are some in Iowa that come close—Mines of Spain along the Mississippi River in northeast Iowa comes immediately to mind. Walczyski’s well-researched book hints at the number parks with as-yet-untold fascinating histories.


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Owen Lovejoy of Illinois was one of the North’s most important abolitionists. His hatred of slavery initially came courtesy of his brother’s blood. In 1837, a proslavery mob in Alton, Illinois, murdered his brother, Elijah Lovejoy, who had been the editor of the abolitionist *Alton Observer*. Devastated but defiant, Owen committed his life to abolitionism while kneeling next to his brother’s bleeding body. Over the next three decades he made good on his vow, first as a minister and then as a politician. Beginning in 1838, he spearheaded a multiracial and mixed gender antislavery coalition that transformed Illinoisans’ attitudes toward slavery, sustained Illinois’ antislavery political parties, and supported Abraham Lincoln’s antislavery career. In 1856 the coalition helped elect Lovejoy to Congress, where he eventually became one of the foremost architects of emancipation.

Lovejoy’s inspiring story is told by historians Jane Ann and William Moore. Although not historians by profession, they decided decades ago to resuscitate Lovejoy’s memory by reinterpreting his role in slavery’s abolition. Passionate and dedicated, they plunged into archival research. The yield has been bountiful. They published a scholarly edition of Lovejoy’s writings in 2004 and returned in 2014 with a book that explained how Lincoln and Lovejoy collaborated to promote emancipation. Now they have completed a trilogy by unveiling the important relationships between Lovejoy and his radical allies.

The book celebrates Lovejoy’s role in the “coalition for equality” that united clergymen, free blacks, and activist women into a phalanx for abolition. The coalition was a loose one. The three groups did not work in perfect lockstep, and at times their priorities differed. Radical
politicians like Lovejoy had to trim their sails in order to get elected, while black leaders unhesitatingly urged abolition and racial equality. Likewise, some women advocated for women’s rights, while others demurred, considering abolitionism sufficiently radical. But all parts of the coalition labored in the trenches for decades. Black leaders like John Jones of Chicago organized Illinois’ African American community to promote abolition and demand repeal of the infamous Black Laws. Female reformers contributed both behind-the-scenes and publicly to the intersecting movements for abolition, antislavery politics, black rights, and gender equality. Meanwhile, white clergy like Lovejoy worked in tandem with African Americans and women. Each group leaned on and learned from the others, and equality was the watchword. At the core was abolition, with ministers using their influence to promote antislavery politics, an initially controversial practice that became commonplace by the 1850s. By then the coalition had helped prepare the ground for the Republican Party, and Lovejoy’s crowning work was passing abolitionist legislation during the Civil War, a task in keeping with his vow. When he died in 1864, Abraham Lincoln memorably wrote that Lovejoy would have a monument “in the hearts of those who love liberty, unselfishly, for all men” (CWAL, 7:367). He will also live on in the hearts of those who, like Jane Ann and William Moore, love equality, unselfishly, for all.


Reviewer Ashley Howard is an assistant professor of African American history at the University of Iowa. Her research focuses on African Americans in the Midwest; the intersection of race, gender, and class; and the global history of racial violence.

Brent Campney’s Hostile Heartland: Racism, Repression, and Resistance in the Midwest is an excellent and much needed historical account. While most Americans are comfortable with a narrative that imagines racist violence as a solely southern problem, Campney intervenes by challenging the “deep-rooted assumptions about the Midwest as a pastoral meritocracy antithetical to the systemic racist practices” (2). Beyond this regional intervention, he also broadens conceptions of lynching to include non-lethal forms of terrorism. As he writes “the study of racist violence should involve the entire spectrum of violence, encompassing