failure of a phalanx of “modern” institutions that were driven by the unifying and homogenizing visions of state authoritarianism. Bozdogan’s authorial voice, however, is not that of an all-seeing critic—say, that of a James Scott—who gazes at the world from a lofty position, to warn us about ill-conceived social engineering schemes doomed to fail miserably. Her sensibilities are those of a generation of intellectuals who have been molded as subjects of nationalist projects. Her self-reflective voice resonates with the kinds of ambivalence that have become the hallmark of this generation, caught between the homogenizing visions of state authoritarianism on the one hand, and the homogenizing forces of global capitalism on the other. This is, of course, what has been described as the “condition of postcoloniality.” The nuance with which Bozdogan situates her subject position within her book articulates the concerns of postcolonial scholarship at its best.

My only criticism of Bozdogan’s book is that it allows the unifying vision of her book to be overshadowed, a bit too much, by her concern to engage with multiple audiences. Any attempt to cut across fields of specialization that do not normally interact with one another necessitates a series of painful compromises. As the author herself poses it, “Does one explain who Le Corbusier was for nonspecialist readers outside the field of architecture? Does one give basic historical information such as the date of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic for readers unfamiliar with the history of Turkey and the Middle East?” (15).

Bozdogan has chosen to do both, by organizing her book in such a way that it is amenable to chapter-by-chapter readings and also as a whole. But the very scope and richness of individual chapters (each of which is packed with basic information, references to intellectual currents and debates, as well as an unusual variety of visual materials) threatens to overwhelm the unifying vision of the whole book. Bozdogan allows this to happen, almost by default, mainly because she deliberately adopts a very modest (for lack of a better term) stance in the introductory and concluding chapters of her book. I believe that the author’s full achievement as a very creative historian resides in making connections and establishing general patterns over a broad stretch of the past. Her book uncovers common elements in elite and popular culture that can be said to reflect the spirit of an age. Moreover, the book appears in print at a moment in time when we are just beginning to realize that the new microhistory of the past two decades, which has contributed so much to our understanding (from the bottom up) of the experiences of marginalized and disadvantaged groups, has also deprived us of a broader, comparative vision of twentieth-century nationalisms. So my criticism—or my complaint, to be more precise—is that Bozdogan’s book deserves a more boldly couched, synthesizing introductory chapter than she has given us.

There is no doubt that Bozdogan’s study on Turkish architectural culture is an important piece of scholarship, one that will be read and reread by those of us interested in the negotiation of modernity and nationalism in Turkey. It also constitutes a significant contribution to the comparative study of twentieth-century nationalisms, not simply as a case study, however excellent, but also as an exemplary analysis of temporal contingencies and global conjunctures that continue to shape their course.

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Notes
1. For a recent collection of articles that discuss the interwar years from this perspective, see the special issue of New Perspectives on Turkey 23 (Fall 2000), edited by R. Kasaba.

Cities

Eric Sandweiss
St. Louis: The Evolution of an American Urban Landscape
Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001, xiii + 282 pp., illustrations (b/w) include 32 photographs, 27 maps, and drawings. $74.50 (cloth), ISBN 1-56839-885-1; $24.95 (paper), ISBN 1-56839-886-X.

Eric Sandweiss’s impressive analysis of the evolution of the St. Louis urban landscape is an important addition to the interdisciplinary study of urban history that has characterized the field for the past fifteen years. His focus is “on the ways in which St. Louisans defined their individual and collective identities through the processes of dividing, trading, improving, and dwelling upon land—acts that . . . not only reflect but actively shape social relations” (3). While not a traditional architectural history, the study does offer important new approaches for understanding the buildings of the city.

Sandweiss, Director of Research at the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis, began the work for this book with his dissertation, “Construction and Community in South St. Louis, 1850–1910” (University of California, Berkeley, 1991). Portions of it have also been published as essays in larger collections (Historical Archaeology and the Study of American Culture [Winterthur, 1996], Planning the Twentieth-Century American City [Baltimore, 1996], and Common Fields: An Environmental History of St. Louis [St. Louis, 1997]). Part of the Temple University Press series Critical Perspectives on the Past, the book fits well with its companion volumes, which the press describes as being “critical of traditional historical method.”

In his introduction, “Fenced-Off Corners, Wider Settings, and the New American Landscape,” Sandweiss develops a broad social and political theme for the more than 200 years of urban evolution he presents. He describes the con-
lict between the “fenced-off corners,” those neighborhood communities that were “separated by cultural and linguistic divides from the rest of the city, congested and at times ridden with disease, home to political bosses who derived their power by distributing favors” (11) and a “wider setting” whose advocates promoted “civic commerce, culture, politics, and architecture” (12), which became a political issue by about 1900. The rest of the book is divided into three sections. Part One treats the founding of St. Louis in 1764 and its colonial legacy into the mid-nineteenth century. Part Two, the heart of the book, discusses the building of the fenced-off corners. Part Three looks at the reaction coming about 1900 in the promotion of the wider setting—in detail for the first half of the century and more briefly from 1950 to today.

Sandweiss’s research is impressive; the range of published and unpublished materials and of individuals that were consulted, the control of the scholarly literature from many disciplines, and an intimate familiarity with the streets, buildings, and land forms of the city are all evident. Thirty-seven pages of endnotes, often miniature essays, comprise a useful historiographical addendum.

The early topographical history of St. Louis has been widely known since Charles Peterson’s durable studies of the 1940s. Sandweiss, in Part One of his book, traces the legacy of this early plan down to the incorporation of the city in 1822, the expansion of its boundaries in 1841, and early real estate developments to the middle of the nineteenth century. Common fields outside the original platted town were opened to development, and, out of the tension between government land control and private interests, the roles of both were gradually defined. Slowly a new landed political elite emerged.

In Part Two, tracing the building of the fenced-off corners, Sandweiss analyzes the change from a relatively defined social and political order at mid-century to one that was complex and highly factional at the end of the century—a shift from “republican liberalism” to “pluralist liberalism” (64). In a close analysis of the real estate development process, he characterizes three stages: first, up to the Civil War, one of unity, simplicity, and a lack of specialization among key players; then, into the building boom of the 1880s, multiplicity, diversification, and specialization; and with the turn of the century, renewed unity from regulation and control of several types. But, “Far from being steady and unchanging, that structure [which this city-building process created] was inherently unstable. Spatial and social relationships locked into a wobbling feedback loop that saw each change in response to the other, then provoking new changes in response” (65).

In three chapters, Sandweiss looks first at the producers—the developers, real estate brokers, contractors, traders, and money lenders; next he considers the consumers—those who owned and occupied the newly developed buildings; finally he examines the regulators and the changing role of the city. The focus of the analysis is on four small working-class neighborhoods on the South Side, within close proximity to each other, developed in quick succession over about a forty-year period. These serve as samples from which larger conclusions about the evolution of the city are drawn. The amount of social, economic, and political detail as well as architectural and urbanistic information that Sandweiss has assembled for the four neighborhoods is vast and brings into sharp focus many aspects of the process. Of special interest to architectural historians is the interpretation of the residential architecture, in which the author correlates building and plan types (well illustrated) with the demographics of the neighborhoods.

In the Menard neighborhood, for example, where the two-story brick façades at first glance look much like other parts of the South Side, Sandweiss gives us drawings and photographs of these double houses with undifferentiated two-room plans entered from shared backyards that “reflected and encouraged certain basic patterns in the relative organization of private, family, and communal living” (105). The owners were predominantly young, recent German or Bohemian immigrants who worked as laborers. Their new houses were financed by neighbors and relatives, and probably built by other neighbors. In the nearby Halliday neighborhood, contrast, larger double houses on wider lots, with highly specialized interior spaces, built by a widely based group of investors and builders, were occupied by an Americanized middle-class population. “To own a home there implied little about one’s ethnic background or age, but much about how one made a living” (139).

The planning and making of streets became an issue of control and financial responsibility that was not easily resolved, and for too long the cheapest macadamized pavement was used. City boundaries continued to expand until 1876 when a new charter fixed them permanently and separated the city from the county. It provided a moment when a general plan for the entire city might have been prepared to replace the evolving process of development, but that had to wait. The implications of the 1876 charter were far-reaching and largely unanticipated, and they resulted in fenced-off corners of a new kind in the twentieth century in the endless separate communities that comprise the metropolitan area of St. Louis today.

In Part Three, “Conceiving the Wider Setting,” Sandweiss looks at civic improvement and city-planning ideals in the period 1890 to 1950, similar to what was happening around the country. In St. Louis, sectional politics pitting the predominantly working-class neighborhoods of the South Side and the North Side against the wealthier neighborhoods of the West End complicated the cause. New city commissions and a citizens’ Civic Improvement League made the case for the wider setting, but implementing it was not simple. The city hired landscape architect George Kessler in 1902 to supervise the planning of Kingshighway, and the Civic Improvement League published a rather conservative
city plan, unveiled on 2 February 1907, when Daniel Burnham gave the keynote address. Eventually, a City Plan Commission was approved in 1911, and in 1916 Harland Bartholomew became engineer of the new commission, beginning a career that helped to define the role of the modern city planner. Sandweiss is especially good at unraveling the planning process, rather than simply reciting the grand visions of the planners. He provides a detailed account of Bartholomew's early work in St. Louis, and a measured evaluation: "By emphasizing and praising the natural or organic aspects of urban growth, Bartholomew stressed the role of the city planner as conservator, rather than innovator, and positioned himself firmly in favor of the status quo of extant growth patterns and social divisions within St. Louis" (217).

Part Three concludes with an epilogue summarizing the plight of a "Declining City" (231) from 1950 to the present, a period when its population dropped from 800,000 to fewer than 350,000, from more than 60 percent of the region's total to less than 15 percent. This was a time when civic improvement ran headlong into civic decline, and many of the remedies—land clearance, housing projects, urban highways—were hardly successes. Ironically, perhaps, it is the ideal of the fenced-off corner that has most force in the evolution of the urban landscape now, not just in the endless St. Louis suburbs but also in the city. I hope that we will eventually get a close analysis of the process by which all this happened, the sort of analysis that so distinguishes this book for the period up to 1950. Writing with wit and sympathy as well as great learning, Sandweiss has given us an unusually detailed and precise social, economic, and political history of the urban landscape of St. Louis. It should not only be read by historians, it should also become part of the ongoing process of building St. Louis.

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Daphne Spain
How Women Saved the City

Daphne Spain has studied boarding houses, vocational schools, settlement houses, public baths, and playgrounds built by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the Salvation Army, the College Settlement Association (CSA), and the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) during the years between 1870 and 1920. In a spirit of moral uplift, members of these organizations created what Spain calls "voluntary vernacular" architecture, building "redemptive places" that "gave newcomers to the city a fresh start, delivered women volunteers from completely domestic lives, and saved the city from being overwhelmed by strangers" (xii). Her book deals with what many middle-class women reformers called "municipal housekeeping." Because men had failed to bring order to American cities, some women believed that voluntary public work in the city could "make the whole world homelike," as Frances Willard exhorted.

Spain's goal is to strengthen the history of urban planning by identifying the "voluntary vernacular" as an area where women's history and the history of the built environment overlap. She argues that many histories of urban development tend to omit women's contributions, while historians of women and social movements tend to ignore the built environment. This is true, although there are some recent exceptions. Sarah Jane Deutsch's Gender, Power, and Space in Boston, 1870–1940 (New York, 2000), covers working-class, middle-class, and upper-class women in one city. In contrast to Deutsch, Spain looked at women and the city nationally, but limited the kinds of organizations she would examine, thus narrowing the scope of her book. She did not study institution building by nurses, social workers, or teachers because these women were professionals, not volunteers. She did not explore suffrage groups or the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), because "the temperance movement had a overtly political agenda" and she wanted to study "organizations that identified themselves in nonpolitical terms, yet accomplished very real political ends by shaping public discourse through the built environment" (20).

The four voluntary women's organizations Spain did research all had a Protestant, Social Gospel orientation. She examines the roles played by leaders as well as local volunteers. Written in two parts, the book deals first with the sacred and secular strategies of women's voluntary organizations in urban settings. Part Two includes case studies of New York, Boston, and Chicago and a concluding chapter on "How Women Saved the City." Extensive appendices include the organizational charters of the four groups, as well as "Addresses of Redemptive Places for Boston, New York City, and Chicago" (261–268). The addresses are useful because the book's maps, by Geographic Information Services, are difficult to read.

The author has done detailed archival research and scoured photographic archives. She includes about seventy views of redemptive places and people in them—nurses, social workers, settlement workers, kindergarten teachers, and volunteers. A shot of a visiting nurse taking a shortcut over sooty tenement roofs in New York is wonderful (137). Many of the images are familiar views by muckrakers of filthy conditions in neighborhoods such as Mulberry Bend or photos of the facades of redemptive places. Among the more unusual photographs are images of fresh-air tents set up by visiting nurses to treat sick babies in urban open spaces and of floating baths placed in rivers in the summer (a combination swimming pool and public bath house). Architectural historians will find relatively few plans shown. Discussion of architects involved with these voluntary organizations is slight, although Julia Morgan designed many YWCAs as part of her pioneering practice as a solo.