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BOOK REVIEWS

Revolutionary Spirits: The Enlightened Faith of America's Founding Fathers. By Gary Kowalski. (New York: BlueBridge, 2008, Pp. 215. \$13.95.); *God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution.* By Thomas S. Kidd. (New York: Basic Books, 2010, Pp. 298. \$26.95.); *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World.* By Maya Jasanoff. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011, Pp. xvii, 460. \$30.00.); *Wellspring of Liberty: How Virginia's Religious Dissenters Helped Win the American Revolution and Secured Religious Liberty.* By John A Ragosta. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, Pp. viii, 261. \$34.95.); *The First Prejudice: Religious Tolerance and Intolerance in Early America.* Edited by Chris Beneke and Christopher S. Genda. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011, Pp. vi, 401. \$45.00.)

Neither scholars nor general readers have tired of the seemingly endless series of books examining the role of religion in the American Revolution and Founding. Five recent titles exemplify the rich diversity of approaches and demonstrate why arguments about this subject are consequential for understanding both past and present.

Gary Kowalski's *Revolutionary Spirits* can be recommended to readers desiring a readable survey of the unorthodox religious opinions of Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Paine, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. The theme of *Revolutionary Spirits* is a familiar one wherein prominent persons are not only studied in themselves but also serve to stand in for "America" itself. *Revolutionary Spirits* is right to remind us that American religion wasn't all Puritans. Of course, neither was it all Franklins and Paines. Kowalski neither surveys pious Founders such as Roger Sherman, Patrick Henry, or John Witherspoon nor provides any helpful social history about the American people themselves. Furthermore, Kowalski is quick to see progressive religious thinking at every turn largely because he's working with an imprecise dichotomy wherein orthodox or dogmatic religion represents an oppressive past and the Enlightenment means liberation and progress from that past. Ironically, *Revolutionary Spirits* also tempts creating his own progressive hagiography (e.g., Madison is a heroic "eco spiritualist"). Kowalski argues that his subjects exemplify an

“enlightened” spirit of religion. Perhaps, but what Kowalski characterizes as the noble pursuit of reason and “unfettered inquiry to cast off ignorance and prejudice” may just as easily be attributed to indifference and pragmatism about doctrinal and theological matters—among both the Founders *and* their contemporaries or inheritors. And while Kowalski notes that the strains of American enlightenment were not as secular as Europe’s, one must ask whether the desire of Kowalski’s subjects to harness piety in order to make better citizens rather than better Christians is the creation of a civil religion that is potentially more useful but certainly no less impious.

A book likewise useful for general readers is Thomas Kidd’s *God of Liberty*, an ideal starting point for appreciating the role of religion during the American Revolution and Founding. *God of Liberty* begins by arguing that the most important contribution of Christianity during this period was its theological reinforcement of existing republicanism and natural rights philosophy. For example, dissenting sects such as Presbyterians and Baptists could find common ground with less devout men like Jefferson or Madison on the importance of God-given rights. Devotees of ancient republicanism could seek common ground with Calvinists on the threat of human corruption and the need for virtue. Deists and orthodox men could likewise allude generally to the work of God in the destiny of nations. This consensus, built in the crucible of the second half of the eighteenth century, is called “civil spirituality” by Kidd. But in order to understand the role of religion *as such* in the Revolution and Founding, Kidd (like Kowalski) must work harder to delineate where piety ends and pragmatism begins. Thankfully, this promised examination of “civil spirituality” turns out to be a far richer demonstration of how traditional devotion (rather than its fusion with secular philosophy) played a substantial role in moving ideas and events.

Kidd begins with influential events prior to the Revolution (notably the Seven Years’ War and the Great Awakening) that fused the causes of Protestantism (broadly defined) and liberty, and ends with the unfinished business of religious disestablishment and slavery in the decades following the war. Like all scholars of this period, Kidd has to struggle with the substantial weight of New England in crafting any comprehensive overview and does an admirable job of moving the book’s narrative elsewhere when appropriate. Kidd also reminds us that the patriot cause was not just the cause of dissenters and some Anglican malcontents. Many Anglicans (north and south) had common cause with dissenters

in opposing the imposition of an Anglican bishop. Likewise, the Quebec Act raised militant and paranoid religious rhetoric to a level perhaps not seen in the Anglosphere since the reigns of Mary Tudor and James II. The narrative of American progress in succeeding years, infused with millenarianism and a new style of jeremiad, became not just the cause of Protestantism but the cause of the Gospel and even all humanity. It is no surprise then to see religious controversies continuing into the early republic and during the election of Thomas Jefferson. Kidd concludes with a warning to those on both sides of the "Christian America" debate. Believers must beware of repeating the providentialist rhetoric of the eighteenth century; secularists must beware stifling the connection between public virtue and religious expression.

Of course, while Kidd's is just one of many fine studies of the patriot cause, little has been written about American loyalists. Maya Jasanoff's *Liberty's Exiles* provides a careful and necessary study of those many Americans who left their homes to become refugees elsewhere in the British Empire. An admirable story supported by impressive research, this is a remarkable opportunity to revisit an event that most Americans think they already know. Jasanoff's book demonstrates the diversity of loyalist justifications. It is not focused on religion as such but does provide valuable profiles of four faithful loyalists—two Baptists and two Anglicans. David George, a runaway slave born in Virginia and then a Baptist preacher in South Carolina and Georgia, left for Nova Scotia. A leading supporter of relocation for black loyalists to Africa, he later spent the rest of his life in Sierra Leone where he set up the first Baptist church in Africa. George Liele, a former Georgia slave, was George's mentor and established the first Baptist church in Jamaica. Ironically, Liele's staying within the British Empire meant that he would enjoy less toleration than his fellow Baptists would gain by supporting American independence. Charles Inglis, assistant rector of Trinity Church in New York, wrote a rebuttal to Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and hoped that Paine's "uncommon phrenzy" would "sink into oblivion." He later became a bishop in Nova Scotia. Jacob Bailey, a Massachusetts-born former Anglican missionary, considered independence treasonous not just to the king but also to his church. The persecution that Bailey and others suffered from patriot mobs reminds us that what has become famous as the War for Independence was also a cruel and merciless civil war. Jasanoff does well to remind us that patriots didn't hold a monopoly on liberty. To be a loyalist still meant being an advocate for British rights and constitutional order—the foundations of American conceptions of

government. Hence, we learn how what she calls the "spirit of 1783" (rather than the "spirit of 76") informed conceptions of ordered liberty in the greater Anglosphere. One wonders what American liberties, and religion, would look like if Joseph Galloway and Benjamin Franklin had succeeded in accommodating the differences of America and Great Britain before events made such reconciliation impossible.

Ironically, had Britain been reconciled to its patriot petitioners, the American landscape of religion might look much different today. Likewise, if religious dissenters had not joined the patriot movement in Virginia, American independence may not have been secured at all. This is the provocative revisionist argument of John Ragosta's *Wellspring of Liberty*. Ragosta's focused, persuasive, and meticulously researched argument has the potential to change how we think about nonconforming religion and the struggle for independence. In contrast to arguments centered on New England and the Middle States that the Revolution was the work of religious dissenters (primarily Congregationalists and Presbyterians), Ragosta reminds us that dissenters in Virginia (primarily Baptists and Presbyterians) had good reason *not* to leave their future in the hands of the same Anglican gentry bent on persecuting them before the Revolution. In fact, it was the royal authority (under the 1689 Act of Toleration) that proved the best protection for dissenters in Virginia. Not only did the British command fail to press their advantage and exploit the weak hold that colonial authority had on dissenters in Virginia, but also the dissenters used their support of the patriot cause to win freedoms heretofore impossible under the colonial Anglican establishment. *Wellspring of Liberty* not only provides insight into the particulars of the conflict for the largest, most populous, and richest colony—sometimes contrasting the situation in Virginia with the situation in other southern colonies as well—it helps us to more precisely understand the true implications of the Great Awakening (not that important) as well as the threat of establishing an Anglican bishop (significant, even in Virginia) as catalysts to American independence.

All of this is contribution enough from Ragosta, but the argument of his monograph also obliges us to revisit the context and importance of arguments made by Jefferson and Madison for religious freedom. How did aristocratic Virginia and its very secure religious establishment become a beacon for religious freedom in little more than a decade? Neither religious liberty, nor corresponding victories for republicanism in general, can be owed simply to the eloquence of Jefferson, Madison,

Patrick Henry, or arguments from the Enlightenment. Instead, the broad argument for liberty and representation is owed largely to the perseverance and patriotism of Christian dissenters who petitioned for religious liberty. Like Kidd, Ragosta tries to move us to prudent ground in our current controversies over church and state. The First Amendment and what is now called "separation" (because of our misplaced spotlight on Jefferson) have been cast as the twin triumphs of a skeptical secularism against Christian America: in reality they are neither. Disentangling church and state must be understood as the achievement of a group of pious dissenters who not only delineated piety from citizenship but also changed Virginia (and other parts of America) with the political theology and egalitarianism of their respective denominations.

Our residual challenges of church and state pale in comparison to those faced by the first two centuries of Americans. Early approaches to religious toleration, intolerance and persecution are the subject of Chris Beneke and Christopher S. Grenda's *The First Prejudice*. Scholars interested in religion and politics will delight in the diversity of topics, even the disagreement, to be found herein. *The First Prejudice* is part of a new wave of studies that promise to pave the way for a renewed study of religious liberty not confined to denominational histories or constitutional theory. The collection of fine essays assembled by Beneke and Grenda, by moving away from the typical avenues of approach, reminds us that the intertwining of the civil and ecclesiastical require a much more diligent study than much of what has gone before. This includes, for example, looking at toleration and religious liberty as more than a linear narrative or something moved just by lofty and noble ideas. The alternative thesis, called "coexistence," suggests that toleration sometimes existed in complete contradistinction from the law when convenient or expedient. In other words, we ought not to assume that toleration was always something principled or moved by legal statute or philosophical ideal. *The First Prejudice* does not provide the first or last word on the coexistence thesis but is willing to entertain it while also suggesting arguments for dissent. We also learn many important particulars about how ideas and the practice of toleration affected Jews, Roman Catholics, American Indians, Quakers, Calvinists, and African slaves in America.

Like the other books under examination, *The First Prejudice* raises questions that are anything but mere antiquarian curiosities. Contentions today are no longer about nonconforming Christian sects, of course, but the worldwide integration of peoples, cultures, and religion.

For example, just as one might ask what was the flow of ideas that justified toleration or intolerance in early America, one should well consider the flow of ideas in the world today determining tolerance or persecution in Asia, the Middle East, or Africa. Another question of surprisingly increasing relevance is the ways in which the public expression of religion is seen as a threat or a boon to civil order. Now, as then, it will likely prove that the spirit of religion must ultimately defend free religious expression. Thanks in part to an experiential theology of interiority (largely owed to nonconforming denominations) and the proliferation of sects, toleration of public worship and religious expression became more inevitable in America. Time demonstrated that this religious toleration, and eventual liberty, remains compatible with civil order. But will this hold true with rising expressions of faith in our own century? That is the story that future historians will have to tell. Our task now is to try to learn from the struggles of the past.

Glenn A. Moots

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Grace in Motion: The Intersection of Women's Ordination and Virginia Theological Seminary. By Judith Maxwell McDaniel. (Brainard: RiverPlace Communication Arts, 2011, Pp. 224.)

Judith Maxwell McDaniel's *Grace in Motion* is about the intersection of one of the Episcopal Church's seminaries and the idea of women priests and how it became reality. Her narrative tells how, beginning in the 1940s, Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) reluctantly faced the issue of women as students and faculty. Very gradually, and often grudgingly, women were accepted in these roles. By the time women's ordination was openly debated in the 1970s, faculty members were generally sympathetic, though not particularly active in achieving change. After women's ordination became a reality, the book focuses on women who came to VTS as students seeking the M. Div. degree and ordination. As the number of women students increased, the author follows the calling and careers of a selected group. McDaniel is the Howard Chandler Robbins Professor of Homiletics at VTS. Each of the chapters of this book presents itself as a sermon. Grace is her text, the women and events involving them are her explication. *Grace in Motion* can be read as both theology and history.

For those interested in the history of the ordination of women this book will be a useful addition to works on the subject. Since it concentrates on a single seminary, it treats the individuals involved more

fully than a study of the whole church easily could. McDaniel has consulted the published works on the subject, seminary archives, and other relevant papers. Most interesting and valuable of her sources are interviews with some VTS faculty and women students. These give a first-hand picture of the women's call, their seminary experiences, and their lives as priests. The women are very frank in these interviews. Their time at VTS and as priests has not always been easy or pleasant. From Alison Cheek (VTS '69), one of the Philadelphia 11, to Christy Laborda (VTS '07) now rector of a church in California, the stories of call and fulfillment are all different but also similar. Women interviewed include three bishops (Jane Dixon, Carolyn Irish, Maryann Edgar Budde), two of the Philadelphia 11 (Cheek and Nancy Hatch Wittig), and a retired seminary dean (Martha Horn).

The first eight chapters, dealing with the events through the early 1980s are the most comprehensive accounts of individual students since there were so few of them. By late in that decade the number of women coming to the seminary was growing rapidly. The interviews therefore represent a far more selective group. McDaniel acknowledges this but is not very clear about her criteria in choosing. For readers who use this book to inform and enliven their own work there are several challenges. There is no index. We are not told where the transcripts are housed. One hopes they are available to qualified researchers at the seminary library.

Grace in Motion is certainly worth reading. Those of us who are Episcopalians and experienced the events it covers will find people we know and times we remember. All readers should appreciate the dedication, determination, and grace of those who were on the front lines of the women's ordination struggle. It is good to have such an account to remind us of that hard road, the people who traveled it, and the great changes that have happened.

Barbara Brandon Schnorrenberg

Alexandria, Virginia

Celtic Christian Spirituality: Essential Writings Annotated and Explained.
Edited by Mary C. Earle. Introduction by John Philip Newell.
(Woodstock, Vermont: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2011, Pp. xi, 144.
\$16.99.)

My new parish and I recently celebrated our new season of mutual ministry. One of the delightful parts of the service is the exchanging

of gifts, symbolic of commitments we make to each other. One of the gifts was a book that I gave to a member of the congregation, saying "Receive this book as an acknowledgement of our commitment to teach and to learn, to foster the power of imagination, and to listen for God's revealing voice in story and in study." The book I presented was *Celtic Christian Spirituality*, prayers and teachings from the Celtic tradition gathered, explained, and commented on by Mary C. Earle. I could not have placed a more appropriate book into the hands of my new parishioner to fulfill that promise.

Mary C. Earle presents various themes found in Celtic spiritual literature, including creation, incarnation, pilgrimage, soul friends, and blessing. In the manner of a gloss, the words of the original prayer, teaching, or meditation is printed on the right side page, and the definitions, explanations, and further thoughts are printed on the left side page. While not a scholar's treatise, the book gives examples from the heart of Celtic spirituality and does so in a way that is accessible to someone who is discovering these riches for the first time. Nor would it disappoint someone who has knowledge of Celtic spirituality, who wishes to deepen and broaden that understanding, and who wishes to be introduced to more of the authors. The introduction places the Celtic world-view and teachings in their historic and cultural context, and gives an overview of how Celtic spirituality has renewed itself for modern spiritual pilgrims. There is also a useful list of further reading at the conclusion of the book.

Celtic spirituality, creation-affirming, is a spirituality that can support a commitment to the well-being of Earth, the well-being of the community. It teaches that we are a network of mutually-dependent relationships, that God self-reveals through creation and creativity, and that all of our activities interest God and can be a blessing. It raises profound theological questions and challenges assumptions of "normative" biblical interpretation. Since, by and large, we are still heirs to the medieval Roman narrative, Celtic spirituality can cleanse our ears to hear afresh what the early Church taught, hear "another way" to understand and follow the gospel.

My experience is that when Celtic spirituality is taught and supported, the spiritual life is nourished and community is built. Then we can begin to have the deep conversations about how to live out this connectedness, this blessedness, in a fallen and frightening world. All of these images are classically Christian, specifically found in Celtic words and images. Earle has done an admirable job in finding the various

readings that reveal these themes; her glosses help us cross the boundaries of time and culture so that the words can be translated into our own experience.

Regina Christianson

Underhill Center, Vermont

On the Thirty-Nine Articles: A Conversation with Tudor Christianity. By Oliver O'Donovan. 2nd Edition. (London: SCM Press, 2011, Pp. xiv, 160. GBP 16.99.)

In prayer books around the Anglican world, along with liturgical texts based on the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and other liturgical resources from the late twentieth century, curious readers who stray find collections of the Articles of Religion. Some Anglican provinces have fewer than the 39 Elizabethan Articles of 1571, as in the United States where eighteenth-century disputes with the mother country led to some attrition. Many provinces, while declaring a doctrinal allegiance to the faith expressed in the liturgies of the prayer book and its successors, still use the Articles as a touchstone of orthodoxy when matters of church order and discipline are in dispute.

Twenty-five years ago, Oliver O'Donovan worked his way through the Articles as they are held in the Church of England. He identified the Reformation controversies beneath their formulations, and highlighted the points at which more recent theological and philosophical enquiry had touched upon the same issues, sometimes echoing and confirming the Tudor insights, sometimes challenging or superseding them. This paperback edition comes with a new Preface and the original Introduction, and it is peppered with quaintly English, 1980s-style sexist language about the believer and "his" faith or the scholar and the enquiries "he" undertakes, which may prove a trial to some readers.

O'Donovan's writing style is otherwise marked by vocabulary that is unapologetically sophisticated and complex sentence structure reminiscent of some of Cranmer's own. The persevering reader will, however, enter a conversation that is both theologically substantial and ecclesio-logically relevant for Anglicans around the world, in a church as beset today by internal arguments as it was engaged differentiating itself in the sixteenth century from Rome and from other Protestants alike.

The Articles do not all receive equal time and treatment from O'Donovan. He gives over thirty pages to those addressing orthodox faith in God, and almost twenty pages to the Articles on the scriptures,

but many others are mentioned only in passing or not at all. Nor does he always treat the Articles in their numerical order. For example, he groups Articles 32 to 39 in a chapter headed "Authority to Command" before Articles 20 to 24 in a chapter entitled "Authority to Convince." He provides a firmly theological rationale for his emphases and omissions, and insightfully notes the areas like pneumatology, creation, and a developed doctrine of the sacraments, where the Reformers spent little time but where the late twentieth century has delved much more deeply.

In the short Preface to the new edition, O'Donovan gives a fascinating example of how context-dependent is any modern conversation with the Articles. He admits to having passed over Article 26 (on the validity of sacraments even when performed by unfit ministers) in silence in 1986. Now, he sees the substance of this article as an essential tool for understanding and shaping the Anglican debates of the last twenty years over the ordination of women to the episcopate (ix – xiii). A useful Appendix is provided with Cranmer's Forty Two Articles of 1553 in parallel columns with the Elizabethan Thirty Nine Articles of 1571. A second Appendix gives the text of the third and twenty-fifth Chapters of the Westminster Confession of 1647, where contrasts with the Articles have been noted in the course of the discussion.

Read this book for the pleasure of its elegant, if slightly dated, prose and for the lightness of touch with which it brings four-hundred-year-old theology into gracious and enlightening conversation with the theologies of today.

Elizabeth J. Smith

Anglican Diocese of Perth

The UMCA in Malawi: A History of the Anglican Church. By James Tengtenga. (Zomba: Kachere Series, 2010, Pp. i, 432. GBP 29.95.)

First of all let me remind readers to wade patiently through the book's acknowledgements before venturing into the text. Because I did not read the acknowledgements it took a substantial amount of time to realize that the author whose name appears on the book's cover did not write the text of this book. Bishop James Tengtenga states in the acknowledgements his lack of time and resources to write a history of the church in Malawi. Nonetheless, on the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the church in Malawi, he saw the importance for young scholars to have access to a book on Malawi's Anglican history. The 1908 signature text by A.E.M. Anderson-Morshead was out of print. *The UMCA*

in Malawi published in 2010 is the original text modified by a last chapter by Tengatenga.

Tengatenga's first book, *Church, State and Malawi: An Analysis of Anglican Ecclesiology* (2006), based on his dissertation, is an important text that he meticulously researched. *The UMCA in Malawi* text would clearly benefit from his postcolonial awareness and his scholarly eye. Based on my reading of the current text, further research and analysis is necessary in three areas: postcolonial critical analysis, research documentation, and vision.

The reader needs to be frequently reminded of the colonial context in which A.E.M. Anderson-Morshead wrote the original manuscript in 1908. Otherwise there is a naïve sense that dismisses the then-colonial meanings that now have a postcolonial significance. The reader feels this in the following excerpt that implies that the ends justify the colonial means. Anderson-Morshead's opening words to the 1908 text are repeated at the end of Tengatenga's acknowledgements page: "The night is indeed far spent, the breaking of the morning has come, and that which Livingstone, Gray and Mackenzie saw darkly has come to pass, however imperfectly and the following pages tell the story of the drawing of the net, often broken, sometimes feebly drawn, but ever bringing to the Master's feet "the souls He died to win"(xi). Future scholars need to tease out the colonial missionary story from the modern day postcolonial reader's lens.

As is the case with so many scholarly works written at the turn of the century, citations and footnotes are lacking. At the time citations were not required in a respected scholarly text; however, it is unfortunate that A.E.M. Anderson-Morshead's research is lost in the lack of documentation. Through this work a different reading of those same documents might be produced. Those who continue the work of telling the story will hopefully be scholars in Malawi who can interpret the subtle and major transitions of their context from the colonial to postcolonial church and society. Finally, thanks to Bishop Tengatenga for facilitating research on the church in Malawi. His vision is cause for our celebration!

Joseph F. Duggan

Postcolonial Networks

Anchoritic Traditions of Medieval Europe. Edited by Liz Herbert McAvoy. (Rochester, New York: Boydell Press, 2010, Pp. xiii, 241. \$95.00.)

This collection of essays regarding the anchoritic traditions of various geographic areas in the European middle ages provides much-needed

work in the field of medieval ascetical history. Anchorites and hermits in the middle ages were by their nature persons retiring from self-promotion, and as such there is a challenge in learning about the individuals who were themselves anchorites and solitaries. Each essay in this collection begins by separating and detailing the various roles of solitaries and monastics found in the region and time periods discussed. The essays in this volume together construct the social roles that anchorites served, in both rural society and urban society, and how those roles related to other traditions, such as penitential movements, monastic reformations, and the developments in forms of women's communities and spiritualities in the middle ages. One of the contentions of the book is that as the church developed in the middle ages, anchoritic life became more the preserve of women, where they could be locked up, and the hermetic life became open more and more to males exclusively.

Whereas a great deal is known about some aspects of English anchoritic traditions, this volume attempts to pull together the "state of the subject" for other cultures and geographic areas in Europe, including the Low Countries, Gaul, Italy, the Iberian peninsula, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. The inclusion of lesser-discussed areas is a big benefit that this collection provides, for these chapters often provide "state of the research" summaries that bring new insights as well as provide much-needed introductions to what is known and how anchoritic persons and texts have been treated by scholars in the past for each geographic area.

Some of the issues that haunt scholars working in different geographic areas are the paucity of sources and the lack of research that has been done previously. Frequently, the chapters work outward through various types of sources as if reading tree rings, starting with the most historically useful sources, even when incredibly scarce, showing the reader how an edifice of information about medieval hermits can be created. Particularly of use in this work is the way in which the authors consider the basis of various forms of textual evidence for knowledge of anchoritic traditions. These vary according to time and place, but include: texts written by self-acknowledged anchorites, historical civic and church records of their locations, wills including them, rules to guide their lifestyles, *vitae* written about anchorites, as well as economic and legal documents. Thus, the volume contains essays such as Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker's, which focus on the textual relationships between solitaries and their literary models, from which the written evidence gives us a strong sense of the high number of solitaries. In contrast,

as Colmán Ó Clabaigh notes in his essay, the records for Irish anchorites are much fewer, in proportion with the few medieval Irish church records that survive.

Modern historians have tended to study solitaries as an integral part of the religious milieu, seeing them as a necessary part of medieval religion, following the approach of Jean Leclercq. This volume begins to fine-tune our understanding of how these solitaries functioned. It is in the spaces between these chapters that the interesting questions of the differences in the functions of solitaries start to emerge and point to new possibilities of how we should re-think the role we allow solitaries to play in our histories of medieval religion. This volume will help anyone trying to gain a sense of medieval asceticism, monasticism or penitential movements. It will also be helpful to scholars who study anchoritism in one of the geographic areas included but want to understand how the state of study compares with that of other regions.

Andrea Janelle Dickens

Ohio State University

Politics Reformed: The Anglo-American Legacy of Covenant Theology. By Glenn A. Moots. (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2010, Pp. 240. \$44.95.)

Glenn Moots has written an impressive study on the impact of covenant theology on British and American politics during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. This is not the sort of book on which to spend a relaxing evening with feet up in front of the fire-place. For those who enter its pages seriously the rewards are great.

Early on Moots set forth his "hope to revive an understanding of theological roots here, perhaps in a way sensitive to modern sensibilities" (3). This relatively modest statement is followed by the qualification: "But whether or not political theologies can be made sensitive to modern sensibilities cannot deter one from studying the historical record and making contemporary applications where one can" (4). He then establishes his arguments by grounding them solidly in the written revelation of God and in natural law. Western Civilization, he argues, has moved off this foundation, sliding away from its Christian roots. In the place of this foundation are secularism and civil religion, or the subordination of religion to civil or political ends. These developments, Moots argues, have left the West with an identity crisis and consequent difficulty in finding a basis for maintaining its political convictions. Countering this drift, Moots'

book articulates some basic principles. For instance, on the last page he states his conviction that both love and covenanting are taught in the Bible. His last sentence proclaims, "Shalom [peace and wholeness] is the great contribution of the covenant tradition, and the possibility of loving-kindness in communities holds out hope for a truly humane political order" (161).

Among other topics in the book is Moots' discussion of the similarities and differences between John Calvin and Heinrich Bullinger, contemporaries who stood in the front rank of Protestant Reformation leaders. He argues that Bullinger was the equal of Calvin in significance during the middle years of the sixteenth century, but too little known and studied today. Throughout, Moots does not seek to present an action plan for a perfect civilization. Such an ambition, he reasons, will lead only to chaos and the either disintegration or dictatorship. What Moots calls for is committed action by humanity to establish the best possible government under God. An understanding of and commitment to the Christian foundation of Western government undergirds Moots' work. Church and state are institutionally separate, but, historically a common Christianity underlay them both. Perhaps Moots will write further on this subject in a manner aimed at a wider audience or others will undertake the popularization. Either way, it is vital that this work continue.

John M. Pafford

Northwood University

The Confederate Soldier's Pocket Manual of Devotions; including Balm for the Weary and the Wounded. Compiled by Charles Todd Quintard. Foreword by William O. Nisbet Jr. (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2009, Pp. xxiii, 173. \$18.00.)

The conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have heightened an interest in the experience of war and combat, thus books and monographs focusing on the spiritual lives of warriors have been produced for popular and academic audiences, respective examples being *The Faith of the American Soldier* (2005) and *God's Hiddenness in Combat: Toward Christian Reflection on Battle* (2009). Obviously, the *Confederate Soldier's Pocket Manual* was compiled in the early 1860s, and yet one can imagine United States' soldiers or Marines in Afghanistan packing it with their gear. As the author of this edition's foreword, William Nisbet, writes, there is a "timeless quality that still speaks" through this slim but deep volume (ix). Now reproduced by Mercer University Press, the book is

of use in academic settings, e.g. in classes on American Christianity and the Civil War, and also in settings more personal and reflective.

Compiled by Confederate chaplain Charles Todd Quintard, an Episcopal priest influenced by the Oxford Movement, and then published in 1863, the book contains few political and no denominational references. While the compilation draws heavily from The Book of Common Prayer, there is little sectarian about it, and a Yankee who found the text on a field of battle would have benefited from it just as well as any rebel. A northerner by birth, Quintard opposed secession but, like Robert E. Lee and others, he felt compelled to stand by his adopted state of Tennessee when it left the Union. Quintard served in a hospital, among other places, and saw the suffering of northern and southern men alike. Late in the war Quintard ministered to Federal prisoners and felt that he had been "unconsciously converted from a Confederate to a Federal Chaplain" (xx). Spiritual battle and earthly struggle are sometimes conflated in these pages, "in the name of Israel's God/Our troops shall lift their banners up" (4), but Quintard never explicitly endorses the Confederacy, though he does include readings that appeal for supplication on behalf of political leaders.

The compilation includes psalms, collects, hymns, outlines for morning and evening prayer services, and reflective pieces on themes such as Christian duty, prayer, and providence. The purpose throughout is to aid Christian devotion in the hellish context of war, but the careful reader will notice complication. For example, it is difficult not to be struck by the various and sometimes paradoxical meanings assigned in these pages to the cross. The cross is the route whereby one becomes associated with a kind of power, the "same hand that was once nailed to the cross is now wielding the scepter on the throne" (7), and it is the grim emblem one looks to for spiritual sustenance before and during the heartbreak of amputation without the benefit of anesthesia: "Jesus, my Redeemer, . . . Thou who didst not despise the Cross . . . be Thou with me in the hour of my agony" (161). Throughout the text, Christ is simultaneously the ultimate victor and fellow-sufferer. "I take comfort in the assurance that there is, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, a fellow-sufferer who . . . is able to and willing to succor every pilgrim" (124).

Of value to historians, theologians, soldiers, and reflective civilians alike, the *Confederate Soldier's Pocket Manual* is a gem of Americana that also serves to remind readers of the literary elegance available in Anglican tradition.

Preston Jones

John Brown University

The Claims of Poverty: Literature, Culture, and Ideology in Late Medieval England. By Kate Crassons. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010, Pp. xi, 389. \$40.00, paper.)

A central argument in Kate Crassons' study is that literature, rather than history, best reveals the most urgent concerns that characterized the debates on poverty in late medieval England (5). A historical approach, Crassons maintains, would likely reveal a somewhat steady hardening of cultural attitudes toward poverty. Such an approach would show that there was a shift in cultural discourse away from viewing poverty as the fulfillment of Christian practice and piety (Franciscanism), toward viewing poverty as a violation of Christian practice and piety (antifraternalism). Crassons, however, is not interested in exploring *that* such a shift took place. Rather, she is interested in showing *how* such a shift can be seen across a range of generically diverse texts, texts that are unified only by the attention that they pay to the late medieval cultural discourses and debates about poverty (12, emphasis in the original).

Crassons recognizes that her study may seem unsatisfying to readers who seek "a clear trajectory or a single argument that neatly sums up the literature of poverty in late medieval England" (12). Her intent is "to resist the lure of such grand narratives and instead primarily focus on the subtle rhetorical maneuvers of such texts" (13). The medieval texts examined by Crassons include two poems (*Piers Plowman*, 1360-1387) and *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*, ca. 1394), two Wycliffite sermons, an autobiography (*The Book of Margery Kempe*, 1436), and three theatrical pageants from the York Corpus Christi drama. In the epilogue she places the medieval texts in conversation with Barbara Ehrenreich's contemporary work, *Nickel and Dimed: Or (Not) Getting by in America* (2001).

The notion of "claims" is the lens through which Crassons examines her chosen texts. Claims operate on two axes. On one axis are the claims that are made for or against poverty, especially voluntary poverty. Should voluntary poverty be viewed as a sign of sanctity or a sign of sinfulness? On the other axis are the claims made upon others by poverty. What claims does poverty make upon those who are involuntarily poor? Who may claim to be poor? What claims does poverty make upon those who have the wherewithal to give alms (discriminately or indiscriminately)?

In *Piers Plowman*, William Langland employs the trope of paired, personified interlocutors (e.g. Rechelesness and Patience; Nede and

Conscience; and Reason and Wille) in order to place anticlerical and antifraternal arguments in rhetorical tension with a more capacious approach to poverty as a concept that is irreducible to a single sign, meaning or discourse (23). Through a close reading of the text, Crassons shows that Langland is unusual among late medieval authors in his recognition of a righteous, working poor (80). Ever conscious of the suffering brought about by need, Langland liberates poverty from "the semantic limitations of labor law, Franciscanism, and anticlerical thought" (88). Langland's poem allows for generous claims to be made for poverty and by poverty.

In the chapter dealing with poverty and the Wycliffite reform, one notices immediately that the discourse has become less capacious. In Wycliffite exegesis, the poor Christ of the voluntarily poor disappears. In his place emerges a powerful lord who commands obedience. Accordingly, Christ does not cure the blind and lame as a simple demonstration of divine love and grace. Rather, such miracles are performed in order that the healed might become productive (holy) and self-sufficient (righteous). The divine command is to work. Thus, the Wycliffite analysis permits fewer claims to be made for poverty or by poverty. For these writers, only the most unusual of bedfellows, the disabled poor and the "nedi" knights, may claim alms.

In her later chapters, and especially in her treatment of *Nichel and Dimed*, Crassons shows that, beginning with the medieval labor laws and continuing down to modern welfare reform, there has been an ongoing societal preoccupation with putting able-bodied people to work. Since work is seen as the antidote to poverty, there has also been a long-standing cultural antipathy toward the claims of the working poor. The capacious claims of poverty, however, persist. "What remains perhaps most clear is that poverty still functions as a force that makes powerful claims on human beings" (295).

Thomas P. Mulvey Jr.

Hingham, Massachusetts

Liberalism without Illusions: Renewing an American Christian Tradition. By Christopher H. Evans. (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010. Pp. ix, 207. \$24.95.)

Since the mid-1960s Protestant liberalism had lost its dominant position in the American religious scene. A cogent analysis of its predicament is offered by Christopher H. Evans, historian at Colgate Rochester Crozier

Divinity School (a seminary long a bastion of theological liberalism) and a parish associate at Christ Episcopal Church, Pittsford, New York. Evans defines liberalism as a historical movement supporting "critical intellectual engagement with both Christian traditions and contemporary intellectual resources," "an affirmation of personal and collective experience, systemic social analysis, and open theological inquiry" (6).

Evans begins by describing the backlash against liberalism but sees mainline churches as still a major component of the American landscape. He then delves into liberalism's origins, discussing the crucial role played by Horace Bushnell, who developed the concept of "Christian nurture," and Walter Rauschenbusch, the archtypical proponent of the social gospel. In approaching its different varieties, Evans covers such diverse figures as Harry F. Ward, Paul Tillich, and Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr.

To make its heritage relevant today, Evans asserts, liberalism must clarify its own beliefs, particularly given the apocalyptic scenarios employed by contemporary fundamentalism. Pointing to matters raised by the thoughtful Presbyterian conservative J. Gresham Machen, Evans calls upon liberals to deal with a host of questions: How does one reconcile the reality of sin with the affirmation that persons are fundamentally good? How can one understand the meaning of Christ's death if one denies the tenet of substitutionary atonement? How does one reconcile biblical accounts concerning the end of the world with the liberal faith that Christianity must reform the very same world? "And perhaps most important, how does one understand the uniqueness of Christ in relationship to the conditions of the modern world" (114)?

Especially crucial is the need of liberal theology to transcend the walls of the seminary and reconnect with the local parish. Even the civil rights movement, the quintessential liberal crusade of recent decades, was not rooted in denominational machinery or academic theorizing; rather it stemmed from grassroots organizations, black parishes, and community action groups. Equally important, Evans calls upon liberalism to return to its roots in scripture and tradition. Early liberals understood the power of Christian conversion and did not shy away from describing themselves as evangelicals. Rauschenbusch was rooted in the Hebrew Bible prophets and synoptic gospels, Anglican reformer Vida Scudder was grounded in the ecumenical creeds of the early church, and Reinhold Niebuhr made continual reference to Augustine.

At the same time, Evans warns liberalism against simplistic certainty, saying it must be comfortable with ambiguity. Opposing any theology

based on negatives, he sees John Shelby Spong and Marcus Borg more known for what they deny than what they affirm. Moreover, conservative congregations have spoken effectively to a number of anxieties: national security, an unstable economy, fear of unemployment, neighborhood violence, and the unequal rewards produced by globalization. In short, Evans propounds a "liberalism without illusions," one that recognizes the limitations of individual efforts while never abandoning the struggle for personal and social redemption. He has produced a wise and learned book.

Justus D. Doenecke

New College of Florida

American to the Backbone: The Life of James W. C. Pennington, the Fugitive Slave Who Became One of the First Black Abolitionists. By Christopher L. Webber. (New York: Pegasus Books, 2011, Pp. 480. \$29.95.)

Christopher Webber, known by Episcopalians as the author of a number of excellent manuals for vestries, liturgical commentaries, as well as a metrical psalter, has launched into new territory, chronicling the life of an African American abolitionist, James William Charles Pennington. Pennington was a teacher on Long Island, eventually finding his way to Yale Divinity School in 1833 where he was treated in paternalistic fashion but showed great promise and competence. He was ordained in the Congregational Church in 1838 and served a church in Newtown, Long Island, where he taught previously. The book reveals the tensions between the inclusion of free blacks into American society and the colonization movement. Pennington struggled with the emigration issue; he was, after all, an American by birth, "American to the backbone," as was his father, Basil. Tensions between William Lloyd Garrison and Lewis Tappan are a frequent theme throughout the book.

One is struck with Pennington's three ministerial affiliations and the fluidity and ease with which he apparently moved between them. He was ordained in the Congregational church and made a transition to Presbyterian ministry at Shiloh Church in New York City. Later, when serving in the South (Natchez, Mississippi, among other places), after the Civil War, Pennington made another transition, this time to the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME). The Presbyterian Church had split into Northern and Southern bodies and it was difficult, at best, for Pennington to serve in that body in the South. This occurred in 1864 and it is unclear if he was "re-ordained" in the AME. After this, he then

took charge of a Congregational Church in Portland, Maine, thus returning to his original affiliation. That, too, was short lived, as he returned south, this time to Jacksonville, Florida, to be in charge of a newly-formed Presbyterian Church. He died there in 1870.

In Webber's epilogue, he provides a valuable and helpful synthesis of the many strands of Pennington's life: 1) His contact with William Wright, the Quaker who treated Pennington as an equal; 2) his awareness of African Americans' genius, that to be black did not mean to be limited; 3) his realization that 700,000 children were in slavery and his vocation to improve the lives of African Americans; 4) his conversion to a "New Light" faith through the influence of Samuel Cox that brought Presbyterians into contact with African Americans; and lastly, 5) his participation in the Negro Convention movement which opposed the American Colonization Society, and developed a broader vision for a multiracial American society. Spending time with James William Charles Pennington is a richly rewarding experience, both as a riveting story of escape and progress.

Phillip W. Ayers

Portland, Oregon

The Spirit of Classical Canon Law. By R. H. Helmholz. (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2010, Pp. xiv, 514. \$28.95.)

In this new paperback edition of his 1996 book, R. H. Helmholz provides an in-depth exploration of a variety of fascinating if not somewhat arcane topics from the vast corpus of classical canon law that spanned the mid-twelfth through the seventeenth centuries of the common era. These topics—thirteen in total—range from the laws of episcopal elections to the prohibition of the ordination of slaves to the freedom of choice with respect to monastic vows and marriage contracts.

Helmholz, a law professor at the University of Chicago, begins with a helpful overview of the sources and literature of canon law, including the texts that comprised the *Corpus iuris canonici*, which is the foundation of the classical canon law. Other sources discussed in the introductory chapter include the Roman law, the Bible, and the voluminous legal commentaries of the canon law jurists.

Helmholz then turns to an in-depth exploration of a variety of topics that are of particular interest to both legal and ecclesial historians. For example, in the chapter on canonical remedies, Helmholz discusses the classical canon law principle of *restitutio in integrum* (that is, restoration

to one's prior condition). This principle gave a party, such as a minor, who was "unjustly disadvantaged by an otherwise legal transaction or procedure" the right to "undo its effects" (95). Not only did the principle of *restitutio* expand the kinds of remedies that previously had been available under the Roman law, but it is the precursor to the modern-day legal remedy of restitution. Other subjects covered by Helmholz include ecclesial jurisdiction (for example, the church's spiritual jurisdiction over disadvantaged individuals or so-called *miserabiles personae*, which included widows and children), economic and property rights (for example, the rules governing disputes over long-standing uses of church property), criminal law (for example, the crime of blasphemy), and canonical sanctions (for example, excommunication).

Helmholz concludes the book with three observations that "reveal something important about the inner nature" of the classical canon law (396). First, Helmholz notes the high quality of the lawyering skills of the canonists. These skills seem "scarcely inferior" to those of "modern lawyers" (397). Second, he notes the ambitious scope of the classical canon law system in that it sought not just to resolve technical legal disputes, but also to "lead men [sic] to the good" in terms of moral guidance (398). Third, he acknowledges that there is much in the classical canon law system that is repulsive and "unpalatable" (398), such as condoning the institution of slavery.

As noted above, *The Spirit of Classical Canon Law* is likely to be of particular interest to legal and ecclesial historians. Although it is written in a fairly accessible albeit academic style, readers may find it helpful to have at least some familiarity with civil law, canon law, Medieval church history, and/or Latin, especially since Helmholz uses technical legal and ecclesial terms liberally throughout the book. Nevertheless, Helmholz's observations about the classical canon law remain highly germane to the issues facing the Anglican Communion today. For example, is the proposed Anglican Covenant consistent with the narrower and more limited vision of canon law that arose out of the English Reformation? Or is the Covenant a movement towards the "exceedingly wide" scope (1) and "vigorous practical centralization" (59) of the classical canon law? Helmholz's book demonstrates that the study of the classical canon law is not simply a matter of historical curiosity, but it may also be a glimpse into our future.

Patrick S. Cheng

Episcopal Divinity School

Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus. Edited by Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter. (Leiden: Brill, 2011. 4 vols: I. How to Study the Historical Jesus; II. The Study of Jesus; III.3 The Historical Jesus; IV. 4 Individual Studies. Pp. xxi, 3652. \$1,329.00, cloth.)

Jesus' teaching and preaching perhaps was not that clear even to his disciples, leading him to ask "Who do people say that I am?" There were diverse answers but the Christian tradition accepted Peter's confession, at least until Hermann Samuel Reimarus in the eighteenth century. Since then, no single voice has prevailed in academic circles. Further, academic research has neither reduced the possible answers nor limited the diversity in approaches and methodologies. Consequently, this *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus* uses terms such as "morass" and "maze" to describe, quite accurately it must also be confessed, the present state of historical Jesus research. Thus in its attempt to provide academic order, this four volume work should perhaps be described as a roadmap as well as an encyclopedia, close study of which will prevent the scholar and student from straying, sinking in details or becoming lost in the footnotes all too characteristic of the myriad of diverse scholarly monographs devoted to this subject.

The editors Tom Holmén (Finland) and Stanley E. Porter (Canada) admit, indeed confess, both the multiplicity of methods, diversities of approaches, and, of course, the resultant differing conclusions. These are the reasons for their massive handbook, one which strives for comprehensiveness, but without sacrificing detail or the opposing viewpoint. The results that could slow or confuse research, are instead, taken by the editors as positive signs of both the interest in the historical Jesus as well as the creativity of contemporary scholarship. Indeed this comprehensive handbook includes chapters contributed by over one hundred scholars from about twenty countries. The breadth is also evident when looking at the individual essays. The variety of notable scholars who contributed to this work is commendable: John Dominic Crossan, James D. G. Dunn, Colin Brown, Scot McKnight and Luke Timothy Johnson, to mention a selection. It is notable that two major scholars in the study of the historical Jesus are not contributors: Marcus Borg and N. T. Wright do not have contributions. There is even a chapter by the British scholar J. D. G. Dunn, "Remembering Jesus: How the Quest of Jesus Lost its Way" (1:183-206) that sets out his disagreements with many of the presuppositions of the modern quest for the historical Jesus. These include questioning the assumption that what defines Jesus is

difference or uniqueness, stressing the importance of Jesus' mission and its oral or tradition transmission. Dunn's chapter, like all the contributors, is supported by an absolute wealth of detailed footnotes. This demonstrates the editors' willingness to include as broad a range of views on the subject.

The first volume, *How to Study the Historical Jesus*, is foundational in that it deals with the question of methodology. Not only has the study of the historical Jesus expanded dramatically since the early twentieth century, but the methods and approaches have diverged widely. Often the choice of one methodology will partly determine the results, or even obscure other results. This volume, like the other three, contains chapters written by the best scholars in their fields, drawn from the international community and each describing their preferred methodologies. This in turn leads to the second part which examines various aspects of the search, such as differing forms of criticism, social-scientific, literary, oral, and memory approaches, as well as addressing questions of authenticity and proof.

The second volume, *The Study of Jesus*, is divided into three parts. The first part focuses on the contemporary quest of the historical Jesus, an area oddly neglected in earlier studies which focused on the history of the quest. Both the history and its contemporary (and diverse) expressions are well presented. The second part addresses current questions such as the description of Jesus, the priority of Mark, and the role of Aramaic to mention some of the ten chapters. The final part proceeds to deal with persisting issues in the quest, issues such as assuming a Jewish or Hellenistic context, Jewish traditions, the transmission of the narratives, apocalypticism, understandings of historiography, the place of Talmudic literature, and of the historian Josephus.

The third volume, *The Historical Jesus*, likewise comprises three parts. The first part naturally focuses on the Jesus traditions in the New Testament but without excluding studies on Jesus in the apocryphal gospels, later Judaism, and in classical sources. Now the second part can address the question of the figure of Jesus, with chapters addressing questions of historicity, family, chronology, background, geography, social and political contexts, language, message, and specific narratives such as the birth and passion narratives. The third part addresses the often neglected or misunderstood relation of Jesus to the Jewish tradition. The included chapters deal with Jesus and Jewish conceptions of God, the Sabbath, the law, the Shema, the temple, the land of Israel, gentiles, Satan, and eschatology.

The fourth volume, *Individual Studies*, includes studies that do not fall into the earlier divisions of the handbook, yet nonetheless contribute to answering some questions raised by the ongoing quest. These include dealing with the satanic, riddles, magic, the Kingdom of God, poverty and wealth, and a number of specific passages in the gospels.

The volumes conclude with two indices, the first being of ancient sources, the second, of modern authors. Here there could have been included a subject index, that would enable a thematic link to be made between all the detailed chapters, and also a comprehensive bibliography. Of course this handbook in four volumes should be in every reference library, but is it also so useful as a *vade mecum* for anyone engaged in the academic study of the historical Jesus that it is difficult not to recommend (despite its price) not only for scholars and clergy, but also for New Testament and theology classes. Of course, those who wish to keep current with the ever-burgeoning field of historical Jesus studies could swiftly benefit by consulting a couple of the chapters and thereby orient themselves and be kept aware of other trajectories in searching for who Jesus was and is.

Iain S. Maclean

James Madison University

Slavery, Civil War, and Salvation: African American Slaves and Christianity, 1830-1870. By Daniel L. Fountain. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010, Pp. xi, 159. \$36.00.)

Many books have been written about slave Christianity in the antebellum South. In *Slavery, Civil War, and Salvation*, Daniel L. Fountain challenges much of what historians thought they knew about the topic. In a first chapter based on the statistical analysis of the available primary sources—largely post-1830 slave autobiographies and the WPA slave narratives—Fountain argues that historians have substantially overestimated the population of slave Christians, suggesting that perhaps twenty-five percent of slaves had converted before the Civil War. This claim, according to the author, is the most important in the book: “that most slaves did not accept Christianity as their belief system” (39). Nonetheless, Fountain also points out that given the barriers to conversion and the inadequate missionary efforts undertaken by southerners, “it is a wonder that as many African Americans converted as did” (93).

Women were more likely to join the church than men, younger people more than older people (with most Christian slaves not reaching the

age of forty), and slaves in urban areas more than those in rural areas. The latter fact is likely in part based upon the significantly larger religious presence in cities than in the countryside in the antebellum period. Occupation had little impact on a slave's decision to convert to Christianity, with field slaves, house slaves, and skilled slaves all joining the church at comparable rates. Most slaves did not convert to Christianity until after the Civil War brought freedom and the "predicted Christian deliverance" from slavery.

One of the most impressive facets of *Slavery, Civil War, and Salvation* is the discussion of alternatives to Christianity in the slave community. Fountain argues, in fact, that many more slaves practiced religions other than Christianity, that the slave community was one of incredible religious diversity. Many slaves, for instance, continued to embrace traditional African religious beliefs, especially Vodun. Slaves often concealed their practice of Vodun by equating African deities with Christian saints. Other slaves practiced Islam, including Abdul Rahahman, whose life demonstrated how easily slaves could hide religious practices outside of Christianity from white southerners. On the other hand, "a majority of slaves most likely created and practiced new composite religions rather than being strict adherents" (79) of Christianity, Islam, or Vodun.

Fountain is also right to point out the religious destitution of much of the Deep South in the antebellum years and how this made it difficult to undertake effective missions to slave populations in Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. Fountain's thesis is certainly true of the Episcopal Church in Mississippi, where, for many years, the church's mission was less one to potential converts, either black or white, than one that attempted to gather together an Episcopal diaspora that had moved to the state from the eastern seaboard. There may, in fact, have been a single Episcopal priest in Mississippi for a year or so in the mid-1830s, making any significant mission work difficult. Fountain does make a misstep here, suggesting that northern Episcopal clergy were reluctant to go south because of slavery. A review of Mississippi Episcopal clergy in the 1850s suggests that about a third were from Northern states and some of these had become slave owners—one owned a plantation and another participated in the so-called "white-washing" of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Slavery, Salvation, and Civil War is an impressive volume that should be read by anyone interested in American slavery and religion in the antebellum South.

Edward L. Bond

Alabama A & M University

Four Philosophical Anglicans: W. G. De Burgh, W. R. Matthews, O. C. Quick, H. A. Hodge. By Alan P. F. Sell. (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2010, Pp. 336. \$124.95.)

Alan P. F. Sell, a former professor of theology and philosophy in Wales, first offers a biography and overview of each "philosophical Anglican's" work. Sell then focuses on the interplay of philosophical and theological ideas in each thinker's work. While perhaps overloaded with quotations, these explications present major themes in the writings of these now little-studied philosophers. Sell chose these particular thinkers because "they illustrate some of the ways in which committed Christians charted their intellectual course during a period of philosophical upheaval" (1). This "upheaval" was caused by the rise of analytic philosophy and linguistic analysis. Most philosophers in this movement were atheists and many of them held that religious language is meaningless. Even though Sell's thinkers were mostly active before this period, they were intent to defend Christian faith, and these defenses are frequently still valid. For example, W. G. de Burgh (1866-1943) who taught classics and philosophy at Reading University, noted (in 1938!) that, "scientists and philosophers show themselves very imperfectly instructed in the nature of the beliefs they hold up for reprobation" (55). De Burgh was perhaps more impressed by the facts of religious experience than philosophers today would be. Yet many theologians today will share his interest in showing that religion should be reasonable, and that "faith was a primary condition of all reasonable life" (277).

W. R. Matthews (1881-1973), dean of St. Paul's Cathedral and the best known of the four thinkers, was a theological liberal and member of the Modern Churchmen's Union. He advocated a revision of the Thirty-Nine Articles because they no longer reflected the mind of the church; he also was in favor of legalizing euthanasia. Matthews attributed the decline of religion to the fact that "large numbers of people do not find Christianity as presented by the Church a credible or even an intelligible doctrine" (106). Oliver Chase Quick (1885-1944) was a canon at St. Paul's who later was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. Quick held the interesting view that while the traditional creeds were intended to defend traditional faith from heresy, they should not be read as though they were addressed to modern agnostics. Rather, according to Quick, "They were aimed entirely at confident teachers of a different, easier, and less mysterious faith, and that surely should be their purpose still" (172). H. A. Hodges (1905-1976) was appointed

to de Burgh's chair at Reading at the age of twenty-nine and remained there for thirty-five years, retiring in 1969. Hughes developed the idea of "basic attitudes" (239) that shape a person's thoughts and values, for example, forming the view of a theist or a materialist. These attitudes thus either open or confine one's experience. This concept is somewhat similar to the notion of "basic beliefs" that the American philosopher, Alvin Plantinga, has proposed in defense of the Christian point of view.

Although abstract metaphysics and doctrine are the major subject matter of the book, there are occasional lighter asides. For example, Sell reports that Matthews, during the courtship of his eventual wife, "invited her to read T. B. Strong's *A Manual of Theology*. She never reached the end of it, and was not persuaded by what she did read" (71). Quick, as head boy at Harrow burned the cribs collected by other boys and traditionally guarded for general use. Sell drily notes that this act "did not commend itself to other pupils" (143). The discussions can be historically complicated; in one passage, for example, Sell comments on Hodges who is commenting on Dilthey who is commenting on Comte (224). But the arguments are presented clearly and critically, and even when the particular views of the four philosophical Anglicans seem dated, the issues such as the value of scientific reasoning and the metaphysical basis of doctrine are abiding concerns of Christian thought.

J. Douglas Ousley

Church of the Incarnation, New York City

The Ordeal of Thomas Barton: Anglican Missionary in the Pennsylvania Backcountry, 1755-1780. By James P. Myers Jr. (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Lehigh University Press, 2010, Pp. ix, 278. \$52.50.)

James P. Myers Jr.'s excellent biography of Anglican missionary Thomas Barton offers a rare glimpse at religious life on the colonial America frontier. Indeed, Myers's elucidation of the comparatively unknown life of Thomas Barton provides an important contrast to the more widely-known biography of backcountry missionary Charles Woodmason and, thereby, contributes to a more nuanced description of frontier Anglicanism. In Myers' account, Thomas Barton emerges as an ecumenical-minded missionary, a backcountry embodiment of Enlightenment thought, and as the eyes and ears of the Penn Proprietary. As the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel's missionary in western Pennsylvania, Barton was never warmly welcomed by the large dissenting population. Yet, as Myers cogently demonstrates, Barton

worked to promote ecumenical unity in the cause of communal defense. Living on the marchlands of war in the 1750s and 1760s, Barton's ecumenical efforts, even those motivated by larger goals of promoting cultural assimilation and conversion to the national church, helped unify backcountry settlers in the common cause of military preparedness and defense.

Although living on the war-torn frontier, Barton was intimately connected to an enlightened world of ideas. Through an impressive epistolary network, which included high ranking members of the Penn Proprietary, for whom Barton was an important source of information, the missionary engaged in a broad, if occasionally tumultuous, intellectual life. Indeed, the most important parts of Myers' book describe Barton's heavy homiletic plagiarism, evident most glaringly in an ecumenically-minded sermon published with Proprietary assistance in 1755, and the missionary's anonymous, yet ardent, support for the vigilantism of the Paxton Boys in the 1760s. Fully contextualizing these intellectual moments, which appear ethically questionable and intellectually incongruous with the rest of Barton's thought, Myers uses them to describe the minister's frontier pragmatism.

While Barton, as the Penn Proprietary's defacto representative in the backcountry, was willing to pragmatically compromise with the Paxton vigilantes, he was less willing to compromise on the issue of colonial independence. Skillfully positioning himself throughout his career as both the Penn family's representative of proprietary and ecclesiastical establishmentarianism and as a friend to dissenters, Thomas Barton was unable to successfully navigate the American Revolution. Unwilling to abjure his ordination oath to the king, Barton lost his position and his home. Exiled from his children and abandoned by the SPG, who refused to grant him leave to return to England, Barton adopted the epistolary persona of a martyr and died in 1780 in British held New York.

Myers' exploration of Thomas Barton's life demonstrates the important and challenging work of Anglican missionaries on the colonial American frontier. Combining political intrigue, ecumenical outreach, and an intellectual pragmatism born from the marriage of Enlightenment ideals and frontier exigencies, James P. Myers' biography of Thomas Barton will undoubtedly prove both useful and entertaining to students of colonial Anglicanism and early American religious history.

Octavia Daughter of God: The Story of a Female Messiah and Her Followers.
By Jane Shaw. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011,
Pp. xx, 398. \$35.00.)

Truth is stranger than fiction, especially when it comes to envisioning a female Messiah who will live forever. On one hand, Jane Shaw's arresting history, *Octavia Daughter of God*, provides such a fascinating portrayal that I had to keep on reminding myself that Octavia and her largely middle-class community, the Panacea Society, were not fiction. On the other hand, the richness of Shaw's historical analysis of the spiritual malaise and post-Victorian challenges facing believers in Britain after the "war to end all wars" is so vividly documented, that it is a wonder that there were not little "Bedfords" popping up across the country.

The basic dimensions of the story tell of a vicar's widow, Mabel Barltrop, who in 1919 founded a millenarian community in Bedford, England. With a local community of over seventy "sealed" members, at its height, and a far-flung healing and corresponding membership that reached over 130,000, the Panaceans were a millenarian community that believed Mabel, renamed Octavia and identified by her followers as the daughter of God, would lead them to immortality on earth. England, and the middle-class suburb of Bedford in particular, was the New Jerusalem. The return of Jesus and Octavia, their own messiah, were eagerly awaited. Houses were kept in order as they were on the day members died in order to be re-occupied by them after the anticipated Second Coming. *Octavia Daughter of God* traces the development of the community, its beliefs, expectations of local members, publications, activities, healing mission, its survival, and its growth after its leader's death in 1934.

Historians will want to pay special attention to the way that Shaw presents the lived religion of the time. Her expertise as a social and intellectual historian has been confirmed in her ground-breaking study of local religious practice, *Miracles in Enlightenment England* (2006). Historians and others who enjoy a good story will also marvel at the narrative development of what is actually a new religion shaped by middle-class women in Britain's interwar years. What made all of this possible were the abundant sources made available to Shaw, including advice from surviving society members. It was a true historian's treasure trove, albeit an archive that needed detailed development over at least five years. The Panacea Society preserved everything: endless confessions and daily

reports on members "overcoming" their self interests, widespread correspondence, pamphlets waiting to be mailed, and linen sections blessed by Octavia which, when placed in water, promoted healing. Shaw's skill in unfolding this story with tact, historical accuracy, constructive judgment, and gentle notes of appropriate whimsy provides a model for others who labor to uncover the practices of ordinary people. No detail of the story, including detailed information on how the society handed sexual difficulties, seems to be missing. A helpful index and extensive bibliography are also provided. Overall this is an exemplary study and an astounding story.

Fredrica Harris Thompsett

Episcopal Divinity School

Ancient Future Disciples: Meeting Jesus in Mission-shaped Ministries. By Becky Garrison. (New York: Seabury Books, 2001, Pp. xi, 138. \$18.00.)

Much has been written of late about "fresh expressions" of church—ecclesial communities established for the benefit of those alienated from conventional church life—but largely from the perspective of their leaders. In this lively compilation of stories, journalist and religious commentator Becky Garrison has done the subject a service by interrogating those who *participate in* such communities.

The book comprises nine case studies of (mainly Episcopalian) "edge communities" across the United States: an extension ministry with the Latino community in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; a transformative feminist liberation community in Austin, Texas; an outdoor ecumenical ministry with the un-housed in Boston; an arts congregation serving the community of the Lower East Side, New York; and so on. Each chapter details progressive, inclusive ways of connecting with people living in a post-secular culture and creating appropriate forms of Christian community for their particular contexts and needs. Some of these experiments still operate within an attractional model of church; others "go out" and form church wherever the needs are situated. But all are characterized by the offering of radical forms of welcome, an easy post-denominationalism ecumenism and the capacity to discern and utilize the gifts of all. A further common thread is the emergence of a desire for "greater intensity" in religious practice, often seen in the formation of a rule of life or the adoption of other "new monastic" practices.

While the volume contains two "interlude interviews" with bishops Thomas Shaw (Massachusetts) and Gregory Rickett (Olympia), there is

no concluding chapter offering a neat summary of the topic. Instead the author intends her readers to discuss each chapter's story within their own ecclesial communities, and apply the learning to those contexts, discerning what is valuable and transferable, discarding what is not. Not having read it in community, the experience was less rich for this reviewer, leaving me with a plethora of unanswered questions. Chief among these is the nagging sense that many of the communities described, while providing a welcome "respite home" for needy pilgrims, nevertheless did not intentionally enable them to grow into disciples who themselves have a transformative effect upon the world. Admittedly some of those who were enfolded into these communities of radical welcome clearly felt enabled to invite other sojourners into the haven, and a few were motivated in turn to work missionally with their un-housed or excluded peers. But there was little said about the long-term, intentional catechesis or "the renewal of minds" required for these newcomers to grow as disciples of Christ and in time engage with God in the transformation of creation—with the exception of the St. Hildegard Community's "Viriditas Curriculum."

It is early days in the "ancient-future" church movement. Perhaps in a few years Garrison might bring her evident powers of participant observation to bear upon a further set of case studies, allowing us to see if the emergent faith commitments described in this volume have moved from personalized eclecticism to something more ecclesial and world-facing.

Anne Tomlinson

Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway

The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The 'Heathen' at Home and Overseas. By Alison Twells. (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, Pp. xiv, 353. \$75.00.)

Utilizing the city of Sheffield as her focus, Alison Twells elucidates the emergence of missionary philanthropy, in its complementary domestic and foreign dimensions as well as in its largely inter-denominational aspect, as a formative element in the emergence of the English middle class in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. She situates mission as part of a larger project of societal reform under the auspices of this emergent middle class, and traces how it evolved into a popular, mass movement, such that by the mid-nineteenth century support for mission had become normative in British mainstream society.

Twells clearly shows that by the 1820s the early progenitors of the movement (at least in Sheffield) came to resent the focus on overseas mission to the neglect of domestic needs. This concern was influenced by the emergent socialist and cooperative tendencies which promoted a more secular analysis of issues of poverty and societal reform. Added to this challenge was the increasing division among the missionary movement along denominational lines. Other than this shift in the 1820s and 1830s, her portrayal is of a seamless connection between foreign and domestic mission, so that issues like abolitionism, education, temperance were intrinsically connected. Adjunct to this she recovers the role of women in the movement, providing an illuminative portrayal of the mother as formative, pedagogical influence in the home where she is able to inculcate a missionary influence in her children. She demonstrates that the more active involvement of women in mission occurred in the 1820s and 1830s. Prior to that, they gained valuable, formative experience domestically as collectors, Sunday school teachers, and society members. Initial involvement as missionary wives had altered from 1860 onward to independent activity.

Twells successfully navigates her way around the potentially competing considerations of Enlightenment thought, civilization, British imperialism, and the contribution of Christianity as a civilizing force. Christian initiatives served as a conduit for ideas of social progress and civilizing influences including an imperialist tinge. In this, the missionary was an important agent of change. To exemplify all these trends Twells offers a case study of Sheffield's association with the London Missionary Society's mission in the South Pacific between 1820 and 1842. It reveals that by the 1830s it was acknowledged that the process of true conversion was to be a more long-term project. This often led to frustration on the part of missionaries, although this was not apparent on the home front.

The book serves to modify some of the assumptions formulated from the stance of post-colonial British history which all too readily assumed an uncritical connection between missionary and colonist. It brings an important new emphasis to our understanding of middle class formation in relation to societal reform (including mission) and its changing character over time. Although, focused on industrial Sheffield nevertheless the findings are of broader significance. All too readily we tend to assume that the missionary endeavor that arose in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was entirely a foreign-focused enterprise, and that it was undifferentiated in its advancement and success. We have

cause to be grateful to Twells for demonstrating that neither of these assumptions are true. For its fair approach, its clear delineation of the connection between domestic reform and foreign mission, the formative influence of new educational endeavors, the impact missionary activity had on revitalizing home churches, and the centrality of the Bible as formative, this volume is to be commended.

Thomas P. Power Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges, University of Toronto

If You Meet George Herbert on the Road, Kill Him. Radically Re-thinking Priestly Ministry. By Justin Lewis-Anthony. (London and New York: Mowbray, 2009, Pp. viii, 248. \$29.95.)

Readers able to transcend this volume's unfortunate title (based on a Buddhist parable) will encounter an examination of parochial ministry in the contemporary Church of England. Justin Lewis-Anthony contends that "for over 350 years the English Church has been haunted by a pattern of parochial ministry which is based upon a fantasy and has been untenable for more than 100 of those years" (1). That pattern was "derived from a romantic and wrong-headed false memory of the life and ministry of George Herbert," (1) the seventeenth century English poet-priest and author of *The Temple* and *The Country Parson*, who exercised a brief ministry at Bemerton, near Salisbury. Herbert lived closely among his parishioners, preached regularly, visited the sick, fed the hungry, catechized the young, went about regularly among his flock, and helped rebuild the church. Significantly, his ministry was set in the context of a small village, which rendered it both feasible and effective.

During much of the twentieth century, however, the Church of England reallocated scarce resources from the countryside to the industrialized urban areas; not surprisingly, the church's theology of ministry also began to change. Beginning in the 1960s (if not earlier), a succession of innovative parochial schemes, often based on the new—and fashionable—social science theories, was introduced, each destined to rescue the church from its interminable slumber. The author argues that the need for change is now more acute than ever. The clergy, steeped in "Herbertism," have become exhausted and burned out. They no longer possess skills or knowledge "valued by a wider society" (45); nor do they continue to *represent* the church, but "*are*" the church (46). Their theological education "is the product of 'ivory towers' and is 'academic' and therefore repugnant to the needs of the church

community" (46). Though they are "omni-present, omni-competent and omni-affirming" (46-7), they seldom have time or energy to do everything expected of them.

But is this picture accurate? The extent of Herbert's abiding influence on the church's parochial ministry is merely alleged, but never proven. It certainly bears no resemblance to this reviewer's experience at an Anglican theological college (at Oxford), where Herbert's spirituality and parochial ministry was taught and admired, but not engaged with as a model for today's church. Likewise, my curacy in a traditional market town, where Herbert's ministry was never held up as exemplary by my incumbent, by those leading post-ordination training, or by the members of my (very diverse ordination) cohort. Admittedly, this represents only one experience in a church where the nature of ministerial formation varies considerably. But the claims made here with regard to the extent of Herbert's influence in the church remain, at best, controversial.

Equally problematic is Lewis-Anthony's characterization of the role of the clergy in contemporary society, much of which seems out of touch with a good portion of the church and its clergy, especially those who minister in traditional small towns and villages. Moreover, the claim that the clergy *are* the church runs counter to the reality within many contemporary (especially small or rural) parishes, where, in the frequent absence of the clergy, the laity have taken on more of the traditional work of ministry. The assertion that the nature of the clergy's theological education is too academic and thus "repugnant," also seems too broadly drawn, as many, subjected to the preaching and ministry of poorly-educated clergy, would emphatically attest. Finally, to describe the ubiquitous nature of the clergy as problematic seems remarkable considering the complaints of many of the faithful in England that their local parish priest is no longer seen to go about them, as he/she is too busy managing, consulting, raising money, counseling, and other such kinds of tangential activities.

There is, of course, a regular need to reconsider existing patterns of parochial ministry and, in the final section, the author offers a number of helpful suggestions. A "KGH" (or "Killing George Herbert") priest, for example, should know who they are, what they are for, who they are set over, how to make decisions, and how to manage conflict. Even Herbert would recognize the value of such sage advice, as would many clergy from throughout the wider Anglican Communion. The value of this book lies in setting aside its ill-founded claims about Herbert

and focusing on the helpful remarks that can be gleaned (mostly) from its final section and Appendix. Here, readers will find not merely the type of fashionable theories that frequently pervade current discussions of the topic, but common sense combined with wisdom drawn from established patterns and the authority of the past.

Grayson Carter

Fuller Theological Seminary

Taking the Long View: Christian Theology in Historical Perspective. By David C. Steinmetz. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, Pp. ix, 187. \$21.95.)

Taking the Long View is a collection of the theologically-oriented lectures and essays by the Reformation Church historian David Steinmetz. In this short work, Steinmetz discusses the consequences of Church history for the life of the Christian community.

The first essays in the book deal with the question of hermeneutics. Steinmetz favors a reevaluation of the privileged position held by post-Enlightenment historical criticism. The historical-critical method assumes that the single correct meaning of the text is the one intended by the original human author. Steinmetz argues in two essays that pre-critical Christian exegesis was superior because of it recognized the possibility of multiple levels of meaning in the text of scripture. This being said, the historical interpretation of the texts is valuable, but it does not exhaust the possibilities of meaning that the Christian community can responsibly recognize.

In other essays, Steinmetz deals with theological issues debated by the Protestant reformers and their opponents. For example, in one essay Steinmetz discusses Marian dogmas and their significance. In a respectful tone, Steinmetz describes the role of Mary in medieval and contemporary Roman Catholic piety and provides a Protestant critique. Similarly, in a number of essays he explores the significance of the priesthood of all believers and its relationship to the reformers' insistence on an ordained and learned clergy. In the main, Steinmetz argues in favor of the position of the magisterial Reformation against both the Roman Catholic and Anabaptist traditions.

The last few essays in the collection deal with the craft of church history and its importance to the life of the church. The church needs historians because it needs to understand its own past. A church without an understanding of its past is enslaved to certain traditional ways of thinking that it cannot disentangle from the original revelation of scripture.

It therefore lacks the ability to be self-critical. Towards the end of the collection there is also a very well-written piece discussing the respective careers of Heiko Oberman and Jaroslav Pelikan, and their contrasting ways of dealing with church history as a discipline.

Overall, this is not an immensely difficult or complex work, but tremendously enjoyable as a light read. It gives the reader a taste of a number of good theological insights gleaned from decades of studying church history.

Jack Kilcrease

Aquinas College

Why Choose the Liberal Arts? By Mark William Roche. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010, Pp. x, 198. \$20.00, paper.)

A traditional liberal arts education has always been a difficult sell in America. The nation's experiment with mass post-secondary education has sent higher percentages of the general populace to college or university since World War II but often with a narrowly vocational focus. More recently, skyrocketing tuition costs at private liberal arts colleges and the scarcity of job openings for liberal arts graduates have served to convince many parents that an expensive undergraduate degree in, say, art history, might not be a prudent path for their children. Given these sobering realities, Mark William Roche's *Why Choose the Liberal Arts?* provides perceptive insights that can inform the thinking of both parent and prospective student alike.

Roche, former dean of Arts and Letters at Notre Dame, organizes the answer to his book's title under three headings. First, he explores the intrinsic value of a liberal arts education (i.e., learning for its own sake). Second, he examines the practical skills and habits that the liberal arts can equip one with and which are invaluable in certain lines of work. Third, he addresses how studying the liberal arts can cultivate character and clarify one's "higher purpose or calling" (10). Undergraduates bring with them to college many fundamental questions regarding the nature of reality and the meaning of life. A liberal arts curriculum can help them pursue such questions in a thoughtful and systematic way. Moreover, it can also suggest a host of new questions that will complicate their assumptions in constructive ways. Here, Roche argues that many today unwisely "elevate an instrumental form of thinking, a means-end rationality, in ways that tend to obscure what is of intrinsic value" (25). By contrast, a liberal arts college can promote thinking as its own good, or as he explains:

"Making money is both necessary and useful, but it is merely useful, undertaken for the sake of something else, whereas the joy of contemplation is an end in itself, an activity pursued for its own sake" (35).

All of which is not to argue that a liberal arts education has no practical utility in today's economy. This sort of traditional curriculum can train students to think critically and to write clearly, two skills that are always in demand. Sadly, many American universities believe that the liberal arts can simply be "covered" with a series of general education requirements, rather than with small seminars that feature intensive writing and speaking components. Roche provides several examples of creative curricula at Notre Dame and elsewhere that ensure that "each liberal arts student explores an engaging set of meaningful questions in some depth" (66). As for cultivating character, Roche argues strongly for both religious and secular institutions taking a holistic approach to education. "Religious universities may be freer about engaging issues of [ethical or character] formation," he notes, "but formation is not a question of religion" (110). Ethical development and character formation have, unfortunately, been largely ignored in secular academe. Often, science and business courses focus on technique rather than on larger questions of purpose and meaning. Yet, studying the liberal arts in a residential community is one of the best ways for students to realize a coherent moral vision. "Even more than awakening a deeper meaning in work," Roche concludes succinctly, "a liberal arts education gives graduates a direction for life" (153).

Roche has written a very thoughtful and fair *apologia* for the liberal arts that speaks to many contemporary challenges. Not only prospective students but current faculty can richly benefit from the author's extensive administrative and teaching experience. The creative teaching methods he cites as examples throughout the book can serve as valuable models for teachers in almost any field. This reviewer would have liked to have seen a more substantial treatment of how tuition costs have placed this sort of traditional education out of the reach of even many middle class Americans. Further, has electronic media made many of today's students less able to summon the sort of sustained, focused attention that intense study of the Western literary canon demands? Even so, *Why Choose the Liberal Arts?* is a very insightful contribution to an important discussion; the academy would benefit enormously if more faculty and administrators read it carefully.

Gillis J. Harp

Grove City College

The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Harry Potter. By John Killinger. (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2010, Pp., 164. \$17.00, paper.)

The comparisons of Harry Potter and his escapades in the seven-book series to the Christian faith are not new. Even author J. K. Rowling acknowledged in an October 2007 interview that her books deal extensively with Christian themes. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* begins with the premise that love can save you from death, ending *Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows* with a proclamation that a sacrifice in the name of love can bring you back from death. In *The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Harry Potter*, John Killinger would have us believe he is the first one to make the connections that so many readers have been making since the first volume of the Potter series appeared in 1997. This book appears to be a sequel to *God, the Devil, and Harry Potter*, written following the release of the fourth book, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. In that text, Killinger explains that Harry's scar from childhood is a mark representing the unspeakable name of the Hebrew god Yahweh.

In his introduction, Killinger presents his case and responds to the Potter detractors. He compares why religious conservatives dislike Harry to the Pharisees who "cleanse the outside of the cup and leave the inside untouched, or strain at gnats and end by swallowing camels" (69). This is certainly fuel for defending against protesters in their neighborhood when they hold a Hogwarts' Vacation Bible School. And he does submit an interesting argument. Every wizarding word is referenced to a scripture passage, and every character takes on the attributes of one of Jesus' disciples or a Biblical figure. While Killinger seems a bit congratulatory of his own perceptiveness and sleuth work in discovering Rowling's secret, he does decipher many symbols and details of the entire saga through the lens of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. A few are a bit far-fetched, such as: "There was a scarlet oval over his [Harry's] heart where the locket had burned him." A scarlet oval over Harry's heart recalls the Sacred Heart of Jesus, one of the most revered signs in Christian history (81).

Killinger's book will be a welcome addition to those educators and theologians who desire to unpack the Harry Potter novels and use them as literary tools for Christian study in contemporary society just as the works of C. S. Lewis, John Milton, and T. S. Elliot. Don't we want

children to experience the Christian message in a language and milieu they are familiar with and engaged to learn more? Children are pretty sophisticated today; they know the world has temptations. And they are quickly losing their imaginations by the hard and unforgiving world that we live in. Why not engage their wonder with seeking God in all shapes and forms?

Sharon Ely Pearson

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