of emulation. Reynolds’s second chapter which outlines Smithson’s use of New Jersey as an alternative space to Manhattan is the book’s major contribution to the ever-growing field of books on this artist. Like the architects, Smithson approved of the messiness of everyday life. By focusing on his work about New Jersey and basing her work upon ephemera in the archives, Reynolds’s book brings to life a more quotidian Smithson than prior scholarship. It also brings Smithson’s concept of “nature” down to earthly use. “The best sites for ‘earth art,’” wrote Smithson, “are sites that have been disrupted by industry, reckless urbanization, or nature’s own devastation” (Flam 1996, 165).

Smithson and his contemporary Gordon Matta-Clark have become heroic for pushing boundaries and forcing “art into life.” Because their lives ended prematurely, they are imbued with the glamour of James Dean in today’s art-world. Unlike many of their contemporaries, they look good because they never lived to become the decadently rich art-stars of the 1980s. Whereas the cult of Matta-Clark is built around contemporary fixations with rough and tumble urban decay and graffiti, Smithson’s groupies celebrate Spiral Jetty as a sublime encounter with an extreme environment. Paradoxically, every one of my students (and colleagues) who talk exuberantly about Spiral Jetty as a physical exploration of space know it as an aerial photograph. It is read safely from the confines of a proxy cockpit, and in that comfort we fool ourselves
into thinking that we “get” it.

Drawing a morphological diagram between Smithson’s influences and work, Reynolds shows how his art was about very simple things: alienation from space, the failure inherent to methods of mapping, and the frisson between multiple mapping systems in verbal and visual perception. Reynolds lays out this information in a manner that prioritizes art historical intra-familial complexities. Chapter One is a rather tedious jaunt through the relevance of Clement Greenberg and other 1960s theories about vision. It sets a stage and stocks it with main characters—enantiomorphs, Robert Morris, and Ernst Gombrich—but is an academic tongue twister. Exemplum gratis regarding Smithson’s *Alogons*: “they are more sight-specific than site-specific, although the specificity of their site produces this sight-specificity” (28). This writing is the result of reading too much badly written art historical theory and Smithson himself. He liked to talk and write about “pointless vanishing points” and free-associate.

“As from the shiny chrome diners to glass windows of shopping centers, a sense of the crystalline prevails,” Smithson rhapsodized, seeing in the surfaces “an infinite number of reflected ready-mades.” This kaleidoscope of references romantically blurs art and life, or transmutes art into life. Growing up in Clifton and Rutherford, New Jersey and attending the Art Students League in New York City, Smithson’s concept of culture in society early on was based on a relationship of center and periphery. He never went to college, becoming a member of contemporary downtown art scene at a very young age. His entire *oeuvre* was made between ages 22 and 35, a fact that explains the degree to which his work smacks of adolescent sci-fi thrillers and drug-induced escapades. Peter Schjeldahl (2005) and others have noted that his writings have the rhythmic cadences and hallucinogenic power of Beat poetry, and that these have served as his legacy better than most of his visual work.

The tendency towards complexity and pseudo-scientific jargon in Smithson’s texts obscure their simplicity. His search for cultural “elsewheres” to question the art gallery led him to seek out marginal spaces between culture and industrial waste or between industrial waste and nature. His 1967 “Guide to the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey” fetishizes industrial margins. It is a bizarre anti-modernist future past where antiquated machines resembled dinosaur fossils. Reynolds conveys Smithson’s delight in the decay of American highway culture. She also explains the importance of Smithson’s development of the “Non-Site,” a delineation of spatial coordinates that is self-consciously unresponsive to the outer world. This rationalization enabled him to keep making work for galleries when he was becoming a poster-boy for earthworks. Enigmatically, I find that the “Non-Site” refutes the centrality of Manhattan more than it points towards anywhere else. Whereas his work in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey carries the emotional charge of meta-autobiography, Smithson’s “Non-Site” was simply not-Manhattan. The “Non-Site” begs the question of whether Smithson’s site-specific work, like going to Passaic, was really ever about the “everyday stuff” of New Jersey. Unlike Venturi, Smithson did not really “learn” from New Jersey. He was committed to estrangement, stating “Things-in-themselves are merely illusions” (222). Displacement is both the modus operandi and the message of Smithson’s work.

Reynolds’s archival work reclaims the diurnal Smithson, and this endeavor makes the book without equal in its field. She notes that the artist’s pediatrician was the famous poet William Carlos Williams, and that his own celebration of New Jersey’s mundane modernity and his use of
geographic and popular imagery surely inspired Smithson. Williams’s line that “there are no ideas but in things” prodded Smithson to photograph the set-back architecture of Art-Deco Manhattan and to perceive a child’s sand box as an image about the “illusion of control over modernity.” As often as he was brilliant, Smithson was wildly sophomoric. The sand box was a “map of disintegration” and also “an open grave that children cheerfully play in.” His intellectualization of the banal articulates his own childless status more than any other meaningful fact or fiction.

Dissecting his reading and cataloguing his library, Reynolds connects his references to Bataille, Lévi-Strauss, and others to a cultural logic specific to his 1960s context. Sifting through the enormous archives, Reynolds astutely observes that Smithson could scrawl art jargon on the cover of *LIFE* magazine that depicted the aftermath of the Newark race riots, the representation of a limp and crumpled up body of an African-American child. Unlike Williams, Smithson lacked empathy and sympathy for people in addition to things.

The trouble with delving so deep into the archives, and Smithson’s photocollages of pornography, is that the reader loses sight of whether the artist was representative of any particular issue, style, or idea. His penchant to auto-archive is not compared to Warhol, and the issue of Pop art is oddly absent. Was its influence confined to private collages by Smithson? Her explicit assumption that Smithson made “counterculture” (xvi) is another disturbing aspect of the book. How can this determination be made?

Drawing a line between where the production and reception of art becomes subversive or taboo is increasingly difficult. Operating outside the gallery or on the Web does not necessarily gesture at a public space. Trying to design a functional commodity is seen as subversive in many art schools. The authors of *The Interventionists* seek to destabilize assumptions and run against the grain of American society, and to their credit they have done so in a manner that is provocative rather than preachy. However, at a time when there is little intellectual real estate that seems to be truly counter-cultural, the intention seems difficult to measure and important to qualify. Problematically, what is theorized in most circles of “fine art” as “everyday stuff” is a foil to play against established points of art and power. “Everyday life” is not a universal substrate but defined by culture, class, ethnicity, gender, etc. Taking material culture more seriously would have made the very different arguments of these texts more convincing. With luck, students who are assigned these texts will demand a greater definition of this terminology.

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BOOK REVIEW

Intimate Enemy: Images and Voices of the Rwandan Genocide
by Robert Lyons and Scott Straus

New York: Zone Books, 2006
192 pages. Illustrations, map, glossary, and acknowledgements
$37.95 (cloth), ISBN 1-890951-63-3

Intimate Enemy: Images and Voices of the Rwandan Genocide, authored by photographer Robert Lyons and political scientist Scott Straus, “departs from a standard model of scholarly analysis, policy recommendations, and journalistic reportage” (14). It grapples with the challenge of how to represent the unimaginable in such a way that readers may “see and contemplate the violence” of genocide “in a manner that stimulates, rather than stifles, reflection” (15-16). We are not asked to gaze upon a neatly packaged description and explanation of the events of 1994, but are required to “contemplate” the intimacy of violence by reading personal testimonies of perpetrators and observing portraits of Rwandan people, who are not easily located as survivor, perpetrator, or prison bureaucrat. We are presented with artifacts of the genocide arranged with as little intervention as the authors can muster. Deliberately rejecting authorship, the “introducer and interviewer Scott Straus”—previously a journalist, now political scientist at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, who has written a “standard” academic book on the genocide (Straus 2006)—explains: “Combined, the testimony and images offer a largely unmitigated and intimate view of the Rwandan genocide” (14). Intimate, yes; unmitigated, no. The book’s blurb tells us that “the images and words are raw and unanalyzed, leaving the reader to make sense of the killers and their would-be [sic] victims.” Of course there are no “raw,” “unanalyzed” images, as Straus in fact concedes (16-17); the artifacts in this book—transcripts of interviews and photographic images—are all manufactured, selected and arranged by the authors. We can only contemplate the genocide through their selections and arrangements.

In contrast to many other representations of the Rwandan genocide of 1994, the authors repudiate the use of iconic and sensationalistic images so often associated with this genocide—images that come with violent meaning pre-inscribed (15). In this book, the reader will find no images of skulls piled high, no mutilated corpses or skeletal remains in churches or along roads: there is no Nyarabuye here (Gourevitch 1998). Instead, the book opens with unexpected representations of living body parts: hands clasped, a scarred leg, the back of a head, a torso and arms, wearing a cross. (Thus Catholicism is referenced, but we are not told why this particular man wears a cross, or what this signifies for him [does it mark him as perpetrator?]). We are invited to view the artifacts of the Rwandan genocide not as human remains, but as human survivors: this book challenges generic categories of “perpetrator” or “victim.” Photographic portraits are juxtaposed of each, forcing the viewer to confront his or her own desire to distinguish between them, to judge and blame, to impose order onto genocide. There is a deliberate
disconnect at various levels: not only are we confronted with portraits without captions (although we are able to confirm our suspicions by consulting the list of plates), but images and stories do not connect directly. Each stands as a living artifact of a multicausal, multifactorial human story that is presented in such a way that we are forced to recognize that the parts do not easily fit together. Straus notes that “[t]he questions the genocide raises…are among the most complex and pressing of our time” (13). Here we find no easy answer, no neat theory explaining the genocide. In this book, the authors refuse to explain, interpret or overtly guide the reader. Intertextual analysis itself is apparently the task of the reader: we make connections and manufacture meaning; the task is to “stimulate reflection” (16).

By bringing the parallel stories together, the book creates accidental encounters that allow readers to confront the genocide in unforeseeable ways (17). We do not see the faces of the specific men (women’s voices are not here) who tell their stories, in translation, via an interpreter. We do not read the stories of those whose eyes seem to meet ours, as they look directly at the camera.

The introduction contains a very brief overview of the “historical background to the Rwandan conflict” and of the genocide. More time is devoted to the book’s methodology. The book is divided into two sections: A collection of edited interviews and a series of caption-less photographs, which deliberately exclude images of overt violence. The interviews were deliberately chosen because those interviewed were not notorious. In fact, the interview selections are often “banal”—“most are pedestrian killers: the farmers, fishermen, and carpenters from all around Rwanda who made the genocide possible” (17). But as Straus concedes, “the written testimony is partial: the words are those of convicted male genocide perpetrators, not a cross section of Rwandans” (16). The respondents were selected from a pool of 230 perpetrators interviewed for a “multistage investigation” in 2002. Straus explains:

In chosing whom to interview, I sought primarily to generate a representative sample of prisoners… . [Certain] constraints led me to interview people who already had been sentenced (rather than those awaiting trial) and those who had confessed to their crimes (rather than those who denied their guilt)… . I wanted a random sample (17).

The interviewees represented in this book are all male. Straus explains that there were too few women who “had been sentenced and confessed to their crimes—too small a number, in any case, to randomly sample” (19). Moreover, “while in some cases elite women had played an important role…overall women played a minor role in the typical attacks on Tutsis. Therefore, I focused on male perpetrators” (19). Those readers searching for primary sources that reveal deeper insight into women’s participation, and the gendered nature of the genocide, may gaze at a few photographs, but otherwise will be disappointed.

The photographer, Robert Lyons, wanted “not only to construct a context in which to view the actual event but also to find new ways of seeing and thinking about the very idea of genocide” (32) He had previously worked with writer Chinua Achebe, and was disturbed by the media representations of Rwanda:

It was difficult to look at my work on West Africa while listening to the news from Rwanda… the media depicted the genocide as “tribal.” Print
and television news focused constantly on the horror of the killings without contextualizing them... I felt that there must be a way to show the horror of genocide without making sensationalistic imagery. I wanted to explore the space between the victims and perpetrators and the outside world—not to simply demonize the perpetrators (31).

Through his portraits, Lyons brilliantly captures the humanity of those engaged in the genocide, and the absence of captions with the images equally brilliantly shines a stark light on the viewer, whose automatic response may be to look for evidence of evil, to find a way to dehumanize the perpetrators and evade “the questions required of each of us as individuals” (31). Straus argues that “[t]he genocide is...impossible to narrate in any detail...[i]t is an aggregate category, a composite of thousands of acts that occurred throughout Rwanda from April to July 1994...” (15). Intimate Enemy reflects this analytical position, providing some of the parts from which a greater whole may emerge. It presents a series of individual narratives and photographic portraits; there are no collective stories, and no group portraits. Thus we confront the people in this book, whether photographically or in interview transcript, as one individual to another: we are all human, and we could all “do this.”

A key question in this book, then, is how to imagine the unimaginable. An answer seems to be to humanize it, and to draw the reader into as intimate a relationship as possible with Rwandans. To restore the humanity, the book adopts a number of strategies. There is no “good,” and no easily delineated “evil.” The faces that gaze at us are not easily classified as perpetrator or victim; the stories are, as Straus intended, overwhelmingly banal. First, this work avoids the “usual” presentations. Second, it asks us to set aside ideas of collective, mass violence, to focus on individuals. The genocide is an aggregate of thousands of acts: we are asked to contemplate a few of the actors, and through images, those acted upon (but who survived). A third aspect of this approach is to allow the people to tell their own stories, largely unmitigated, although the interviews were structured, and the conditions under which they were conducted begs the question of how “unmitigated” they can be.

Straus suggested that beyond the “accidental encounters” with people in this book, “readers may not need to know much more” (17). This reader disagrees. Ironically, given Lyon’s concern for the ways in which the conflict has been represented in the media, this book too lacks sufficient context. There is too little historical and contemporary context, and too little discussion of how other scholars have represented and interpreted the events of 1994. However, because of its concern with humanizing the unimaginable, and the way it forces readers to reflect not only on genocide, but on our own relationship to it, Intimate Enemy is an excellent introduction. It provides an intimate frame from which readers may begin to search for deeper understanding of genocide, in general and in particular, through the encounter this book provides, in however flawed a manner, with human beings, not simply “perpetrators” and “victims.”

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BOOK REVIEW

Women of the Earth Lodges: Tribal Life on the Plains
by Virginia Bergman Peters

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000
xvi+217 pages. Notes, bibliographic references, and index
$19.95 (paper), ISBN 0-8061-3243-4

Every couple of years I teach a course on Native Peoples of North America. In the introductory class we discuss what students already know about Native Americans, and how much their preconceptions have been formed by media images, previous education, and whatever personal experience they may have had. We trot out all the stereotypes, including Chief Wahoo, a Northeast Ohio favorite (logo for the Cleveland Indians), which ends up in a sometimes heated discussion over the nature of stereotyping, ethnic identity, and other such topics that we never really leave for the entire course. The purpose of all this is to get the students to question what they think is true, and open them up to some alternative perspectives. One of the most difficult stereotypes to break through is that of the Plains Indian as representative of the entire continent, the romantic image of the warrior on horseback, always moving, always threatening, always male.

Virginia Bergman Peters’s book is just the sort of text I can use in my course, because she gently shreds this image by focusing not on the nomadic peoples of the Northern Plains, but on the Missouri River nations of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara. Settled farmers for centuries, they represent a stark contrast and alternative lifestyle to the Sioux, Cheyenne, and other groups more familiar to most of us. Even more useful is the author’s focus on the women in these communities and their centrality to the economic, social, and ceremonial life of their nations. Again, this pushes against the few stereotypes of Native American women offered up as princess, beast of burden, or prostitute.

Peters begins her study with several short chapters that describe her purpose in creating this work, the ethnohistoric sources used, and the basics of time, space, and environment that allowed for a rich farming culture to thrive on the Northern Plains for centuries. She relies heavily on nineteenth-century eyewitness accounts, such as those of George Catlin and Prince Maximillian, early ethnographers’ descriptions, and historic interviews with tribal members, such as Buffalo Bird Woman of the Hidatsa. Her purpose is to create a full picture of community life in the pre-reservation era. Largely descriptive in orientation, Peters eschews explicit theoretical perspectives, although one might characterize her work as implicitly feminist, and also functionalist. Some would consider this a fault, while others might be more than pleased with her straightforward, jargonless presentation.

The author’s first long chapter is devoted not to women specifically, but to religion and its importance in framing all other activities from the perspective of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara. A second general chapter focuses on social structural features of these communities, including matrilineal kinship organization (mostly), matrilocal residence patterns, clans, age-grade societies for men and women, and political leadership. The reader does not arrive at a section devoted to women until Chapter Seven, describing girlhood and adolescence. A companion
chapter examines women’s adulthood and old age. In each case, the nature of the ethnohistorical data forces Peters to describe women’s lives somewhat normatively. However, she edges around this problem creatively with two useful techniques. First, she relates the experiences of particular individuals, who often had rather different experiences in their lives. Second, she contrasts the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara situations, so that distinctions are clearly drawn among the three nations.

Even a book that ostensibly focuses on women has to mention men occasionally, and Peters does more than that by providing a corresponding chapter on men’s life cycle, especially through the lens of warfare, its relationship to social prestige, political organization, and ceremonial activities. The final three major sections are devoted to women’s roles as farmers (hence their reputation as drudges), their work in the context of buffalo hunting (in both ceremonial activity and animal processing), and as prime components of the Plains trade network. The Missouri Valley farming communities produced a considerable surplus, and were central nodes in the distribution of agricultural produce to nomadic groups (and later, whites), as well as conduits for the horse, gun, and fur trades. As such, they wielded considerable power, at least until decimated by epidemic diseases in the mid-nineteenth century. Since women were the farmers and maintained control over the products of their labor, they held great economic and social authority in their communities, a fact seldom noticed or appreciated by the outside observers who described so many other aspects of the life of these peoples.

A mere 170 pages of text cannot cover everything, and so Peters chose not to continue her narrative into the reservation era. While she notes many changes through the historical period under consideration, she opts for an approach that does not explicitly frame such changes to examine their effects on the women she describes. How communities coped with disease, loss of independence, and reservation life from the perspective of gender would have been fascinating, although it would have produced a much longer book. The greatest deficiency is not the scope of the work, however, but the minimal use of illustrations, all in black-and-white. This is especially frustrating given the copious and beautiful paintings of George Catlin and Karl Bodmer of these societies in the 1830s. Despite this flaw (I blame the publisher), the book is recommended as an excellent and balanced overview of the nineteenth century lifestyles of these Missouri Valley nations.
BOOK REVIEW

Ornaments of the Metropolis: Siegfried Kracauer and Modern Urban Culture
by Henrik Reeh; translated by John Irons

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2004
264 pages. Illustrations, preface, notes, bibliographic references, and index
$39.95 (cloth), ISBN 0-262-18237-8

In Ornaments of the Metropolis, Henrik Reeh eloquently argues for the central importance of Siegfried Kracauer’s Weimar writings for understanding the modern metropolis. The book traipses through reflections on metropolitan subjectivity and social experience, and resists urban cynicism by finding space for utopian possibilities. Reeh integrates a much broader range of Kracauer’s work—most famously known for his essays in the Frankfurter Zeitung and his later work on film—than usually finds its way into scholarly reflection. Beyond these feuilleton-journalistic cultural essays, Reeh analyzes Kracauer’s fiction, dissertation on architecture history, and a biography/social history of nineteenth-century Paris.

Reeh’s book is a plea for a humanistic inquiry into the metropolis as a remedy for the overwhelmingly administrative concerns of urban planning. Through Kracauer’s writings, Reeh builds a case for the city as a locus in which the individual subject can resist disintegration before the forces of modernization. Through individual and collective reflection the individual may take experiences from the external, objective world, which can then be reshaped in a process of resubjectivization. This city is more than accumulations of labor and social forces consolidating capital’s position over individual subjects; it opens the possibility for personal and social transformations. Reeh’s analysis follows a tripartite structure in which the principle of division appears to arise from an intersection of distinctions in genre, thematics, and periodization.

In the first part, Reeh’s primary texts for analysis are Kracauer’s anonymously written serial novel Ginster (later published as a book) and his doctoral thesis on wrought-iron ornaments in Berlin. Reeh uses these two texts to lay out Kracauer’s thoughts on the city and ornament through the First World War. Here, Reeh outlines Kracauer’s analysis of the subjective pole of their city—it is seen through the individual Ginster or the eye of the student Kracauer. While individuals can lose themselves to the objective culture in this city, Kracauer tries to open a space for subjective reflection. The objects and experiences of the city do not merely shape and form a docile subject; an individual can respond to and reflect upon these to bring about a resubjectivization.

Reeh draws upon Kracauer’s later urban essays—dating from the mid-1920s into the early 1930s—to frame his theoretical reading of Ginster. These feuilleton essays form the core of his analysis in Part Two. Here, Reeh traces how Kracauer leaves behind his youthful, solitary
reflections on urban life to bring a Marxist-inflected social perspective to bear on the modern metropolis. Shifting from Part One’s pole of the world of an individual bourgeois subject, Reeh argues that in his newspaper essays, Kracauer tries to locate urban understandings in “a rational, systemic world” (196).

In his final, brief section, Reeh follows Kracauer’s mid-1930s move in location (Berlin to Paris) and change of form (from the feuilleton to Kracauer’s own generic invention—sociobiography). Analyzing Kracauer’s history of operetta composer Jacques Offenbach within the context of Second Empire France, Reeh explicitly address the role of history in shaping social subjectivity. Kracauer argues that the rise of operetta is inextricably linked to the boulevard life of Paris and the political structures of Napoleon III’s France. This historical framing attenuates any possible propensities for positing too great an individualism.

Reeh’s book works between the poles of two primary, but not fully achieved, goals. First, he proposes “to gradually define the theoretical principles and the practical conditions for a true humanistic science of the urban” (1). Second, he argues that the concept of the ornament is central to first understanding Kracauer’s thoughts on the city and then for more generally analyzing the modern metropolis itself. Beyond surface decoration, “the ornament is linked to everything from the scribbles of childhood and youth to a form of writing” (5). Reeh’s idea of the ornament is so wide-ranging as to become a bit elusive. Despite some ambiguities, the concept of the ornament proves to be a useful heuristic for the majority of Kracauer’s urban writings but nearly falls out in the final section on nineteenth-century Paris. The visuality of the ornament—either as two-dimensional design form or as an intellectual trope—does not weather well the turn to an aural form. Reeh does compellingly establish his secondary and tertiary goals for the book. His recuperation of Kracauer’s neglected urban analyses and their idiosyncratic but valuable contributions to understandings of urban modernity is well put forth. Likewise, he extracts from Kracauer a strong argument for the importance of the city in the development of modernity.

Reeh culls methodological tools from Kracauer for his humanistic science of the urban. The point of departure for Kracauer’s analyses is always within the metropolis; he does not seek a vantage point from outside the modern city—neither temporally (historically) nor spatially (from the country). Likewise, Reeh’s point of departure is the work of Kracauer; he does not adequately get outside of Kracauer’s writings. With the exception of cursory introductory looks to Adolf Loos on ornaments and Georg Simmel on modernity, the city, and subjective experience, Reeh limits his discussions almost exclusively to the work of Kracauer. The passing mention of Kracauer’s friends and interlocutors—like Ernst Bloch, Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno—are primarily to show how their letters or writings can illuminate the work of Kracauer. Reeh makes it appear as though Kracauer’s ideas appeared ex nihilo. Grounding him within a stronger context of intellectual history would not only help to better elucidate the work, it would better strengthen contributions to the humanistic science of the urban.

For instance, Part Three’s analyses of Offenbach, operetta, and the particular historical moment of the Second Empire read like Lukács-lite. Kracauer was quite familiar with Georg Lukács’s *The Theory of the Novel*—he wrote two different reviews of the book—and its idea that specific artistic forms arise at particular moments to reinscribe epistemic paradigms in the form. Knowing that Lukács linked this argument to an
overwhelming concern with the transcendental homelessness (*Heimatlosigkeit*) of modernity would help to ground Kracauer’s discussion of *Heimat* in the Offenbach book. Kracauer takes the sad lament of Lukács’s nostalgia and offers a measured utopian solution; rather than looking back with longing, one can substitute a modern experience, e.g., the Parisian boulevard, for the lost Heimat of childhood hearth and home.

A second place where recourse to one of Kracauer’s sources would help consolidate Reeh’s arguments would be even easier to integrate than the Lukács suggestion. Reeh mimics Kracauer’s use of a small object or a unique experience of the city to make broader claims about metropolitan life; he uses close readings of individual works of Kracauer to discuss modern urbanity. A greater integration of Simmel would be useful to provide a model for the synecdochic relationships between the fragmentary object and an urban totality. Kracauer’s essayistic writing does not offer an easily appropriated method—a point of which Reeh is aware. Despite quite diligently working through correspondence, diaries, and writings to establish a strong relationship between Kracauer and Simmel, Reeh underutilizes this connection. Demonstrating how Kracauer derives this method of synecdoche from Simmel’s *The Philosophy of Money*—again Reeh demonstrates Kracauer’s admiring familiarity with this text (33)—would enable Reeh to appropriate a more rigorously developed method for his humanistic science.

Reeh tries to recuperate these principles of fragmentariness, lack of system, and so on, for his humanistic science. But he fails to demonstrate how these traits which previously necessitated Kracauer’s relegation to obscurity can now become central to a study of the city. The inadequacy of urban planning to understand the nuanced dynamics of the city is clear, but how does a fragmentary study of objects become a theoretical principle or method unless he better appropriates a Simmelian method. I also am unclear that a humanistic urban science is as entirely lacking as Reeh posits. While urban theorists like Henri Lefebvre or David Harvey may subordinate individual subjects to social forces, I find elsewhere a model of what I believe Reeh calls for—Marshall Berman’s *All That is Solid Melts Into Air* (Berman 1988). Berman integrates Goethe, Marx, Baudelaire and Dostoyevsky in his study of modernization and its impacts on the subjects and objects of the city.

Even though the systematizing of his humanistic science and the framing of the ornament are not fully executed, Reeh is definitely worth a read. He compellingly establishes the significance of Kracauer as an urban thinker and offers evocative reads of Weimar life and, somewhat less so, of Second Empire Paris.

**References Cited**