

whose literary snobbery he derided (by Paul Lewis and Dan Currie).

In a concluding essay, Patricia West notes the overriding irony of birthplace interpretations: they typically celebrate eminent men while obscuring women's work and lives in these romanticized domestic spaces. Like many of the contributors, West suggests the opportunity to tell more "meaningful stories" about human life in place and time (p. 265). The essays in *Born in the U.S.A.* tell such stories—of the literal and figurative construction, and the limits and of-

ten-untapped potential, of these sites. Other places, especially the homes of the less famous and fortunate, warrant similar examination from academic scholars and from public historians who engage visitors through the stories of origins and lives.

SCOTT E. CASPER is Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and Professor of History at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. He is the author of *Sarah Johnson's Mount Vernon: The Forgotten History* (2008).



Way Up North in Louisville

African American Migration in the Urban South, 1930-1970

By Luther Adams

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. Pp. xiv, 272. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95.)

Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South

Louisville, Kentucky, 1945-1980

By Tracy E. K'Meyer

(Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2009. Pp. xi, 410. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.00.)

Luther Adams, in *Way Up North in Louisville*, and Tracy E. K'Meyer, in *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South*, have written pioneering studies of the Great Migration and the civil rights revolution in the upper, urban South. Their studies add to and confirm the work of Earl Lewis on Norfolk, Virginia, and Joe Trotter Jr. on southern West Virginia. Adams and K'Meyer know Louisville firsthand; Adams grew up in the city and K'Meyer has lived and worked there for the past thirty years.

Each chose Louisville because of its location on the border between northern Kentucky and southern Indiana. Historically, neither truly southern nor clearly northern, Kentucky and Louisville exhibited features of both. Kentucky did not secede during the Civil War even though it retained slavery. During Reconstruction, Louisville segregated its schools but otherwise did not adopt a legally enforced system of Jim Crow segregation. Neither the city nor the state ever deprived African

American males of the right to vote. After World War II, Louisville's African American community remade the city into the most racially liberal municipality in the South.

Adams examines the African American experience in Louisville from 1930 to 1970, K'Meyer from 1945 to 1980. Both argue that the civil rights movement started after World War I, but failed to gain momentum until the close of World War II. They disagree, however, on the movement's immediate cause. Adams believes that participants in the Second Great Migration changed racial politics. K'Meyer marks the end of the Jim Crow era with the close of World War II and gives little attention to the Great Migration, keeping her eyes squarely on the civil rights revolution in Louisville.

Adams argues that African Americans in the Upper South resisted white racial oppression since the Civil War, demanding the rights of American citizenship, retaining the right to vote, and limiting the imposition of racial segregation. Whites, he argues, enforced a comprehensive system of segregation on the Lower South through the ever-present threat of racial violence. Even so, most other Southern blacks, including those in Louisville, equated being African American with being Southern. Louisville's large and politically assertive black community offered black Southerners opportunity and security without having to leave their homeland. Drawing on employment and population statistics, as well as

on the testimony of select individuals, Adams recounts the impact of the Great Migration on civil rights in Louisville. He fails, however, to uncover where migrants and their parents came from, and he omits any discussion of their levels of education, their religious affiliations, or the character of their music, dance, and other folkways. He also fails to explain how black culture of the Deep South altered black ways in Louisville. For Adams, politics and resistance are the entire story.

K'Meyer writes a detailed, complex, and insightful account of a Southern black community overcoming racial segregation that American whites, North and South, considered integral to the American way. Drawing on the records of nearly fifty African American organizations, governmental agencies, and white resistance organizations, she shows how African Americans attacked racial discrimination in Louisville and Kentucky. K'Meyer sketches black civil and political rights prior to World War I and identifies the ways in which Louisville and Kentucky differed from the remainder of the South. She thoroughly analyzes how African Americans in Louisville dismantled Jim Crow segregation following World War II. Louisville blacks fought for access to medical care, all-white colleges, public accommodations, and public and professional schools—although she concludes that the failure to end segregated housing in Louisville limited and, in some cases, negated earlier civil rights gains. K'Meyer explains

how African Americans, by voting as a bloc, often determined whether Republican or Democratic candidates won in municipal elections and, as “swing voters,” wielded significant power in city government. Allied with white liberals, the federal court system, sympathetic state and federal agents, and national television networks, Louisville’s African Americans confronted their opponents, including a revived Ku Klux Klan, a majority of the city’s whites, and a moderate, but still obstructive, city government. No one voluntarily gave anything to African Americans in Louisville, and it took thirty-five years of unrelenting struggle to end Jim Crow segregation.

K’Meyer’s *Gateway to the South* may be the finest and most insightful

study of the civil rights movement in a single community. It is a must read for anyone interested in twentieth-century America. Adams’ *Way Up North* offers a valuable study of the postwar, African American South. The authors convincingly present Louisville as a microcosm of the fight that altered American race relations after World War II and conclusively demonstrate that African Americans delivered the critical blows that inflicted a second Lost Cause on the white South.

WILLIAM B. SCOTT is Professor of History at Kenyon College. His most recent book, with Peter Rutkoff, is *Fly Away: Four Cultural Pathways of the African American Great Migration* (2010).



General Lewis B. Hershey and Conscientious Objection during World War II

By Nicholas A. Krehbiel

(Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011. Pp. xi, 201. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.00.)

This monograph traces the history of the Civilian Public Service (CPS) program for World War II American conscientious objectors as guided by Indiana-born Lewis Hershey, director of the United States’ Selective Service System from 1941 to 1970. Nicholas Krehbiel probes Hershey’s early career as a military officer responsible for overseeing this unique federal program, which accommodated the religious beliefs of more than 12,000

conscientious objectors by designating wartime work “of national importance” in camps and units where men performed “civilian” work in lieu of military service. Basing his arguments on both military records and the files of sponsoring church denominations, Krehbiel persuasively argues that Hershey’s leadership charted a church-state partnership that, while controversial, represented a policy of toleration for religious minorities