

For the City as a Whole: Planning, Politics, and the Public Interest in Dallas, Texas, 1900–1965, by Robert B. Fairbanks. Urban Life and Urban Landscape Series. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998. xiii, 318 pp. Maps, notes, bibliographic essay, appendix, index. \$47.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ERIC FURE-SLOCUM, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

Robert Fairbanks's important study of twentieth-century Dallas places ideas at the center of urban history. Countering city narratives that underscore large-scale social and economic forces, such as suburban growth or industrial decline, or regional differences, such as the Sunbelt versus the Rustbelt, Fairbanks features civic and business leaders' changing conceptions of the city. He charts the rise and fall of the "city-as-a-whole" discourse, inquiring how this view of the metropolis shaped urban planning and governance.

At the start of the twentieth century, when Dallas counted just 42,638 residents, business and civic leaders began to perceive the city as a system. To coordinate the disparate parts, they advocated a city commission form of government and a citywide plan. During the rapid growth of the 1920s, urban leaders pushed this conception of the city a step farther, defining the city as a "system of systems"—problems in one part reverberated throughout the metropolis. An emphasis on comprehensive planning and a shift to the council-manager form of government followed. A network of business-led organizations operated as the custodians of the "city-as-a-whole" strategy in the electoral arena (the Citizens Charter Association) and in civic affairs generally (the Dallas Citizens Council) to ensure growth and stability. Fairbanks argues that these leaders acted on "their continued belief that the city, as opposed to individual groups or neighborhoods, constituted the basic unit of concern" (172). After the pinnacle of the city-as-a-whole period in the 1930s and 1940s, a different conception of the city began cohering in the mid-1950s. Dallasites increasingly viewed the city as a site to skirmish over the needs and rights of particular groups, neighborhoods, or individuals, fragmenting urban politics and planning.

In this richly detailed portrayal, Fairbanks offers close readings of planning documents, careful analyses of changing government and civic organizations, and lively accounts of local politics. His broader framework, which continues the scholarly project he began in *Making Better Citizens* (1986), nicely focuses these well-researched chapters. Aware, of course, of the context of economic and political change, Fairbanks demonstrates the value of paying close attention to urban leaders' changing conceptions of the city.

But why limit this insight largely to urban business leaders? Fairbanks contends that these players had the greatest impact, hence their thinking and actions deserve our primary attention. As a good historian, however, Fairbanks puts aside this advice occasionally and follows the story down a number of promising avenues, exploring how Dallas's working classes, Mexican-American residents, and African-American organizations advanced their own ideas about the city. I only wish Fairbanks had strayed even more. Building on this fine book, perhaps we can extend our understanding of urban politics and planning and examine more fully the ongoing contests for power in this city-as-a-whole. Fairbanks's study deserves a wide audience, including urban and planning historians and readers interested in cities great and small.

Gender, Race, and Politics in the Midwest: Black Club Women in Illinois, by Wanda A. Hendricks. Blacks in the Diaspora. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998. xviii, 162 pp. Notes, index. \$27.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY KATHRYN M. NEAL, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

In *Gender, Race, and Politics in the Midwest*, Wanda A. Hendricks examines a brief but salient period in the history of African-American women's clubs in Illinois, the Progressive Era years of 1890 to 1920. At that time, Illinois boasted an unparalleled number of such clubs compared with other states in the region and throughout the country. Black female club members in Illinois encountered challenges unlike those of their cohorts in other regions. These challenges were introduced primarily by the major influx of southern blacks into northern cities such as Chicago, as well as the steady increase of African Americans moving from rural to urban areas within the state.

Hendricks traces the history of black women's clubs in Illinois from their founding in the early 1890s, sparked by the exclusion of black women from the planning committee of the World's Columbian Exposition, to their emergence as a collective social and political force in Illinois state and local history. Groups of middle-class, educated, and religious black women formed coalitions throughout the state, their mission being to uplift African Americans through unity and collective effort. Club activities were under way in Illinois even prior to the founding of the National Association of Colored Women in 1896. The Illinois Federation of Colored Women's Clubs was founded in 1899. Despite often facing both racial and gender discrimination, black

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