Fighting Sprawl and City Hall: Resistance to Urban Growth in the Southwest

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and all that entails. Perhaps the difference between the West and other regions is a matter of scale. Thus, readers might recognize some of the issues westerners have wrestled with and profit from the insights these authors offer.


REVIEWED BY PATRICIA BURGESS, CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Though in many respects a work of western history, Michael Logan’s _Fighting Sprawl and City Hall_ has value for those elsewhere. Logan develops his thesis—that opposition to urban growth has been a constant element—in case studies of Tucson, Arizona, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, but there are larger lessons.

After providing some general background, Logan moves to the early twentieth century, when each city developed a “growth is good” mentality. By the end of World War II, a growth machine was firmly entrenched. Boosters and government officials in both cities made deliberate appeals to gain new residents, tourists, and economic development. Success brought both increased population and annexation of the urban fringe. Success also brought opposition. Most apparent initially was political opposition. Some resented planning and zoning controls. Others wanted no city services or taxes. Those in annexed areas feared loss of their rural lifestyle. State laws governing municipal incorporation and annexation guided opposition. A second type of opposition was ethnically based. Largely Hispanic South Tucson successfully resisted annexation by becoming an independent municipality; Albuquerque’s Old Town did not. In the 1960s both cities targeted Hispanic barrios for urban renewal because officials feared inner city blight might scare off new residents, tourists, or development opportunities. But residents of the targeted areas resisted. Each city also used elements of its ethnic heritage to attract tourists and economic development while making little genuine effort to understand, respect, or preserve it. Environmental resistance to growth was the last to be voiced explicitly. Both Tucson and Albuquerque promoted their sunny climates and beautiful vistas, but fringe development and auto-induced smog soon hid the views. Water shortages occurred as new residents made the desert green and “foreign” plants brought irritating pollens. Brief chapters at the end of each case study show that the story is not over.
Logan's two case studies are interesting, but as he explains the differences between Tucson and Albuquerque it is easy for the reader to miss the point that they are variations on a common theme—not two different themes. A concluding chapter brings the pieces together but does not fully develop the implications of this work. There are important lessons here about growth and efforts to control it, but they are mostly implicit in the two case studies. Boosters in both cities apparently failed to realize that the growth they sought might detract from the very factors that made their city appealing.

Juxtaposing growth in Tucson and Albuquerque against the midwestern experience is enlightening. Sprawl is here, too. However, the circumstances are different, for with only a few exceptions—such as Des Moines, Indianapolis, and Columbus—our larger cities are surrounded by incorporated suburban municipalities. They have long been unable to annex fringe areas in the way that Tucson and Albuquerque did, and they have blamed their problems on that inability. *Fighting Sprawl and City Hall* illustrates, however, that annexation is not without costs. It also reveals the important role state governments can play (a neglected area of research). Finally, it indicates that the forces supporting growth are complex and strong. Iowans fighting to save farmland and villages from sprawl have their work cut out for them.


**REVIEWED BY TOM MORAIN, STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**

*History Outreach* is a collection of eleven essays that, in the words of their editors, "examine the philosophical background of public history as community outreach, especially within the context of larger professional responsibilities." Public history has no one standard definition throughout the essays. All would agree that it involves in some way historical programming to an out-of-classroom audience. One essay, however, promotes the concept that public history is defined by the techniques it uses, such as oral history. Yet all historians, regardless of their subject or audience, could profitably incorporate such techniques into their research. The basic American history survey course, for example, would be involved in public history by this definition if students went into the community with tape recorders to find out how local residents experienced the trends discussed in lectures and