

strates that Hubbell preyed upon the commercial misfortune of others. As an ambitious young lawyer, he made his name purchasing warrants and tax liens. He later took advantage of tough commercial times either to seize control of struggling railroad corporations or to drive them out of business to enhance his private wealth and power. Friedrichs further reveals that Hubbell did not always play well with local politicians, particularly when he warred with the Des Moines City Council over municipal waterworks. There is nothing wrong with lauding Hubbell and other innovative American business leaders for their economic contributions. Nevertheless, greater focus on the financial consequences of Hubbell's empire building could shed intriguing light on the darker side of Gilded Age capitalism and render him a more complex and compelling character in this story.

Investing in Iowa is ultimately an insightful study of the life of a groundbreaking person who left a lasting mark on his world. The book may not offer much that will surprise scholars of western settlement, urbanization, or business. For readers interested in how an intrepid entrepreneur built a commercial fiefdom in a particular Iowa place, however, it offers an enlightening read.

Upstream Metropolis: An Urban Biography of Omaha and Council Bluffs, by Lawrence H. Larsen, Barbara J. Cottrell, Harl A. Dalstrom, and Kay Calame Dalstrom. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. xiii, 507 pp. Illustrations, index. \$19.95 paper.

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Although neither Iowa nor Nebraska is generally perceived as an urban state, a major metropolitan area straddles their common border. *Upstream Metropolis* offers a thorough and enlightening history of this sprawling urban mass, tracing the evolution of Omaha and Council Bluffs, with lesser coverage of adjacent suburban communities. Given the significance of the Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolis, this new volume should prove a valuable resource to anyone interested in the urban Midwest. Iowans especially should applaud the coverage afforded Council Bluffs. There have been a number of histories of Omaha, but the smaller Iowa city has suffered relative neglect. *Upstream Metropolis* is, then, not a biography of a single city but an attempt to encompass the development of a metropolitan area spanning two states and including two historic hubs.

Because of Omaha's later preeminence, many readers may not realize that Council Bluffs is actually the older of the two cities and the parent of its western neighbor. *Upstream Metropolis* makes this clear when describing the Iowa city's early history as a Mormon way station originally named Kanessville. When the federal government opened the Nebraska Territory to white settlement in 1854, Council Bluffs residents exploited their advantage, ferrying across the Missouri River to claim lots in the new settlement. Gradually both cities developed as significant frontier outposts, with Omaha winning designation as the territorial capital. In addition, it profited as a supply center for fortune seekers headed to the newly opened Colorado gold fields.

Perhaps the most significant factor in the development of the two cities was the Union Pacific Railroad. The eastern half of the nation's transcontinental railroad, the Union Pacific headed west from Council Bluffs and established both cities as major rail centers. Railroads would play an especially significant role in the Council Bluffs economy, providing a disproportionate share of local jobs. In the late nineteenth century, Omaha developed a more diverse economy, becoming a major stockyards and meatpacking hub.

The railroads and packinghouses attracted thousands of European immigrants in search of jobs. Thus Omaha became a rich ethnic mosaic, with residents from every part of Europe as well as a contingent of African Americans. South Omaha, originally a separate city, evolved as a classic immigrant, working-class town. In contrast, Council Bluffs was not only less varied economically but also less diverse ethnically. Whereas Omaha became a characteristically diverse and dirty American metropolis with all the problems and possibilities of America's emerging cities, Council Bluffs assumed the narrower role of mid-western railroad town.

Certainly neither city conformed to the bland, wholesome mid-western stereotype. *Upstream Metropolis* chronicles the prostitution, gambling, and drinking endemic to the wide-open cities straddling the Missouri River. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Omaha and Council Bluffs had a seamy reputation for sin, and local authorities were not committed to cleansing the area of moral blight. Moreover, ethnic tensions produced periodic outbreaks of violence, the most notable example being Omaha's Court House Riot of 1919, in which a mob murdered a black man accused of assaulting a white woman.

Although rural Nebraska experienced a marked loss of population and suffered the insecurities of fluctuating market prices and uncertain weather, Omaha continued to grow throughout the twentieth cen-

ture, adapting admirably to economic change. As headquarters for the Strategic Air Command, the Omaha area benefited from Cold War spending. The stockyards and packinghouses provided fewer jobs, but the old blue-collar town transitioned relatively painlessly to a white-collar hub. Insurance companies, telecommunications, and data processing offered new employment opportunities and perpetuated prosperity in the Nebraska metropolis.

With its narrower reliance on the railroads, Council Bluffs fared less well. Its population stagnated, and urban renewal projects reaped failure rather than revival. Eventually, however, gambling seemed to prove a panacea for the Iowa city. In an excellent chapter, "Reviving Council Bluffs," *Upstream Metropolis* discusses the late twentieth-century effort to establish Council Bluffs as a gambling destination, an initiative that brought much-needed jobs and money to the beleaguered community.

Historians have generally ignored the plight of smaller cities, focusing instead on attempts at regenerating the nation's metropolitan giants. The authors' account of Council Bluffs' doldrums and the community's various responses is, then, especially illuminating. Economic change has blighted not only Detroit and Pittsburgh but also has plagued the smaller cities of Iowa. *Upstream Metropolis* admirably describes how one of these communities coped.

In many ways, *Upstream Metropolis* is a masterful synthesis, but it is not totally evenhanded in its account of the metropolitan area. It presents relatively little about Sarpy County, Nebraska, and its burgeoning growth in the second half of the twentieth century. Sarpy County is actually more than half again as populous as Council Bluffs' Pottawattamie County, ranking second only to Omaha's Douglas County in the metropolitan area. Nearly one-fifth of the area's people reside there, and its significance to the metropolis bodes to grow even greater in coming years. Generally, *Upstream Metropolis* reads not as a history of a metropolitan area but as a twin-city history, switching back and forth between Omaha and Council Bluffs. Given this bipolar vision, the suburbanization of Sarpy County remains a relative blind spot.

On the whole, however, the authors of *Upstream Metropolis* should be commended for their contribution to the history of the Midwest. They offer a readable narrative of the development of a major metropolitan area that merits the attention of every student of the region.