

ers produce conquest, subjugation, and environmentally destructive extractive industry; still others result in various forms of adaptation, accommodation, merger, and persistence. Moreover, these frontier processes have unfolded at various times and in various places throughout American history, and they continue to play themselves out to this day. Thus, the plural “s” used in the title of this new edition cannot be ignored—it is absolutely essential to the authors’ fundamental point.

Although Hine and Faragher employ an expansive definition of “the West,” including within their treatment most of the trans-Mississippi region, readers searching for Iowa content will be disappointed. Other than a few brief references to Iowa’s demographic changes in the 1840s and ‘50s, there is almost no commentary on specifically Iowa topics. Still, *Frontiers* is valuable for students of Iowa history if only for its lucid and thorough synthesis of western regional history—a history in which Iowa has played an undeniably important role.

Although this condensed version is considerably shorter than the authors’ original text, I doubt that it will prove to be significantly more attractive to a “popular” audience. It does include four photo galleries with more than 70 illustrations, but the original edition contains an even more extensive and far richer collection of colorful photos and maps interspersed throughout the text at relevant points. Similarly, academic endnotes have been replaced by lists of “further readings,” but it is hard to discern how that editorial decision would necessarily increase the book’s marketability to its intended audience. Thus, the reaction to *Frontiers* will likely be mixed. Compared to the original, it is a watered-down product that does not offer any compelling justification for its creation other than its brevity. On the other hand, considered on its own terms and without comparison to the original, it is highly recommended and would make a valuable addition to any library. All things being equal, I’ll take the original.

*Jacob Weidenmann, Pioneer Landscape Architect*, by Rudy J. Favretti. Hartford, CT: Cedar Hill Cemetery Foundation; distributed by Wesleyan University Press in association with University Press of New England, 2007. 196 pp. Photographs, illustrations, plans, notes, appendixes, bibliographic references, index. \$49.95 cloth.

Reviewer Heidi Hohmann is associate professor of landscape architecture at Iowa State University. She has published a number of articles on biographical subjects in landscape architecture.

Better known for its rural, vernacular landscape of farms, fields, and small towns, Iowa is not particularly recognized for its historic de-

signed landscapes. Yet Iowa has an important heritage of designed landscapes—including parks, cemeteries and courthouse squares—that deserve acknowledgment and documentation. A few of the earliest and most significant of these landscapes receive attention in Rudy Favretti's book, *Jacob Weidenmann, Pioneer Landscape Architect*. A biography of the landscape architect who originally laid out the Iowa state capitol grounds, this book also sheds new light on the early history of landscape architecture and the built heritage of Iowa.

Chapter one of *Jacob Weidenmann* covers the landscape architect's "formative years," including his artistic education in Switzerland, youthful travels in Europe, North America, and South America, and emigration to New York in 1856. The rest of the book portrays Weidenmann's productive yet rocky career as a landscape architect designing estates, cemeteries, subdivisions, parks, and gardens in Connecticut, New York, Illinois, and Iowa. Embedded in the book's chronological narrative is a comprehensive catalog of Weidenmann's known built works, with descriptions of their historic and existing conditions. Photographs, illustrations, and Weidenmann's own plans and architectural drawings, many reproduced in color from his long-out-of-print book *Beautifying Country Homes*, help readers understand these designs as well as Weidenmann's design influences and philosophy.

For scholars of landscape architecture, this comprehensive record of Weidenmann's career serves to better illuminate the products and methods of the early practice of landscape architecture in America. Although the second half of the nineteenth century was a time of rapid expansion for landscape architecture, the history of the field has tended to narrowly emphasize the contributions of a few key figures (such as A. J. Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted), largely because of a dearth of information about other practitioners of the time. Favretti's meticulous research on the previously unexamined Weidenmann begins to redress this deficiency. Unfortunately, the book stops short of fully contextualizing Weidenmann's work in the larger realm of late nineteenth-century landscape architecture. Although the brief conclusion at the end of the last chapter compares Weidenmann's contributions with those of Olmsted, Olmsted's original partner Calvert Vaux, and H. W. S. Cleveland, the assessment seems somewhat perfunctory. Furthermore, Favretti's positioning of Weidenmann as the "father" of landscape architectural education seems like a misdirection of Weidenmann's obvious significance as a designer, especially given that he died prior to the establishment of formalized landscape architectural education. The book's other scholarly weaknesses are an unwieldy referencing system and the author's unfortunate tendency to

paraphrase Weidenmann's motivations and intentions, when direct quotations from the primary sources might provide a clearer account of events.

However, Favretti's apparent affinity for Weidenmann and the book's conversational tone should make it appealing for a lay audience interested in landscape design. For readers in Iowa, especially, the book is not only accessible, but also provides new and surprising details about the design and construction of some beloved Iowa landmarks, such as the state capitol grounds, state fairgrounds, and Terrace Hill. Weidenmann's work on the fairgrounds and Terrace Hill are interesting, but they pale beside his work on the capitol grounds, which he began in 1884 and completed in 1890. Interestingly, Weidenmann had worked on portions of the U.S. Capitol grounds in 1874, drawing and rendering plans for Olmsted during their years of collaboration. Weidenmann's own plans for the Iowa state capitol, with its sweeping walkways, lush picturesque plantings, and great stairway leading from the western façade to the Des Moines River, seem to recall Olmsted's earlier design, a fact that goes unnoted in the text. However, Favretti's otherwise detailed account and images of Weidenmann's design do reveal that the capitol grounds were as carefully and ornately designed as the building, with the same intention of elevating the art and culture of a frontier state.

Sadly, little of Weidenmann's landscape design for the Iowa state capitol remains extant today, with the exception of the grand stairway. Indeed, as the book makes clear, most of Weidenmann's works are lost or substantially altered, a fact that highlights the book's real value. By documenting Weidenmann's landscapes, Favretti makes them live again, at least in text and pictures, and ensures their inclusion as an important part of our national and state history. This book should inspire citizens and historians to seek out Iowa's other designed historic landscapes as places worthy of serious study.

*Iowa State Fair: Country Comes to Town*, by Thomas Leslie. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007. 142 pp. Illustrations (many in color), notes. \$19.95 paper.

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Thomas Leslie's *Iowa State Fair* offers a succinct, informative, and enjoyable account of the annual exhibition, now more than 150 years old.