

essentially passive and contextual definition of the region as an enduring, unchanging place with certain environmental characteristics; it is the "Industrial Midwest" or the Old Northwest "as well as adjacent St. Louis" (vii). The region's values remain rooted in a stable, romanticized, or parochialized image held by a persisting minority of the region's urban population. In their vision of a region occupied by yeoman farmers and small towns, large cities and sprawling suburbs still seem somewhat alien. Cloaking the region in the public relations term *heartland*, which seems to speak to some nostalgic yearning for an imagined centrality as the standard bearer of truly American values, hardly clarifies the definition of the region. In this study of the "Industrial Midwest," Iowa plays a peripheral hinterland role. Yet today it is Iowa, not Ohio, that welcomes interstate travelers to "the Heartland."

The Protestant Experience in Gary, Indiana, 1906–1975: At Home in the City, by James W. Lewis. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992. xv, 304 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

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Beginning his research by asking how well mainline Protestantism related to the twentieth-century industrial city, James W. Lewis assumed a negative answer in light of the scholarly consensus. By examining an unquestionably industrial city, Gary, Indiana, and two local congregations, however, Lewis uncovered substantial data pointing to a vigorous urban ministry that thrived for several decades. The subtitle of the volume aptly discloses the author's viewpoint.

The book is organized into two major divisions. In the first several chapters Lewis concentrates on the city of Gary. He deftly summarizes the formative years and the political, social, and religious responses to the diversity of the Indiana municipality. The second part focuses on two important local congregations: First Presbyterian Church and City Methodist Church. A chapter on the theme of cities and congregations opens the volume, and an epilogue summarizes the significance of the experiences of the two Gary congregations.

In the first part of the book, Lewis cogently describes the role of Judge Ebert Gary and the United States Steel Corporation in the formation of the northwestern Indiana city. For Lewis, diversity—social, racial, and ethnic—characterized Gary from its inception. He devotes considerable space to the public school system created by William A. Wirt. Serving as Superintendent of Schools from 1907 to 1938, Wirt lengthened the school day and year, maximized the efficient use of

equipment and facilities, and provided a night school program for adults and a weekday church school opportunity for children.

When dealing with the religious contours of Gary, Lewis contends that although the city's Protestants constituted a minority of the religious population, that small group exercised significant influence in the early decades of Gary's history. He also judiciously assesses the record of the white, Protestant, elite churches in dealing with U.S. Steel, race relations, and social change. On the individual front, Lewis finds that Gary's influential citizens belonged to Protestant churches and were heavily involved in religious as well as civic affairs. As for the institutional presence, Lewis explores several areas: social service and Americanization, race relations, crusades against immorality and corruption in politics, and outreach by means of evangelism and church extension.

In his treatment of the two local congregations, Lewis focuses on the themes of congregational development, building programs, and ministerial leadership. In this section of the book, Lewis makes two significant contributions to historiography. First, while recognizing the value of the new social history's emphases on common people, Lewis rightly contends that leadership is highly important in religious organizations. Lewis, therefore, provides a thorough analysis of the ministerial roles of Frederick E. Walton and Frederick Backemeyer at First Presbyterian Church and William Grant Seaman at City Methodist Church. Second, Lewis depicts the Presbyterian congregation as embodying traditional evangelical Protestantism, and the Methodist church as manifesting progressive Social Gospel Protestantism. Lewis thereby provides evidence that both forms of Protestantism contributed positively to the encounter with the twentieth-century industrial city.

Whereas both congregations were "at home" in Gary during their prime years in the early and mid-twentieth century, ultimately they both succumbed to a rapidly changing urban society. In the 1970s First Presbyterian merged with three other Presbyterian congregations in northwest Gary. City Methodist Church ended its existence at the same time. Lewis contends, however, that in facing the industrial city of the first part of the century, "they did so not with despair and resignation but with energy and enthusiasm, reflecting their conviction that the church could be and should be at home in the city" (202).

The theme of "at home in the city" invites testing in other medium-sized midwestern localities with characteristics differing from Gary's. From the Presbyterian side, Christ Presbyterian Church in Madison, Wisconsin, might provide an interesting window on the urban experience in a university city. Also, First Presbyterian Church in Waterloo,

Iowa, might serve a similar purpose for a blue-collar city characterized by diversity.

Lewis works at the complex intersection of three types of history: urban, religious, and congregational. He draws on an abundance of sources, including congregational and regional manuscript collections, interviews and personal correspondence, local newspapers, census reports, pamphlets describing Gary and its organizations, as well as an impressive array of secondary sources written by authoritative contemporary historians of both urbanization and religion. The volume contains several tables on topics such as the population and religious membership of Gary and characteristics of the two featured local congregations. In addition, two dozen illustrations, including photographs of pastors and edifices, enhance the book. Lewis's well-conceived and attractively written study should evoke interest from a number of audiences: scholars of religious and urban history, enthusiasts for local and regional history, and practitioners of sophisticated congregational history.

The Great Jerusalem Artichoke Circus: The Buying and Selling of the Rural American Dream, by Joseph A. Amato. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993. xxxiv, 244 pp. Illustrations, notes, tables, appendix, bibliography, index. \$44.95 cloth, \$16.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY BARBARA J. STEINSON, DEPAUW UNIVERSITY

Joseph A. Amato's *The Great Jerusalem Artichoke Circus: The Buying and Selling of the Rural American Dream* provides a history of the rise and fall of American Energy Farming System (AEFS), a company in southwestern Minnesota that sold over twenty-five million dollars worth of Jerusalem artichoke seed to buyers concentrated primarily in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa during an eighteen-month period from late 1981 to early 1983. Amato describes his work as a "cultural history of a recent episode in national agricultural history," with a "full cast of characters," including "desperate farmers, greedy small-time speculators, unemployed ministers, charismatic salesmen, irrepressible boosters, legitimate and illegitimate scientists, a range of consultants, and a parade of attorneys, public officials, investigators . . ." (xxix, xxviii). Amato asserts that the phenomenal success of Jerusalem artichoke seed sales is connected to several social, economic, and cultural developments of the early Reagan years: evangelical Christianity combined with high-technology hucksterism, the collapse of the farm economy, and a resurgence of national myths "about the uniqueness of America, its land, its countryside, and its farmers" (49).

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