

that he leaves the station wagon to charge into the field to pray and throw tobacco to the spirits, much as a Euro-American male might rush back into the house to watch two more minutes of an important college basketball game. In the middle of a drunken adolescent scene at the powwow grounds, Ted Facepaint has the eloquence and maturity to utter, "Tomorrow evening, revived by rain, thunder, and lightning, the new Red-hatted Grandfather will stand by the forest's edge" (83).

While not wishing to detract from the artistic creation, I am impressed by the book's accomplishment as an autobiographical document. For those who study literature, *Black Eagle Child* presents stories in their fullest context for understanding of meaning and function. For anthropologists, the book offers a many-faceted view of a traditional culture. Readers experience, for example, a Ghost Feast and adoption ceremony with more vividness than any documentary film could provide. For historians, Young Bear offers not just a Mesquakie version of the events of the past one hundred years but a convincing account of the way history guides life in a traditional culture. For anyone who simply wants to learn, *Black Eagle Child* is a revelation, "a true encounter with a mysterious force . . . impervious to bullets, sacred incense, and admissions of poverty."

Iowa: Perspectives on Today and Tomorrow, by Robert James Waller. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1991. xiii, 322 pp. Diagrams, notes, appendix. \$27.95 cloth, \$17.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY GARY HEATH, MOUNT ST. CLARE COLLEGE

Robert James Waller, former dean of the Business College at the University of Northern Iowa and currently professor, grew up near Rockford, Iowa, on a farm. Although his book focuses on the economic future of Iowa, drawing on interviews and library research across the state, he incorporates a good deal of anecdotal history derived from his many years here. Particularly revealing are his comments on how farm life has changed and his observations on how politicians and Iowa Department of Economic Development officials go about planning our economy. Anyone interested in Iowa business history would find this book especially appealing.

Professor Waller takes Iowa economic planners and politicians to task for thinking almost exclusively in quantitative terms, for equating economic growth with the good life. He asks: What are we trying to do with our economy? Stimulate consumers to ever higher

levels of consumption until the environment collapses? Or, are we aiming for sustainable growth? Certainly, he deals with value issues very compellingly, effectively questioning the cultural assumption that we can achieve happiness through consumption.

The author disputes the conventional wisdom of "smokestack chasing," trying to attract the big industries; he points out that most new jobs are created by small businesses. He also challenges what he terms the "participate-in-the-global-economy-or-perish" mentality. "A community's economic development efforts should be focused on the creation of many smaller enterprises, particularly those that can make use of locally produced resources" (215). His reasoning is that promoting a diversity of enterprises and relying on local resources renders the Iowa economy less vulnerable to global economic fluctuations.

Waller writes in a popular style, not unlike Vance Packard. "We are a floundering culture. . . . I think many people sense we have lost our way in a melange of selfishness and infantile demands for fleeting, shallow pleasures" (235). He advocates less consumption and more emphasis on personal and family life. Not only does he have something solidly analytical and insightful to say throughout the book, he never hits a shrill note (though often a humorous one), nor does he assume a patronizing tone. His message: We in Iowa should build an economy to enable self-fulfilled, happy individuals. The economy is not an end unto itself. It must serve higher human needs and aspirations.

My one significant criticism of Professor Waller is of his TAO ("two things at once") approach to economic development. An example offered by him: Since Iowa ranks first among the states in pesticide use, we should develop expertise in low-input ("sustainable") agriculture. That is, by doing two things at once, we solve the problem of pesticides as we achieve sustainability. The elaboration of TAO sounds plausible and reads well, but it is too simplistic to inform me. In fact, TAO strikes me as only a beguiling acronym for stating the obvious.

This think tank in book binding offers a rich harvest of ideas and information that cannot all be included in this short review. If you wish, for example, to learn of Waller's value-added approach to agriculture and his ideas about sustainability, as well as his "Commonwealth of Villages" proposal to suffuse new life into rural Iowa, I strongly advise you to read this excellent, highly readable book, the product of a pen that exhibits a decided literary flair reflected in Waller's best-selling novel, *The Bridges of Madison County*, published by Warner Books in 1992.

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