

notes together. These are conveniently restated on pages 189 to 191. Then, if one has the patience, check the rich bibliography, noting the far-flung professional literature on which the study is based. Even the most knowledgeable observer will find some new avenues to explore in this list.

But Professor Francaviglia will be most pleased, I am sure, if instead of heading directly for the library, we instead make a pilgrimage to a nearby Main Street. Here we can see for ourselves, savoring the scene, checking the time of the place, and perhaps adding another axiom to the list. In the final analysis, this book pushes us out of our chairs, helping us to look with discerning eyes and to ponder anew the deeper meaning of our built environment.

The Changing American Countryside: Rural People and Places, edited by Emery N. Castle. Rural America Series. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995. xx, 563 pp. Maps, tables, notes, index. \$25.00 paper.

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While the politicians in Washington may not have noticed, for the past fifteen years the people of rural America, and those in the heartland states in particular, have experienced a significant transformation of local economic and social structures. Farms, farm families, and farm businesses that had stood for generations have disappeared. Consolidated farms, corporate farms, chain stores, discount warehouse stores, and suburban subdivisions have taken their place. Those men and women who remain on the land have adjusted to these new economic circumstances by working off the farm and learning to spend as much time on the computer as in the fields. Even with recently higher prices for certain crops, hard times on the farm continue—hard times that have added fuel to the flames of some extremist political movements.

The Changing American Countryside provides scholarly evidence of what rural folks have experienced for nearly two decades. For that reason and several others, it is a very useful anthology. Its stated goals are two: it hopes, first of all, "to push back the frontiers of knowledge" about current trends in rural America; and second, "to influence the thoughts and actions of both scholars and [the] public" (xv). A compilation of twenty-six essays written by members of the National Rural Studies Committee from sociology, economics, geography, political science, anthropology, and agriculture departments of colleges and universities across the United States, *The Changing American Countryside* details diverse structural and societal changes in non-metropolitan America. Much of the data it provides can not be found in any other

source. Regrettably, however, the chances of this accomplished group of scholars significantly influencing public thinking about rural America is unlikely at best.

Scholars of rural America will welcome *The Changing American Countryside* with open arms. It is very difficult to find a single source that gathers so much current data regarding life in rural America. Needless to say, when economic and social conditions are changing so rapidly, statistics and analysis from the late 1970s and early 1980s simply will not do. Neither will personal observations from a single locale or anecdotal evidence from several. Thus the best essays actually lift a burden from scholars' shoulders. For example, Peirce Lewis's article, "The Urban Invasion of Rural America: The Emergence of the Galactic City," explores with maps, diagrams, and aerial photography the extent of development of farmland by suburban entrepreneurs. He sounds the alarm for preserving rural community structures and prime farmland that is just beginning to be heeded around the country. Similarly, John Fraser Hart declares and then proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that "'rural' and 'farm' no longer mean the same" (63). Indeed, a significant portion of the essays are devoted to detailing the diverse kinds of nonfarm labor performed in the countryside. In "Finding Rural Success: The New Rural Economic Landscape and its Implications," Mark Drabentstott and Tim R. Smith examine the areas — mostly those with "lifestyle amenities" — that have flourished in the 1990s. Finally, while the six articles on regional and ethnic diversity do not produce as much new material as the other essays do, their inclusion in the volume is highly significant. If "rural" and "farm" no longer mean the same thing, "rural" and "white" never have.

There are a few problems with the anthology, however. I feel compelled to remind the authors that the Pequot tribe, owners of the immensely successful Foxwoods Casino, live in southeastern Connecticut, not western Massachusetts (315). I also found some of the essays to be repetitive, and one or two others to be too general to be useful. Missing altogether from the volume is any serious consideration of rural politics or of the impact of specific federal policies on rural America. Such topics may never have been part of the editor's plans, but they should have been. Both the Republican and the Democratic parties have ignored the problems of rural America, and such incognizance has more often been answered by bombings and court liens than by organized nonviolent protest or caucus. Scholars need to do their part to reemphasize the relations of public power in the countryside.

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