

Cherry, Gordon E., ed. *Shaping an Urban World: Planning in the Twentieth Century*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980.

Pp. xii, 259. Figures, maps, illustrations. \$27.50 (U.S.)

Kain, Roger, ed., *Planning for Conservation: An International Perspective*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981. Pp. xii, 292.

Tables, figures, maps, illustrations. \$30.00 (U.S.)

P. J. Smith

Volume 10, Number 3, February 1982

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1019085ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1019085ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine

ISSN

0703-0428 (print)

1918-5138 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Smith, P. J. (1982). Review of [Cherry, Gordon E., ed. *Shaping an Urban World: Planning in the Twentieth Century*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980. Pp. xii, 259. Figures, maps, illustrations. \$27.50 (U.S.) / Kain, Roger, ed., *Planning for Conservation: An International Perspective*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981. Pp. xii, 292. Tables, figures, maps, illustrations. \$30.00 (U.S.)]. *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 10(3), 70–72. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1019085ar>

conomic hard times, "indigent" Canadian doctors were willing to accept almost any scheme that would put money in their pockets. The only reason Canada did not get national health insurance in that era was because government, not doctors, choked on its cost. Then, in the late 1940s Canadian doctors, apparently now more affluent (the authors failed to make this clear) discovered all the objections long "known" to American doctors, and health insurance was knocked dead for another generation.

If one is an American and as typically and inexcusably uninformed as I was about Canadian history, this lengthy collection is a good antidote to ignorance, at least for several important areas of Canadian history. American (and Canadian) scholars interested in the history of medicine, health, and the learned professions will find *Medicine in Canadian Society* particularly valuable for its cross-national perspective. Teachers in those fields also have available a very readable supplemental text. The McGill-Queens University Press is to be congratulated for bringing out a useful and timely book.

Ed Beardsley  
Department of History  
The University of South Carolina

---

Cherry, Gordon E., ed. *Shaping an Urban World: Planning in the Twentieth Century*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980. Pp. xii, 259. Figures, maps, illustrations. \$27.50 (U.S.).

Kain, Roger, ed., *Planning for Conservation: An International Perspective*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981. Pp. xii, 292. Tables, figures, maps, illustrations. \$30.00 (U.S.).

With these handsome volumes, the opening trilogy of an important new series, *Studies in History, Planning and the Environment*, is brought to completion. The volumes also share a common origin in the papers presented at the first International Conference on the History of Urban and Regional Planning, which was held in London in 1977. Now, however, they have the benefit of editorial direction, as they have been selected, arranged, rewritten and, in the case of Kain's book, supplemented by invited contributions "to deepen the historical dimension and to widen the international perspective."

Excluding the editors' introductory essays, a total of twenty-four original papers has been assembled. Most were written by planners, geographers or historians (including specialists in the history of art and architecture), but it also strikes me as particularly fitting that several of the contributors to the conservation volume defy easy pigeon-holing. Similarly, although most of the contributors are either British or American, there are enough from oth-

er countries (Germany, Austria, Poland, Greece, Japan and Canada) to give the books a truly international flavour. This is enhanced by the fact that some of the British and American authors have ventured beyond the English-speaking realm to which most of us are confined. As a result, these two collections cover a range of planning experience well beyond that which is normally available in the English-language literature. This, it seems to me, is their most important contribution.

The major respect in which the books betray their conference origin is in the variation in scope and intensity among the individual essays. This, of course, is unavoidable, no matter how firmly editorial control is exercised, but it inevitably raises awkward questions about the appropriate level of writing and the intended audience. In this instance, only a reader of the most catholic taste is likely to want to read each volume, cover to cover, although every essay has something of value for even the most knowledgeable scholars of planning history. But while most of the essays are likely to appeal to their own, fairly specialized readerships, there are several which seem more suited to a much larger audience. I mean this in two senses, which is another way of highlighting the difficulty the editors faced in trying to impose a sense of unity on their respective collections. On the one hand, there are those essays which ought to be known to people who would not normally think of looking into the planning history literature. The best example is by A.D. King: "Exporting Planning: The Colonial and Neo-Colonial Experience," an article which says as much about the whole process of cultural diffusion, and the transmission of metropolitan ideologies into colonial contexts, as it does about the history of planning. I found it fascinating, not least because the Canadian planning movement has depended so heavily on the same process. Then, on the other hand, and altogether different in tone and purpose, there are a number of survey articles which could well become standard entries in the reading lists for beginning courses in the development of planning thought. W. Houghton-Evans' "Schemata in British New Town Planning" is a case in point from Cherry's volume; the "schemata" are physical design concepts, and lead to a quick review of design principles from Aristotle and the Hippodamian grid to today's variants of the "orthogonal grid." (Am I alone in regarding this as a tautology?) A parallel example can be found in Andrew W. Gilg's, "Planning for Conservation: A Struggle For Survival and Political Respectability"; the suggestive title to the contrary, this is a brief overview of the development of the nature conservation movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Of their kinds, these are all excellent essays; it is the mix that sits uncomfortably. To shift from Houghton-Evans, for example, to Watanabe's detailed description of the development of a dormitory suburb of Tokyo in the 1920s, or from Gilg to Zarebska's equally detailed description of the plan for the reconstruction of the Polish

city of Kalisz, requires a high degree of intellectual gear-shifting. Of more practical import, this same problem of mix will, unfortunately, limit the market appeal of these books. Even by today's standards, they are expensive. And although the publisher's money has been well spent, in a purely physical sense (good paper, attractive dust-wrappers, clean type and layout, and numerous photographs and other illustrations, particularly in the conservation volume), I would be hard pressed to urge people to buy them. They should make the shelves of a small coterie of academics, whose research and teaching interests range rather broadly within the field of planning history, but otherwise they seem destined to be purchased by libraries as reference works. On this, though, I can be firm; all self-respecting libraries should have them.

To be fair to the editors, they have done their best to cope with the diversity of their material, by organizing the papers around sub-themes which, in turn, give some structure to the books. Roger Kain has been more successful in this than Gordon Cherry, no doubt because he was able to invite contributors to fill out the gaps in his coverage. Because there were not enough conference papers to justify a full book on the general theme of conservation, Kain was not constrained as tightly as Cherry in his selection, and his organization is both simpler and more obviously logical. The system has still produced its sports, but that, too, seems to reflect the shortage of conference material that he had to draw on.

Kain's sub-themes, in order, are the origins and development of conservation; natural resource and landscape conservation; and building preservation and urban conservation. To my mind, though, only the middle set is well related to its theme. It also provides a model that would have strengthened the whole book, since it comprises a broad overview (Gilg) followed by three case studies. These concern the campaign for a national park in the English Lake District; the use of planning controls for amenity purposes in England between the two world wars; and the development of river basin planning in the United States, with particular reference to the Tennessee Valley Authority. In the opening set, by contrast, only three of the five essays really belong together, and in the concluding set, only two out of four. The former begins with surveys of the development of conservation movements in Canada, Germany and Austria, respectively, while the latter includes a parallel review of architectural conservation in Greece and an essay (by Kain, himself) which surveys the development of conservation legislation in France as a prelude to a detailed examination of experience in the Marais district of Paris.

These nine essays, together with Teresa Zarebska's on the reconstruction of Kalisz (which I would have preferred to see in the urban section, rather than in the first section where Kain placed it), constitute the book's contribution to the history of conservation. And insofar as their purpose

is to introduce a variety of international experience to a wide audience, the contribution is a useful one. Some of the essays also go further than that, and I would particularly single out Alan Artibise and Gilbert Stelter for their fresh interpretation of the Commission of Conservation in the light of the most recent work on the development of planning thought in Canada.

Since the conservation volume turned out to be the longest in the trilogy, I am inclined to think that it should have been limited to these ten papers. At the same time, I would want to transfer at least one of the left-overs to Gordon Cherry's collection. This is Norma Evenson's essay on the never-ending debate about the regulation of building heights and profiles in Paris – a debate that is not marked by a desire to conserve anything (except, perhaps, the image of Paris as a great work of art) so much as the need to adapt a detailed element of the planning control system to an ever-changing aesthetic. The essay is therefore an investigation into "planning method," to pick up the title that Cherry adopts for one of his sub-themes.

Given the material that he had to choose from, Cherry's collection is unavoidably more disjointed and idiosyncratic than Kain's, but the individual essays also tend to be more specialized and searching. With two exceptions (essays on Germany and Brazil), the nationalistic survey approach is eschewed here, and the volume may well have gained in scholarly tone if it had been eschewed entirely.

The first section of the book is called "recurrent themes," but its two essays address topics that I would rather describe as grossly neglected. First, Peter Marcuse discusses the "puzzling split" between housing policy and city planning in the United States. I am not sure why he is puzzled, but I do agree that the separation is illogical and that it has had important implications for planning practice, in Canada and Britain no less than in the United States. So, too, has the automobile, which is Blaine Brownell's subject in an essay entitled "Urban Planning, The Planning Profession, and the Motor Vehicle in Early Twentieth-Century America." I welcome this sign that historians are at last giving critical attention to this most far-reaching of technological innovations.

From this solid beginning, the book progresses through three sections to a concluding "assessment." First, under "Planning Method," are the essays by Houghton-Evans and Watanabe, along with a description of the evolution of the regional planning system in the Rhine-Main area up to 1945. Next comes a section styled, rather grandly, "Establishing the Planning Tradition." It includes the two survey articles on Germany and Brazil, as well as Cherry's own contribution (in which I personally have much interest) on Neville Chamberlain's role in the British planning movement. We then shift to King's important article on the diffusion of planning ideology, which is paired with a case study of Lusaka under the

theme of "international transfers," and the book concludes with a disappointingly brief review of the anti-planning debate. Planners, at least, are not likely to find much that is fresh or disturbing in this last essay, which suggests that urban historians are not yet familiar with the large, critical literature spawned by the planning movement over the past ten or fifteen years.

On balance, problems of selection and arrangement aside, I am strongly of the view that it was right to publish these books. As in all collections culled from conference proceedings, the editors cannot escape a stream of criticisms – that their material is uneven, in various senses; that it lacks unifying conceptions (what is "planning history"?); and that the purpose of the collection is unclear. Yet I, for one, am pleased to see most of these particular essays in print; and even more pleased to see the series launched.

P.J. Smith  
Department of Geography  
University of Alberta

---

Sutcliffe, A. *The History of Urban and Regional Planning: An Annotated Bibliography*. London: Mansell, 1980. Pp.284. £12.95.

When the Planning History Group was established in 1974 a decision was made to compile and publish a comprehensive bibliography listing all major contributions to the study of the history of urban and regional planning. Anthony Sutcliffe prepared a bibliography for the inaugural meeting of the group, and in 1977 published an expanded bibliography in monograph form with some 650 citations (see review of this bibliography in *U.H.R.*, October, 1980).

*The History of Urban and Regional Planning: An Annotated Bibliography* is an updated and expanded version of the 1977 bibliography. It contains some 1,400 citations, all of which are briefly annotated. The annotations are generally one or two sentences long, and they provide useful information which supplements the title of the work.

Though it is a very large bibliography, it is very well organized and, therefore, very easy to use. The material has been divided into eight major subject categories. An index of names (people and places) and an index of authors is provided. The introduction contains a concise review of the history and historiography of urban and regional planning.

The eight subject categories are:

1. Planning history: definitions, methods and objectives.

2. Encyclopaedias, guides and bibliographies.
3. Planning as a world movement.
4. Planning in individual countries.
5. Planning in individual towns and cities.
6. Individual planners.
7. Nineteenth-century antecedents (e.g., utopian tradition, model communities, garden cities).
8. Aspects of urban and regional planning (e.g., urban renewal, transport, zoning, new towns, regional planning).

It appears that all the Canadian planning history literature published prior to early 1980 has been included. The general section on Canada contains eighteen citations and the section on individual towns and cities includes eleven Canadian municipalities.

The bibliography is also very easy to use because a great deal of discretion has been exercised over what qualifies for inclusion. This is clearly a planning *history* bibliography. It is not a general planning bibliography with a lot of history citations. Sutcliffe has only included material which has for its main purpose the study of planning over a period of time or material which studies some specific event after it has occurred. This excludes general planning literature and works in which historical references are only incidental. Primary material, such as published collections of letters, documents or plans, have also been excluded. Unpublished university theses have been included.

This is and will remain for a long time to come a very important reference work. One could not ask for a more thorough or better organized bibliography.

J.D. Hulchanski  
Centre for Urban and Community Studies  
University of Toronto

---

Reps, John W. *Cities of the American West: A History of Frontier Urban Planning*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979. Pp.xiii, 827. Illustrations. \$75.00 (U.S.)

John Reps will be familiar to specialists in urban studies as the dean of city planning historians. His work, *The Making of Urban America* (1965), is a landmark in the field and his more specialized studies on Washington, on colonial Virginia and Maryland, and on mid-western cities are well-known. His interest in western America has already resulted in *Cities on Stone: Nineteenth Century Lithograph Images of the Urban West* (1976), which he published in association with the Amon Carter Museum, but the present volume is the full-scale production for which the former was preparation.

The thesis of *Cities of the American West*, which is supported by such a wealth of detail as to be incontrovertible,