



## Merle Curti Award

*for the best books published in American social history and American intellectual history*

### AWARD COMMITTEE:

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### SOCIAL HISTORY



**Julie M. Weise**, University of Oregon, *Corazón de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South since 1910* (University of North Carolina Press).

Drawing on sources in the United States and in Mexico and engaging the histories and historiographies of race, the American South, immigration, urbanization, and the borderlands, *Corazón de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South since 1910* offers a fresh perspective on a region and a time that we thought we understood. Julie M. Weise employs an engaging writing style and explores the region in all

its geographical, demographic, and temporal complexity, offering readers an album of evocative yet precise snapshots of Mexican American communities in cities, towns, and rural areas throughout the South and throughout the twentieth century. Integrating more lived experience than most histories of labor, immigration, and segregation, Weise also offers deep and nuanced analysis of those experiences. Transnational in scope and revisionist in outlook, *Corazón de Dixie* is a model of how we can enrich and even transform familiar historical narratives through the inclusion of previously understudied subjects.

### INTELLECTUAL HISTORY



**Daniel Immerwahr**, Northwestern University, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Harvard University Press).

Ideas matter, Daniel Immerwahr shows us, and so does their forgetting. Community-based development has recently been heralded as a reaction against the large-scale, top-down modernizing projects of the twentieth century. In *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development*, Immerwahr shows that in fact the “communitarian strain” of thinking deeply

influenced policy making throughout much of the last hundred years. In precise prose that is by turns impatient, witty, and compassionate, Immerwahr explores the theory and practice of community development in the United States, India, and the Philippines. Rather than ending poverty and enabling change from below, the community-based initiatives in Immerwahr’s account usually failed to reduce inequality while becoming entangled—intentionally or unintentionally—with local power relations. This, however, is a history of failure with success on its mind. Immerwahr persuasively argues that when we acknowledge the tragic history of “thinking small,” a less sentimental analysis of the