

that threatened the white monopoly on power—political, economic, social, or even cultural—was quickly and easily turned away. Both the formal privileges of citizenship and the leeway to control such institutions as churches, lodges, segregated leisure establishments, and even schools could be permitted as long as blacks made no attempts to turn these institutions into forces for social change.

This review's focus on broad issues slights the richness of detail that illuminates Wright's narrative. The complex texture of race relations in Louisville emerges clearly; housing, economic opportunity, politics, and protest all receive careful attention. Drawing on an array of sources that is especially impressive to scholars familiar with the difficulties of locating material for such studies, *Life Behind a Veil* affords a view of black Louisville from both inside and outside. Most important, it uncovers the meaning and the content of that veil, behind which black residents of Louisville created a community and struggled against barriers that both limited and stimulated the development of that community.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

JAMES GROSSMAN

The Rise of the Urban South, by Lawrence H. Larsen. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985. ix, 220 pp.

Nashville in the New South, 1880-1930, by Don H. Doyle. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985. vii, 288 pp.

Nashville Since the 1920s, by Don H. Doyle. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985. vii, 330 pp.

During the past decade or two students of the American South have begun to pay more attention than did earlier generations of scholars to the character and importance of the section's towns and cities. Historians such as Blaine Brownell, David Goldfield, Leonard P. Curry, and Howard Rabinowitz have broadened our understanding of the economic, social, political, and cultural life of the region's urban centers. Lawrence H. Larsen and Don H. Doyle have contributed two useful studies to the growing body of literature on the urban South.

Larsen believes that the decade of the 1880s was of "crucial importance in shaping the American urban network and forging a national economy" (ix). In *The Rise of the Urban South* he examines the dynamics of southern urbanization during this critical period. He contends that although southern cities exhibited certain regional characteristics, patterns of urban development there differed little from those in other parts of the nation. However, he believes it is more important to judge

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southern urban growth on its own merits than to compare it with that in the North or West.

Larsen regards the relatively small number of urban centers in the antebellum South as a logical outgrowth of the agricultural nature of the region's economy and believes it had little to do with an agrarian ideological hostility to cities. He argues that in spite of the flurry of activity and rhetoric on behalf of industrialization and urbanization during the New South era earlier patterns of growth persisted. Dixie lacked both the capital and the entrepreneurial skills to bring about a rapid transformation of its economy. With an infusion of northern funds and expertise significant changes occurred, but at a slower pace than New South apostles had hoped or were willing to admit. Furthermore, much of the industrial expansion came in such areas as milling, textiles, and the manufacture of fertilizer, which depended on the fundamentally agricultural nature of the region. By comparison with the rest of the nation, the South had little heavy industry, and only a few cities, such as Baltimore, Louisville, New Orleans, and Richmond, had the concentration of machine shops and foundries essential to major industrial operations. In addition, the majority of southern cities lacked the regional or national railroad connections to become vital centers of commerce and manufacturing. Since the growth of towns and cities was integrally linked to economic development, the process of urbanization in the region as a whole was relatively slow. The census of 1880 indicated that the urban South was losing ground in comparison with the rest of the nation. However, the author contends that this mattered little because it was more important for the South to revitalize existing urban centers than to develop new ones.

Larsen suggests that in many respects cities south of the Mason-Dixon Line had much in common with those in the North and West. They were plagued by inadequate sanitation and transportation systems, insufficient police and fire protection, and meager public health programs. These problems were compounded by circumstances unique to the region. The policy of racial segregation which led to the proliferation of disease- and crime-ridden slums and the paucity of funds in most cities meant that public services in the South generally fell short of those elsewhere. There were also certain demographic differences. There tended to be fewer immigrants, more blacks, and a higher percentage of residents indigenous to the region among the southern urban populace than among urbanites in other sections of the country. Otherwise, the ratio of women to men, life expectancy of the white population, proportion of resources devoted to education, and percentage of the population who were church members were typical of statistical patterns in other parts of the nation.

While Larsen looks at the growth of the entire urban South during the Gilded Age, Don H. Doyle, in his two-volume history of Nashville produced for the city's bicentennial celebration, examines Nashville's evolution from a provincial state capital in the 1880s to a major metropolitan center in the 1980s. The study may well tell the average reader with no particular interest in Tennessee or its capital city more than he or she wishes to know, but it is well written, interesting, informative, and objective, generally avoiding the chauvinism and filiopietism that sometimes characterize local histories.

The author does a commendable job of balancing his discussions of economic, political, social, and cultural developments in Nashville. He recounts the city's unsuccessful efforts in the 1880s and 1890s to establish locally-owned regional and national rail connections in hopes of becoming an important manufacturing and commercial center. He examines the impact of progressivism, two world wars, the Great Depression, and post-World War II affluence on the development of the city's economy, which he characterizes as largely service oriented, based on such industries as insurance, finance, education, religious publishing, and entertainment. Over the years residents of Nashville have referred to their city as the "Athens of the South," the "Protestant Vatican," and "Music City." Doyle acknowledges the importance of higher education, religious administration and publishing, and the country music industry, and he devotes considerable attention to the economic and cultural significance of each, but the story he relates suggests that no one of its popular appellations captures the Tennessee capital's diversity and vitality.

Doyle describes the suburban expansion, evolution of ethnic neighborhoods, and proliferation of slums which were the corollaries of an infusion of German, Irish, Jewish, black, and poor white immigrants. He contends that while there was prejudice, discrimination, and sometimes racial violence, conditions in the Tennessee capital were better than those in much of the South. The black population, which constituted the largest minority in the city, consistently had a measure of political and economic power, and this, along with Nashville's civic pride, its location in the Upper South, and its rather genteel approach to race relations, appears to have helped it weather the civil rights struggle of the 1950s and 1960s somewhat better than other urban areas in Dixie.

As Nashville grew, its leaders, like those elsewhere, found it difficult to keep abreast of the economic, social, and physical changes occurring in their city. Doyle examines their efforts to formulate policies and establish institutions suited to the needs of an expanding urban center. He describes the partisan battles for power between Democrats

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and Republicans during the last century, examines efforts at urban reform in the Progressive Era, analyzes the impact of New Deal and Great Society programs, and recounts the struggle in the 1950s and 1960s to consolidate the governments of Nashville and Davidson County into a single unit that could provide the range and quality of services and the kind of planned growth that Nashville required as it emerged as a metropolitan center.

Doyle portrays Nashville as a city proud of its past but not entrapped by it. It has certain distinctly southern characteristics upon which it capitalizes. Yet Nashville, in Doyle's view, is a modern urban metropolis firmly rooted in tradition, but with economic, social, and political ties that transcend local or regional bounds.

Neither of these works offers any strikingly new interpretation of the urban South. Although Doyle's study of Nashville is an exemplary exercise in local history, it will appeal primarily to readers with some special interest in the Tennessee city. Larsen's book provides a wealth of information, much of it statistical, that illuminates the establishment and progress of cities in Dixie. The author's contention that the southern urban network should be judged on its own merits and his exposition of the relationship between economic expansion and urban growth in the region is of value to students of the South in particular and the city in general.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

ROBERT F. MARTIN

The Strip: An American Place, by Richard P. Horwitz; photographs by Karin E. Becker. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985. xii, 188 pp. Illustrations, notes. \$25.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

The Strip is the second book about the culture of work by Richard P. Horwitz, professor of American studies at the University of Iowa. Horwitz has taken Coralville, Iowa, as his local example of America's ubiquitous collection of roadside businesses to engage the reader in a seemingly objective analysis of a controversial environment. He concludes with a humane sermon but without suggesting equally strong remedies. The documentary photographs by Karin E. Becker lend a characteristically realistic touch throughout the text to help Horwitz portray his sympathy for workers.

The first two chapters contain an innovative investigation of the contending national views about the strip. Some denounce the strip as American commercialism gone mad in aesthetic blight, dietary deficiency, and disorderly development. Alternatively, others have defended the strip as a convenience to the consumer in a hectic world and

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