



The Annals of Iowa

Volume 77 | Number 1 (Winter 2018)

pps. 110-111

A Spectrum of Faith: Religions of the World in America's Heartland

Bill R. Douglas

ISSN 0003-4827

Copyright © 2018 State Historical Society of Iowa. This article is posted here for personal use, not for redistribution.

Recommended Citation

Douglas, Bill R.. "A Spectrum of Faith: Religions of the World in America's Heartland." *The Annals of Iowa* 77 (2018), 110-111.

Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.12471

Hosted by Iowa Research Online

state. She examines the Doctrine of Discovery, the 1819 Indian Civilization Act, and forced assimilation and lists the more than 40 treaties that took place in Minnesota alone between 1805 and 1847.

When a Native elder asked Murphy, "When you find the truth, what are you going to do with it?" (138), she realized that she was on a journey with no end. She understood that she was obliged to tell the true story of how the United States was settled in hopes that it would help heal the scars of the land and the people. She also concluded that she must learn to listen to those who were not like her if she was going to become a more effective ally.

Murphy has engaged in a process of self-examination that few white people seem willing to undertake in public. She acknowledges her fears and the shame she felt over her privilege and articulates her struggle with clarity. White Birch, Red Hawthorn is a work of great insight and bravery that manages to challenge readers' beliefs without becoming strident or arrogant. No matter where we live on this continent, this work serves as a valuable guide for all who want to understand the process by which our cities, towns, and houses were built on top of someone else's home.

A Spectrum of Faith: Religions of the World in America's Heartland, edited by Timothy Knepper, photography by Bob Blanshard. Des Moines: Drake Community Press, 2017. ix, 126 pp. Full-color photographs. \$30.00 paperback.

Reviewer Bill R. Douglas lives and writes in Des Moines. His article on Des Moines's Calvary Baptist Church in the 1920s appeared in the Summer 2017 issue of *Baptist History & Heritage*.

This lavishly illustrated book is the result of sending Drake University students to 15 Des Moines religious communities: three of the four Jewish congregations (no Chabad), two Sikh groups, three Muslim mosques (Bosnian, primarily Arab, and international), two Buddhist and two Hindu temples (including an ethnically Nepali Bhutanese refugee community), and three Christian churches (Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant but no Pentecostal).

With subsections on history, identity, space, and practice, the project should be seen as an exercise in lived religion, as the introduction makes clear. The book also succeeds in its aim of uncovering the spectacular contemporary diversity of religious practice in one midwestern city. Concentrating on practice leaves at least one major question unresolved: why the degree of diversity *within* religions in Des Moines? Of

course there must be ethnic, historical, personal, and theological answers, but the book does not ask the question.

Limiting a broad religious tradition to three congregations also hides much of the new ethnic diversity within Christianity: Tai Dam Mennonites (and animists), Burmese Baptists, Mexican Pentecostals, Korean Methodists, South Sudanese Presbyterians and Lutherans, and Congolese evangelicals (for starters) complicate a Des Moines religious scene that seems a long way from 1950s-era *Life* and *Christian Century* portrayals of Iowa religion as white, Protestant, middle-class, and generous but self-absorbed.

Local Vino: The Winery Boom in the Heartland, by James R. Pennell. Heartland Foodways. Champaign, Urbana, and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2017. xi, 192 pp. Illustrations, tables, references, index. \$95.00 hardcover, \$19.95 paperback.

Reviewer Josh Sopiarz is associate professor and reference librarian for social sciences and government information at Governors State University. He has presented conference papers on craft brewing and wineries in the Midwest.

James Pennell's romp through wineries in Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Iowa offers readers a glimpse into the Midwest's growing wine industry. *Local Vino* is an ode to the region's vintners, enologists, vignerons, oenophiles, and casual imbibers and reflects Pennell's quest to better understand the wine boom he has recently been observing in the Heartland. Initially, Pennell set out to write solely about Indiana's burgeoning wine industry. At his editor's suggestion, Pennell expanded his scope to include wineries in Ohio, Illinois, and Iowa. The book benefits from this expansion; however, Pennell's ethnographic approach led him primarily to wineries reached easily by car from his home base in Indianapolis. To his credit, Pennell made many such trips and did his homework on the industry in each of the four included states. The result is a lively jaunt across a swath of a region not widely known for its wine, but whose winemakers are clearly working to establish its reputation nationally, if not globally.

In the first half of the book, Pennell lays the groundwork for the project by identifying three common themes that apply across the region. First, local wineries provide generally "merry, festive, convivial" places for people to gather and socialize informally. Second, local wineries unite "the need for community and the desire to pursue and be rewarded for good work" (3). Third, local wineries benefit both from the "buy local" movement and the burgeoning international wine market. Pennell