

privilege. Gates himself evolved with the times. His 1953 essay, "From Individualism to Collectivism in American Land Policy," included here, marked his growing concern for the environment and ended with a plea for a "more socially minded" use of resources (118). His final essays in the 1980s blasted the "vandalism" (142) wrought by "greedy capitalists" (122) in the West and their Republican allies in Washington.

Gates was no postmodernist, and the shifting applications of his liberal principles did not cause him to doubt their soundness. His unbroken faith in the Jeffersonian dream gives some of his work today a dated look. Yet it stands in this book as a model for later practitioners of scholarship that is propelled by deep conviction, yet still meticulous in research and scrupulous in presentation.

The Pursuit of Local History: Readings on Theory and Practice, edited by Carol Kammen. Matewan, NJ: Alta Mira Press, 1996. 240 pp. Notes, suggested readings, index. \$24.95 paper.

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Carol Kammen, senior lecturer in local history at Cornell University and a frequent contributor to the American Association for State and Local History's *History News*, has published several books on the writing of local history. Her latest effort brings together essays on the topic in a fine anthology. The authors cover a broad range of subjects: common threads of local and regional history, the role of amateur historians and nonacademics, the purposes of local history, and conceptual approaches to community history, to list a few. The book also confronts serious controversies, such as deficiencies in—and the value of—local history, how not to write it, and how to write dull history. Kammen's husband, historian Michael Kammen, has drafted an excellent summary of opportunities and challenges in the field. Other contributors represent a variety of backgrounds, including established academics like Professor Kammen, historical editors, librarians, and, of course, local historians. Even though most of the authors are from the East, what they have to say about local history in, say, New York, Ohio, or Kansas City is as relevant to Iowa as are the points made in "Nearby History: Connecting Particulars and Universals," by Myron A. Marty, dean of Arts and Sciences at Drake University.

The problems in this useful volume are minor. I question whether the section on nineteenth-century views of local history (Salma Hale's 1828 address to the New Hampshire Historical Society, an 1815 address by James Davis Butler Jr. to the Vermont Historical and Anti-

quarian Society, and an 1846 bibliographical essay by German immigrant Hermann Ernst Ludewig) relates, as the other sections do, to how local history is practiced at the end of the twentieth century. There should be an index and bibliography, since this is supposed to be a sort of guide for those laboring in the vineyards. Most readers will be disappointed to find only a thirteen-item "suggestions for further reading" on the last page. All in all, however, this is a much needed handbook, packed with specific advice for anyone involved in the research or writing of local history.

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