

and content of this book all would make it a candidate for classroom use. The price (\$19.95 for the paperback and \$39.50 for the hard-cover) precludes that. As a result, yet another fine book will be underutilized.

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The New Urban Landscape: The Redefinition of City Form in Nineteenth-Century America. By David Schuyler. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. xv + 237 pp. \$29.50.)

The publication of Kenneth T. Jackson's *Crabgrass Frontier* (1985) has focused considerable attention on a lively body of scholarship concerned with understanding urban and suburban form and culture and their interrelationships. David Schuyler's contribution to that literature is an examination of an important strain in the nineteenth-century debate on the ideal spatial and cultural organization of the American metropolis. Between 1840 and 1900, a "new generation" of civic leaders, "including social reformers, physicians, religious leaders, landscape designers, and cultural arbiters," crusaded to create a new urban landscape, "one that introduced nature as a means of countering the over-civilization of the city." Schuyler chronicles the development of that naturalistic perspective as it emerged in the design and promotion of "rural" cemeteries, large public parks, comprehensive metropolitan park systems, and planned residential suburbs. Although he analyzes the planning ideas of A. J. Downing, Calvert Vaux, and Charles Eliot, the central figure in his account is Frederick Law Olmsted, whose writings and landscape designs best articulated the vision of a built environment that, as Schuyler properly emphasizes, was pastoral and civilizing without being anti-urban. Schuyler's precise depiction of the new perspective that "was a creative synthesis of the divergent values associated with country and city in nineteenth-century American culture" is based on a careful reading of the primary sources—landscape plans as well as writings of major participants in the urban debate. His is the best account to date of the restructuring of

agrarian ideology to accommodate the pastoral ideal of the middle landscape that profoundly influenced the design of certain urban and suburban recreational and domestic spaces until World War I. His analysis should, mercifully, lay to rest the widespread misunderstanding of the "rural" or suburban ideal as inherently anti-urban.

If *The New Urban Landscape* disappoints, it is in the author's failure to clarify the place of the naturalistic alternative to the commercial urban gridiron within the larger nineteenth-century debate on urban form. We do not learn how widespread and widely implemented the new perspective was, whether it influenced the design of recreational and domestic spaces in major metropolitan areas only or in smaller cities as well, or whether it won adherents in regions other than the East and Midwest. By arguing that "the conception of the park evolved from an associational and educational space that was essentially an extension of the city into a naturalistic landscape that in its very rusticity was the antithesis of the urban environment," Schuyler implies a direction and purity that neither the larger debate nor the actual designs of urban recreational spaces possessed. This same false dichotomy obscures the common social ends to which pastoral, associational, and other reform-oriented landscape designs were directed—the promotion of moral and physical well-being among the urban populace. In his last and least satisfactory chapter, Schuyler swaps his historian's hat for that of the critic, lamenting the late nineteenth-century eclipse of Olmsted's pastoral vistas by the less appealing neoclassical landscapes of the City Beautiful movement. But if Schuyler hasn't yet written the definitive account of nineteenth-century urban landscape design, he has made an important contribution to our understanding of a design perspective that fostered a strong American heritage of urban parks and suburban spaces.

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Southern Capitalists: The Ideological Leadership of an Elite, 1832-1885. By Laurence