

The Editor's Perspective

THIS ISSUE of the *Annals of Iowa* includes two stories of American Indians. In Iowa history, the story of American Indians has largely been limited to accounts of the cultural encounter between them and white settlers in the early to mid-nineteenth century and has been dominated by accounts of the Meskwaki (known in official U.S. government records and to earlier scholars as part of the Sac and Fox tribe). In the past year, the *Annals* included a story from the post-World War II era highlighting an aspect of the Meskwaki's relatively recent experience in Iowa—Judith Daubenmier's account of Sol Tax's efforts to practice "action anthropology" on the Meskwaki Settlement from the late 1940s to the early 1960s. This issue expands our understanding of the American Indian experience in Iowa further by focusing on the imprisonment of a group of Dakota in Davenport in the 1860s and on an instance of discrimination against a Winnebago in Sioux City in the 1950s.

I am pleased to be able to offer these stories that extend our understanding of the American Indian experience beyond the Meskwaki experience. It is true, however, that the Meskwaki have a particularly rich and enduring presence in Iowa history, a presence that is also unique because they have maintained their traditions on land that they own (whereas most tribes have been forced onto reservations set aside for them by the U.S. government). Moreover, their history is well documented in collections held at the State Historical Society of Iowa. Now, with funding from Humanities Iowa and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Society's Special Collections Coordinator Mary Bennett—working closely with the Meskwaki, especially Suzanne Wanatee and tribal historian Johnathan Buffalo—has compiled much of the Society's documentation, along with some material from the Historical Preservation Office of the Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa, for presenta-

tion on an interactive CD-ROM that will soon be available for general distribution.

The CD-ROM contains an amazing range of material: a bibliography, an anthology, a timeline, a selection of artifacts with descriptions, sound recordings of Meskwaki language and music (as well as history lectures), reproductions of historic documents (including censuses), maps, photographs, film clips, lesson plans for educators, and brief topical discussions of various aspects of Meskwaki history and culture.

The material is presented largely from a Meskwaki perspective, with much of the text written by tribal historian Johnathan Buffalo, and it is accompanied by fascinating photographs and other artwork. There is much to discover at whatever level of depth the explorer wishes (typical of the kind of electronic media presentations that are increasingly the media of choice for young people). Among the items that I found most fascinating: a short essay on the Meskwaki experience with baseball by Johnathan Buffalo; the magnificent photographs from the early twentieth-century Duren Ward Collection; reproductions of manuscript census pages from six different censuses, from a rare 1840 census to the 1937 census used today as a basis for determining tribal enrollment (to legitimate a claim that one is a member of the tribe, an ancestor must be listed in this 1937 census); maps documenting the Meskwaki presence in the Midwest dating all the way back to 1687, and subsequent maps showing the expansion over the years of Meskwaki-owned land near Tama; audio clips of the Meskwaki language; and video clips of Meskwaki games and dancing at powwows. Other users will undoubtedly find their own favorites among the riches presented here.

For more information or to purchase a copy of the CD-ROM, contact Mary Bennett, State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, IA 52240; or visit the Museum Store at the State Historical Building in Des Moines or on the Society's Web site at www.iowahistory.org.

—Marvin Bergman, editor

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