

judge himself, insightfully draws on recent critical legal scholarship to highlight not only the past, particularly in terms of the controversial issue of tribal sovereignty, but possible futures for tribal courts. Pommersheim's study — along with Kermit Hall's introductory essay and the three chapters on landmark cases — justify the hope that John Wunder holds for the future of scholarship about "law and the Great Plains."

The Heartland Chronicles, by Douglas E. Foley. Series in Contemporary Ethnography. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995. x, 228 pp. Illustrations, references, index. \$34.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY MARY OLSON, CORNELL COLLEGE

A Chicano "radical" once castigated anthropologist Douglas E. Foley, saying, "You'll never understand us. If you want to be a civil rights crusader, appease your white guilt by writing about racial injustice in your community" (xii). In *The Heartland Chronicles*, Foley accepts the challenge and returns after twenty-five years to his "hometown and boyhood memories" to tell the story of Indians and whites living together in Tama, Iowa, a rural community bordered by the Mesquaki Indian settlement (xii). To explore this cultural borderland, Foley drew on his racial memories, interviewed Indians and whites, attended town and tribal rituals, and examined the field notes of an earlier anthropological study of the Mesquakis and the archives of local newspapers.

The Heartland Chronicles reveals life at the Tama/Mesquaki border as tinged with racism and mutual images of "mysterious, forbidding places" (3). A white boyhood friend recalled the Mesquaki settlement as a "dark, scary place. . . . They used to say it was a dangerous place after dark with all the drinking and fighting and all the knives and guns" (3). Similarly, a Mesquaki classmate remembered that "Town was a kinda scary place. It seemed like people stared at you. . . . some people taught their kids that whites would hurt them" (4). Many white classmates recalled Tama High School as a place with little racial hostility; they warned Foley that "most Indians would exaggerate how bad whites mistreated them" (9). An Indian classmate disagreed, pointing to incidents when Mesquaki students were treated as outsiders (13). Perceptions also clashed over the arrival of the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the 1970s. "Most whites accused AIM of stirring up racial trouble," but AIM inspired many young Mesquakis (33). As he reviews Tama's past, Foley admits that "many whites do not condone racism, but we find it hard to stand up to our rednecks" (13).

Divergent perceptions continue, many focused on the schools. Mesquakis point to cultural isolation in Tama schools and worry about sending their children to a place where they may not be accepted. Whites are concerned with the financial burden of Indian students and see them as silent nonparticipants who may underachieve or become hell-raisers.

Conflicting images of Mesquakis are woven into Tama discourse. Many whites portray them as a "doomed, backward, immoral culture" (87). They see the settlement as full of factionalism and political corruption. For one, the Mesquaki culture is "like a pest. Something you learn to live with" (69). In others, the Mesquaki culture creates yearning. They want to learn about the Indians, to know them, to live with them. Or, they see the settlement as an asset to be promoted.

Increasingly, Mesquakis tell their own stories and argue among themselves about these tellings. In the process, their culture emerges as "a complex mix of tradition and innovation," held together by a round of ceremonies, including wakes and adoptions, burials and powwows (120). The settlement bristles with debate between "traditionalists" and "progressives" about enrollment practices, the schools, the tribal government and the virtues of economic development. Nevertheless, the settlement remains home, a still surprisingly communalistic place where Mesquakis can "settle down and search for their spiritual roots" (125).

The Heartland Chronicles is an intensely personal account of coming home to revisit and revise racial memories. Its strength rests in the exacting detail with which Foley demonstrates that in the midst of the Iowa heartland lies "a racial border that scars many people and inhibits understanding" (203). Tama and the Mesquaki settlement are revealed as a cultural boundary that is hard to cross, "just to be neighborly" (144). The text is an effective addition to cultural borderland literature. It will also be welcomed by those interested in Native Americans, who will be rewarded with a rich account of the Mesquaki struggle to maintain cultural traditions while asserting tribal sovereignty.

Foley's portrait of whites seems, conversely, rather static. As a white Tama teacher said, "the book shows the town as basically red-neck with a few liberal teachers" (212). One wonders if attention to multiculturalism is changing Tama. As whites navigate a more ethnically conscious America, are they questioning their cultural domination of the town? Increased border crossing, brought on by the lure of jobs at the new Mesquaki casino, is changing whites' views of Mesquakis. Will it also alter whites' views of themselves? And will border crossing by both whites and Mesquakis finally create a more permeable racial boundary and lessen fear, ignorance, and envy? Such

questions invite consideration as we await the reinvention of Indian and white relations at this cultural border.

Rural Radicals: Righteous Rage in the American Grain, by Catherine McNicol Stock. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996. xi, 219 pp. Illustrations, notes, note on methods, note on sources, index. \$24.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY MARK FRIEDBERGER, ARGYLE, TEXAS

Catherine McNicol Stock's imaginative book tries to latch on to the uproar brought on by incidents in the past decade at Oklahoma City, Waco, and Ruby Ridge. Judging from advertisements in literary magazines, *Rural Radicals* had an unusual amount of publicity when it first appeared. As the preface makes clear, Stock's editor convinced her that "there was such a thing as a general-interest book written by an academically trained historian," and welcomed her proposal. However, the book received only two reviews in the eastern press. Perhaps one of the reasons it was ignored was because of its academic style. While *Rural Radicals* has several admirable characteristics, accessibility to a lay audience is not one of them.

A ritual of academic writing is the "touching of the cap" to distinguished scholars who plowed the ground earlier. Given the boldness of the project—a brief survey of the contradictory legacy of rural activism over the past 250 years—Stock depends on the secondary literature for most of her coverage. As the book contains the full scholarly apparatus of bibliographical essay and endnotes, the name dropping may be annoying for the general reader. One other reason why *Rural Radicals* is not very appealing to laypersons is that the two main historical chapters are stodgy. Nonspecialists are not adept at writing entertainingly about early American history. Stock spends a good deal of time on Bacon's Rebellion, Shay's Rebellion, and the colonial regulator movement—to show the reader that rural rage today has a precedent. These stories—Stock uses the hip academic term to describe some of her historical coverage—unfortunately lack a storytelling flair to hold interest.

The book is more successful as an academic historical essay. Indeed, few scholars to whom Stock shows deference would have dared to produce such a bold analysis. She asks three questions at the outset. Why, over the course of history, has rural America spawned so much anger? Why is the political legacy of this activism so contradictory? And why has an earlier reform mode of activism been overwhelmed recently by intolerant right-wing paranoia? The book is

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