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 surburban 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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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
government should be constituted yields a clear conclusion. Jefferson was, as he called himself, both a “federalist” and a “republican,” and a “whig” above all else.

Jefferson's federalism manifested itself in his strong support for the division of power not only between independent legislative, executive, and judiciary branches, but also between states and the national government. While diplomatic service in France caused the Virginian to view energetic central government as a necessity, Hamiltonian attempts to consolidate power in the new nation's capital moved Jefferson to become a staunch defender of states' rights as well. Throughout America's formative decades, he held that the national government had legitimate jurisdiction over foreign and commercial policy, while the states—as he proclaimed in his first inaugural address—comprised “the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, & the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies” (185).

Those tendencies were evident in both the Washington and Adams administrations, and they constituted the antithesis of Jefferson's ardently democratic republicanism. He railed against a national bank, a national debt, high taxes, and the Alien and Sedition Acts—all because they monopolized power in the hands of a few Americans at the expense of the states and the people at-large. For Jefferson, Mayer argues, republicanism concerned less the structure of government than the question of who should control it, and he insisted upon a wide franchise and responsive representatives.

Most fundamental to Jefferson’s constitutional thought, Mayer maintains, was his radical whiggism. In the tradition of Locke, Sydney, Coke, and English Whig historians, the Virginian detested anything but strictly-limited compacts based upon the maintenance of rights such as life, liberty, and property. Jefferson saw government as, at best, a necessary evil. At worst (and more typically) it was an invitation to tyranny and an instrument for oppression. For him, the Constitution served not only as a license for the rightful use of power, but also as a restraining order against its abuse.

Mayer demonstrates that Jefferson’s political thought was no less evolutionary than revolutionary: “it evolved gradually, shaped by the circumstances of his time” (xi). In addition, and in part because of its changing nature, it was beset by several apparent contradictions. While Jefferson the opposition leader upheld a doctrine of strict constitutional construction in the 1790s, Jefferson the president justified purchase of the Louisiana territory as an exercise of constitutionally-implied powers. But the chief executive first called for an amendment to authorize the acquisition and, that not forthcoming, almost let the opportunity to double America's size slip through his fingers. “Rather than showing
hypocrisy,” Mayer writes, “Jefferson’s reluctant acquiescence in the Louisiana Purchase... demonstrate[s] the seriousness of his constitutional scruples” (216).

As Mayer points out, the Virginian’s constitutionalism caused him to consider not only the body of government but also the body politic. If the Constitution restrained the government from trampling upon the liberties of the people, then education could prevent citizens from trampling upon the rights of each other. Through his advocacy of a system of public education for his native state and his ward system for participatory local government, Jefferson aimed to teach democracy to all citizens. He sought nothing less than an enlightened, reasonable republic where men were capable of protecting individual liberty and of responsibly governing themselves. This, according to Mayer, “was the preeminent hallmark of Jefferson’s constitutional thought” (314).

This is a path-breaking, penetrating study. Well-researched and gracefully written, Mayer’s book deserves recognition as our best intellectual biography to date of the third president. Shedding considerable light on Jefferson’s constitutional thought, it goes beyond an explication of the Virginian’s views on citizens’ relations with their government to describe how Jefferson hoped citizens would relate to each other.

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