

ture and the scientific study of natural systems, and rural ecology became a mainstream endeavor. Iowa State University, an establishment stronghold of technologically driven production research, founded the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture and created a new *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture*.

Beeman and Pritchard argue convincingly that "sustainable ecological agriculture" as an alternative movement was co-opted and adopted by traditional agricultural institutions because it provided viable scientific and ethical solutions to problems associated with soil erosion and environmental pollution (88). This detailed study provides the cultural context from which alternative farming practices in the twenty-first century should be scientifically evaluated and culturally rewarded in Iowa. Beeman and Pritchard point out that only 1 to 3 percent of Iowa's agricultural research dollars are targeted toward sustainable projects. Anyone concerned with Iowa agriculture and the environment should read this book. Then perhaps that will change.

Mapping the Farm: The Chronicle of a Family, by John Hildebrand. 1995. Reprint. Borealis Books. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2001. 245 pp. Illustrations, notes. \$23.00 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

Reviewer Keith Fynaardt is associate professor of English at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. His primary research interest is agricultural literature.

Perhaps a better title for Hildebrand's book would have been *Son-in-Law of the Middle Border*. To be sure, there are maps of the O'Neill family farm near Rochester, Minnesota, which Hildebrand married into, and considerable effort is spent charting the story of the farm and its farmers since the 1880s. In chapter two, several maps and aerial photographs are unfolded and explained in an attempt to get at what Hildebrand wants: "a series of overlays that will orient me not only to how the land lies but where we fit into it" (15). Like other writers who have similar questions about the farmland and farmers of middle America, Hildebrand is smart enough to begin with maps, but wise enough to know that knowledge of surfaces is just that. Something as vast as the cornfields of the Midwest is best approached through the telescopic power of the map, at least for beginners, and then through the microcosm of a family farm; Hildebrand does both. But Hildebrand's best answer to his ancient question is in his in-law "overlay," which fits somewhere between the cold objectivity of the cartographer and the heat of old blood ties—in what he discovers about his own relationship to the farm.

Reading *Mapping the Farm* is especially pleasant alongside books such as Michael Martone's *The Flatness and Other Landscapes* (2000) or Drake Hokanson's *Reflecting a Prairie Town: A Year in Peterson* (1994).

Agricultural Fairs in America: Tradition, Education, Celebration, edited by Julie A. Avery. East Lansing: Michigan State University Museum on behalf of the FairTime Project, 2000. viii, 104 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, glossary. \$26.00 paper.

Reviewer Jeff Zacharakis-Jutz is a community development specialist with Iowa State University Extension. His research and other professional activities focus on the relationship between adult education and social movements.

In the Midwest, county and state fairs are part of our cultural fabric and tradition. With four children in 4-H, part of my annual vacation is spent at the county and state fairs where, in addition to educational projects and posters, our children show livestock and vegetables. It is with this background and bias that I read Julie Avery's account of agricultural fairs in the United States. Although I found the book interesting, I was not captivated. In fact, I kept looking for something else, not exactly sure what I was looking for but knowing that something was missing.

The book's 13 essays are divided into 5 parts. Part one, "The Essence," provides a good summary of agricultural fairs and begins to reconstruct their history. Part two, "The Collection of the Fair Publishing House, Inc.," adds wonderful visuals to this story with the inclusion of numerous fair posters published between 1900 and 1922, 16 of which are in color. This may be my favorite section as I found myself consumed by the details of each poster, imagining how as the primary form of advertisement during this period they sought to create an atmosphere of wholesome family fun. Part three, "Agriculture, Arts, and Innovation," presents a historical picture of how fairs were used to promote agricultural innovation and served as art galleries for local artists to present their work. Part four, "From Small Town to Metropolis," begins to discuss how the purpose of county fairs changes as society changes from agrarian to urban/suburban. The strength of every county fair, especially those that continue to thrive, is their ability to adapt to their communities. If livestock is a major industry and there are lots of farms in the area, then agriculture should be featured at the fair. In urban settings, people still want to see animals, vegetables, and jars of jelly, but those fairs usually have to identify local interests and then develop opportunities where residents and youth can participate. An example might be having competition in web-page design.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.