

## Local Vino: The Winery Boom in the Heartland

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course there must be ethnic, historical, personal, and theological answers, but the book does not ask the question.

Limiting a broad religious tradition to three congregations also hides much of the new ethnic diversity within Christianity: Tai Dam Mennonites (and animists), Burmese Baptists, Mexican Pentecostals, Korean Methodists, South Sudanese Presbyterians and Lutherans, and Congolese evangelicals (for starters) complicate a Des Moines religious scene that seems a long way from 1950s-era *Life* and *Christian Century* portrayals of Iowa religion as white, Protestant, middle-class, and generous but self-absorbed.

*Local Vino: The Winery Boom in the Heartland*, by James R. Pennell. Heartland Foodways. Champaign, Urbana, and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2017. xi, 192 pp. Illustrations, tables, references, index. \$95.00 hardcover, \$19.95 paperback.

Reviewer Josh Sopiarz is associate professor and reference librarian for social sciences and government information at Governors State University. He has presented conference papers on craft brewing and wineries in the Midwest.

James Pennell's romp through wineries in Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Iowa offers readers a glimpse into the Midwest's growing wine industry. *Local Vino* is an ode to the region's vintners, enologists, vigneronos, oenophiles, and casual imbibers and reflects Pennell's quest to better understand the wine boom he has recently been observing in the Heartland. Initially, Pennell set out to write solely about Indiana's burgeoning wine industry. At his editor's suggestion, Pennell expanded his scope to include wineries in Ohio, Illinois, and Iowa. The book benefits from this expansion; however, Pennell's ethnographic approach led him primarily to wineries reached easily by car from his home base in Indianapolis. To his credit, Pennell made many such trips and did his homework on the industry in each of the four included states. The result is a lively jaunt across a swath of a region not widely known for its wine, but whose winemakers are clearly working to establish its reputation nationally, if not globally.

In the first half of the book, Pennell lays the groundwork for the project by identifying three common themes that apply across the region. First, local wineries provide generally "merry, festive, convivial" places for people to gather and socialize informally. Second, local wineries unite "the need for community and the desire to pursue and be rewarded for good work" (3). Third, local wineries benefit both from the "buy local" movement and the burgeoning international wine market. Pennell

supplements personal interviews and anecdotes with data to bolster his arguments throughout.

In the book's stronger second half, Pennell breaks down the various challenges facing midwestern wineries. He identifies the usual suspects and market forces at work in all four of his target states. These include the three-tiered distribution system, labor issues, money/investment difficulties, problems at harvest or during production, quality control, and that one great big obstacle to success—reputation. At a time when affordable wines from the world's leading regions are available, how do majority first- and second-generation grape growers/vintners distinguish themselves *and* make ends meet? For Pennell, it is the people and their dedication to the product and their patrons that will determine the future. There is a boom underway, but major challenges loom and Pennell is not naïve about this.

The diversity Pennell encountered at wineries in his target states suggests that the industry is bigger and more complex than one might assume. And this is without including the state of Michigan, which is arguably the biggest player in the region. Also, although Pennell does mention the work of university extension services, it would have been appropriate to include something about Elmer Swenson (formerly at the University of Minnesota), whom many recognize as the person responsible for hybridizing grapes able to both withstand midwestern winters and make good table wine. This and the majority of any other quibbles are minor. Ultimately, Pennell's book presents a nuanced look at the industry. It is sure to interest professional and casual readers alike.

*Retired, Rehabbed, Reborn: The Adaptive Reuse of America's Derelict Religious Buildings and Schools*, by Robert A. Simons, Gary DeWine, and Larry Ledebur, with Laura A. Wertheimer. The Sacred Landmarks Series. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press in cooperation with Cleveland State University's College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, 2017. ix, 382 pp. Maps, tables, charts, illustrations, notes, glossary, index. \$45.00 paperback.

Reviewer Paula Mohr is an architectural historian for the State Historical Society of Iowa.

In the mid-1990s, the conversion of St. John the Baptist Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, into a microbrewery and restaurant was both praised and condemned (the beer is made where the altar was located). Historians and theologians held up that project and others like it as evidence of the commodification of "the sacred" in the postmodern era.