

leaders, as well as rank-and-file members, to propel forward the civil rights movement in packinghouses and communities in Iowa, the Midwest, and throughout the nation.

*Remembering Roadside America: Preserving the Recent Past as Landscape and Place*, by John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2011. xxiii, 284 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95 paper.

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*Remembering Roadside America* is the seventh book by two of the most prolific researchers on the history of twentieth-century American roadside architecture. Most of their collaborative publications have been evolutionary histories that focus on particular types of buildings: gas stations, motels, and the like. This book, however, is a rich examination of a range of historic preservation issues. It contributes to our understanding of the significance of the modern American roadside and its ability to capture and express the cultural values and beliefs of twentieth-century Americans.

Since the advent of the automobile transformed the nature of travel and transportation throughout the United States, most Americans have struggled with how to understand and value the roadside environment that resulted from its popularity. Buildings dedicated to the support of the car's maintenance and operation and to drivers' and passengers' need for food, drink, and lodging began to sprout along roads' edges as soon as automobile ownership became commonplace. Such commercial endeavors became thriving contributors to the architectural history of small towns and large cities alike, although the buildings that usually housed these businesses were often small and somewhat temporary in nature. Likewise, roadside signage and billboards that advertised the presence of such businesses were often extreme in their eye-catching quality but also quick to change and only marginally controlled or regulated.

With the passage of time, the American roadside began to evolve into more of a collage than a palimpsest as larger, newer, and often more homogenous franchised businesses were inserted into the mix. The shift from small highways to bypassing interstates left some roadside relics from earlier times to linger—a point made poignantly in Pixar's animated movie *Cars* (2006). How to merge the obscurity and

relative obsolescence of this landscape with a reasoned approach to historic preservation is the subject of this book.

The text is broken up into seven chapters. In the first three, the authors review the history of the American roadside landscape and establish the theoretical constructs for understanding it as evidence of our collective human and cultural geographies. Drawing on their vast collection of images of American roadside architecture, Jakle and Sculle present a perspective on the development of the roadside that is national in its scope and comprehensive in its consideration. Relying on interpretive theories of the everyday environment established in the scholarship of J. B. Jackson, Kevin Lynch, and John R. Stilgoe, among others, the authors argue for understanding the roadside as a meaningful place containing layers of cultural memory that challenge contemporary interpretations of the value of the ephemeral and the vernacular. In particular, they clarify the ways the architectural landscapes of the American roadside can be understood as evidence of the emphasis on change as a sign of progress that was so prevalent in the *zeitgeist* of modern America.

The second half of the book presents an overview of the limitations and potential of twentieth-century American preservation philosophy to serve as a strategy for interpreting the meaning and significance of roadside environments. Jakle and Sculle also document and challenge the ways American notions of the museum have shaped the ways we preserve and interpret our past. In the case of the historic roadside, one is challenged to consider the role of the road itself, as well as how factors such as proximity and speed influence our ability to understand the meaning and significance of these artifacts. In the end, the authors help us see the possibility of developing more authentic outdoor roadside museums that include an accurate preservation of the spatial qualities associated with roads and roadside architecture and the ability of such places to represent change over time.

This book has many strengths. It is readable and well illustrated with a combination of photographs and postcard images along with a few helpful maps and charts. It presents a well-grounded and well-constructed argument for valuing and preserving roadside America within the context of theories of the everyday. Most important, it provides a thoughtful critique of American preservation policies and incentive programs and their applicability to landscapes affected by the automobile. Because Iowa is bisected by the Lincoln Highway and home to some excellent but often endangered examples of historic roadside architecture, this book is particularly relevant to all who may be interested in that aspect of Iowa's heritage.