

STATE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF IOWA

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

# The Annals of Iowa

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Volume 68 | Number 1 (Winter 2009)

pps. 77-79

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## Fruits and Plains: The Horticultural Transformation of America

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ISSN 0003-4827

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### Recommended Citation

Vermaas, Lori. "Fruits and Plains: The Horticultural Transformation of America." *The Annals of Iowa* 68 (2009), 77-79.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.1303>

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theran community. Their book goes a long way toward making their case in an irenic tone. Personal relationships nurtured at the synod's colleges and single seminary fostered Augustana's ethos; that is well documented here. The focus on Augustana, rather than on the entire range of Swedish American churches, makes the argument for institutional continuity. Augustana's position in the spectrum of Lutheran doctrine and piety in the United States gave it a particular mediating role in cooperative ventures and twentieth-century mergers; that is less central to the book, but clearly told.

The book is organized into four chronological parts and 20 thematic chapters. The authors split responsibility for chapters, allowing each to draw on prior research and expertise. Although the seams between their work are not visible, the strategy yields some repetition, which is more instructive than distracting. The volume contains an admirable interweaving of social, cultural, and theological concerns. Its concerns range from congregational life to negotiations over church polity. Topics such as assimilation, music, and women's ordination are treated in sidebar-like, self-contained sections varying in length from a paragraph to a few pages. Photographs interspersed throughout the text help readers visualize the times and the people: for example, Emmy Evald and the Women's Missionary Society Board in 1916, a group of mid-twentieth-century youth at a summer conference, and American and Swedish church leaders in clerical garb at an ecumenical gathering. Some, but not all, of the topical sections are included in the table of contents; there is no list of illustrations. An index allows readers to trace subplots or accounts of specific enterprises, such as foreign missions. The ten tables in the appendix give ready access to data such as membership statistics, founding dates of schools, and the Synod's presidents. The suggestions for reading section points toward primary and interpretive works concerned with the narrow subject of the book; reference notes reveal a wider range of archival, historical, and contemporary sources.

*Fruits and Plains: The Horticultural Transformation of America*, by Philip J. Pauly. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. xi, 336 p. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Lori Vermaas is an independent scholar. She is the author of *Sequoia: The Heralded Tree in American Art and Culture* (2003).

When historians study "culture," many intend high culture, the canonical arts, whose interpretation often depends on a constellation of cultural theories that largely eschew the empirical. But Philip J. Pauly, who died in April 2008, found its agricultural meaning much richer and

more useful. The term, as used by nineteenth- and twentieth-century horticulturists, referred to both an art form and a scientific practice. "An umbrella term for efforts at biotic improvement" (6), such as manuring strategies and plant breeding, culture in this context "involved not only [ancient] traditions of skills [and theories], . . . but also material chains of living things" (264) whose crafting and controlling by horticulturists contributed to tasteful park designs and sometimes new plant species. Pauly restores the term's use and applies it in a fascinating chronological string of case studies or significant moments that reveal the main themes in American horticultural history. His is an engaging, if often dense, tale of knowledgeable Americans concerned with issues of foreignness and nativity and their impact on American identity. Indeed, the transplantation, naturalization, and discovery of plants in America, as well as their exclusion or expulsion from the nation's borders, reveal much about the nation's shifting idea of itself, especially for one that has based much of its sense of uniqueness on nature.

Few scholars have attempted to examine the history of American horticulture within this cultural context, and thus Pauly's work sets the standard for future syntheses and microstudies. Most scholars have tended to focus on horticulture's aesthetic side, such as park design or individual histories of landscape designers or particular plant species, thus ignoring the scientific history that plays such an integral part in American horticultural history. A historian of science, Pauly was well suited for the task. Inspired by a 2002 Rutgers conference that led to *Industrializing Organisms* (2004), which examines the history of humans' alteration of other species' evolution, he adopted a more interdisciplinary approach, incorporating histories of the environment, agriculture, science, art, political science, and national development.

The chapters are organized primarily chronologically: colonists' concerns about the inferiority of American plants and culture, particularly Jefferson's response via *Notes on the State of Virginia* and other gardening experiments; a fascinating examination of colonists' and Europeans' responses to America's first invasive species, whose christening as the Hessian fly played off the equation of plants with people (the bug arrived on imported grass), thus intentionally associating it with foreign invasion; the development of nineteenth-century horticultural organizations and practices, and the influence of nativity issues (which encouraged naturalizing foreign plants successfully and cultivating native wild plants); the effort to arborize the prairie in the late nineteenth century; federal plant introduction activities in the nineteenth century, which welcomed more exotics; American efforts to interdict pests, circa the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries;

a history of plant selection in landscape gardening in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; an exploration of Florida's horticultural construction, as a totalizing case study of all relevant topics (plant selection, pest control, restoration); and horticulture into the modern era, when pest control and ecological restoration dominate the profession, and gardening has become associated with amateurs.

This is a huge amount of information, bulging at the seams, perhaps too much so. Pauly manages it fairly well, although there are some minor quibbles. His analysis of Jefferson's attempts to disprove criticisms by Raynal and other European historians is promising, but his conclusions about Jefferson's motivations for the Sally Heming affair (as an example of naturalizing an exotic) work more at the level of insinuation and nuance than as deep cultural readings. His evaluation of regions and their peculiar issues, such as the prairie—its arborization and restoration—is insightful and sturdy. However, due to his overreliance on nineteenth-century Illinois horticultural records, he overlooks exceptions to his larger claims about the shift in attitudes from prairie arborization toward restoration that occurred by the early 1900s. For instance, during that period, Iowa horticulturists actually became *more* proactive in promoting tree-planting activities (especially via Arbor Day) because they had noticed in the 1890s that Iowa children and schools were not maintaining the trees they had planted. Many horticulturists reported seeing withered and dying trees in schoolyards, tempering Pauly's generalized assessment that Arbor Day played a significant role in arborizing the region's landscape. Horticulturists' increased involvement thus promoted arborization, rather than prairie restoration exclusively, in Iowa during the early twentieth century. But these are small criticisms. Pauly adeptly turns over new ground, hopefully inspiring more studies applying similar approaches to analyzing horticulture's transformation of the American landscape.

*Sunday Afternoon on the Porch: Reflections of a Small Town in Iowa, 1939–1942*, photographs by Everett W. Kuntz, text by Jim Heynen. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008. x, 106 pp. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Terrence J. Lindell is professor of history at Wartburg College. He has investigated home-front activity during World War II in northeast Iowa.

In 1939 teenager Everett Kuntz invested his savings in a 35mm Argus AF camera and learned to roll film for it from surplus motion picture film stock. Over the next four years—during which he went from high school to the University of Iowa to the armed forces—he captured life in and around his hometown of Ridgeway in northeastern Iowa.