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Pred Allan. *Urban Growth and City-Systems in the United States, 1840-1860*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980. xviii, 282 pp. Figures, index, tables

Peter G. Goheen

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origin, some being drawn from the conference and others being drawn from elsewhere. The original notion that the "politician is at the centre" does not seem to have been sustained as the central focus of contributions to the volume. A number of the papers appear to be elaborations of ideas which have been raised and discussed elsewhere. For example, both of Plunkett's papers are good summaries of some of his other writings; Lorimer's thesis can be found throughout his publications and Axworthy's paper reflects some of the research published by his Institute of Urban Studies in the mid-1970s. The papers themselves are uneven, providing a range of theoretical or methodological criticisms of the study of urban government in Canada (Clarkson, Dickerson, *et al*) juxtaposed with very descriptive papers, such as those presented by Quesnel-Ouellet.

Having said all this, there are perhaps two points in favour of the volume. First, it is refreshing in that it is not Ontario-centred. Indeed, western cities seem to be the most prominent subject of discussion. Secondly – and this is a positive contribution derived from the very deficiencies in the volume cited above – this book prompts suggestions concerning how to generate a coherent publication from a thematic conference. Perhaps the best approach is to have a set of pre-arranged themes and approaches which provide a point of departure for participants who prepare papers. By having all participants agree upon an approach, the themes and papers can be diverse but still make for a coherent whole.

Katerine A. Graham
Institute of Local Government
Queen's University

Pred Allan. *Urban Growth and City-Systems in the United States, 1840-1860.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980. xviii, 282 pp. Figures, index, tables.

The idea that the growth of a city is explained by the structure of its relations with other cities, that its role as a part of an interdependent system of cities determines its economic performance, has been explored by Allan Pred in a series of studies of the United States from the late-eighteenth to the early-twentieth century. Pred has sought to articulate a general theory capable of encompassing relations among cities in the urban system throughout this entire period of dramatic change. This theory he uses to generate more particular models by which he explores the significance to the urban system at given periods of such processes as industrialization, urbanization, and technological change. While the period from 1840 to 1860 was one of very rapid population growth, the author considers it important also because it presaged the rise of industrial urbanization and marked the decline of mercantile-based growth. He poses four questions at the outset (page 3):

> How simple or complex were the economic interdependencies of major centers within the U.S. system of cities and its various regional city-systems during the 1840-60 period? How did the economic interdependencies of that period interact with the feedback processes that apparently affected population growth within ... cities? How can those same interdependencies be related to the ongoing processes of ... city-system growth and development? Why was major-center rank stability solidified or maintained during these two decades ...?

The book contains three substantial empirical investigations. The first is a discussion of the pattern of urban growth where the principal concern is to document the continuing lead enjoyed by long-established cities during a period of rapid city founding. Acknowledgement of the expansion of the system comes in the consideration given to several rising cities of the mid-west. The argument is based on manipulation of statistics of urban population by date of entry into the census and by region.

Second, the author presents a wealth of fresh evidence of the economic ties that bound cities together in a complex web of relations. His focus is always on the largest cities and on their specialized trading patterns. He most elaborately documents commodity movements from or through Boston, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Cincinnati, and Charleston. Boston's trade he examines with particular attention to detail. Evidence for that city includes its trade in boots and shoes and in ice, and its non-local investments in railways and insurance. He supports his text with a substantial appendix of maps and tables. Pred intends the "snapshots" he offers the reader to be representative rather than definitive examinations of the larger pattern of interurban economic relations and to indicate the complexity of interactions already existing by 1860.

In another, briefer chapter Pred examines spatial biases in information contained in the newspapers of the period. He chose to itemize place specific non-local economic information appearing in several issues of the daily papers published in nine large cities in 1851 and in two cities in 1860. His utilization of consistent data series for each of the cities makes the evidence comparable over time and space, and it is here that he discusses the relevance to his findings of the organization of the post office and the telegraph systems.

The reader will find the theoretical statements in this book less novel than the empirical sections. The model will be familiar to those acquainted with Pred's writing. The model is a loosely structured argument expressed in

written and graphic form. The model, of "circular and cumulative growth feedbacks," is not expressed in a way that allows it to be reduced to a limited number of clearly articulated statements which could be explicitly evaluated or refined in light of the evidence and by recourse to specific analytical procedures. It is a more useful device for organizing a presentation than for assessing the evidence.

In his book Pred shows his imaginative grasp of historical conditions which occupied several centuries and continents. The scale at which he works and the evidence he brings to light serve to set his work apart from that of most of his contemporaries. His contribution is in a grand structural design and in an acute eye for detail.

Peter G. Goheen
Department of Geography
Queen's University

Barth, Gunther. *City People: The Rise of Modern City Culture in Nineteenth-Century America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. viii, 289 pp. Illustrations, notes, sources and index. $27.95 (Canadian) $19.95 (U.S.).

This is a novel, colourful, and largely persuasive view of the modern city, based on an impressively large and imaginative collection of primary sources. Barth begins by emphasizing the contrasts, diversity and conflicts of the American city, arising from such forces as ethnicity, economic inequality, age, race and the freedom of American life which "allowed great numbers of people to live as individuals more fully than before" (page 16). This stood in marked contrast, he argues, with European cities which never experienced the same kind of heterogeneity: the American poor never became a uniform proletariat, and they "cared enough for the opportunities in their new surroundings to prefer the promises of a free life to any call for solidarity" (page 22). These themes recur throughout the book: a belief in American exceptionalism and a celebration of the freedom and diversity which he believes constitutes the essence of that distinctive experience.

This city of contrasts required a new culture to provide "a common urban identity that also left enough room for each individual's dreams and aspirations" (page 229). Five institutions were crucial in shaping this new culture: the apartment building, the metropolitan press, the department store, the baseball park, and the vaudeville house. Examining each in turn, Barth demonstrates their contributions to a culture which had reached maturity by the early years of the twentieth century when, he claims, the "modern city" began to be destroyed by the automobile.

His treatment of the apartment building is part of a larger discussion of urban space in which he reviews the layout of streets and lots, architecture, the park movement, and public transportation. This is in some ways one of his more disappointing chapters, for he tries to cover too much and fails to integrate his material adequately. Nevertheless his remarks about the function of the apartment are intelligent and insightful. Departing from the Parisian models which originally inspired American builders, apartments did not contain a mix of social classes, but rather housed distinct groups, "because the social flux that attracted people of different origin also prevented easy contact between various groups" (page 47). Apartments solved the problem of finding accommodation for a family in cities where the single dwelling was not economically feasible for more than a few. They also accustomed people to the vertical dimension of the city, as well as to the advantage of such new technology as steam heat and electric lights.

The metropolitan press emerges as one of the most significant institutions of the nineteenth-century urban world. In a series of brilliant insights Barth demonstrates how it "helped to make diversity comprehensible and acceptable" (page 106) and ultimately fostered a "growing cosmopolitanism" (page 107). It also helped create a distinctly urban way of speaking and thinking, and paradoxically, by encouraging a respect for people's differences, encouraged greater uniformity of behaviour.

Although the department store could be found in Europe, it was in America that it first acquired a number of important characteristics, especially its openness to women from a range of classes and its conversion of downtown into a shopping area. It also shaped the lives of the women who shopped and worked in it, granting them an escape from the isolation of domesticity at the same time that it subjected them to the servitude of "shopping as a social obligation" (page 145). It gave urban life "charm and civility" (page 147) and like the metropolitan press helped to overcome the divisions of modern city life by forging new links among unlike people.

The ball park also played a crucial role in the city, giving rootless people a sense of belonging and teaching them the meaning of competition within rules. The final institution which he treats is the vaudeville house from which the audience emerged "as city people – urban men and women on the point of acquiring social skills and sharing cultural values that enabled them to cope with the complexities of modern city life" (page 228). The tempo, songs, language, and dress of vaudeville spread out onto the city streets and acted as significant elements in shaping the short-lived culture of the modern city.

It is precisely this contention – that the appearance of the automobile marked the end of the modern city –