

turn-of-the-century period—but new perspectives that are coming into play. Social and personal history plays much more of a role, and both the context of the time and place and the individual biography, warts and all, appear. There is life beyond Chicago, and there are many subjects worthy of study. Finally, the recording, interpreting, writing, and teaching of the history of architecture must be considered in any perspective.

Snowbelt Cities: Metropolitan Politics in the Northeast and Midwest since World War II, edited by Richard M. Bernard. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990. ix, 352 pp. Maps, tables, appendixes, notes. \$35.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY GERALD D. NASH, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

During the past two decades urban historians have viewed the development of American civilization from a variety of new perspectives. Some, such as Carl Abbott and Richard Bernard, developed the concept of the Sunbelt to analyze new communities in the South and West. Such an interpretation invariably invited a contrast. In the 1980s, thus, Bernard postulated the theory of a Snowbelt, a land encompassing the Northeast and the Middle West. If the precise boundaries of these regions were difficult to locate—and were challenged by some critics—these theoretical formulations nonetheless contributed to a deeper understanding of American urban growth in the second half of the twentieth century.

In order to develop the concept of Snowbelt cities more fully, Bernard invited a group of historians and urbanologists to dwell on the issue. Each contributed an essay on a city on which he or she was an expert. The communities included Boston, New York City, Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Chicago, Cleveland, and Kansas City. As Bernard notes, "if the 1970s were the decade in which Americans discovered the Sunbelt, the 1980s mark the era of rediscovery for the urbanized regions of the Northeast and Midwest. Once the focus of media attention, the Sunbelt and its youthful glow began to fade just as northern lights brightened, recharged by promises of high-tech prosperity. Where once the press hailed the sunny climes below the 37th parallel, it now deplors that region's trouble spots, folded away where the sunlight of economic development never shines. By contrast . . . the mature and settled cities of the Snowbelt appear ready to light the nation's way to economic modernization for the twenty-first century" (1). But Bernard warns that the processes of change are enormously

complex. He notes that there is little substance behind grandiose claims of Snowbelt advocates. Those midwestern cities that have rebuilt and retooled their economies are beginning to meet regional challenges, but those who have not face serious crises.

Within this complex context Bernard detects three significant patterns of urban politics in the Snowbelt. In some midwestern cities such as Indianapolis and Milwaukee, business interests tended to exercise control. In others, such as Chicago, black leaders assumed control. A third alternative was in cities represented by Cleveland and Kansas City, where alliances of business people, white ethnics, minorities, and reformers contributed to ruling cliques. Economic development ebbed and flowed in accordance with the goals and particular hopes of these shifting power structures.

Although Bernard's essay is tightly knit and cogent, most of the remaining contributions are not. They tend to be far-ranging and discursive, often straying from the basic themes. Most of the authors provide compact, narrative histories of the political development of their respective cities, and include useful bibliographies. The book is not so much a disciplined analysis of the Snowbelt as a useful reference work. It provides short summaries of urban politics in the Middle West and Northeast. Urban historians will find it to be a useful work.

Local Businesses: Exploring Their History, by K. Austin Kerr, Amos J. Lovejoy, and Mansel G. Blackford. Nearby History Series. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1990. xiv, 128 pp. Illustrations, index. \$14.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY WILLIAM B. FRIEDRICKS, SIMPSON COLLEGE

Over the past two decades or so, many historians have become worried that their discipline is far too specialized and no longer reaches a broad audience. Because the editors of the Nearby History Series believe history is both valuable and useful, they have attempted to rekindle the interest in history by taking it out of the academy and putting it back in the hands of the public. As the series title indicates, this collection of books focuses on local rather than national or international issues. Within this framework, *Local Businesses* is a worthy addition.

For hundreds of years, masters have passed on their skills and the "mysteries of the trade" to interested young people through apprenticeship systems. And so it is with this book. Here, two leading business historians and a chief curator of a historical museum have teamed up to pass on the "secrets of the business historian's craft" in a

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