

that in the movies would bring Frankenstein's monster to life. In the American imagination electricity was not all light; it was darkness as well. Nye only occasionally touches on such perceptions in his account of the blessings that electricity wrought.

On the whole, Nye has offered a stimulating and expansive account that may not prove definitive but might well stir further interest in his topic. It deserves to be read by all serious students of American culture.

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Jens Jensen: Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens. By Robert E. Grese. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. Pp. xiv, 304. Illustrations, maps, figures, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

It is a pity that landscape design has to be such a self-destructive work of art. As soon as it is in place in its perfect form, it begins to grow, erode, require trimming, go to seed, succumb to pollution and vermin, and otherwise change its form. Even the work of such famous landscape creators as Frederick Law Olmsted survives as only a small sample of the original output. Such is also the fate of Jens Jensen, and that is too bad. Not too many know the work of the Danish-born designer outside his role as the landscape specialist for the "Prairie School," the group of architects who accepted the principles of design best articulated by Frank Lloyd Wright. Jensen eagerly accepted the notion that the Midwest could produce an architecture—both building and landscape—that incorporated the native building materials, natural colors, and horizontal flatness of the region.

But Jensen's importance transcends the role as a mere supplement to the Prairie School. As Robert E. Grese points out in this fascinating and important book, Jensen also became a major American interpreter of the function of city parks, designing thirty-four of them in Chicago alone during the first part of his career. The relative newness of that city and its parks during the first part of the century gave him the opportunity to shape the basic design and purpose of the public sylvan retreats and playgrounds. That task, however, was made difficult by low budgets and interference from politicians. Midway through his career Jensen shifted his attention from public to more private urban, suburban, and wilderness spaces. A substantial practice of estate landscaping included such wealthy clients as Henry Ford but thrived primarily among Chicago's North Shore suburban elite. This income supported both Jensen's untiring efforts to educate the public about the importance of the natural landscape that surrounded them and his ef-

forts to protect reserves of relative pristine beauty from the onslaught of automobiles and real estate speculators. Anyone who has enjoyed the recreational areas at the Indiana Dunes or any one of several Illinois state parks enjoys a part of Jensen's heritage.

This is a good book. It is clearly organized, with introductory biographical sections that delineate the origins of Jensen's mindset and the exciting Chicago cultural milieu in which he worked. These sections are followed by discussions of individual projects grouped into types, and the book concludes with an interpretive assessment of Jensen's career. While organized like a catalog, it avoids reading like one.

PERRY R. DUIS, who teaches history at the University of Illinois at Chicago, has written three books about Chicago, including (with Scott LaFrance) *We've Got a Job To Do: Chicagoans and World War II* (1992). He was co-curator of the Chicago Historical Society's "Chicago Goes To War" exhibition (1992-1993).

American Photography and the American Dream. By James Guimond. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991. Pp. 341. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth-bound, \$39.95; paperbound, \$17.95.)

Carl Jung valued dreams because he believed in their ability to advance self-knowledge when viewed within the context of one's life. In this seminal study James Guimond evaluates the American Dream within a historical context as reflected and projected by photography.

Chapter One, "Dreams and Documents," describes both the imagery to be analyzed and the author's assumptions. Guimond's focus is "the relationship between Americans' ideas about their nation and their ways of illustrating these ideas, particularly with photographs, between 1899 and the mid-1980s" (p. 4). The author chose photographs characterized as "civic" and "documentary." Civic images illustrate "something the citizens might learn about themselves and their own lives" (p. 4). Documentary photographs depict social conditions rather than explore esoteric aesthetics and use representative imagery that "captures the drama of ordinary people" with the intent "to overcome or dispose some false, superficial, or stereotyped viewpoints about their 'ordinary' subjects" (p. 5). Guimond assumes that the camera is an extension of the mind and that the photographs he selected are, citing Goya, products of a functional art intended "to banish harmful common beliefs and to perpetuate . . . the sound testimony of truth" (p. 18).

The balance of the book is an examination of the parallel abilities of photography and the American Dream to empower societal transformation. The author contrasts the erosion of industrial "white" education for African Americans and Native Americans at Virginia's Hampton Institute as represented in Frances Johnston's