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Paul Groth. *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. xxii, 401 pp. Illustrations, graphs, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$35 Cloth.

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disturbing pattern of excluding the arts and artists from definitions of "culture." See Alberta Arthurs, "Taking Art Seriously," *American Arts*, (Fall, 1996).

4. Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986) and Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983) are fine historical presentations of popular culture nearer the turn of the century.

PAUL GROTH. *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. xxii, 401 pp. Illustrations, graphs, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$35 Cloth.

HENRY CISNEROS, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, recently announced with pride that more than 65 percent of American families lived in privately owned homes. This astounding figure testifies to the enduring success of a sixty-year-old federal housing policy whose principal aim is to advance single-family home ownership. But this statistic also raises questions about the social costs of such a singular policy for, as persistently high foreclosure and housing turnover rates attest, mortgages are clearly failing to deliver adequate and appropriate shelter to many Americans.

In *Living Downtown*, architectural historian Paul Groth closely examines the history of the residential hotel, a housing alternative which flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by serving a remarkably diverse clientele. From opera divas and corporate executives on-the-make to single laborers and wage-earning women, Americans of many stripes found the prospect of a privately-owned home either personally undesirable or untenable and frequently chose instead to rent rooms (or just a bed) in city centers by the day, week, or month. Despite (or perhaps because of) its success in meeting diverse shelter needs of men and women who often valued their freedom from patriarchal family structures or domestic responsibilities, the residential hotel acquired an unseemly reputation in the dominant culture and ultimately met its demise at the hands of reformers intent on eradicating any "congregate form of living" within the twentieth-century American city (201).

Living Downtown traces the rise and decline of the residential hotel by combining the techniques and insights of conventional social history with those of architectural criticism, city planning, and public policy studies. Making ample use of photographic and other visual evidence, Groth supplements his readings

of housing administration and reform literature with detailed reconstructions of different hotel types. Through a systematic examination of insurance maps, building permits, city tax records, inspection reports, and water company archives, Groth skillfully reproduces composite layouts for hundreds of long-vanished hotels in order to illustrate the various design strategies of hotel owners.

Although *Living Downtown* effectively surveys hotel life on a national scale from 1800 to 1980, Groth achieves analytic depth and thematic focus by concentrating his coverage in three ways. First, Groth uses evidence mostly from San Francisco, where up to ten percent of early-twentieth-century residents lived in hotels, for his most detailed analyses of hotel business, reform, and subculture. Second, Groth addresses antebellum and contemporary hotel experiences only in passing, emphasizing instead the seventy-odd years between the Civil War and Great Depression when hotel living was at its peak. Finally, while the book examines the broad array of hotel residents, it attends mostly to working-class lodgers. Such a focus is appropriate because cheap rooming and lodging houses made up the vast bulk of residential hotels and therefore attracted the most persistent attention of reformers.

The book's first half comprises an introduction and four subsequent chapters each of which recounts the social and cultural history of a residential hotel type: the palace hotel, the "midpriced mansion," the rooming house, and the cheap lodging house. The four chapters which compose the book's second half then turn to the rise of an organized opposition to hotel life, especially that which targeted cheap lodging houses. Coming together most forcefully under the banner of Progressive reform at the turn of the century, this opposition eventually insinuated itself into law through the passage of local moral and building codes, zoning ordinances, and eventually Federal Housing Administration lending guidelines which systematically steered investors away from hotel construction. After World War II, as professional planners increasingly defined low-priced hotels as "blight," what Groth calls "the monolithic one-best-way approach" to housing policy justified ambitious urban renewal and suburban building projects that destroyed old hotel communities, created a low-cost housing shortage, and dramatically narrowed a previously pluralistic housing market that had once accommodated diverse tastes and needs (302).

While Groth successfully describes the process of the residential hotel's marginalization, he less successfully explains it. In fact, the closest Groth comes to an explanation is to blame reformers' "ignorance" of hotel life and its subcultures. (Indeed, the epigraph to *Living Downtown* is Goethe's dictum, "There is nothing more frightening than active ignorance.") But this explanation begs

the larger question of why generations of reformers, city planners, policy makers, and architects remained systematically insulated from real "knowledge" about hotels and their residents.

In addressing this question, Groth would have benefitted from the rich literature of urban geography and sociology which analyzes how changing political economies frame decisions on the part of governments and private capital to invest, disinvest, and reinvest in urban real estate. Scholars such as David Harvey, for example, have shown that the eradication of alternative housing forms through the twentieth century owed less to misguided notions of urban planning than to the structural logic of real estate markets which devalorized urban working-class neighborhoods through suburban development and later revalorized those same neighborhoods through urban renewal and gentrification. Moreover, as command over social space is a crucial element in any search for profit and social hegemony, decisions which decimated cheap hotel communities also served to fragment a potential source of working-class opposition and resistance.

Thus, the decline of the lodging house after World War II must be seen as part of larger transformations in the built environment precipitated by the changing needs of economic elites. Although Groth concludes his book on a hopeful note about contemporary hotel experiments for the homeless, such restructuring of inner urban space will undoubtedly remain limited as long as other forms of housing tenure command higher profits.

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DAVID N. MAYER. *The Constitutional Thought of Thomas Jefferson*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994. xiv, 397 pages. Bibliography, index. Cloth, \$39.50.

BUCKING THE RECENT TREND to locate Thomas Jefferson within the competing frameworks of civic republicanism and Lockean liberalism, David N. Mayer's new book offers a "fresh perspective" on early American ideology and a bold revision of existing scholarship. Mayer's project is to "explain comprehensively Jefferson's constitutional thought on its own terms," and as Jefferson described it (x-xi). The result of careful readings of both archival texts and Jefferson's published writings, this study of the founder's statements on how