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**Forum: COVID-19 in Context**



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**Roundtable on Gaming Pedagogy and Teaching Virtue in the College Classroom**

## FROM THE EDITOR

The COVID-19 pandemic and the advent of ChatGPT dealt a one-two punch to educators. The first destabilized classrooms by raising the question, Why should students show up in person when they could just Zoom in or watch a video? The second destabilized writing and assessment. How could educators ever again be certain that students created their own written work? Should we even expect students to do their own writing now, or has that skill become outdated, like quill-pen calligraphy? The combination of upheavals is causing everyone—professors, students, parents, donors, administrators, politicians, and employers—to rethink what it means to educate, or to be educated, in this new environment.

This issue features a forum on the COVID-19 pandemic, with papers from the CFH session at the American Historical Association annual meeting in January 2023. The papers put this pandemic in historical, racial, and religious context in ways that only academic hindsight can accomplish. Of course, as Nancy Tomes's contribution illustrates, data on COVID-19 is still coming in, with analysis ongoing as well. It is wonderful when historians can engage news cycles on topics as momentous as a global pandemic, but the journalistic first draft of history can be faulty. Insight will sharpen as time passes. More recent events give new perspective on older ones, too.

We do not have the luxury of waiting for clarity when it comes to pedagogy. As waves of infections continue to hit our campuses, and as new AI technologies come online every few weeks, we have to keep teaching class sessions, writing exams, and grading papers. Students are still being formed and informed by everything we're doing, undeterred by the fact that we are making it up as we go along.

An article and a roundtable in this issue might suggest a way forward: play. Jacob Randolph's article looks back at the Missionary Education Movement of the early twentieth century to explore efforts to inculcate curiosity, empathy, and world-mindedness in children. Most readers of this journal teach older students, not children, but our aims might not be so different. We can learn from these long-ago educators' aspirations and shortcomings.

For concrete suggestions on incorporating play into college and secondary classrooms, see the roundtable edited by Lynneth Miller Renberg and Timothy J. Orr, which began as a session at the CFH annual meeting at Baylor in spring 2022. Participants have used a variety of play pedagogies, including board games, role-play, and video games. Dr. Renberg's students created their own games. The roundtable contributions address logistical issues such as time and materials, but, as with Randolph's article, they also offer ethical reflections. Play is not just a way to enrich the classroom experience, recapturing students' COVID- and AI-addled attention, but it has an uncanny ability to bring weighty philosophical questions into focus. As Renberg and Orr write, "it became clear to us that one common outcome of using these mediums to explore history was an expanded space to wrestle with morality and what it means to be a Christian who engages the past. Using games in the classroom did not just create new ways for students to engage with the past, but also pushed students to grapple with the moral ramifications of acting as an agent of

the past within the context of these games. This gave their pedagogical experiences with these games a surprising degree of gravity." An approach that can bring both more levity and more gravity to the classroom is one that many of us might want to consider.

Lastly, a note on timing. You didn't miss the winter/spring 2023 issue, because there wasn't one. I simply did not have enough articles through the revision process to go forward with an issue at that time. The pipeline continues to flow at a trickle. I don't know why this is, although I know that *Fides et Historia* is not the only journal experiencing this challenge. I would guess that the slowdown reflects a combination of factors. Archival research was sharply curtailed during the pandemic, and those effects linger. Many historians have struggled to find or maintain employment in recent years. CFH is also going through something of a generational shift, and some phases of a person's career—and personal life—are more conducive to article production than others.

I apologize for the inconsistency of the *Fides* production schedule, but I hope that you will agree that the quality of the editorial content has been consistently high. CFH members are doing excellent work! Please send more of it my way.

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# ARISTOTLE'S EMBRYONIC ERROR: THE FALLACY OF FALSE CAUSE AS THE BASIS FOR PATRIARCHY

**SANDRA L. AMOROSO**

Aristotle's theory on the biological genesis of females in human reproduction, upon which his philosophy about the place of women in political and private life was based, is demonstrably flawed. Resting on morally objectionable and scientifically false theories of causation, Aristotle's conclusion that women are unfit to rule breaks down under challenges to the premises of his argument. Nonetheless, even while both scientific development and the advancement of Christian morality and ethics cast a harsh light on his fallacious reasoning, Aristotle's theory of female inferiority maintained a hold on society throughout antiquity, somewhat receded but was then revived during the medieval age, and permeated the culture of Western Europe into the Reformation era. Moreover, although Protestant theologians otherwise challenged the status quo of the culture and of biblical interpretation, they chose to maintain Aristotelian ideas of female inferiority that directed their interpretations of biblical texts. This choice yielded the philosophical, and then theological, rationale and rhetorical ammunition to limit both women's right to rule in the public sphere and women's personal liberty in public and private spheres.

## The Origin of Female Inferiority

At the foundation of Aristotle's belief that women are inferior to men is his belief that women are deformed males: "for just as the young of mutilated parents are sometimes born mutilated and sometimes not, so also the young born of a female are sometimes female and sometimes male instead. For the female is, as it were, a mutilated male …"[1]

Aristotle's belief in the inferiority of women stems from what is now known to be a significantly flawed understanding of the process of human reproduction and embryonic development. Certainly, Aristotle's observations and insights into biology were impressively detailed, often accurate, and did contribute significantly to the science of embryology. In his quintessential book *A History of Embryology*, Joseph Needham remarks, "If I have devoted ample space to an account of Aristotle's contributions in embryology, it is, firstly, because they are actually greater in number than those of any individual embryologist, and secondly, because they had so profound an influence upon the following twenty centuries."[2] Needham

[1]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 2.3.737a 25–27.

[2]Joseph Needham, *A History of Embryology*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press,

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goes on to describe Aristotle's "outstanding contributions" as, among other things, that he made "logical conclusions of the principles of observation," "introduced the comparative method," made advances in the quest to determine the timing of sex determination, and correctly determined the functions of the placenta and the umbilical cord.[3]

However, Aristotle made some significant, consequential errors in his scientific observations and conclusions. He erred in his conclusion that the male is the sole contributor of the material that develops into a human, believing that the woman's contribution was merely an environment that nourishes the embryo produced from the male seed. Additionally, in his analysis of sex determination, Aristotle concludes that a child born female is a deformed male. In other words, an otherwise male embryo becomes female because it was deformed by an inhospitable environment in the woman.

## The Female Function in Human Reproduction

While the Greeks and Aristotle understood that human reproduction was a product of sexual activity, Aristotle believed that the whole contribution of human seed came from the father and implanted in the mother; the mother was simply a carrier, or laborer. Effectively, a male could father a reproduction of himself, but only if the female he chose as the mother did not fail to nurture the embryo properly.

Aristotle laid out his case that the male contributes the seed in his semen, and the female contributes nourishment of the seed in her menstrual blood, but she does not contribute the essential seed that develops into a human embryo and fetus: "That, then, the female does not contribute semen to generation, but does contribute something, and that this matter of the menstrual flow … is clear from what has been said."[4] Gotthelf summarizes Aristotle's basic narrative of generation:

> [H]is theory of the efficient cause of generation: the father, as ultimate efficient cause, acts on a material supplied by the mother, the (useful part of the) *katamēnia* [menstrual blood], but does so through his semen which carries, embedded somehow in a distinctive heat, a set of movements which initiate a process leading in normal circumstances to the production of an offspring one in form with the father.[5]

Some of Aristotle's contemporaries developed alternative views on female contribution, in line with existing Greek ideas of fertility in which women played an important, albeit unclear, role in conception as evidenced by their consulting the oracles or making offerings to the fertility gods when infertility was a problem. Aristotle's medically-oriented view on sole male contribution was nonetheless also consistent with Greek mythology. For example, in the play *Eumenides* performed in

2015; orig. publ. 1959), 54.
[3]Needham, 55.
[4]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 2.3.729a 21–23.
[5]Allan Gotthelf. *Teleology, First Principles, and Scientific Method in Aristotle's Biology*, Oxford Aristotle Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 97.

the century prior to Aristotle, Orestes defends himself against charges of killing his mother by noting that she is not his blood relative, and Apollo concurs.

> ORESTES. But do I then share with my mother a blood bond?
>
> […]
>
> APOLLO. The mother is no parent of that which is called
>
> her child, but only nurse of the new-planted seed
>
> that grows. The parent is he who mounts.[6]

What the Greeks had missed, and what Aristotle then perpetuated with his seemingly medically-informed backing, was an essential element of embryological genesis, as Needham points out: "[Aristotle] knew nothing of the mammalian ovum, and indeed, as is shown in his embryological classification, expressly denied that there was such a thing."[7]

Yet even a dull observer can hardly miss the obvious challenge to sole male contribution. Children, daughters and sons alike, often resemble their mothers. How could it be possible that the female made no contribution to the seed if their offspring favor their resemblance? Aristotle postulated an explanation for this phenomenon, claiming that both the seminal and menstrual fluids contributed matter to the embryo; whichever of the two proved to have the stronger motion would have the greater influence on the formation of the fetus:

> I mean how it is that the male contributes to generation and how it is that the semen from the male is the cause of the offspring … Does it exist in the body of the embryo as part of it from the first, mingling with the material which comes from the female? Or does the semen communicate nothing to the material body of the embryo but only to the power and movement in it? For this power is that which acts and makes, while that which is made and receives the form is the residue of the secretion in the female.[8]

Gelber summarizes the whole of Aristotle's writings on the matter thus:

> Aristotle identifies *kinēseis* in the reproductive fluids from the parents as the *per se* causes of inherited features … because of the way in which both semen and menstrual blood are formed, there will also be *kinēseis* in the mother's contribution, the matter. Aristotle describes the mechanism by which the offspring comes to resemble one parent rather than the other in terms of

[6]Aeschylus, *Eumenides*, 606, 658–660.
[7]Needham, *History of Embryology*, 43.
[8]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 2.3.729b.1–8.

these *kinēseis* prevailing or failing to prevail.[9]

According to Aristotle, a child will only resemble its mother if the mother's "residue" prevails over the father's; if the mother's power and movement prevails significantly, her offspring resembles her in both form and manner. It is interesting to note that Aristotle presents the general and ideal nature of things to be that "the female, as female, is passive, and the male, as male, is active, and the principle of the movement comes from him."[10] While care must be taken not to assume that Aristotle is necessarily making broad statements about the behavior or social and political constructs of human males and females based on his assertions about biological functions, nonetheless he is asserting that in generation, the female is associated with passivity, and the male is associated with activity. Horowitz explains, "It is implied in Aristotle's view that the female is in the fullest sense of the word a 'laborer.' She passively takes on her task, laboring with her body to fulfill another's design and plan, and consequently her contribution to the product is of a secondary nature. The product of her labor is not hers."[11]

Things go awry when there is a deviation from this nature: if the semen is weak, or the menstrual fluid is powerful, then the male is too passive or the female is too active. Thus the proper ratio will be out of balance and the result will be a deviation from the ideal: there may be no offspring at all, the offspring may deform into a female, or the child will resemble the mother instead of the father. Aristotle's readers would reasonably conclude that the ideal and natural female is one who passively receives from a male, and labors for his benefit. It must be emphasized that Aristotle's picture of the ideal female is built on a premise of her biological function in procreation and sex determination, and Aristotle's understanding of this aspect of procreation is spectacularly wrong.

## The Monstrous, but Necessary, Female

In *Generation of Animals*, Aristotle attributes the causes of female births to the coldness of the mother, which can be caused by her age, the environment during copulation, or the nature of the connection between the potential mother and father. In regard to age, Aristotle says, "Far more females are produced by the young and by those verging on old age than by those in the prime of life; in the former the heat is not yet perfect, in the latter it is failing."[12] In other words, a woman too young or too old has an environment too cold for the embryo and thus the embryo will more likely deform into a female. Furthermore, he says that the direction that the wind is blowing or in which direction the male and female are looking during copulation contributes to sex determination: "more males are born if copulation takes place when north than when south winds are blowing," he claims, and "shepherds also

[9]Jessica Gelber, "Form and Inheritance in Aristotle's Embryology," in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy Volume 39*, ed. Brad Inwood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 190–191.

[10]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 2.3.729b.13–14.

[11]Maryanne Cline Horowitz, "Aristotle and Woman," *Journal of the History of Biology* 9, no. 2 (Autumn, 1976): 197.

[12]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 4.2.766b.28–30.

say that it not only makes a difference in the production of males and females if copulation takes place during northern or southerly winds, but even if the animals while copulating look towards the south or north; so small a thing will sometimes turn the scale and cause cold or heat."[13]

Aristotle also attributes causation of female birth to the nature of the relationship between the male and female during copulation, saying that "a certain correspondence with one another" is necessary because offspring "come into being as products of art or of nature," and as such they "exist in virtue of a certain ratio."[14] Sophia M. Connell, author of a book on Aristotle's view of animal procreation, explains:

> In a hotter material condition at conception, a heart develops which is able to concoct the residue of blood to its ultimate state (GA766I4). The presence of this male heart also explains, on a material level, how the embryo develops male characteristics and parts … The blood vessels that form in the male embryo will be of a character that corresponds to its hotter blood; they will be tougher and stronger than the female variety … In cooler conditions at conception, a female heart develops. The heart begins to nourish and blood is produced which is less concocted or cooler than the male … for Aristotle, the development of a female body is also, on some level, a failure: the cooler situation at conception occurs because the male principle *fails* to fully master the matter.[15]

As if to drive the point home, Aristotle compares the birth of a female to that of other circumstances of birth in which he deems something to have gone wrong, such as when children are born that do not resemble their parents in appearance, or appear deformed and not like typical human beings.

> [T]hough resembling none of their relations, yet do at any rate resemble a human being, but others are not even like a human being but a monstrosity. For even he who does not resemble his parents is already in a certain sense a monstrosity; for in these cases nature has in a way departed from type. The first departure indeed is that the offspring should become female instead of male; this however, is a natural necessity.[16]

The female, through Aristotle's eyes, is a monstrosity, though a necessary one.

To be fair, Aristotle's biological writings are sophisticated and nuanced, though a plain reading of his texts sets off alarm bells for feminist critique. Connell argues that the bases of those conclusions should not be interpreted in an informed reading of his biological texts:

[13]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 4.2.767a.19–12.
[14]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 4.2.767a.13–22.
[15]Sophia M. Connell, *Aristotle on Female Animals: A Study of the Generation of Animals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 28.
[16]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 4.2.767b.4–9.

> [M]any try to show that Aristotle was in the business of justifying patriarchy through his depiction of female bodily and reproduction incapacity … Aristotelianism, especially in its medieval guise, has given us systematic sexism … denying women an equal role in society on the basis of reproductive capacity. However, on close analysis of the key texts it becomes clear that Aristotle himself did not have such a system in place.[17]

However, whether or not ancient societies or medieval scholars understood the nuances of Aristotle's formal causes of generation consistent with Connell's understanding, contrary to what Connell claims, the wider reading of the corpus of Aristotle's works demonstrates that Aristotle did in fact deem the development of a female embryo to be a failure and a monstrosity (albeit a necessary one). He did in fact deny females equality in society by placing them in a permanently inferior position to males—in a similar category to slaves and children—and subsequent scholars and theologians did in fact understand these to be Aristotle's views and used them as rationale to argue for the subjugation of women in the medieval age and beyond. Aristotle's intent aside, the effect remains. Misogynistic and patriarchal systems have been justified in societies for millennia, using Aristotle's texts as rationale.

## Functional Inferiority in Females

On the basis of their biological inferiority to males, Aristotle translates to females some implication of inferiority to the nature of their functional capacity. His writings provide less clarity, however, as to the exact effect of their biological inferiority to their rational capacity. He does explicitly deem that which is feminine to be associated with an inferior capacity to regulate one's own passions.

## Ethical Inferiority

In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle identifies three undesirable moral states—vice, incontinence, and brutishness.[18] Notably, he connects the quality of brutishness to "disease or deformity" and then connects "incontinence and softness (or effeminacy)" but "continence to endurance."[19] Thus, Aristotle alludes to that which is correlated to females, softness or effeminacy, as being connected with that which positions a person toward an undesirable moral state—incontinence, or, lacking self-control:

> Now both continence and endurance are thought to be included among things good and praiseworthy, and both incontinence and softness among things bad and blameworthy … and the incontinent man, knowing that what he does is bad, does it as a result of passion, while the continent man, knowing

[17]Connell, 2–4.
[18]Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 7.1145a.15–16.
[19]Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 7.1145a.31, 35.

> that his appetites are bad, does not follow them because of his reason.[20]

Most particularly, a person with female qualities is inclined toward incontinence; in other words, the nature of a female is to be less able to be controlled by reason and more inclined to be controlled by passion. When a man does "bad and blameworthy" things, he does so because he is not following reason, but instead is following his passions—like a woman (soft and effeminate).

Thus, Aristotle deems females to be in some sense correlated to less desirable moral states, but while he says a female is less able to be controlled by reason, he does not explicitly say a female is deficient in her capacity to reason. To an extent, Connell concurs, saying, "Within the Aristotelian biological account of female nature women are not depicted as less rational or more emotional than men."[21] In the *biological* account, he may not depict females as less rational or more emotional. But without question, Aristotle deems females biologically inferior, and it is more reasonable to conclude that he translates that natural inferiority as causal to the case he makes for her ethical and political inferiority than to say that he does not. Connell says otherwise, arguing that one should not make connections between his biological and political writings:

> He makes no explicit connections. . . .You have to be very cautious about making these connections for yourself … I think what's going on is about complementarity in the *Politics*. He wants to find that there are virtues of men, virtues of women, virtues of other roles that people play in the household and these will differ and that in order for the city to work you need these different roles and the women are playing this inferior role.[22]

## Fixed Inferiority

However, in the following passages from *Politics*, Aristotle makes an explicit claim that nature—biology—has determined a hierarchy in society, and that females ought to be ruled by males because of their biology:

> But is there any one thus intended by nature to be a slave, and for whom such a condition is expedient and right, or rather is not all slavery a violation of nature? There is no difficulty in answering this question, on grounds both of reason and of fact. For that some should rule and others be ruled is a thing not only necessary, but expedient; from the hour of their birth,

[20]Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 7.1145b.8–14.
[21]Connell, 28.
[22]"Aristotle's Biology with Martin Leroi, Myrto Hatzimichali, and Sophia Connell," hosted by Melvyn Bragg, *In Our Time*, on BBC Radio 4, February 7, 2019, 30:03–30:55, https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0002cfd.

> some are marked out for subjection, and others for rule.[23]

Aristotle claims in this passage that it is not a violation of nature that some people are born into slavery, rather it is necessary because of nature. Some men are born inferior on the basis of intellectual limitation, saying "between men and animals (as in the case of those whose business is to use their body, and can do nothing better), the lower sort are by nature slaves. . . . He who participates in reason enough to apprehend, but not to have, is a slave by nature."[24] To the point, Aristotle is identifying something about their biological development such that "from the hour of their birth," they are intellectually inferior, and therefore it is a fulfillment of their biological nature to be slaves.

Since he has also argued that females are biologically inferior from their earliest embryological generation, they too are "from the hour of their birth" inferior and are marked out by nature for something less, but he does not relegate them to slavery because he does not deem them intellectually inferior. He makes a direct assertion about a woman's capacity to reason, and he does so in the context of contrasting her capacity to that of slaves and of children:

> The freeman rules over the slave after another manner from that in which the male rules over the female, or the man over the child; although the parts of the soul are present in all of them, they are present in different degrees. For the slave has no deliberative faculty at all; the woman has, but it is without authority, and the child has but it is immature.[25]

In this passage, Aristotle gives credence to the woman's capacity to reason, which indicates that her capacity to reason is irrelevant to the question of hierarchy. A closer inspection of both the language and authorial intent is warranted. Horowitz notes the challenges of the passage and investigates the term "authority," or *akuron* in the Greek, saying,

> That woman's deliberative faculty is *akuron* is Aristotle's most explicit statement on woman's mental or spiritual inferiority, yet it is cryptically ambiguous … Aristotle used the adjective *akuros* both as a political term implying lack of legitimate power or authority and as a biological and medical term implying inadequacy of capacity. He may have meant, 'A woman has no right to deliberate.'[26]

Authority is a key term because Aristotle determines that women lack it, and he uses this lack to rationalize limitations placed on the use of a woman's deliberative faculty. The language used affirms that Aristotle does not argue for a woman's essential intellectual inferiority, but rather that her positional inferiority renders her intellectual capacity void in relation to her husband's rule over her. In this sense,

[23]Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.5.1254a18–23.
[24]Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.5.1254b17–22.
[25]Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.5.1260a 9–15.
[26]Horowitz, "Aristotle and Woman," 207.

Connell's assertion that Aristotle is arguing for complementarity of males and females (with men's role in society being to rule over women) for the sake of society is correct, except—and this is significant—that he does not say that the needs of society are causative of females "playing" an inferior role. Rather, he says that females *are* inferior and that nature (biology) is the cause, which happens to be "expedient" for the sake of the needs of his ideal society.

Aristotle further supports the claim that women's intellectual capacities are rendered void in the hierarchy because of their naturally-derived positional inferiority:

> A husband and father, we saw, rules over wife and children, both free, but the rule differs, the rule over his children being a royal, over his wife a constitutional rule. For although there may be exceptions to the order of nature, the male is by nature fitter for command than the female, just as the elder and full-grown is superior to the younger and more immature.[27]

It is worth pausing in the passage here to note two things. One, Aristotle concedes that there are "exceptions to the order of nature" and that the natural order is that the male is fit for command and the female is not. What the qualities are that makes one "fit for command," he does not explicitly identify here, but one could posit that based on the exposition of Nicomachean Ethics 7.1 that he means that one is continent (self-ruled by reason) and thus endures, whereas one unfit for command is incontinent (self-ruled by passions) and thus soft. Aristotle believes the natural male is the former, and therefore fit for command, while the natural female is the latter, and therefore not fit for command.

Aristotle acknowledges that there are exceptions. He presumably means that some females go against their natures, being self-ruled by reason, and would by that standard be fit for command, while some males go against their natures, being self-ruled by passion, and would by that standard be unfit for command—although self-rule is ultimately not the test of fitness for leadership, because men and women are each superior or inferior based on their original, fixed, natural position. Rule in the household, then, is not determined by merit of the individual; rather rule is determined by fixed hierarchy. At the very least, in Aristotle's account, females are naturally unqualified. Susan Moller Okin explains the nuance between nature and politics in Aristotle well, noting that for Aristotle, nature informs the political, and for both, it is best when each functions in a manner that is consistent with its essence:

> Aristotle's ethics is, to a large extent, traditional ethics, clarified and justified. Unlike Plato, he does not argue, in dealing with ethics any more than with biology, that the world should be different from the way it is, but starts from a basic belief that the *status quo* in both the natural and the social realm is the best way for things to be. This conservative approach, however, is not simply assumed dogmatically, but has its own rationale.

[27]Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.12.1259a.39–1259b.1–4.

> Things are the way they are, Aristotle argues, because of the function each of them performs, and their survival is proof that they perform their functions well.[28]

## Fixed Role

Intriguingly, Aristotle defines the foundational relationship between male and female to be that of a "constitutional rule" of husband over wife; in *Ethics*, he uses the term "aristocratic."[29] Numerous scholars have noted the disconnect here between Aristotle's description of what appears to be some degree of equality between husband and wife, and the rest of his works, which describe a relationship of inferior female to superior male. Aristotle offers further explanation:

> *But* in most constitutional states the citizens rule and are ruled by turns, for the idea of a constitutional state implies that the natures of the citizens are equal, and do not differ at all. *Nevertheless*, when one rules and the other is ruled we endeavor to create a difference of outward forms and names and titles of respect, which may be illustrated by the saying of Amasis about his foot-pan. The relation of male to female is always this kind.[30] (Emphasis mine)

To Aristotle's way of seeing it, the male is fit for rule and the female is not, but in the household the husband and wife relate to each other at least in some regard as equals. It seems quite plausible that Aristotle is acknowledging that the relationship between husband and wife has an additional layer beyond the political, which he describes as constitutional or aristocratic. Considering the context of his contrasting wives with children and slaves, one could presume that Aristotle is referencing that both the husbands and wives are adults, free, and have deliberative faculty, and on these bases they are equals and "do not differ at all."

His use of the term "nevertheless" is the interpretive key to this passage. He has already stated that this "constitutional" relationship does not operate like a typical one does, because the ruler and the ruled do not alternate positions in the hierarchy. He emphasizes that the one rules (male) and the other is ruled (female), meaning there is a permanent hierarchy in the relationship. He then explains that when there is a fixed hierarchy, symbols are created to outwardly show the nature of the relationship. He points to "the saying of Amasis," a story by Herodotus, to illustrate his point. Herodotus tells the story of when the Egyptian King Amasis came to power. Initially, his subjects "hold him in small esteem, because he had been a mere private person."[31] Before becoming king, he had been equal to his subjects, and so they did not see cause to esteem him. But using "cleverness," he crafted a plan to

[28] Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1979), 74.
[29] Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 7.9.1241b.30.
[30] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.12.1259a 39–1259b.4–9.
[31] Herodotus, 2.172.

gain their esteem: he took a golden foot pan, normally used for foot washing, and had it melted down and fashioned into a golden statue, whereby the Egyptians "flocked to the image" to worship it, not knowing it had once been the foot pan. He called an assembly and told his subjects of the statue's origin, and equated himself to the statue. He was once equal to them, but because he was now their king, he was worthy of worship.

Aristotle said, "The relation of male and female is always this kind."[32] It seems that he means the husband and wife have the same underlying nature since they are both free adults with deliberative faculties, just as the gold is the same in both the foot pan and the statue, but that they "nevertheless" have different functions. Even though they are equal, they have outward forms that indicate their functions—the wife takes the form of the foot pan (valuable but humble and in service) and the husband takes the form of the statue (valuable and worthy of respect and worship). Following the illustration of the story then, while the wife and husband are equal, he is male, and thus worthy of rule and it is always this way, "by nature." Riesbeck aptly explains the story in light of Aristotle's belief in that natural inferiority of women. "Though the statue and the foot pan had the same underlying nature, their outward forms and functions called for very different treatment. But while citizens mark their temporary differences of authority by conventional means, males, Aristotle thinks, are *always* marked out as by nature more suited for rule than females."[33]

Nielson adds some additional insight:

> Those who read Aristotle's reference to political rule as an admission of the basic equality between the capability of men and the capability of women take the story of Amasis' foot pan to show that the general is equal to his subjects, but commands their respect because of an arbitrary role he has assumed. I take the story to teach us something else. Amasis is not king because someone has to do it, but because he is a spirited general, prepared to grab power and keep it. His clever use of the foot pan only reinforces the point … I have argued that, although Aristotle thinks women and men are equal in rational abilities, they are unequal in their ability to put decisions into action.[34]

Nielson accounts for Aristotle's apparent understanding of equal capabilities of rationality, though in light of Aristotle's foundational teaching on the biological, and thus positional, inferiority of women, a man commanding a woman would not be "arbitrary." It would be natural, a product of biological development—for Aristotle, males biologically are correlated to activity (grabbing power) and females biological-

[32] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.12.1259a 39–1259b 9.

[33] David J. Riesbeck, "Aristotle on the Politics of Marriage: 'Marital Rule' in the Politics," *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, 65, no.1 (May 2015): 138. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43905646.

[34] Karen Margrethe Nielsen, "The Constitution of the Soul: Aristotle on Lack of Deliberative Authority," *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, 65, no. 2 (Dec 2015): 585. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43905693.

ly are correlated to passivity (laborers in service).

In the context of the constitutional rule reference and the illustration of equality with functional inferiority in the story of Amasis's foot pan, Aristotle's assertion that a woman has deliberative faculty, but has no authority to use it, is logically consistent. He furthers his argument by referencing the virtues, or "excellences of character," that are associated with the ruler and the ruled. While Aristotle has correlated undesirable moral states (incontinence) to females, he does also allow that women can express virtues equal to men, though "nevertheless" they are not the same.

> Clearly, excellence of character belongs to all of them; but the temperance of a man and of a woman, or the courage and justice of a man and of a woman, are not, as Socrates maintained, the same: the courage of a man is shown in commanding, of a woman in obeying … All classes must be deemed to have their special attributes; as the poet says of women, 'Silence is a woman's glory,' but this is not equally the glory of man.[35]

According to Aristotle, while a woman can be virtuous like a man, and in that sense they are equal, they each express their virtue within the limitations of the natural states and within the spheres to which their natural states ought to be fulfilled: he expresses virtue as a ruler both in the household and in the polis, and she expresses virtue as a submissive both in the household and in the polis. As Horowitz puts it, "A conventional Greek, Aristotle limited his perspective of women's service to the state to her fulfillment of functions within the family. . . . The separate spheres of man and woman necessitate different virtues. Man needs the courage of a ruler; woman needs the modesty and silence of one who obeys."[36]

To emphasize the point, the logical basis for Aristotle's ideal state is that the female is inferior to the male because she is a deformed male, and she is a deformed male because of the biological processes in human reproduction and sex selection. Because of that deformity, she is rightfully submissive to males in the kinds of communities which humans establish—namely, households and states. The problem is obvious: the entire foundation of Aristotle's ideal state disintegrates with the correction of his flawed understanding of human reproduction and sex selection.

## Aristotle's Logical Fallacies

Aristotle's reasoning regarding the subjugation of females can be examined using his own methodology, the syllogism. Consider the major premise, minor premise, and conclusion:

> All deformed men are unfit to rule.
>
> Women are deformed men.

[35] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.13.1260a.21–13, 28–31.
[36] Horowitz, "Aristotle and Woman," 208.

Therefore women are unfit to rule.

Both premises are problematic. The major premise, all deformed men are unfit to rule, is morally and ethically objectionable as Aristotle's determination for "fitness" to rule is first based on an ideal presentation or perfection of the human form (either physically or of intellectual capacity). From a strictly logical lens, the premise rests on a flawed a priori argument—that one can know that every single apparently deformed man is unfit to rule without experiencing every deformed man.[37] Aristotle indeed makes an a priori argument, as is evidenced by his "solution" to the birth of deformed infants: "As to the exposure and rearing of children, let there be a law that no deformed children shall live."[38] So committed was Aristotle to the idea that deformity was intolerable, that he advocated for a law to ensure that every infant born deformed would be "exposed," by which he was referring to the ancient Greek practice described here: "Before the child was accepted into the family by the father, it was not regarded as a person. If children were not accepted they would be exposed, meaning they were taken to a remote location, or even flung onto a dung heap, to die."[39] Here Aristotle's claim goes so far as to say that all deformed men are unfit to live, but his shift to rule can be seen when he makes the allowance for some deformed men (namely women) to live because of "necessity"—"The first departure indeed is that the offspring should become female instead of male; this however, is a natural necessity."[40] If these deformed men (females) must live, then they are obviously unfit to rule—"Again, the male is by nature superior, and the female inferior, and the one rules, and the other is ruled; this principle, of necessity, extends to all mankind."[41]

Aristotle's minor premise, women are deformed men, rests on a more obvious fallacy, *non causa pro causa*, or the fallacy of false cause. Aristotle assigned deformity, or monstrosity, as the cause of female, and this is objectively false. Females are not deformed males. Females do not begin as male seed and deform into female because of cold temperatures, the environment during copulation, a south wind, a lack of passivity on the part of the mother, or an ill-matched nature between the father and the mother. The essential material that becomes the embryo does not come exclusively from the sperm.

Aristotle was wrong. To be fair, science did not advance to demonstrate his conclusions to be objectively false until 1651, when William Harvey published his groundbreaking book *De Generatione Animalium*, in which he conclusively disproved Aristotle's theory and put forth his own—"that an egg is the common Original of all animals."[42] Needham marks the significance of Harvey's findings, saying "There can be no doubt that the doctrine *omne vivum ex ovo* was an advance on all

[37] Peter Kreeft, *Socratic Logic: A Logic Text Using Socratic Method, Platonic Questions, Aristotelian Principles*, edition 3.1 (South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine Press, 2010), 228. See Kreeft for a treatment of syllogisms and fallacies, including a priori arguments.
[38] Aristotle, *Politics*, 7.16.1335b.20–21.
[39] S. M. Baugh, "Marriage and Family in Ancient Greek Society," in *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, ed. Ken M. Campbell, (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic), 123.
[40] Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 4.2.767b.8–9.
[41] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.5.1254b.13–15.
[42] Needham, *History of Embryology*, 149.

preceding thought … He destroyed once and for all the Aristotelian (semen-blood) and Epicurean (semen-semen) theories of early embryogeny."[43] Advancements continued throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly as improvements to microscopes made observation of mammalian ovum possible. In 1827, Karl Ernst Von Baer recorded his microscopic discovery which significantly forwarded the understanding of embryology, declaring "I was fortunate enough to discover in the ovary those origins of the ovum of mammals and man which, despite the greatest efforts, had been sought in vain through successive generations."[44]

By the late 1800s early revelations of sex chromosomes began to chart the path toward the eventual discovery in 1959 that sex determination was a result of whether the sperm that fertilized the egg contained either a Y chromosome or an X chromosome, finally upending millennia of consequential beliefs that the mother, as Aristotle claimed, determined the sex of the child.[45] In fact, in direct contrast to the minor premise of Aristotle's syllogistic logic, the mother and the father both contribute equally to the material required for the conception of an embryo via an egg and sperm, respectively. Furthermore, sex determination is not a deformity, but is determined upon conception based on the chromosomal material in the sperm (X for female, Y for male).[46] With both the major premise and the minor premise either suspect or wholly disproven, Aristotle's conclusion that women are unfit to rule falls apart.

## Reason or Rationalization?

Aristotle's premises and conclusion cannot be entirely dismissed as scientific naivete. While his theory was not absolutely disproven for many centuries, even in his own time he eschewed competing theories of human reproduction and embryology that did not lay a philosophical foundation for male superiority and female inferiority, as did his. Aristotelian scholars disagree on the motivation behind Aristotle's specious conclusions. In his book, *The Female in Aristotle's Biology: Reason or Rationalization*,

[43] Needham, *History of Embryology*, 149–150.

[44] Karl Ernst von Baer and Charles Donald O'Malley, "On the Genesis of the Ovum of Mammals and of Man" *Isis* 47, no. 2 (1956): 122. https://www.jstor.org/stable/227335.

[45] J. K. Abbott, A. K. Nordén, and B. Hansson. "Sex Chromosome Evolution: Historical Insights and Future Perspectives," *Proceedings of the Royal Society: Biological Sciences*. 284(1854):20162806 (May 17, 2017), 1, 3c. PubMed Central.

[46] There are known, rare exceptions to XX, XY sex determination described here: "Geneticists have found a small number of XY women and XX men. These otherwise normal individuals share one common trait—they are infertile … In the mid-1980s, geneticist David C. Page of the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology discovered that during the production of sperm, occasionally a small segment of the Y chromosome containing the male-determining gene would accidentally be inserted into an X chromosome. The infant who received that X chromosome would thus be a male, even though he was XX instead of the normal XY. Similarly, an infant who received the other portion of the Y chromosome from which the gene had been deleted would be female, even though she was XY instead of the normal XX. see Thomas H. Maugh, "Gene That Determines Gender Reportedly Discovered: Science: Work by British geneticists could eventually lead to insights on how to treat cancer and other diseases." *Los Angeles Times*, July 19, 1990, https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1990-07-19-mn-411-story.html.

Robert Mayhew considers the possibility that the rationalization of preexisting cultural misogynies could have been a causal factor, saying "given the ancient conception of the female as inferior to the male, there may well have been pressures on Aristotle to view the issue in a certain way."[47] Ultimately, however, Mayhew hems at the idea that bias was causal and determines that Aristotle's conclusions were part of the normal scientific processes of his time. Any misogynies, in his view, were incidental and not germane to the subject matter:

> Is the picture he paints, though generally erroneous, the result of reason – of honest, objective science? Or is it the result of ideological rationalization? … Not all of Aristotle's mistakes were unavoidable and/or based on the limitations of the state of science at the time he worked. I did occasionally catch a (sometimes faint) whiff of ideological influence or motivation … Nevertheless these traces of bias are not overwhelming or primary or fundamental.[48]

Yet, even if Aristotle followed normal scientific processes, his conclusions were outside of the norm of the day. In *Women's Bodies in Classical Greek Science*, Lesley Dean-Jones establishes that Aristotle's ideas of the solitary contribution of male seed to the embryo did not comport with his contemporaries:

> [W]e have extensive arguments from Aristotle against elaborate scientific theories which posited a role from female seed in conception. These arguments seem to be directed against a well-established and widely held view … while the [Hippocratic] Corpus exhibits varying opinions on such points as the mechanism of resemblance, sex differentiation, and embryonic development, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of the authors adhered to some theory of female seed.[49]

Still, Dean-Jones argues that scholars critical of Aristotle unfairly accuse him of misogynistic motivations because they fail to acknowledge the possibility that his intent was attempting to balance the perspective on human reproduction:

> [T]he theory that in the vast majority of animals the female could not provide seed herself did have explanatory value where the alternative theory was lacking (why a father should be necessary at all), and while acknowledging that the 'male seed only' theories did undermine a mother's claim to her children, we should not assume that their appeal was based solely on a desire to perpetuate the subordinate social and political status of women … But it is hardly fair to fault the Greeks for

[47] Robert Mayhew, *The Female in Aristotle's Biology: Reason or Rationalization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 4. EBSCOhost.
[48] Mayhew, 115–116.
[49] Lesley Dean-Jones, *Women's Bodies in Classical Greek Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), EBSCOhost Ebook, 154.

> observing that human reproduction is sexual and in the light of this attempting to identify the unique element that a father brought to reproduction.[50]

Perhaps Aristotle wished to counter other explanations in order to ensure due credit was given to the male contribution in reproduction, even if his conclusion was ultimately proven to be an overreach. After all, that females become pregnant and deliver infant humans made at least an aspect of their significant contribution to human reproduction obvious; what role males played, if any, was up for debate.

Notably, while Mayhew and Dean-Jones offer charitable interpretations of Aristotle's motives, both cede that Aristotle was at least, in some part—"a whiff" perhaps and "not solely"—influenced by the benefit of presenting a scientific explanation that affirmed female inferiority. In *The Concept of Woman: The Aristotelian Revolution, 750 BC – AD 1250,* Sister Prudence Allen offers another perspective. She presents a thorough treatment of the various hypotheses of the ancient world regarding reproduction and embryology, but considers Aristotle's intent. She summarizes:

> It is important to reflect on the fact that Aristotle intentionally rejected previous theories of generation that had maintained the presence of female seed … Parmenides, Empedocles, Democritus, Anaxagoras, and the Hippocratic writings all contained reference to some sort of contribution of female seed to the process of generation … Aristotle's theory, which rejects all contribution of seed – or of formative element – by the mother, is a radical departure from what was thought to be the case at the time he wrote … from his theory of generation, Aristotle drew devastating consequences for the concept of woman in relation to man.[51]

Jean Bethke Elshtain echoes the point about Aristotle's lasting significance,

> In describing the woman, for example, as an inferior life form, a kind of misbegotten man (necessarily so given that her essence dictated her limitedness) Aristotle buttressed the prejudices of his age. His views held sway or proved persuasive long after the glory of Attica had been reduced to romantically mystified historic memory.[52]

Whether Aristotle was primarily, secondarily, or not remotely motivated

[50] Dean-Jones, 150–151.
[51] Sister Prudence Allen, *The Concept of Woman: Volume I The Aristotelian Revolution, 750 BC – AD 1250* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 96.
[52] Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 47.

by misogyny, his erroneous teaching on this subject proved, as noted by Allen, enormously consequential because he did, in fact, present a biological and philosophical basis, erroneous though they were, to support arguments for and justify claims of male superiority and female inferiority—foundational beliefs for patriarchal political and societal structures.

As new evidence and scientific discovery made the true nature of reproduction and embryology more clear, the scientific community and practitioners of medicine responded accordingly in the proper care and treatments of gynecologic and obstetric concerns and with fertility care. However, the implications of Aristotle's teachings on the ideology of female inferiority continued to permeate political, societal, and religious norms and expectations. Horowitz summarizes the significance:

> [U]ltimately from 'The Teacher' have come many of the standard Western arguments for the inferiority of womankind and for the political subordination of women to men in home and in society … the importance of Aristotle is that in the medieval and early modern periods of Western civilization Aristotelian generalizations were set down and perpetuated as universal and natural truth.[53]

In other words, even while the premises of Aristotle's argument began to be definitively proven false, his conclusions were nonetheless adopted as "universal truth."

## Aristotelianism in Late Antiquity

The belief that women are inferior and unfit to rule permeated Western European thinking for centuries after. Scientists and theologians alike began to chip away at his premises, though in many ways the die was already cast.

### Galen

The court physician to Marcus Aurelius, Galen (AD 131–201) in many regards perpetuated Aristotle's theories, even while undercutting the essential foundation of them. Galen maintained Aristotle's concept of female inferiority: "Well, then Aristotle was right in thinking the female is less perfect than the male. . . . The female is less perfect than the male for one principal reason – because she is colder."[54] With what is arguably a sleight of hand, Galen changed the premise of the argument for female inferiority. Aristotle argued that the female was inferior because she was essentially a deformed male; Galen agrees that she is inferior, and that she is "cold," and then presumes to say that this is the principal reason for her inferiority, even though, as has been demonstrated, this is not the premise of Aristotle's argument. Why would he do this? If on the whole "one might say that Galen's account [of

[53] Horowitz, "Aristotle and Woman," 183.

[54] Galen, "On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body in Sister Prudence Allen," *The Concept of Woman: Volume I The Aristotelian Revolution, 750 BC – AD 1250* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 187.

conception theory] is not all that different from Aristotle's," why should he shift the premise of Aristotle's argument that women are inferior, which makes them unfit to rule?[55]

Perhaps the explanation lies with one significant point of difference that Galen has with Aristotle. His contemporaries had discovered ovaries, and, thinking they contained female seed, Galen believed "that female seed is expelled from the ovaries at the time of coition in such a manner that both seeds meet in the womb, mix, and form a membrane."[56] Chung notes the significance of the difference, noting that Galen's theory "projected active power, principle, and role" on the female.[57] Galen could not ignore the advancements in scientific discovery that exposed Aristotle's flawed premises. It is reasonable to consider that Galen foresaw the possibility that the cause of female genesis would ultimately be proven to be other than "monstrosity" and, aiming to carry on the biological arguments for female inferiority, shifted the basis for the argument.

## Irenaeus

Early church father Irenaeus (AD 130–202) also echoes ideas about women's inferiority. For example, he wrote, "Why was it that when these two (Aaron and Miriam) had both acted with despite towards him (Moses), the latter alone was adjudged punishment? First, because the woman was the more culpable, since both nature and the law place the woman in a subordinate condition to the man."[58] Irenaeus was a significant contributor to early Christian theology, and he was influenced by Hellenistic culture. Robert M. Grant asserts that Irenaeus has been studied almost exclusively through the lens of his Christian tradition, but "he lived in the philosophical-rhetorical world of the day as well as the church," so Grant examines Irenaeus's writings in light of that consideration.[59] He concludes that "Irenaeus is certainly devoted to Christian tradition. But he represents the confluence of Hellenism and Christianity no less distinctly than the apologists do. And he is choosing from the maelstrom of Greek thought what he thinks will be adaptable to the Christian religion."[60] In this text, Irenaeus adapted the Hellenistic presupposition of natural female inferiority into a reading of the biblical text.

## Augustine of Hippo

Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430) delivers a striking shift in Christian thought

[55] Anthony Preus, "Galen's Criticism of Aristotle's Conception Theory," *Journal of the History of Biology* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1977): 83. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4330669.
[56] Preus, 83.
[57] Hyun Sok Chung, "Aristotle vs. Galen: Acceptance and Transformation of Ancient Life Genesis, The Role of Medieval Medicine in the Debate on Singularity/Plurality of Substantial Figures in the 13th Century," trans. Google Translate, *Korean Journal of Medical History* 28, no. 1 (2019): 244. doi: 10.13081/kjmh.2019.28.239.
[58] Irenaeus, *Fragment 32.*
[59] Robert M. Grant, "Irenaeus and Hellenistic Culture," *Harvard Theological Review* 42, no. 1 (Jan 1949): 41.
[60] Grant, 51.

away from Aristotelianism. Augustine was not particularly impressed with Aristotle; describing his opinion of Aristotle's Categories, he wrote, "What profit did this study bring me? None. In fact it made difficulties for me, because I thought that everything that existed could be reduced to these ten categories, and I therefore attempted to understand you, my God, in all your wonderful immutable simplicity, in these same terms."[61] In his teachings on the Christian doctrine of the resurrection, Augustine says, "[S]ome conclude that women shall not rise women, but that all shall be men, because God made man only of earth and woman of the man. For my part, they seem to be wiser who make no doubt that both sexes shall rise."[62] In Augustine's time, some argued that when a female body becomes perfected in the resurrection, the body would become male—since, according to Aristotelianism, to be female is an imperfection, a deformity. The resurrection corrects deformity.

Augustine counters the thinking that conflates the Aristotelianism theory of woman with Scriptural accounts of woman's origin and destiny. Augustine undercut the entire Aristotelian premise that woman is a deformed man: "For before they sinned, the man and the woman were naked and were not ashamed. From those bodies, then, vice shall be withdrawn, while nature shall be preserved. And the sex of woman is not a vice, but nature."[63] Elshtain summarizes the significance of Augustine's departure, saying "Augustine, taken all in all, is one of the great undoers of Greek misogyny which dictated a separate and inferior female nature and consigned women to a 'lesser' realm of 'necessity.' More problematically, perhaps, he also undid Aristotle's vision of the polity as the home for man's highest aspiration and hopes on earth."[64] To be sure, the medieval age, which in large part was built on the Augustinian ideal of monastic community and the celibate life in service to God as an essential foundation for the church (and thus society), while not a paragon for women's liberation or advancement, nonetheless offered opportunities for women through the monastic system that had previously been unavailable. However, the winds shifted once again as the age of Scholasticism ushered in a renewed interest and admiration for the Greek philosophers, and Aristotle in particular.

## Aristotelianism in the Late Medieval and Early Protestant Age

Augustine's recast of social and political thought away from Aristotle in the fourth century was as culture-shifting as Thomas Aquinas's recast of social and political thought back toward Aristotle in the thirteenth century. Elshtain captures the magnitude well, saying, "In the wake of that twelfth century Renaissance in the Christian West, which saw the infusion of Aristotle's works into medieval Europe via Arabic translators, Augustine's discursive approach to social thought receded into the background of philosophic and political discourse."[65] Aquinas (1225–1274) filled the void and cemented female subordination into Christian doctrine. In *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas visits Aristotle's question, saying, "For the Philosopher says

[61] Augustine, *The Confessions*, 4, 16.
[62] Augustine, *The City of God*, 22, 17.
[63] Augustine, *The City of God*.
[64] Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman*, 73.
[65] Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman*, 74.

that 'the female is a misbegotten male.'[66] To answer the question, he quotes Genesis 2:18, which states that it is not good for man to be alone, specifically challenging Aristotle's premise that a woman is a "misbegotten" male. Seemingly disagreeing, Aquinas said she was created intentionally for the purpose of being a helpmate for the purpose of procreation. However, like Aristotle, he frames his argument around the concept "necessity," saying that "it was necessary for woman to be made" for the purpose of procreation, and then cites Aristotle's theories of generation as an explanation for woman:

> Among perfect animals the active power of generation belongs to the male sex, and the passive power to the female … As regards the particular nature, woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex, while the production of woman comes from defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external change, such that of a south wind, which is moist, as the Philosopher observes. On the other hand, the woman is not misbegotten, but is included in nature's intention as ordered to the work of generation… in producing nature, God formed not only male but also the female.[67]

Aquinas both parrots Aristotle's theories of the deformed woman and weaves his theories into Christian doctrine. Aquinas reaches Aristotle's same conclusions about the place of a woman in the order of society, setting women inferior to men in both their natural capacity and positionally in hierarchy: "For good order would have been wanting in the human family if some were not governed by others wiser than themselves. So by such a kind of subjection woman is naturally subject to man, because in man the discretion of reason predominates."[68] While, arguably, Aristotle did not overtly say that women lacked the capacity to reason, Aquinas overtly does say women lack the capacity to reason equal to men, and thus, men were set by God to rule over them in order to maintain good order in society. To what effect? Monumental, to be sure.

## Luther Contends with Aristotle

Martin Luther (1483–1546) provides an essential example of early Protestant theology contending with Aristotelianism. Demonstrating a great disdain for Aristotle in 1520, he delivered a cutting invective against the place of the "blind, heathen master Aristotle" in university education, saying:

> In this regard my advice would be that Aristotle's *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, *On the Soul*, *Ethics*, which have hitherto been thought his best books, should be altogether discarded, together with all

[66] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1.92.1.
[67] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1.92.1.
[68] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1.92.2.

> the rest of his books which boast of treating the things of nature, although nothing can be learned from either of the things of nature or the things of the Spirit. Moreover no one has so far understood his meaning, and many souls have been burdened with profitless labor and study, at the cost of much precious time. I venture to say that any potter has more knowledge of nature than is written in these books. It grieves me to the heart that this damned, conceited, rascally heathen has with his false words deluded and made fools of so many of the best Christians. God has sent him as a plague upon us for our sins.[69]

Luther directed such censure primarily at the specific books listed, but he did find value in some of Aristotle's other texts, such as *Rhetoric*, *Logic*, and *Poetics*.[70] Clearly, Luther had a more nuanced view of Aristotle than his harsh words imply. Stern argues that "there are three levels in Luther's critical engagement with Aristotle and his influence: objections at the institutional level, at the level of general Christian theology, and at the level of Luther's own theological outlook."[71] Similarly, Vodenko et al. argue that scholars should apply careful scrutiny in determining whether Luther's censure applied to "medieval Aristotelianism vs the original ideas of Aristotle."[72]

Thus, when analyzing Luther, and particularly his assertions on women and his contention with Aristotle on the matter, distinctions should be made between his rejection of Aristotle for the purpose of university education, the use of Aristotle for general theology, and the use of Aristotle for Luther's own theological outlook. Luther rejects medieval Aristotelianism and its application to university education regarding natural philosophy, upon which his rationale for the natural inferiority of women is based. That does not mean, however, that Luther rejects all of the original ideas of Aristotle for the use in the development of his general theology or his own theological outlook. Vodenko et al. note that "despite the strong rejection of Aristotle's usefulness for theology by Luther, we can discern a limited use of Aristotelian categories by Luther when dealing with some matters of politics and ethics."[73]

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[69] Martin Luther, *An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate, 1520: Proposals for Reform Part III*, trans. C. M. Jacobs (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Company, 1915), 1, http://sermons.martinluther.us/Proposals%20for%20Reform%20Part%20III.pdf.

[70] Robert Stern, "Martin Luther," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2020 Edition), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/luther.

[71] Stern, "Martin Luther."

[72] Konstantin V. Vodenko et al., "Sprejemanje Aristotela v poznih teoloških delih Martina Lutra," [The Reception of Aristotle in Martin Luther's Late Theological Writings] *Bogoslovni vestnik/Theological Quarterly* 81 (2021): 1, 23, https://www.teof.uni-lj.si/uploads/File/BV/BV2021/01/Vodenko.pdf.

[73] Vodenko et al., "Reception of Aristotle," 23.

## Female in the Imago Dei

Indeed, throughout his commentary on Genesis, Luther particularly rejects Aristotle's categorization of women as monstrosities on a theological basis of the male and female being created in the imago Dei. While Aquinas rejected "monstrosity" on the grounds that God created woman purposefully as a helpmate, Luther contends that she is not a monstrosity because she is made in the imago Dei. Referencing Plato's story of the origin of the two sexes, Luther says "This tale fits Aristotle's designation of woman as a 'maimed man'; others declare that she is a monster. But let them themselves be monsters and sons of monsters – these men who make malicious statements and ridicule a creature of God in which God Himself took delight as in a most excellent work."[74] So it seems that Luther takes great offense at Aristotle's categorization of women as monstrosities, or inferior in their natural creation. However, a closer inspection of Luther's writings aligns him in other significant regards with Aristotle's conclusions about women and to some extent his premises, and save the language of "monstrosity," he nonetheless deems women to be inferior creations.

This is significant because Luther rejects Aristotle's natural philosophy, but not on the basis of its embryonic error as a false cause for natural female inferiority. He rejects it on the grounds that God could not create something that is imago Dei and also monstrous. Luther rejects Aristotle's premise that women are deformed men, yet still concurs with his conclusion that women are inferior and cannot rule. In this way, Luther uses some of Aristotle's premises, and adds theological arguments that lead to Aristotle's conclusion about the inferiority of women (and its consequence), thus shaping his theological narrative to fit that conclusion.

In the same sermon, Luther explains that in Genesis, Moses made clear that Eve was different from the man in having "a much weaker nature," but like Adam, was a "partaker in the divine image and of the divine similitude, likewise of the rule over everything."[75] These statements are remarkably similar to Aristotle's explanation for women being the equal of man in their capacity for virtue, but that they express their virtue within the limitations of their natural states. Luther asserts, like Aristotle, that women are naturally inferior:

> Although Eve was a most extraordinary creature – similar to Adam so far as the image of God is concerned, that is in justice, wisdom, and happiness – she was nevertheless a woman. For as the sun is more excellent that the moon (although the moon, too is a very excellent body), so the woman, although she was a most beautiful work of God, nevertheless was not the equal of the male in glory and prestige … let us note that this passage [1 Peter 3:7] was written that this sex [female] may not be excluded from any glory of the human creature, although it

[74]Martin Luther, "Sermon on Genesis, 1535, LW I," quoted in Susan C. Karant-Nunn and Merry E. Wiesner, *Luther on Women: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 26, ESBCOhost.

[75]Martin Luther, "Sermon on Genesis, 1535, LW I," 23.

> is inferior to the male sex.[76]

Again, the interpretive key to this passage is "nevertheless." God created woman equal to man in that she is in the image of God, but she was *nevertheless* a woman. Luther's claim of created, inherent female inferiority parallels Aristotle's claim of natural, inherent female inferiority.

### Adam's Victory

Luther then grounds his explanation for the positional inferiority of women on the Fall of man and the entry of sin into the world, laying the blame entirely on Eve. He claims that in the biblical account of the Fall of man, the serpent knew not to approach the male. This implies that Luther believed that the male was created superior and the female was created inferior in their sinless state. According to Luther, if the serpent had approached the superior male first, sin would have never entered the world: "If he had tempted Adam first, the victory would have been Adam's. He would have crushed the serpent with his foot and would have said: 'Shut up! The Lord's command was different.' "[77]

This is an extraordinarily significant claim, and it explains how Luther justifies the inferior position of a woman in a hierarchy, in spite of the fact that she is created in the imago Dei. That she is created in the imago Dei is germane to Luther's Reformation-defining argument about justification. Oswald Bayer explains the relevance of justification by faith to human dignity:

> This [that humankind is justified by faith] means that humankind – any human without exception – is, without any merit or any worth that he could grant himself or expect from other humans as recognition, unconditionally and absolutely recognized and valued by his creator, redeemer and perfecter. This means he has an inviolable and indestructible dignity. Since this dignity is not conferred on him by any human person, no human being can deny it to him.[78]

However, while humans could not deny the dignity due to others as an image-bearer of God, Bayer asserts that in the Fall they could do so to themselves, and they did. Humans "invalidated" their own dignity, which for Luther meant the loss of freedom:

> Luther's eminent interest in human freedom is a general anthropological interest insofar as what is at stake applies to the constitution and dignity of every human being … The human being is perceived as a sinner: as a creature that controverted its

[76] Luther, "Lectures on Genesis, 1535, LW I," 25–26.
[77] Luther, "Lectures on Genesis, 1535, LW I," 27.
[78] Oswald Bayer, "Martin Luther's Conception of Human Dignity," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Human Dignity: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Marcus Düwell et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 102.

> original freedom by abusing it and therefore – of his accord – forfeited and lost his likeness to God (Romans 3:23).[79]

## Created Inferior

Luther asserts that the culpability of humanity's fall into sin lies with Eve, so it follows that Eve lost the greater degree of dignity, and thus freedom, than Adam. This then gives Luther the moral justification for women's positional inferiority to men—men have more dignity and freedom than women, because men were not primarily responsible for the Fall, and thus, women are subject to men. If this is indeed what Luther thought, there is a major flaw in his argument. According to the narrative, Eve was already inferior to Adam prior to the Fall. He claims Adam would never have sinned had the serpent approached him first. Luther asserted that Eve was created inferior. This is logically problematic because it assigns to the Creator the responsibility of denying the full dignity of humanity to a human created in the imago Dei. Woman in her unfallen state was created in the imago Dei and not in need of justification, and therefore she had an inviolable and indestructible dignity. Only when of her own volition did she choose to act inconsistently with her imago Dei did she lose dignity and gain the need of justification. Therefore, if she was inferior in her created, sinless state, then it was the Creator who denied her dignity. To claim that Eve was created imago Dei and sinless yet also lacked dignity commits the logical fallacy of contradiction: both things cannot be true at the same time. If one is in the imago Dei and sinless, one has no lack of dignity, meaning there is no basis for loss of freedom through inferiority.

Moreover, Luther echoes Aristotle's concept of the necessity of the female on the basis of the order of the world, asserting his view of women's telos, further emphasizing the point that Luther believed women were created by design with inferior human dignity, and thus were justifiably subservient to men:

> Women are not created for any other purpose than to serve men, and to be his assistant in producing children … He commands her to humble herself before her husband, that means she does not live according to her own free will … the wife can undertake nothing without the husband … wherever he is, she has to be with him, and humble herself before him.[80]

While Luther overtly distanced himself from Aristotle's use of the term monstrosity in reference to women, he fully embraced the Aristotelian-based cultural conception that women are naturally (he would say created) inferior, have a weaker nature, and while having equal capacity for virtue, women remain positionally inferior regardless of merit or capacity. For Aristotle, this is justifiable because women are

[79] Bayer, "Martin Luther's Conception of Human Dignity," 102.
[80] Martin Luther, "Sermon on Genesis, 1527, WA XXIV," quoted in Susan C. Karant-Nunn and Merry E. Wiesner, *Luther on Women: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 18, 23, ESBCOHost.

deformed men. For Luther, bringing his Aristotelian eyes to the text and reading female inferiority into the Genesis account, he concludes that women are justifiably placed in an inferior position to men because, first, they were created with inferior dignity, and, second, they were responsible for the Fall, therefore permanent subjugation is natural.

## The Queens

The next several centuries would be filled with great strife. The rending of Christendom between the Roman Catholics and Protestants challenged the very essence of Christian doctrine, with Luther playing no small part in that. Within this Lutheran context, a most significant series of events takes place in the wake of the death of King Henry VIII that set up an epic battle between philosophy, theology, and politics and placed women squarely in the middle of the conflict. The succession of the throne of England was in question because King Henry had only produced one living male heir among his six wives. The women were blamed for the failure to produce male heirs, as is consistent with Aristotelian theories of sex selection, and Henry's one living male heir died young. In a confluence of unprecedented circumstances, the thrones of England and Scotland fell into the hands of women: the Catholic Queen Mary I of England (r.1553–1558), succeeded by her Protestant sister Queen Elizabeth I (r.1558–1603) along with the Catholic but tolerant Mary, Queen of Scots (r.1542–1567). Between the teachings of Aquinas for the Catholics, and Luther for the Protestants, neither the Catholic nor Protestant queens had theological support for their right to rule. Notwithstanding, the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I managed to rule England for forty-four years, with the beginning of the British Empire marked under her reign. Her reign was not without uprisings and resistance from those who voiced their objection to her right to rule on the basis of her sex.

## Knox and The Monstrous Regiment of Women

John Knox (1514–1572), Protestant Reformer and preacher, published a widely circulated, audacious pamphlet in 1558 that condemned the queens based on Aristotelian proofs that their female rule was a gross violation of nature and, reading Scripture through that same lens, declared female rule to be against God's order. Where Aquinas and Luther rejected the idea that women were "misbegotten," Knox embraced it. But like Aquinas and Luther, he adopted Aristotle's philosophy that women are inferior and thus necessitated a hierarchical structure in society and politics that elevated men and subjected women. Not to be missed is the title of his pamphlet, which indicates both his source material and the tone of his writing: *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women (1558)*. Monstrous—as in Aristotle's conception of monstrosity. He opens lamenting that more preachers and learned men are not speaking out against the "rule of a Wicked Woman, yea, of a traitress and bastard," and then identifies her greatest crime of all—that she has authority over men: "I am assured that GOD hath revealed unto some in this our age, that it is more than a monster in nature that a Woman shall

reign and have empire above Man."[81] He goes on, "To promote a Woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion or empire above any realm, nation or city is A. Repugnant to nature. B. Contumely to God. C. The subversion of good order, of all equity and justice."[82] Lest he leave any question about it, Knox directly references Aristotle as evidence to support his argument:

> For this writeth Aristotle in the seconde of his Politkes, what difference shal we put, saith he, whether that women beare authority, or the husbanesd that obey the empire of the wyues be appointed to be magistrates? For what isueth the one, must nedes folowe the other, to witte, iniustice, confusion, and disorder … What wolde this writer (I pray you) haue said to that realme or nation, where a woman sitteth crowned in parliament amongst the middest of men.[83]

Knox not only adopts Aristotelian ideas of natural female inferiority, he advances the argument by proclaiming that to order a society contrary to what he claimed were the truths of natural female inferiority was not only unnatural and thus "repugnant" —even worse, it defamed God. Notably, in spite of Luther's attempt to pivot the argument away from natural inferiority and toward created inferiority, Knox did not shy away from embracing Aristotle's natural inferiority. Knox provides an early example of outcries amongst Protestant Reformers against women, and the weaving of Aristotle's natural philosophy into Protestant theology.

## Conclusion

The very nature of Protestantism defies a uniform statement on the movement's treatment of any subject, women included. Protestant leaders had various views on the subject. Knox's pamphlets and Luther's teachings did not go unanswered by those who disagreed with their assertions, but their positions were by no means unique. Ironically, Protestants championed sola scriptura as a hermeneutical principle, yet Aristotelian confirmation bias ensured that interpretations of biblical texts regarding women would result in a reading of the text affirming female inferiority. Nevertheless, Protestant adherence to Aristotelian theories of the inferiority of women permeated the developing theology of this era contributing to a larger societal debate about women, or the querelle des femmes. As the philosophical era advanced into the Enlightenment, the quest for equality and advocacy for human rights took center stage, but women remained excluded in many regards, particularly in the manner of her right to rule others, and even their own selves. The querelle des femmes never really ended, and continues even today. Despite the increasingly rapid scientific discoveries that have wholly and unquestionably disproved Aristotle's

[81] John Knox, *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, ed. Edward Arber (Project Gutenberg, last updated June 20, 2020), preface, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/9660/9660-h/9660-h.htm.
[82] Knox, *The First Blast*, "The Declamation."
[83] Knox, *The First Blast*, "To Awake Women Degenerate."

premises that were foundational to his conclusion that females are unfit to rule, the mantle of male superiority on the basis of flawed Aristotelian concepts of natural female inferiority was championed by many Protestant Reformers and remains the basis, whether overtly or otherwise, for doctrinal positions that limit women in many Christian denominations and movements today, with little attention given to the flawed bases of those doctrines. Reflecting on this history, Christians today must contend with two realities: one, that there is no defensible basis in natural philosophy for natural female inferiority, and two, that claiming that females were created inferior places responsibility for the dehumanization of women on the Creator, God. That is a rather serious claim to make.

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# MILLENNIAL THEMES IN HYMNS AND GOSPEL SONGS: FROM COTTON MATHER TO LARRY NORMAN AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC

**DAVID W. KLING**

In an appendix to a published sermon in 1712, the Rev. Cotton Mather wrote, "When the Kingdom of God, and New World is coming on, this is One of the hopeful Harbingers; Cant II. 12 *The time of the singing Bird is come, and the Voice of the Turtle-Dove is heard in our Land. . . .* In the *Hymns* which the Devout and Soaring Pens of men filled with the *Dove-like Spirit* are of late more than ever furnishing the Church of God withal, *Methinks, I see the Time of the Singing of the Birds coming on*." According to Mather, the very act of hymn-singing was evidence of the imminent Second Coming of Christ. And what hymns should be sung that will usher in the millennium? The "Incomparable *Hymns*" of Isaac Watts. "In them," continued Mather, "the *Voice of the Turtle-Dove would be heard in our Land*."[1] Sung in the privacy of their own homes, New England's saints, writes Christopher Phillips, "might sweeten their days and raise their voices in celebration of the impending millennium."[2]

Over 250 years later in 1969, Larry Norman, a college drop-out and counter-cultural hippie whose Pentecostal experience transformed him into a Jesus

[1]An earlier version of this article was delivered as a keynote address for the Cotton Mather Conference, "Cotton Mather's *Biblia Americana* and the Millennialist Tradition in Early American Protestantism," at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C., on February 25, 2023. The author wishes to thank Daniel Hummel, Mark Noll, Daniel Pals, and Douglas Sweeney for comments and suggestions on previous iterations of this article. Cotton Mather, "Appendix," in *The Wayes and Joyes of Early Piety* (Boston, 1712). Mather's views were brought to my attention in Christopher N. Phillips, "Cotton Mather Brings Isaac Watts's Hymns to America: or, How to Perform a Hymn without Singing It," *New England Quarterly* 85, no. 2 (June 2012): 213–14. See also, Christopher N. Phillips, *The Hymnal: A Reading History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018), 91–93. For Mather's foray into paraphrasing hymns of the apocalypse (i.e., the Book of Revelation, chap. 5), see Cotton Mather, *Hebrews – Revelation*, volume 10 of *Biblia Americana*, ed. and ann. Jan Stievermann (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2023), 492–94.

[2]Phillips, "Cotton Mather Brings Isaac Watts's Hymns to America," 214. The scholarship on Watts's hymnology is immense. For the most recent and best analysis of this "father of English hymnody," see David W. Music, *Studies in the Hymnody of Isaac Watts* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2022).

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freak, released an album with Capitol Records and the song, "I Wish We'd All Been Ready." This song about the Second Coming soon became the apocalyptic anthem of the Jesus movement and then spread to evangelical youth groups around the country. To my knowledge, Norman's ballad was the most popular dispensational premillennialist song ever written.

To say the least, Mather and Norman are a study in contrasts. True, both had long hair—Mather, thanks to a periwig; Norman had real, blond flowing locks; both read their Bibles literally; both were premillennial literalists; and both expected the imminent return of Christ.[3] But like biblical prophetic prognosticators before and after them, they differed in their understanding of the details and the sequence of events preceding Christ's return. The extent of Norman's views is expressed in a simple ballad; for Mather eschatology was a theological science of reason, exegesis, and numerological speculation that became "a life-long obsession."[4] To be sure, both Norman and Mather envisioned catastrophic events before Christ's return but, of course, those specific events were linked to the events in their own day. Both believed the saints would be raptured or taken up to be with Christ before the great conflagration (1 Thess. 4:17).[5] On one hand, Mather's millennialism combined hope (the songs of Watts attest to that) with despair ("a world almost void of true and lively faith") and catastrophe (the impending "dissolution, renewal, and purification of the world by fire").[6] On the other hand, there was little hope expressed in Norman's lyrics of doom and gloom. Some would be taken secretly to meet their Lord, whereas others would be left behind wishing "we'd all been ready."

Finally, the contrast in hymnology between Mather's day and Norman's is striking. In Mather's era, no hymns of "human composure" or human creation were sung in formal corporate worship, for the Reformed tradition followed Calvin's dictum that singing must be restricted to "the words God has put in our mouths," meaning that some version of the Psalter and other versified scripture was the only permissible worship hymnody. By Norman's day, of course, thousands of hymns and gospel songs of human creation attested to a rich tradition of evangelical hymnody that was only in its infancy in Mather's day. As "incomparable" as Watts's hymns may have been, a few of comparable and many more of lesser quality would follow.

Although Mather restricted the hymns of Watts (*Hymns and Spiritual*

[3]In his introduction to volume 10 of Mather's *Biblia Americana*, Jan Stievermann refers to Mather as a "premillennial literalist" (30) who rejected the preterist interpretations of Hugo Grotius, Henry Hammond, and John Lightfoot, among others. However, Mather also insisted on the possibility of hidden mystical, typological, and allegorical readings of the Bible (63). Where Mather departed from a strict literalist interpretation (and the later dispensational perspective) was in rejecting the future national conversion of the Jews (194–95). See also Reiner Smolinski, "Apocalypticism in North America," in *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism*, ed. Bernard J. McGinn, John J. Collins, and Stephen J. Stein (New York/London: Continuum, 2003), 450–55.

[4]Stievermann, "Editor's Introduction," in Cotton Mather, *Biblia Americana*, vol. 10, 143.

[5]Stievermann, "Editor's Introduction," 179–80.

[6]Cotton Mather, *Dr. Cotton Mather's Student and Preacher, or directions for a candidate of the ministry:* […] *to which is added a literal translation of Dr. Cotton Mather's famous Latin preface* (London: R. Hindmarsh, 1789), 7, 9.

*Songs*, 1707, 1709) and those of his own composition to a private devotional setting (especially to be sung with family), a generation later, the Great Awakening, as is often the case in revivals, upended worship music. During his tours in 1739–41, George Whitefield insisted that the hymns of Watts, the Wesleys, and other English poets be included in worship. And as Jonathan Edwards soon discovered after the young revivalist Samuel Buell introduced Watts's hymns in his Northampton congregation when Edwards was absent on a guest preaching trip in 1742, his parishioners heartily agreed.[7] A whole new era of hymnody was introduced—one that would define American evangelicalism. According to Stephen Marini, the preeminent historian of evangelical hymnody, the hymns of evangelicals articulated the beliefs, rituals, institutions, and spirituality of the evangelical movement. In his estimation, "no other single source provides this kind of information."[8]

Hymns have been a major component, if not the major component, of the lived experience of all Christians, embodying a fundamental, enduring, and transforming social practice. Sung corporately in worship, in camp meetings, in revival assemblies, and Sunday schools, or sung privately in devotional settings, in the home, in the workplace, and in leisure settings, hymns (and in our day, praise worship songs) are the primary vehicle of transcendence for Christians, and especially so for Protestant Christians.

What of hymns of the millennium? Eschatology has always been a central component in evangelical preaching and belief. How was the doctrine of "last things" expressed in song? According to John Wesley, hymns were intended to communicate "a little body of practical and experimental divinity." Do millennial hymns express Wesley's assertion? If millennialism refers to a future ending that is divinely ordained, then hymns about heaven (both the longing for and the abode of) could be included with hymns of judgment and the Second Coming. A survey of evangelical hymnals in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries turns up far more and often twice as many hymns focused on the saints going up than on Jesus coming down. Often, both were mentioned together, but the emphasis was typically on ascending to Jesus in heaven rather than Jesus descending to earth in judgment, more on the "Mansion Over the Hilltop" (Ira F. Stanphill), and "When the roll is called up yonder" (James M. Black) than "Will Jesus Find Us Watching" (Fanny Crosby) and "Jesus is Coming Again" (John W. Peterson).

[7]Edwards acceded to his congregation's wishes, but he insisted that Watts's hymnody be limited to the summer and then only on a few occasions. Despite his reservations with hymns of human creation, Edwards understood the spiritually transformative nature of singing. He formulated a theology of congregational singing and promoted singing schools and singing meetings. See David W. Music, "Jonathan Edwards and the Theology and Practice of Congregational Song in Puritan New England," *Studies in Puritan American Spirituality* 8 (2004): 103–33; David W. Music, "Jonathan Edwards's Singing Lecture Sermon," *Studies in Puritan American Spirituality* 8 (2004): 135–46. For background to the style of singing that Edwards endorsed, see Laura L. Becker, "Ministers vs. Laymen: The Singing Controversy in Puritan New England, 1720–1740," *New England Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (Mar. 1982): 79–96.

[8]Stephen Marini, "From Classical to Modern: Hymnody and the Development of American Evangelicalism, 1737–1970," in *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Hymnody in the History of North American Protestantism*, eds. Edith L. Blumhofer and Mark A. Noll (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 7.

To provide a contrast, I will give some attention to hymns of heaven, but the primary focus of this paper considers hymns of the Second Coming within the African American community, the evangelical tradition, mainstream Protestantism, and those within religious communities situated on the margins of American life for whom apocalypticism has been central to their beliefs and practices.[9] As we will see, the earliest hymns of Adventists in the 1840s and Pentecostals in the early twentieth century explicitly articulated the imminent end to the present order. As the years passed, however, apocalyptic fervor waned. As these groups integrated into American society, hymns of the impending apocalypse eventually disappeared. Not until the "rapture fever" of the late 1960s and 1970s did apocalyptic songs, revived in the genre of contemporary Christian music, make a comeback.

Two types of millennial hymns emerged over three centuries: those generic in content and those of more specificity. Generic millennial hymns characterized nearly all Protestant hymnody, whereas among groups whose origins were born of apocalypticism, both the quantity of millennial hymns and their apocalyptic emphasis is far greater than is found in evangelical hymnody. An exhaustive accounting is not possible here; rather, I offer a preliminary enquiry and selective examples of an understudied area of hymnological research.[10]

## Millennial Themes in Evangelical Protestant Hymnody, 1737–1865

In Stephen Marini's examination of seventy-one of the most popular hymns published in eighty-six evangelical hymn collections between 1737 and 1860, heaven was the most popular topic (three of the thirteen most printed texts on the list are about heaven), but only one hymn focused on the Second Coming, Charles Wesley's "Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending."[11] The lyrics to the hymn's first stanza express a generic millennial theme: "Lo, He comes with clouds descending, / Once for favored sinners slain; / Thousand, thousand saints attending / Swell the triumph of His train; / Alleluia, alleluia! / God appears on earth to reign."[12]

[9]As Marini and others have noted, the study of hymnology, particularly the categorization and influence of hymns, is an inexact science. A topical index or a table of contents in a hymnbook does not always accurately convey the entire content of hymns, for often there is overlap in subjects (e.g., the saint going to heaven may overlap with Christ's Second Coming), but the editor may decide for one or the other or include the hymn both in "Heaven" and "Second Coming." The frequency of a hymn appearing in hymnals certainly tells us something about the popularity of a hymn, but we have no way of knowing how often the hymn or song was sung by a congregation.

[10]Leonard I. Sweet observed the same nearly forty-five years ago in "Millennialism in America: Recent Studies," *Theological Studies* 40, no. 3 (1979): 530. Despite the more recent attention paid to the impact of hymnody in the evangelical tradition, to my knowledge, no scholar has traced the effect of millennialism on hymnody in America.

[11]Stephen Marini, "Hymnody as History: Early Evangelical Hymns and the Recovery of American Popular Religion," *Church History* 71, no. 2 (June 2002): 280, 283, 299. The three hymns of heaven and their rank: # 5, "On Jordan's stormy banks" (Stennett); # 7, "Jerusalem my happy home" (anonymous); # 8 "There is a land of pure delight" (Watts).

[12]There was an apocalyptic element in Charles Wesley's hymns written in the aftermath of the

Extending the chronological endpoint in another study, Marini ranks the most frequently printed hymns in 175 Protestant hymnals and hymnbooks from 1737 to 1960. The result is even more pronounced. Wesley's hymn is the only Second Coming hymn in 300 that makes the list.[13] In his topical breakdown of hymns from 1737 to 1860, Marini accounts for the surprising absence of eschatology (as well as the absence of hymns on ecclesiology, communion, baptism, and the Godhead) to the highly contested nature of these doctrines among evangelicals. Debates over these matters, he notes, "often constituted grounds for the sectarian separations that divided the early evangelical movement as quickly as successive revivals increased it… Only hymn texts that carefully avoided all possible controversy on these sensitive doctrinal matters could enjoy widespread popularity."[14] Wesley's hymn certainly did that. Every orthodox Christian in Wesley's day affirmed the centuries old creeds that Jesus Christ would "come to judge the living and the dead" (Apostles Creed) or that he would "come again with glory to judge the living and the dead" (Nicene Creed). Wesley's lyrics made no mention of the contested issues of numerology or poured out vials, the sequence of end-time events, and the details of the tribulation or the timing of the millennial reign. All Christians, including evangelicals, could sing Wesley's hymn with conviction.

The surprising lack of eschatological hymns is even more striking, given that millennial and apocalyptic thought was present in the minds of the first pilgrims to set foot on America's shores, intensified during the revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and then became such a driving force among fundamentalists and evangelicals in the first half of the twentieth century that Matthew Sutton titled his recent history of modern evangelicalism, *American Apocalypse*.[15] Anglo-American evangelicals preached,

mid-eighteenth- century earthquakes in London (1750), Boston (1755), and Lisbon (1755). The earthquakes were a sign of impending judgment; the end of the world was at hand; and Christ would come again and inaugurate a new creation. See Margaret G. Flowers, Wayne G. McCown, Douglas R. Cullum, "18th-Century Earthquakes and Apocalyptic Expectations: The Hymns of Charles Wesley," *Methodist History* 42, no. 4 (July 2004): 222–35. The authors observe that beyond the generalities noted above, Wesley expressed "little interest in how the end of the age will come," 234). For a similar analysis limited to the London earthquakes, see Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, " 'On the Occasion': Charles Wesley's Hymns on the London Earthquake of 1750," *Methodist History* 42, no. 4 (July 2004): 197–221. The authors of both articles detail Wesley's many biblical references in his hymns, especially those from the Psalms, the prophet Isaiah, and the Book of Revelation.

[13] Stephen A. Marini, Appendix I: "American Protestant Hymns Project: A Ranked List of Most Frequently Printed Hymns, 1737–1960," in *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology*, ed. Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 251–64.

[14] Marini, "Hymnody as History," 284. But see Ruth H. Bloch, *Visionary Republic: Millennial Themes in American Thought, 1756–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), who contends that until the end of the eighteenth century, millennial views were in flux and there was little polarization along premillennial and postmillennial lines. Citing the hymns of Watts, Baptists, and Methodists, Bloch notes, "the distinction between a millennial and non-millennial eschatology was not always clear" (134)—a confirmation of the generic quality to these hymns. For specific references to hymns, see endnotes 53 and 58, p. 263.

[15] Matthew Sutton, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism* (Cambridge,

exposited, and published voluminous theological works on the Second Coming, and often disagreed intensely among themselves about the details, but their hymns, almost entirely of English provenance until the last decades of the nineteenth century, neglected these particulars. Besides the possibility of sectarian divisiveness, perhaps articulating the details of the Second Coming did not fit either with the purpose of hymnody, which was primarily to praise the triune God, or its format, which favored simplicity.

If we consider the complex variations in millennial thought, with its differing chronologies, personages, and events, perhaps it is not so surprising that hymns retained a generic quality. Is Christ's return imminent? Would the Second Coming precede or follow the millennium? Would the transition to the coming Kingdom be gradual and imperceptible or sudden and catastrophic? Who or what does the antichrist and Babylon signify—an individual, an institution, a movement, or evil in general? What historical events are connected to the pouring out of the vials of wrath? What role did humans play? Were they passive observers of God's powerful intervention or were they actors in the eschatological drama? With these and other questions, often requiring in-depth answers, it is understandable that most millennial hymns leave open the details of the final unveiling to interpretation. What millennial hymns *do* emphasize are the basics of eschatology such as Christ's coming, God's judgment, or a combination.

## Millennial Themes in Antebellum Hymnody

As is the case with hymnody in general, millennial hymns addressed the needs of a particular community at a particular moment in time. The spirituals of African American slaves, "the greatest gift of the Negro people," according to W. E. B. Du Bois, represent the quintessential expression of millennial themes embedded in the life histories of an oppressed people.[16] Often coded or containing double meanings, spirituals referenced both an otherworldly and a this-worldly liberation. Heaven designated not only a transcendent reality but also an earthly land of freedom, be it Africa, Canada, or the northern reaches of the United States. Challenging earlier scholarship that interpreted spirituals "as being exclusively other-worldly and compensatory," James Cone contends that the theme of heaven, often couched in the term, "going home," "generally contained double meaning."[17] Thus, for Frederick Douglass, singing "Bound for [the heavenly] Canaan Land" meant "the north was our Canaan." When slaves sang "I looked over Jordan and what did I see, / Coming for to carry me home," they were looking for freedom beyond the Ohio River.[18] "I Want to Go Home" anticipated both a transcendent and imminent deliverance:

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Mass./London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014).

[16]W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903; reprint, New York: Fawcett, 1961), 182.

17. James H. Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues: An Interpretation* (New York: Seabury Press, 1972), 89.

[18]Cone, *The Spirituals*, 90. Similarly, the spiritual "Deep River": "My home is over Jordan, / Deep river, Lord / Want to cross over into camp ground." See Richard Newman, *Go Down, Moses: A Celebration of the African-American Spiritual* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 1998), 30–31.

"O, yes, I want to go home; / There's no tribulation / … There's no more slavery in the Kingdom, / … There's no evil doers in the Kingdom, / … All is gladness in the Kingdom."[19]

"Steal Away" referenced not only the life to come, but also a signal of freedom for slaves who plotted to escape to the north. An apocalyptic element in the verses (see Rev. 8:5–7) is followed by a simple refrain of stealing away:

> 1. My Lord, he calls me, / He calls me by the thunder; / The trumpet sounds within-a my soul, / I ain't got long to stay here. 2. Green trees a-bending, / Poor sinners trembling; … 3. Tombstones are bursting, / Poor sinner stands a-trembling … 4. My Lord, he calls me, / He calls me by the lightning; …
>
> Chorus: Steal away, steal away, / Steal away to Jesus; / Steal away, steal away home / I ain't got long to stay here.[20]

In a documentary collection of 978 African American spirituals, songs of heaven and deliverance exceeded those of Christ's return and judgment by a ratio of at least five to one—far surpassing the two to one ratio noted earlier in evangelical hymnody.[21] The reason for the discrepancy in ratios is obvious: The oppressive conditions of slavery bred hope of a better life in the next world—a homecoming of relatives, rest, and reward, but also an abode where justice was divinely guaranteed. Lyrics of deliverance include repeated references to meeting Jesus, boarding a train or ship or riding in a chariot—all bound for glory, longing for the heavenly home, reaching the golden shore, living in bright mansions, wearing heavenly robes, and walking streets of gold. And yet with the ascent to heaven there is the descent of the returning Savior. The coming of the Lord brings judgment: Babylon will fall, the moon will turn to blood, and the Lord will come with sword in hand to hew down sinners. Some spirituals, such as "In that Great Getting-Up Morning," rose to apocalyptic fervor: "See the elements melting, / See the forked lightning, / Hear the rumbling thunder. / Earth shall reel and totter, / Hell shall be uncapped, / The dragon shall be loosened. / Fare you well poor sinner."[22] In "God's Gonna Set This World on Fire," divine intervention would bring justice whereby "one of these days," former slaves would "drink from the healing cup."[23]

The millennial spiritual songs compiled by Richard Allen (1760–1831) and those by abolitionists reveal a generic quality common to evangelical hymnody, but with a twist. As in African American spirituals, an element of judgment and

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[19] Newman, *Go Down, Moses*, 91.

[20] Christa K. Dixon, *Negro Spirituals: From Bible to Folk Song* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 81–82.

[21] See *Lyrics of the Afro-American Spiritual: A Documentary Collection*, ed. Erskine Peters, The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Black Music (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993). The following sections focused on heaven: "Lyrics of Deliverance," "Lyrics of Jubilation and Triumph," and "Lyrics of Transcendence." For Christ's return, see "Lyrics of Judgment and Reckoning."

[22] Peters, *Lyrics*, 278–79.

[23] Newman, *Go Down Moses*, 77.

God's wrath is more prominent than is found in traditional hymns of the antebellum era. Among the first generation of both Black and white Americans converted by Methodist circuit riders, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1787. Rather than rely on the official Methodist hymnal, he issued his own hymnbook in 1801, *A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns, Selected from Various Authors*.[24] Many of his selections reflected an evangelistic zeal for the gospel, and included the well-known hymns of Charles Wesley, Isaac Watts (especially), and John Newton, as well as folk hymns. One anonymous hymn, "Behold the Awful Trumpet Sounds," hit an apocalyptic high note with its references to the Savior "descending from his throne / To burst asunder all our tombs… But who can bear that dreadful day, / To see the world in flames: / The burning mountains melt away, / While rocks run down in streams." The wicked are consigned to hell and the saints will reign "at God's right hand."[25]

At least one hymn added to the second edition was written by Allen himself.[26] Titled, "See! how the nations rage together," the hymn is a call to repentance (the last line: "O sinners! sinners! will you turn?"), but it is also amply interspersed with prophetic warnings of impending doom should sinners not repent before the coming of the Lord:

> Stanza 1: See! how the nations rage together, / Seeking of each other's blood; / See how the scriptures are fulfilling! Sinners awake and turn to God.
>
> Stanza 3: We read of wars, and great commotions, / To come before that dreadful day; [Matt. 24:6] / Sinners quit your sinful courses, / And trifle not your time away.
>
> Stanza 8: To see the land lie in confusion, / Looks dreadful in our mortal eye; But O dear sinners, that is nothing, / To when the day of doom draws nigh.
>
> Stanza 9: To see the Lord in clouds descending, [Rev. 1:7] / Saints and angels guard him round; / The saints from earth will rise to meet / But sinners speechless at his frown."[27]

In keeping with spirituals and evangelical hymnals, Allen's sixty-four selections focus more on going to heaven than on Christ coming in judgment. Nine hymns focus almost exclusively on heaven, whereas six emphasize God's judgment or the

[24] For the larger context, see Dennis C. Dickerson, "Heritage and Hymnody: Richard Allen and the Making of African Methodism," in *Sing Them Over Again to Me: Hymns and Hymnbooks in America*, ed. Mark A. Noll and Edith L. Blumhofer (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006), 175–93.

[25] Richard Allen, *A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns, Selected from various authors*, no. 10 (1801; reprint, Nashville, Tenn.: AMEC Sunday School Union, 1987), 19.

[26] Jon Michael Spencer, *Black Hymnody: A Hymnological History of the African-American Church* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 4.

[27] Allen, *A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns*, no. 58, (pp. 104–05).

Second Coming, and three combine Christ's coming with heaven's reward. One hymn (unknown author), "How happy every child of grace," combines the two in a striking eschatological fashion:

> Stanza 4: When Gabriel's awful trump shall sound. / And rend the rocks, convulse the ground, / And swears that time is at an end, / Ye dead arise to Judgment. / See lightnings flash, and thunders roll, / This earth wrapt like a parchment scroll. / Comets blaze, / Sinners raise, / Dread amaze, / And horror seize / The guilty sons of Adam's race, / Unsaved from sin by Jesus.
>
> Stanza 5: The Christian, filled with rapturous joy, / 'Midst flaming worlds he mounts on high / To meet his Saviour in the sky, / And see the face of Jesus. / Then soul and body reunite, / And fill'd with glory infinite. / Blessed day, / Christians say, / Will you pray, / That we may / All join that happy company / To praise the name of Jesus.[28]

As one might expect, hymns arising from the abolitionist movement allude to impending divine judgment. The Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society sponsored *Freedom's Lyre: or Psalms, Hymns, and Sacred Songs for the Slave and His Friends* (1840). Under the heading, "Slaveholders Admonished," one of the hymns, "The Lord will come," assured God's judgment upon both slave and master by bowdlerizing the last two lines of this popular Reginald Heber hymn:[29] "The Lord will come! a dreadful form, / With wreath of flame and robe of storm: / Then slaves and masters both shall find / An equal judge of human kind." In Heber's original, the last line reads: "On cherub wings, and wings of wind, / Anointed Judge of human-kind." Another hymn shifted the focus to the coming Savior, "the prisoners to release, / In cruel bondage held; / The gates of brass before him burst, / the iron fetters yield."[30] Still another, "The Day is at Hand," connects God's wrath and judgment against slavery with the end of the world: "The end will come, it will not wait, / Bonds, yokes, and scourges have their date; / Slavery itself must pass away, / And be a tale of yesterday."[31]

Julia Ward Howe's "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" (1862), "perhaps the most popular hymn of wars and moral crusades in the English-speaking world,"[32] is centered on the central theme of the Day of Jehovah. Howe extends the

[28] Allen, *A Collection*, no. 55 (pp. 92–93).
[29] According to Hymnary.org, "The Lord will Come" has been published in 185 hymnals.
[30] Edwin F. Hatfield, *Freedom's Lyre: or Psalms, Hymns, and Sacred Songs for the Slave and His Friends* (New York: S. W. Benedict, 1840), # 112 (p. 102), # 227 (p. 210).
[31] Maria Chapman, "The Day is at Hand," *Songs of the Free, and Hymns of Christian Freedom* (Boston: I Knapp, 1836), 98–99; quoted in Terrie Dopp Aamodt, *Righteous Armies, Holy Cause: Apocalyptic Imagery and the Civil War* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2002), 25.
[32] Ernest Lee Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 198.

apocalyptic themes of abolitionist songs but in a more poetic fashion and one richly adorned with biblical allusions or quotations. Without question it is the most scripturally redolent of millennial hymns ever written in the United States, even though Howe herself was far from the evangelical fold. Consider the biblical references to the very first stanza:

> Mine eyes have seen [Isa. 6:5, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts] the glory [perhaps Isa. 63:1]
>
> of the coming of the Lord [Matt. 24:30; Mal. 4:5];
>
> He is trampling out the vintage [Howe originally wrote "wine-press" and then changed it to "vintage"; Rev. 14:19–20, "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gather the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." Rev. 19:15, And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smit the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God"]
>
> where the grapes of wrath are stored [Rev. 6:17, "for the great day of his wrath shall come"];
>
> He has loosed the fateful lightning [Rev. 8:5, "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake."],
>
> of His terrible swift sword [Ezek. 32:12, "By the swords of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall, the terrible of the nations, all of them"].
>
> The repeated phrase in the refrain, "Glory, glory hallelujah," is the triumphant cry that succeeds the pouring out of the seven vials and the fall of Babylon (Rev. 15:7, 16:1).[33]

In the ensuing stanzas, Howe further expounds upon the apocalyptic framework and identifies the Union army with the divine armies that would crush the enemy and inaugurate the millennium. This emphasis on the shedding of

[33] For a discussion of biblical references, see Edward D. Snyder, "The Biblical Background of the 'Battle Hymn of the Republic,' " *New England Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (June 1951): 231–38; Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation*, 197–202.

soldiers' blood represents a profound shift in millennial thinking. In the decades preceding 1860, many white Americans expressed great confidence—a postmillennial perspective of "cosmic optimism" as one historian has put it—"that they could usher in the Kingdom of God through moral suasion, evangelization, and voluntary reform—decidedly by nonviolent means. But the Civil War installed the military as the most powerful of millennial instruments, with killing as its sacred mission; America's strength of arms would justify its election as a new Israel. In this holy war, it became increasingly common to regard the conflict as a means of both human redemption and national redemption."[34]

The "Battle Hymn of the Republic" became the leading anthem of the Northern Union cause during the Civil War but, as George Rable has noted, it could have easily been sung by Southern Confederates. With its expressions of the "coming of the Lord," "trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored," "truth was marching on," "die to make men holy," and "live to make men free," each side could apply the hymn to their own their cause.[35] Following the war, the hymn's militaristic, masculine, and millennial themes were so compelling to Billy Sunday that he closed each revival meeting with its singing. Billy Graham followed suit in his twentieth century "crusades." Now fully ensconced among the rituals of America's civil religion, the hymn was used by Graham to link human redemption to national redemption.[36]

## Millennial Themes in Adventist Hymnody

For many religious groups situated on the margins of American life in the early decades of the nineteenth century, an apocalyptic outlook defined their identity.[37] Originating amid the revivals and awakenings reconfiguring the religious landscape, these sectarian bodies expressed their beliefs not only in books and tracts, but also in hymnody replete with millennial themes. Composed for the true believers, several hymnbooks bear the titles of their futurist visions: *Millennial Praises* (1813) of the Shakers (a.k.a. United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing) and *Millennial Harp* of the Adventists (1842). Early hymnbooks of the Stone-Campbell movement, especially Barton Stone's, *The Christian Hymnbook* (1829), featured apocalyptic hymns.[38] In the first official hymnal of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns* (1835), twenty-four of the nine-

[34] George M. Frederickson, *The Inner Civil War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 7 (quoted in Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation*, 187); John Stauffer and Benjamin Soskis, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic: A Biography of a Song That Marches On* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 90.

[35] George C. Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 88.

[36] Stauffer and Soskis, *The Battle Hymn*, 212–27 (Sunday), 229–34 (Graham).

[37] See Stephen J. Stein, "Apocalypticism Outside the Mainstream in the United States," in *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism*, 493–515.

[38] Jim Mankin and Jason Fikes, "'When Shall I Reach That Happy Place?': Apocalyptic Themes in the Hymns of the Stone-Cambell Movement," *Restoration Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (First Quarter 1996): 17–18.

ty hymns compiled by Emma Smith contained millennial themes.[39] At least fifty hymns were borrowed or rewritten well-known Protestant hymns, including Watts's "Joy to the world," whose first line was revised from reference to the first advent: "Joy to the world, the Lord is come," to reference the Second Advent: "Joy to the world, the Lord *will* come."[40]

No other group better exemplifies the millennial spirit of the times than the Millerites. In his *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, Ernest Sandeen named the Adventist prophet William Miller (1782–1849) "the most famous millenarian in American history."[41] Through an assiduous and systematic study of the Bible not far removed from Cotton Mather's hermeneutic—in fact, an excerpt from Mather's "Famous Latin Preface on the Second Coming of Christ" was appended to one of Miller's publications[42] —Miller became convinced that Daniel 8:14 ("Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed"), was the key to cracking the prophetic code of Christ's physical return. Although a series of failed prophecies culminated in the "Great Disappointment" of October 22, 1844, some supporters remained convinced that Christ had returned in some way, either in a spiritual sense or he had entered the "heavenly sanctuary," or that his return was still imminent.

Prior to the Great Disappointment, in the heady days of anticipating Christ's bodily return, the Rev. Joshua V. Himes (1805–95), Millerism's chief apologist, financier, organizer, and publicist, compiled the *Millennial Harp, or the Second Advent Hymns* (1842), *Millennial Musings* (with Josiah Litch), and then combined these with another songbook into the *Millennial Harp, designed for meetings on the Second Coming of Christ, improved edition* (1843).[43] These hymnals, highlighting the premillennial doctrines of the Adventist movement, were circulated and sung at an estimated 120 tent meetings in the spring and summer months of 1842, 1843, and 1844. Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of several transcendentalists fascinated by the "come outer" Millerite movement, declared that "New England cannot be painted

[39] Emma Smith, ed., *A Collection of Sacred Hymns, for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams & Co., 1835). Parley Pratt, an early LDS leader, wrote many millennial poems/hymns that were included in subsequent LDS hymnbooks. See *The Millennial Hymns of Parley Parker Pratt*, ed. and comp. Samuel Russell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913); Dean L. May, "Notes and Comments: The Millennial Hymns of Parley P. Pratt," *Dialogue: Journal of Mormon Thought* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 145–50.

[40] Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music: A History* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 20–21. Watts's hymn is # 15.

[41] Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800–1930* (1970; reprint, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1978), 50.

[42] William Miller, "A Familiar Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth Chapter of Matthew and the Fifth and Sixth Chapters of Hosea, […] to which is added An Extract from Dr. Cotton Mather's Latin Preface, &c, on the Second Coming of Christ," ed. Joshua V. Himes (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842); see also Charles Fitch, "Letter to Rev. J. Litch, on the Second Coming of Christ; with the Sentiments of Cotton Mather on the same subject" (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1841).

[43] Joshua V. Himes, *Millennial Harp, or the Second Advent Hymns* (Boston, 1842); Joshua V. Himes and Josiah Litch, *Millennial Musings: A choice selection of hymns, designed for use of Second Advent Meetings* (Boston, 1842); and Joshua V. Himes, *Millennial Harp, designed for meetings on the Second Coming of Christ, improved edition* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1843).

without a portrait of Millerism with the New Advent of Hymns," and in his journal copied the lyrics of a popular millennial hymn, "To the Old Church Yard."[44]

Nearly all hymns in the first edition of the *Millennial Harp* allude to aspects of the Second Coming. A review of the index of subjects in *Millennial Musings* reveals a movement awash in millennial themes: "New Jerusalem" (11 hymns), "The Desire of the Bride" (10 hymns), "The Alarm and Call to Duty" (14 hymns), "The Midnight Cry" (20 hymns; the term is taken from Matt. 25:6, "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.), "The Jubilee" (5 hymns), "The Resurrection" (14 hymns), and "The Triumph" (6 hymns). An improved edition included well-known millennial hymns by English authors: "All hail the power [of Jesus' Name]" (Edward Perronet), "Jesus shall reign" (Watts), "Glorious things of thee are spoken" (John Newton), "From Greenland's icy mountains" (Heber), "Lo! He comes with clouds descending" (Wesley), and "Jordan's stormy banks" (Samuel Stennett).

Several hymns highlight the coming apocalypse. The "Hymn for 1843" cites 2 Peter 3:10–14 and includes the stanza, "If earth and all her treasure, / Are doom'd to fire and flame; / Her Royal pomp, and pleasure / Are but an *empty name*!"[45] Others mention "Sodom wrapt in fire … what piercing shrieks!,"[46] "Nature's swift approaching doom! / War, and pestilence, and famine, / Signify the wrath to come,"[47] "the waking up of nations, God and Magog to the fray,"[48] a "Righteous God! Whose vengeful vials / All our fears and thoughts exceed,"[49] "Armageddon's day comes on, / The carnival of Slaughter's sons,"[50] and "The earth … dissolve, by raging flames destroyed."[51] As frightening as these lyrics appear, they represent a very small number of hymns whose overwhelming focus is the glory of the imminent return of Christ and the joys of heaven.

Despite the disillusionment following the Great Disappointment, many Adventists continued to set times of the Lord's return for the next seven years, concluding the prediction of October 22, 1844, had been a prophetic miscalculation. A tiny remnant who later became Seventh-day Adventists adopted the views of Hiram Edson, a farmer in upstate New York, who concluded the date was right but the event wrong. Christ did not descend to earth but began the final phase of his high-priestly ministry by the "cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary" whereby the records of sins in the heavenly books were examined to determine who was entitled to enter the eternal kingdom.

James White, the husband of the prophetess Ellen Gould White, compiled

[44] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Ralph H. Orth and Alfred R. Ferguson, vol. 9 (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 30, cited in Gary Scharnhorst, "Images of the Millerites in American Literature," *American Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 24. The lyrics Emerson reproduces are not exactly the same as in *Millennial Harp … improved edition*, Part 2, # 24.
[45] *Millennial Harp … improved edition*, Part 1, p. 7.
[46] *Millennial Harp … improved edition*, Part 1, p. 43.
[47] *Millennial Harp … improved edition*, Part 1, p. 54.
[48] *Millennial Harp … improved edition*, Part 1, p. 70.
[49] *Millennial Harp … improved edition*, Part 2, p. 16.
[50] *Millennial Harp … improved edition*, Part 3, p. 4.
[51] *Millennial Harp … improved edition*, Part 3, p. 82.

the first hymnal of this fledgling movement in 1849, *Hymns, for God's Peculiar People*. In this small book of fifty-three hymns, he borrowed fourteen selections from Himes's *Millennial Harp*, and added a few hymns that charted the direction of this new Adventist sect.[52] Several hymns point to the significance of the Sabbath, but 70% (37 of 53) focus on the advent hope. Of these, nineteen hymns bear directly on the coming of Christ, nine on the pilgrimage of the saints from this life to another, and nine express a longing for heaven. One hymn, "Adventists' Experience," focuses specifically on events of 1843/44 and the novel doctrine of Christ cleansing the heavenly sanctuary.

> In forty-three, each took his lamp, / Went forth to meet the Lord; / … But, forty-three flew quickly by / And left us toiling here; / … In forty-three we heard the cry / At midnight peeling forth-- / Behold the heavenly Bridegroom's nigh, / He'll soon descend to earth. / … Our longing eyes were rais'd in vain, / To meet him in the air, / For 'twas not so, the Bridegroom came, / His Bride's not here, but there. / There to the fair Jerusalem, / Unseen by mortal eye, / Jesus our King and Priest did come, / Thus answering to the cry. 'Tis there, within the pearly gates, / A marriage feast is spread—/ 'Twas purchas'd for the scatter'd saints / By Christ, their living head. / Then let us patient wait awhile, / 'Till we those joys do see; / There we shall bask beneath his smile / To all eternity."[53]

The apocalyptic mood is captured in various hymns, including Hime's "Armageddon" selection. Lyrics of other hymns communicate the fall of Babylon, impending judgment, God's wrath, the battle of two kingdoms, and earthquakes, pestilence, and plague. A few hymns critique socioeconomic conditions, confirming the Adventists' marginal status: "Kingdoms now are reeling, falling, / … on their sages vainly calling, all these wonders to explain; while the slain around are lying, / God's own little flock are sighing—for him to come. / Here the wicked live securely, of tomorrow boasting surely, while from those who're walking purely / they extort dishonest gain; Christians, cheer thee; be hopeful, soon you'll behold the Lamb once slain, saying to his flock, I have come on earth to reign."[54] With the fall of Babylon, "her merchants all shall mourn; all their merchandise shall fail them, and with fire it shall burn; / blow the trumpets in mount Zion, Christ will come a second time, ruling with a rod of iron."[55]

An examination of subsequent editions of Seventh-day Adventist hymnals issued in 1886, 1941, and 1985 reveals a decided shift away from apocalyptic themes and the increasing inclusion of the well-known hymns of Watts, Wesley, Newton, Stennett, Heber, and even Fanny Crosby. At the same time, the hymnody

[52] On the calculation of Himes's hymns, see Lyell Vernon Heise, "The 1849 Hymnal: A Theological and Historical Study" (unpublished paper, Andrews University, 1974), 82.

[53] James White, comp., *Hymns, for God's Peculiar People, that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus* (Oswego, N.Y.: Richard Oliphant, 1849), Hymn # 7.

[54] James White, *Hymns*, # 24.

[55] James White, *Hymns*, # 46.

remains thoroughly Adventist. Of the 1413 selections in the 1886 hymnal, 274 (nearly 20%) express Adventist themes: Waiting for Christ (88 hymns), Second Advent (39 hymns), Death and Resurrection (59 hymns), Reward of the Saints (38 hymns) and Bible Songs (i.e., each is accompanied by a text of scripture) of Judgment, Second Advent, and Reward of the Saints (50 hymns).[56] To ensure the correct interpretation of prophecy, a lengthy explanation of "The Four Universal Kingdoms" (Dan. 2:31–36) and "Interpretation of the Dream" of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:37–44) follows the hymn "Look for the Way-Marks."[57]

The 1941 official hymnal exhibited more of the evangelical mainstream, including thirty-one hymns by Watts, twenty-nine by Wesley, and twenty-three by Crosby. The prolific Adventist hymn writer, F. E. Belden, contributed twenty-four. Of 703 total hymns, the topical index listed forty-three hymns on the Second Coming and fifteen on the Reward of the Saints—about 8% of the total, a significant decline from the 1886 hymnal.[58] The 1985 hymnal remained committed to the Adventist ethos, but again, hymns on the Second Coming continued to decrease. The topical index listed thirty-four out of 695 hymns on the Second Advent (less than 5%).[59]

How do we account for the diminishing number of millennial hymns in a century and a half of Seventh-day Adventist history? Of course, the same question applies to other groups originating in the exhilarating days of apocalyptic fervor. Suffice it to say, no group can maintain collective effervescence indefinitely. Heightened expectation recedes with time. There occurs settling, routinization, coming to terms with the quotidian demands of life, and, in the case of the Seventh-day Adventists, the need to consolidate gains and organize. Doctrinally, the expectation of the imminent return of Christ remains, but existentially, millennial fervor is no longer central to belief and practice. The former "boundlessness" of the movement has led to "consolidation."[60] A sect has become a church, a move from the margins closer to the mainstream.

## Millennial Themes in Evangelical Protestant Hymnody, 1870–1900

The devastating impact of the Civil War, the importation of Victorian hymns from England, and the introduction of American gospel hymns shifted the ethos of evan-

[56] *Seventh-day Adventist hymn and tune book, for use in divine worship* (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Publ. House, 1886).
[57] *Seventh-day Adventist hymn*, 555.
[58] *The Church Hymnal. Official Hymnal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Takoma Park, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assoc., 1941).
[59] *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assoc., 1985), 783.
[60] The terms are from John Higham, "From Boundlessness to Consolidation: The Transformation of American Culture, 1848–1860" [1969], in *Hanging Together: Unity and Diversity in American Culture*, ed. John Higham and Carl J. Guarneri (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 149–65. Jonathan M. Butler invokes these terms in "The Making of a New Order: Millerism and the Origins of Seventh-day Adventism," in *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 189–208.

gelical hymnody in a decidedly new direction, one that would carry forward well into the middle of the twentieth century. As Stephen Marini has written, "It is not too much to suggest that the war's wounding rendered the evangelical mind numb and its hymnodic voice dumb. The mutual ravaging of a people who believed itself regenerate and sanctified was a devastation so great that even a belief system based on Christ's own sacrificial death could not adequately explain it."[61] The popular gospel hymns of the second half of the nineteenth century reduced the doctrinal distance of a transcendent, mysterious God to reflect a heightened focus on Jesus: his comforting presence, his atoning sacrifice that "rescued" the sinner, the offer of salvation, and the promise of heaven.[62] Scholars have pointed to the domestication of evangelical gospel hymnody in this era, with its emphasis on the affections and the prevalent sentimental theme of "coming home" to describe both conversion and going to heaven.[63] The optimism inherent in the antebellum postmillennial perspective of inaugurating the Kingdom of God on earth before the physical return of Christ shifted to a premillennial view: Amid the toils of life and troubles of society, Jesus would return to rescue his own before the millennium.

Again, as in earlier periods, hymns of the saints "going up" far outnumber those of Christ "coming down." For example, in the topical index to the compilation of gospel hymns by Ira Sankey, who was the evangelist Dwight L. Moody's longtime chorister, there are twice as many songs listed under "Heaven" (66) than the "Coming of Christ" (30).[64] Another popular evangelical hymnal used in church services, Sunday schools, and young people's societies had four times as many songs of heaven (20) than the Second Coming (5).[65] Fanny Crosby, the blind Methodist and author of over 8,000 hymns, is a prime exemplar of the evangelical mood of the day. Whereas Mather thought singing could hasten the millennium, Crosby never speculated as much, but, like Mather, she considered singing an act of evangelical devotion. As she put it, "I sing and cannot be silent; / His love is the theme of my song."[66]

[61] Marini, "From Classical to Modern," 30.

[62] On nautical rescue hymns, see Sandra S. Sizer, *Gospel Hymns and Social Religion: The Rhetoric of Nineteenth-Century Revivalism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), 30–31, 43–44, 126–27, and "Appendix" (161–73); Richard J. Mouw, "Some Poor Sailor, Tempest Tossed": Nautical Rescue Themes in Evangelical Hymnody," in *Wonderful Words of Life*, 234–50.

[63] Jonathan M. Butler, *Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling: Heaven and Hell in American Revivalism, 1870–1920*, Chicago Studies in the History of American Religion (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publ., 1991); June Hadden Hobbs, *"I Sing for I Cannot Be Silent": The Feminization of American Hymnody, 1870–1920* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 78–84.

[64] Ira Sankey et al., *Gospel Hymns Nos. 1 to 6 Complete* (1895; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1972). By my own calculations, the disparity was even greater. I counted 75 Hymns of "Heaven" and 29 of the "Coming of Christ."

[65] William Phillips Hall and J. Wilbur Chapman, comps., *Christian Hymns No. 1* (Philadelphia: Hall-Mack Co., 1899).

[66] See Edith L. Blumhofer, "Fanny Crosby and Evangelical Hymnody," ed. Philip V. Bohlman et al., *Music in American Religious Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 226.

In her biography of Crosby, whom Sankey and others made famous by including her songs in their best-selling trans-denominational hymnals, Edith Blumhofer noted that "almost every Crosby text … anticipated heaven."[67] The saints not only looked forward to their heavenly home following death, but they also anticipated the Lord's imminent return. It is an exaggeration to conclude, as one historian has, that "Evangelical hymns are replete with references to the coming millennium,"[68] but one of Crosby's most popular hymns clearly fits that millennial mold. Her hymn, "Will Jesus Find Us Watching?" (a reference to Mark 13:35–37), published in over 250 hymnals to date, reminded the faithful to be ever watchful and ready for the return of Jesus.[69] Stanza one referred to the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1–13): "When Jesus comes to reward His servants, / Whether it be noon or night, / Faithful to Him will he find us watching, / With our lamps all trimmed and bright?" and stanza two to the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30): "If at the dawn of early morning, / He shall call us one by one, / When to the Lord we restore our talents, / Will He answer you, 'Well done'?" Another very popular premillennial hymn was Lelia N. Morris's, "What If It Were Today?"[70] The first stanza read, "Jesus is coming to earth again—/ What if it were today? / Coming in power and love to reign— / What if it were today? / Coming to claim His chosen Bride, / All the redeemed and purified, / Over this whole earth scattered wide / What if it were today?" The lyrics of other evangelical hymn writers such as James M. Gray, the dean and president of Moody Bible Institute, and Albert B. Simpson, the founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination, exhibit the same generic approach, emphasizing that the imminent return of Christ may be morning, midday, or twilight. The saints watch, wait, and long for the Bridegroom to soon receive his own.[71]

These hymns are typically labelled premillennial because they fit the theological context of the day, but there is nothing specific in their content to indicate, as with Wesley's, "Lo! He comes with clouds descending," that they couldn't be a generic statement of the Lord's imminent return. In the throes of revival, postmillennialists were as insistent as premillennialists that Jesus would return at the close of the millennium. Of course, the question was, on which side of the millennium would Jesus return? The Second Great Awakening in the first half of the nineteenth century engendered both views: the excitations of the awakening convinced some

[67] Edith L. Blumhofer, *Her Heart Can See: The Life and Hymns of Fanny J. Crosby*, Library of Religious Biography (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 276.

[68] Randall Balmer, "Apocalypticism in America: The Argot of Premillennialism in Popular Culture," *Prospects: An Annual of American Cultural Studies* 13 (1988): 432, endnote 31.

[69] The tabulation is in Hymnary.org.

[70] Hymnary.org tabulates the hymn was published in 95 hymnals.

[71] See the hymns of Gray: "All Hail the Coming Son of God," "Coming in Glory," "Jesus is Coming, Is Coming," and "Oh Hasten Thine Appearing." Simpson's hymns include "Unto the Coming of the Lord," "The Glad Homecoming," "Jesus is Coming Again," and "He is Coming Back Again." A strong evangelistic and missionary element is communicated in the lyrics to Simpson hymn, "Hasten on His Coming," wherein stanza 3 reads, "If we send the Gospel everywhere, / We may hasten forward his appearing." None of these hymns proved to be very popular, appearing in only a few hymnals. For the listing and content of these hymns, see Hymnary.org.

that the millennium was reaching its culmination *before* Christ returned, whereas for others such as the William Miller, it heralded the coming of Christ *after* which came judgment and the thousand-year reign of Christ. Premillennialists approached prophetic portions of scripture more literally and increasingly expressed less confidence in progress, although sometimes in ambiguous ways, as premillennial hymns confirm.

To be sure, Bible teachers, theologians, and then, prophecy conferences beginning in 1860s and culminating in the Niagara Conference Creed of 1878, brought dispensational premillennial views before the public, citing "signs of the times" that presaged the Second Coming—wars, rumors of wars, apostasy, natural and manmade catastrophes, etc.—but evangelical hymnists such as Crosby and Morris eschewed the dire warnings of the coming apocalypse.[72] Jonathan Butler has observed that these hymnists' "rapturous fantasy of the world's end and a new heaven and a new earth to take its place was not born of an utterly dark pessimism [often characteristic of premillennialists], but a bright if naïve optimism."[73] Indeed, as Blumhofer notes of Crosby's hymns, "Above all, [her] lyrics remind one that Christians are happy people."[74] If the theologically minded singer wanted to fill in the details of an approaching cataclysmic end, so be it.

## Millennial Themes in Mainstream Protestant Hymnody

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as modern biblical criticism made inroads into seminaries and pulpits, major portions of mainstream Protestantism increasingly ignored the language of the imminent return of Christ and its sometimes-apocalyptic implications. As critics interpreted the Bible within the context of other ancient literature, they noticed similar genres of apocalypticism in the myths of ancient Mesopotamia. Moreover, they reasoned that the purpose of apocalyptic writings in the Bible was to comfort or sustain a minority community amid exile, persecution, or under threat of extinction. Its language was symbolic, not literal. Talk of Jesus descending in the clouds or meeting him in the air, or the so-called signs of the times was the fruit of misplaced literalism, the product of a primitive worldview. The general trend was to reject millennialism of any kind and especially its association with apocalypticism which, as James Moorhead notes, was

[72] For her use of the term "rapture" (and "raptured," "rapturous") Crosby has been labeling a dispensational premillennialist. She did use the term "raptured soul" in the hymn, "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross" (1869): "In the cross, in the cross, / Be my glory ever; / Till my raptured soul shall find / Rest beyond the river," but in context it refers to the ascent into heaven after death, and not to John Nelson Darby's increasingly popular premillennial view of the secret rapture of the saints. Of course, "rapture" can also mean "a state, condition, or fit of delight or enthusiasm" (OED). Of the nearly 3,000 hymns by Crosby indexed in full text by Hymnary.org, 90 use some form of the word "rapture" (e.g., rapturous, raptured). The instances of the use of the word refer to a sense of being caught up in excitement. For example, in "Blessed Assurance": "Perfect submission, perfect delight, / visions of rapture now burst on my sight;" See *David's Hymn Blog*, "Fanny Crosby and the 'Raptured Soul,' " (http://drhamrick.blogspot.com/2018/10/fanny-crosby-and-raptured-soul.html).

[73] Butler, *Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling*, 140.

[74] Blumhofer, "Fanny Crosby and Protestant Hymnody," 227.

"becoming an embarrassment to many Protestants."[75]

A study of millennial themes, or more accurately, the lack thereof, in mainstream Protestant hymnals from the late nineteenth century to the present awaits a full study. Here I want to briefly mention two hymnals published to reflect the theology of the Social Gospel movement, and then point to the influence of the Social Gospel movement on Methodist hymnody.[76] One of the major theologians of the movement was Walter Rauschenbusch, a Baptist seminary professor in Rochester, New York, whose teachings on the Kingdom of God reflected the liberal Protestantism of his day. He criticized premillennialists who "are best pleased when they see humanity defeated and collapsing, for then salvation is nigh." For them, "Active work for the salvation of the social order before the coming of Christ is not only vain but against the will of God."[77] Rauschenbusch had no patience for apocalypticists who produce "little diagrams which map out the history of the human race on deterministic methods, as if God consulted the clock. . . . Apocalyptic believers necessarily insist on the verbal inerrancy of Scripture and oppose historical methods, for their work consists in piecing mosaics of texts."[78]

With other Protestant liberals, Rauschenbusch viewed Christ's coming not as an event but as a process, the continual advance of the Kingdom of God in this world. "The Kingdom of God," he stated, "is not a concept nor an ideal merely, but an historical force."[79] It was realized not through supernatural intervention, but through human hands; nor was it otherworldly, but a product of the here and now. Rauschenbusch's critique of the hymnals of his day was as stinging as his critique of evangelical theology. "If any one will look over either the standard church hymnals or the popular revival collections," he wrote in *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1912), "he will find very few hymns expressing the desire for a purer and diviner life of humanity on earth." A few hymns "have something of the ring of social hope," but "the hymns expressing the yearning of the soul for the blessed life in the world to come are beyond computation."[80]

Earlier in his ministry (up to ca. 1900), before the maturation of his theology of the Social Gospel, Rauschenbusch was not so convinced. A recent biographer has characterized Rauschenbusch's developing theology as "grafting the new onto that which was indispensable from the old."[81] The old was, among other things, a strong pietist streak that reveled in revival singing. In his role as mediator of American religion to German Americans, Rauschenbusch joined with Ira Sankey

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[75] James H. Moorhead, "Apocalypticism in Mainstream Protestantism, 1800 to the Present," in *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism*, 479.

[76] The section draws from Jon Michael Spencer, *Protest and Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 61–81.

[77] Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917; reprint, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978), 211.

[78] Rauschenbusch, *A Theology*, 216.

[79] Rauschenbusch, *A Theology*, 165.

[80] Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 163.

[81] Christopher H. Evans, *The Kingdom is Always Coming: A Life of Walter Rauschenbusch* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 168.

in creating a German hymnal, *Evangeliums-Lieder* or "Gospel Hymns" (1897) that included the songs of Crosby and six hymns (out of 344) on the return of Christ. Included were well-known classics by Philipp Nicolae ("Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying") and Watts ("Joy to the World," with a shift from present to future tense as in the Mormon hymnal: the Lord *will* come), and more recent hymns by Horatius Bonar ("Eternity is Drawing Nigh"), Thomas Kelly ("Crown Him"), Sankey ("What a Gathering") and Walker Whitcomb ("The Crowning Day") that emphasized a readiness for the Second Coming.[82]

In keeping with Rauschenbusch's later negative assessment of Protestant hymnals, what is most noticeable in two hymnals reflecting the theological thrust of the Social Gospel Movement is the total absence of millennial hymns, and more specifically, evangelistic gospel hymns that referred to the celestial Kingdom in ways that separated the "saved" from the "lost." The new hymns increasingly focused on the redemption of society rather than the salvation of the individual soul.[83] Henry Sloane Coffin's and Ambrose Vernon White's *Hymns of the Kingdom of God* (1910) was "an attempt to furnish the Church with a hymnal in which Christian communion with God is viewed as fellowship with the Father and the Son in the establishment of the Kingdom."[84] Their hymnal included a mixture of classical orthodox hymns, including those by Luther (2), William Cowper (6), Philip Doddridge (6), Watts (16), and the Wesleys (17), as well as contemporary hymns of the Social Gospel. Under the fifty-nine hymns listed under "The Kingdom of God," Charles Wesley's "Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning," was followed by W. Russell Bowie's "O Holy City seen of John," with its unmistakable emphasis on the Kingdom of this world:

> Stanza 2: "Hark, how from men whose lives are held / More cheap than merchandise, / From women struggled sore for bread, / From little children's cries, / There swells the sobbing human plaint / That bids thy walls arise!"
>
> Stanza 4: "Give us, O God, the strength to build / The City that hath stood / Too long a dream, whose laws are love, / Whose ways are brotherhood, / And where the sun that shineth is / God's grace for human good."[85]

One kingdom hymnal that met Rauschenbusch's approval was Ma-

[82] *Evangeliums-Lieder 1 und 2*, ed. Walter Rauschenbush and Ira D. Sankey (Chicago: The Biglow & Main Co., 1897). My thanks to Mark Noll for bringing these millennial hymns to my attention.

[83] For summaries of these developments in hymnody, see Henry Wilder Foote, *Three Centuries of American Hymnody* (1940; reprint, Hamden, Conn.: Shoestring Press, 1961), 307–19; H. Davies, "The Expression of the Social Gospel in Worship," *Studia Liturgica* 2, no. 3 (Sept. 1963): 174–92; *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America*, ed. Ronald C. White, Jr., and C. Howard Hopkins (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), 152–56.

84 Henry Sloane Coffin and Ambrose White Vernon, eds., *Hymns of the Kingdom of God*, rev. ed. (1910; New York: A. S. Barnes Co., 1916), iii.

[85] Sloane Coffin and White Vernon, Hymns, #187.

bel Mussey's *Social Hymns of Brotherhood and Aspiration* (1914). "Many hymns were chosen," noted Mussey in the preface, "which Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Catholic may sing with equal fervor."[86] Unlike Coffin's and White's hymnal, Mussey's short hymnal of 111 selections disregarded the orthodox hymns included among Coffin's and White's 508 selections. Jesus or Christ makes five appearances, brother/brotherhood over twenty; "the trumpet" announces not the Second Coming, but the coming kingdom of "the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man," where "mad greed for wealth and power / No more shall grind the weaklings in the dust."[87]

The Social Gospel and other liberal Protestant perspectives had a trickle-down effect on mainstream Protestantism's hymnody. An examination of five Methodist hymnals (1836, 1849, 1876, 1905, 1935) reveals a decreasing interest in doctrinal hymns, from an earlier emphasis on sin, salvation, God's sovereignty, and Christ's deity to an emphasis on prayer and the Kingdom of God. In the 1935 edition, a new emphasis is placed on "scripture as a source of light, to offset the waning infallibility of the scriptures" and a move away from the supernatural to the functional emphasis on living out the Christian life."[88] The most noticeable change in the century of hymnals was a new social emphasis on the Kingdom of God and "brotherhood." No such hymns could be found in the first two editions, seven appeared in the 1905 edition and seventeen in the 1935 edition.[89] One hymn encapsulates this new emphasis on the Kingdom of God in this world rather than in the world to come: " 'Thy Kingdom come,' on bended knee / The passing ages pray; / And faithful souls have yearned to see / On earth that Kingdom's day."[90] The *Methodist Hymnal* of 1964 completely dropped the section, "Christ's Return," from the topical index.[91] Twenty-five years later, in its table of contents, the *United Methodist Hymnal* listed "Return and Reign of the Lord" under the heading "A New Heaven and a New Earth." Four of the nine hymns (out of a total of 734) qualify as Second Coming hymns, including two of Charles Wesley's classics, "Rejoice the Lord is King" (stanza 4: "Jesus the Judge shall come, / and take his servants up to their eternal home") and "Lo, He comes with clouds descending"; one by the Lutheran pastor and composer Philipp Nicolae (1556–1608), "Wake, Awake for Night is Flying" (stanza 1: "The Bridegroom comes, awake, your lamps with gladness take"); and a fourth and rather surprising inclusion of Daniel W. Whittle's, "I Know Whom I Have Believed" (stanza 4: "I know not when my Lord may come, at night or noon day fair, nor if I walk the vale with him, or meet him in the air"). Whittle, a premillennialist associated with the evangelistic campaigns of Moody, composed

[86]Mabel Hay Barrows Mussey, *Social Hymns of Brotherhood and Aspiration* (New York: A. S. Barnes Co., 1914), v.
[87]Hay Barrows Mussey, *Social Hymns*, #s 70, 40. For a critique of Social Hymns from a feminist perspective, see Hobbs, "*I Sing for I Cannot Be Silent*," 152–64.
[88]Franklin Benjamin Crawford, *Theological Trends in Methodist Hymnody* (Carnegie, Pa.: Carnegie Church Press, 1939), 93–94.
[89]Crawford, *Theological Trends*, 107.
[90]Crawford, *Theological Trends*, 120 (Hymn # 463, 1935 edition).
[91]Donald P. Hustad, "Apocalyptic in Contemporary Hymnody," *Review and Expositor* 72, no. 3 (Aug. 1975): 357.

explicit lyrics announcing Christ's imminent return.[92]

Following the trend in mainstream Methodist hymnals, an emphasis on the Social Gospel is evident in the hymnody of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The hymnbook of 1892 registered twenty-three Social Gospel hymns (out of 760 selections); the 1946 hymnal listed thirty-five hymns that could be so-classified (out of 461 selections); the 1954 hymnal had forty-two Social Gospel hymns (out of 673 selections); and in the 1984 hymnal, reflecting the influence of the civil rights movement, the list of Social Gospel hymns increased to fifty-four (out of 593 selections). The steady increase in hymns of social concern has been accompanied by a proportionate decrease in hymns of the Second Coming.[93]

## Millennial Themes in Pentecostal Hymnody

The contrast between hymns of the Social Gospel movement and the contemporaneous Pentecostal movement could not be more striking. Whereas the Social Gospelers dispensed with talk of the Second Coming, Pentecostals reveled in it, convinced that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit heralded the imminent, bodily return of Christ. In 1906, Frank Bartleman, an attendee at the Azusa Street Revival and an early leader of Pentecostalism, claimed the holiness hymn, "The Comforter Has Come," had become the anthem of the revival.[94] Many hymns were generated under the inspiration of the Spirit. "Jesus is Coming," a divinely inspired hymn, was given to the William Cummings family as they prepared to go to Africa as missionaries.[95] The lyrics of another hymn, "When Jesus Comes," attest that "We read the signs in earth and sky, / And know that thou are near."[96] Of eighteen Spirit-inspired hymns recorded in William Seymour's *Apostolic Faith* publications, half expressed the imminent return of Christ, and two others alluded to it.[97] The titles included "Hark! The Moments are Passing" and "The Warfare, The Rapture, and Afterwards."[98] The apocalyptic "The Signs of the Times" by C. E. Kent was composed in response to the San Francisco earthquake in 1906.

> The earth is trembling far and near / With quaking sound, —
> and fills all with fear, / The rocks are rent with awful power, /
> Which causes strongest men to cower.
>
> A sickening feeling fills the air, / And nations tremble yet
> unaware / That soon will come the awful wo, / When to their

[92] *United Methodist Hymnal: Book of United Methodist Worship* (Nashville, Tenn.: United Methodist Publ. House, 1989), Hymn nos. 715, 718, 720, and 714.
[93] Jon Michael Spencer, "The Hymnody of the African Methodist Episcopal Church," *American Music* 8, no. 3 (Autumn 1990): 290–91.
[94] Stephen Dove, "Hymnody and Liturgy in the Azusa Street Revival, 1906–1908," *Pneuma* 31 (2009): 244.
[95] Spencer, *Protest and Praise*, 175.
[96] Melissa A. Archer, "'I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day': A Pentecostal Engagement with Worship in the Apocalypse" (Ph.D. diss., Bangor University, 2013), 60.
[97] Spencer, *Protest and Praise*, 175.
[98] Dove, "Hymnody and Liturgy in the Azusa Street Revival," 258.

> dreadful doom they'll go.
>
> All nations feel a crisis near, / Men's hearts are failing them for fear; / Distress of nations now has come, / Soon Christ shall call His people home.
>
> The earth is groaning with its sin, / Which louder grows with awful din, / Until the great triumphant blast, / Shall free from Satan's rule at last.[99]

Other Pentecostal publications also drew abundantly from the language of the apocalypse. *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, an Atlanta publication begun in 1907, featured songs and poems based on images and texts from the Book of Revelation. One stanza from "Wedding in the Air" (based on Rev. 19:7–8, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb) reads: "O brother, are you ready? / That blissful scene to share, / To join the marriage supper, / The wedding in the air?" Another, "Signal Bell," draws from the Parable of Ten Virgins, 1 Thess. 4, and texts from Revelation. These texts are captured in one stanza: "Our garments now keep white and clean, / Be ready for the Groom, / For soon He'll clasp in His love, / Our Lord is coming soon. / Come, trim our lamps, be ready, / The Bridegroom's now at hand / To gather all His loved ones / In one united band."[100]

Indicative of the transition from the boundlessness of Pentecostal fervor to the consolidation of institutional gains and integration into society is the hymnal of the African American Holiness-Pentecostal Church of God in Christ (COGIC), *Yes, Lord!* Not until 1982, the diamond jubilee of this denomination founded by Charles H. Mason in 1907, did the church publish a hymnal. Previously, members relied upon the spontaneous inspiration of the Holy Spirit for their hymns, most of which were drawn from memory from evangelical Protestant hymnody. In *Yes, Lord!* hymns of the Second Coming are few—a mere six out of 525 hymns.[101] As observed in other evangelical hymnody, selections of "heaven" (under the heading, "Heaven and Everlasting Life") far outnumber hymns of Christ's Second Coming by a five to one margin.[102] Premillennial eschatology is affirmed (e.g., J. Wilbur Chapman's "One Day," George Walker Whitcomb's "Is It the Crowning Day?," and Andraé Crouch's "Soon and Very Soon"). In contrast to hymnody of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, hymns of the Social Gospel movement are completely absent.[103] "This is altogether characteristic," writes Jon Michael Spencer, "for the Holiness and Pentecostal Movements arose in part in reaction to the secularism, intellectualism, and racial exclusivism of this middle-class Protestant reform movement."[104] In Spencer's judgment, this absence betrays COGIC's sense of concern

[99] Dove, "Hymnody and Liturgy," 175–76.
[100] Archer, "'I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day,'" 66–67.
[101] *Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal* (Memphis: Church of God Publ. House, 1982), Hymn nos. 45, 270–275
[102] *Church of God in Christ Hymnal*, "Heaven and Everlasting Life," nos. 153–184.
[103] *Church of God in Christ Hymnal*, nos. 45, 274, 168.
[104] Spencer, *Black Hymnody*, 153.

with the social ills of poverty, unemployment, broken homes, etc.[105]

## The Return and Disappearance of Millennial Hymns and Songs, 1960–2020

Evidence suggests that millennial hymns and songs increased in popularity in the 1960s and '70s. The website Hymnary.org features graphs showing how often various hymn texts appeared in hymnals in different years.[106] Several millennial hymns composed in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries reached their peak frequencies in these decades. For example, Lelia Morris's "What If It Were Today?", which seldom appeared in more than 10% of hymnals published in the first five decades after its 1912 composition, more than doubled in frequency in 1968 and remained popular through 1976. J. R. MacDuff's "Christ is Coming" (written in 1853), Jessie E. Strout's "Jesus is Coming Again" (1872), Mabel Camp's "He is Coming Again" (1913), and C. A. Blackmore's "Some Golden Daybreak" (1934) trended similarly. J. Wilbur Chapman's "One Day" (1910), G. W. Whitcomb's "Is It the Crowning Day?" (1910), and H. L. Turner's "Christ Returneth" (1878) vacillated in frequency before reaching their highest percentage of hymnal appearances in 1968 (Chapman) and 1976 (Whitcomb and Turner).

The increasing inclusion of these millennial-themed hymns and songs into American hymnody correlates to the social upheavals of the 1960s and '70s that, in the minds of many a fundamentalist and evangelical, portended the Second Coming. Publishers, filmmakers, and producers of commercial gospel music soon discovered a huge market for apocalyptic eschatology. In his widely popular the *Late Great Planet Earth* (1970), Hal Lindsey propagated the dispensational view for millions of eager readers who either enjoyed dystopian fantasy or were true believers that the end was about to occur in their lifetime.[107]

In this context, new millennial hymns and songs complemented the old. Robert E. Winsett's "Jesus is Coming Soon," composed in 1942 and published in 1956, was selected Song of the Year in the Gospel Music Association's first Dove Awards in 1969. Bill and Gloria Gaither's "The King is Coming" (1970) appeared not only in hymnals but was popularized through their records, concerts, and television appearances. Andraé Crouche's "Soon and Very Soon" (1976) reached an audience through similar media. Both the older and newer hymns were what I have

[105]Spencer, *Black Hymnody*, 153.

[106]Hymnary.org is a comprehensive index of hymns and hymnals. In my initial research I selected "Second Coming" from the Topics menu, from which I compiled a list of millennial hymns. The data on the hymns that follow were retrieved from the Text timeline graphs (there is a separate graph for Tunes) that accompany each hymn title. There are limitations to the graph, for while one can track the percent of hymnals in which a hymn appears, the number of hymnals for any given date is not provided. However, the total number of hymnals in which the hymn appears is provided with general information at the top of the hymn entry so that one can judge the overall popularity of a hymn.

[107]For a discussion of historical factors that led to the revitalization of dispensational premillennialism, see Richard Kyle, *The Last Day Are Here Again: A History of the End Times* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1998), 115–37; and especially Daniel G. Hummel, *The Rise and Fall of Dispensationalism: How the Evangelical Battle over the End Times Shaped a Nation* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2023).

called generic millennial hymns. Nearly all had a premillennial emphasis, although in one exceptional case, so generic was the Gaithers' song that, to their surprise, Moody Bible Institute banned it from its radio listening audience after the theological faculty deemed it amillennial.[108]

What is even more surprising is that while the age of popular American hymnody (1880–1899) and the emergence of dispensationalism coincided, no hymn or gospel song explicitly expressed the basics of this eschatology. Dispensational premillennialism was a doctrine in search of a song for nearly a century. Eventually, Larry Norman provided it—although it is probable that the decorous theologians at Dallas Theological Seminary, a center of the dispensational premillennialist movement, would have been uncomfortable with Norman's crowd. The song has appeared in just one hymnal,[109] but in a survey of former Jesus People, "I Wish We'd All Been Ready" was by far their favorite.[110] All three stanzas refer to the secret rapture, but the second is especially poignant (see Luke 17:34–36): "A man and wife asleep in bed / She hears a noise and turns her head, he's gone / I wish we'd all be ready. / Two men walking up a hill, / One disappears and one's left standing still; / I wish we'd all been ready. / There's no time to change your mind, / The Son has come and you've been left behind."[111]

In 1975, the musicologist Donald Hustad observed that if it's true that most church attenders learn more theology from hymns than sermons, then there's little hope that they will learn much of eschatology during the next generation. "Today," he wrote, "hymnody and hymn-singing have come to an 'apocalyptic' crossroads of their own."[112] Hustad surveyed the modern hymnals of major denominations, noting a steep decline, if not the complete elimination of hymns focused on Christ's return. However, the selection of hymns was "quite different in churches with a strong premillennial commitment." Hustad cited *The Advent Christian Hymnal* (1967) with twenty-two selections on the Second Coming, and evangelical interdenominational hymnals such as *Great Hymns of the Faith*, which featured twelve hymns on Christ's return.[113] Hymnals published after Hustad's article appeared maintained this emphasis. As noted above, *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* of 1985 continued to emphasize hymns of the Second Coming—far outnumbering the hymns about any other topics. A widely used trans-denominational hymnal among evangelicals listed nineteen songs on Christ's return in its topical index, ranging from Wesley's perennial "Lo! He comes, with clouds descending," to Crosby's classic "Will Jesus Find Us Watching," to Peterson's contemporary "Jesus is

[108] Hustad, "Apocalyptic in Contemporary Hymnody," 361–62.
[109] *The New Church Hymnal*, #506, listed in Hymnary.org.
[110] Larry Eskridge, *God's Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), Appendix, Table A.3, 302.
[111] To be sure, Norman's lyrics are not fully consistent with dispensational theology which posits that the rapture will occur seven years before the Second Coming with the Tribulation in the middle. Norman's lyrics seemingly collapse both into one. See Norman's lyrics below. My thanks to Daniel Hummel for pointing out this discrepancy (email correspondence, May 30, 2023).
[112] Hustad, "Apocalyptic in Contemporary Hymnody," 363.
[113] Hustad, "Apocalyptic," 359.

Coming."[114]

## Conclusion: Contemporary Christian Music and the Revival of Millennial Themes

Hustad's article appeared amid a radical transformation in worship, crossing racial, ethnic, and denominational boundaries. His words proved prophetic. In the half century since he made his observations, the hymnal has disappeared in evangelical churches and with it, not only millennial hymns but others of doctrinal substance. In its place, the lyrics to contemporary praise and worship songs, also known as contemporary Christian music, are projected onto a screen. Evangelical Protestant worship music—fueled by charismatic influences, the baby-boomers urge to revolt against tradition, and by pop music—has undergone a revolution.[115] The worshippers' subjective, introspective condition emphasizing intimacy with God, Jesus, or the work of the Holy Spirit, has largely replaced the objective, doctrinal content of traditional hymnody, including millennial hymns. To be sure, end-time themes remained in what Daniel Hummel has called "pop dispensationalism"—witness the popularity of Larnelle Harris's "Don't Let the Rapture Pass You By" (1982) and especially Sandi Patty's "We Shall Behold Him" (1982), to name a few.[116]

Although this transformation dismayed many a traditionalist, provoking all-out "worship wars," Cotton Mather's eighteenth-century millennial vision persists, albeit clearly devoid of theological substance or a broader theological framework. The praise hymns of today's saints, often with eschatological implications, are a constant reminder not only that "God inhabits the praises of his people" (Ps. 22:3), but of that day when all will "see the time of the singing birds coming on."[117]

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[114] *Praise! Our Songs and Hymns*, comp. John W. Peterson and Norman Johnson; Singspiration Music (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1979). See nos. 248–60. Hymns of heaven continued to outdistance those of Christ's return, with 30 listed in the topical index.

[115] For a thorough discussion of these developments, see Lester Ruth and Lim Swee Hong, *A History of Contemporary Praise and Worship: Understanding the Ideas that Reshaped the Protestant Church* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2021). See also Michael S. Hamilton, "A Generation Changes North American Hymnody," *The Hymn* 52, no. 3 (July 2001): 11–21. Hamilton notes that "nearly every American denomination has revised its hymnal in the past 40 years" (12). Today, of course, many evangelical churches no longer use hymnals.

[116] For more on "pop dispensationalism" CCM, see Hummel, *The Rise and Fall of Dispensationalism*, 289–92. Hummel extends his discussion of pop dispensationalism to include not only music but televangelism, seminars, books, films, comics, and video games.

[117] For a discussion of singing as the "sound of heaven" at interdenominational conferences for evangelical students, see Monique M. Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation: How Contemporary Worship Music Forms Evangelical Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), chap. 2, whose title "Singing Heaven Down to Earth" describes the creation of eschatological communities at these conferences.

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# PLAYING FOR GOD: THE AMERICAN PLAY MOVEMENT AND MISSIONARY EDUCATION IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

**JACOB RANDOLPH**

## Introduction

"Has the Missionary Movement Promoted World-Mindedness at Home?" This was the question that Sophia Fahs posed to the readers of *Religious Education* on New Year's Day, 1926. Fahs's title inquiry, splashed across the page in bold capital type, was followed by a series of pointed rhetorical questions urging Protestant educators to make their next move with great precision. The Missionary Education Movement—an interdenominational advocacy group, think tank, and publishing house—had been churning out literature, holding regional conferences, and gathering missions-education data from local congregations for more than two decades by the time of Fahs's article, but reforming the bad habits of nearly two millennia of tradition was not going to happen overnight. As Fahs remarked with some foreboding, "In every age, when there has been a missionary movement, it has been less than wholly admirable. The wheat has had tares growing with it."[1] She wondered in print if she and her peers of missionary educators had overcompensated for the authoritarian errors of their eighteenth-century forebears, if the missionary pendulum had swung too far in the direction of relativism causing the flame of Christian missionary zeal to grow dim. "Is it possible," Fahs asked, "to retain in any measure a sense of special privilege and still be world-minded?"[2] In other words, in the shadow of the rise of pluralistic religious studies, rapid globalization, American white supremacy, and the devastation of a world war, did American missionaries have anything unique to offer the world?

The answer of the Missionary Education Movement (hereafter MEM), along with other Protestant missions organizations, was a resounding yes, at least in the case of children. Typically, the term *missionary education* in the literature refers to the introduction of European pedagogy in colonial settings, primarily through missionary schools.[3] However, in the case of MEM, the goal was to introduce

[1]Sophia Lyon Fahs, "Has the Missionary Movement Promoted World-Mindedness at Home?" *Religious Education* 21 (January 1926): 176.
[2]Fahs, "Has the Missionary Movement Promoted World-Mindedness at Home?" 178.
[3]For an introduction into the complex relationship between missionaries, their agencies,

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American children to non-Western peoples. In the early twentieth century, missions organizations aimed to cultivate "world-mindedness" or "world friendship" in Protestant children. As Dana Robert notes, world friendship was a driving emphasis of missionary strategy in the era of the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. The rhetoric of world-mindedness or world friendship captured an ecumenical push toward cross-cultural awareness and the need for personal relationships in the endeavor to enlarge the kingdom of God.[4] Youth were especially held up as the hope for a brighter future characterized by "true internationalism." Hugh Morrison's work on missionary education sheds light on the unique role that children's missionary magazines played in the campaign to shape juvenile ideas about non-Western peoples and inculcate global citizenship in this period. He writes that children in British and American contexts were formed religiously and civically through interaction with "a range of material culture … through which children were informed and developed ideas about the wider world."[5] One aim of such periodicals was establishing points of contact between American children and those of other nations. By doing so, it was thought, American Christian children would mature into a spirit of world friendship that would bring peace on earth.[6]

"Missions play" was a primary means that educators used to facilitate these cross-cultural points of contact. Games, stories, costumes, and activities from other peoples were collected by missionaries and transmitted to American kids as an essential ingredient in creating culturally curious children who would grow into world-minded (and therefore peace-loving) adults. Yet missions play was not, as Fahs worried, merely for the point of relating with other nations; missionary literature made clear that missionaries could also aid the civilizing process of other cultures by sharing the fruits of the American play movement.

At the turn of the twentieth century, social scientists and reformers in the U.S. turned their attention to child welfare, including the civil benefits of children's play. Protestant church leaders latched on to these findings, imbuing the ideal of a playful and carefree childhood with divine importance, and these ideals permeated the assessment strategies of missionaries as well. The significance of play in child development merged with the missionary call to world friendship to create a unique expression of establishment Protestant emphasis on cross-cultural awareness, or what historian David Hollinger refers to as cosmopolitanism, in the twentieth century. Hollinger sees Protestant cosmopolitanism as a self-projection based on a "desire to transcend the limitations of any and all particularisms in order to achieve a more complete human experience and a more complete understanding of that

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colonial subjects, and the colonial governments under which they labored in the British missionary schools, see Felicity Jensz, *Missionaries and Modernity: Education in the British Empire, 1830–1910* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2022).

[4]Dana Robert, "Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35 (2011): 100–101.

[5]Hugh Morrison, "British World Protestant Children, Young People, Education and the Missionary Movement, c. 1840s–1930s," *Studies in Church History* 55 (2019): 476–77.

[6]Katharine Scherer Cronk, "The Missionary Enterprise in Relation to World Peace," *Missionary Review of the World* 49.7 (1926): 556.

experience."[7] Cosmopolitan Protestants did not seek to flatten or eradicate cultural differences, but rather to use their knowledge of cultural differences and particularities to better understand the world and the essential universal makeup of humanity, which would in turn make them more empathetic and better equipped to love their non-American neighbors as themselves.[8]

The growth of the missionary play movement illustrates some of the major shifts that were taking place in both American society and Western missionary methodology at the turn of the twentieth century. To demonstrate the explanatory power of the missionary play movement as a cosmopolitan project, I will first briefly note the historical roots of the American play movement. Then I will examine the marked emphasis on play theory in the teaching literature of missionary educators. Finally, I will explore a few examples of how American play was taken into non-Western contexts by missionaries and Protestant thinkers in the hope that the world would be made safe and the kingdom of God brought nearer by creating stronger, more moral, more empathetic children the world over.

## American Child Reform and the Growth of Organized Play

The coming of the twentieth century has been commonly marked as ushering in the "century of the child."[9] The late-nineteenth-century criticism that American society had failed its children was, by the early twentieth century, coupled with a novel hope that society had the resources to pull endangered children out of their dire circumstances.[10] Progressive-era reforms helped ensure that low-income and immigrant urban children—the most at-risk demographic—could be healthy, happy, and set on a path toward self-actualization through increased public health, the establishment of nurseries and childcare facilities for working mothers, and the enactment of compulsory school attendance laws.[11] Local, state, and federal government programs gradually adopted and built upon measures achieved largely through benevolent societies and volunteer movements of the nineteenth century,

[7] David A. Hollinger, "Ethnic Diversity, Cosmopolitanism and the Emergence of the American Liberal Intelligentsia," *American Quarterly* 27 (1975): 135. Hollinger connects this cosmopolitan identity directly to Protestant missionaries in *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

[8] Hollinger, "Ethnic Diversity," 135.

[9] Ellen Key coined this phrase, using it as the title of her seminal work on children's rights. Key was an early adopter of the child-centered educational paradigm and a staunch advocate of strong societal infrastructures to support parental needs. See Emiliano Macinai, "The Century of the Rights of Children Ellen Key's Legacy towards a New Childhood Culture," *Ricerche Di Pedagogia e Didattica* 11 (2016): 70; Ellen Key, *The Century of the Child* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1909).

[10] Dirk Schumann, "Child-Rearing and Citizenship in the Twentieth Century," in *Raising Citizens in the "Century of the Child": The United States and German Central Europe in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Dirk Schumann (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 5.

[11] Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 173.

formalizing the collective burden of social care for children.[12]

Amid these reforms, progressive educators, social workers, and child psychologists turned their attention to the personhood of the individual child. As reform measures and public health awareness gradually led to safer living conditions for American children, and as mortality rates plummeted, concerns about children expanded from a basic apprehensiveness for their survival to an existential concern with upholding the purity of childhood. Pioneering psychologists such as G. Stanley Hall advocated for the biological, psychological, and social phenomenon of adolescence, warning a newly industrialized America that the urban environment as it stood posed a threat to child development. Activity—so essential to socialization and growth—was stifled by industrial labor and the cramped living conditions of cities, leading to criminality in boys and prostitution in girls.[13] Child advocates began to ask: What types of social stability needed to exist for children to *be* children in the most idealized sense of the word? Ronald Cohen summarizes the social consciousness of the early twentieth century, noting that "[a]dults worried about children—everyone's children, not just their own—for their own sake and also out of fear for the country's future."[14] The emphasis on a child's personhood coalesced with the emphasis on the social organism, such that to care for one's own child and the children of others was tantamount to ensuring the salvation of society.

One of the main concerns that occupied academic research on children in this era was access to play and recreation. As part of the rhetoric that came out of child labor reforms, play became a sort of foundational characteristic of childhood to be guarded. For instance, a well-circulated propaganda piece from A. J. McKelway of the National Child Labor Committee, entitled "Declaration of Dependence," identified a series of "inalienable rights" for children, among which was "the right to play and dream," in opposition to the drudgery and demands of adult life, the "toil for daily bread."[15] Raymond Fuller, managing editor of *The American Child* and advocate to end child labor, wrote that "to rob children of childhood as playtime is to rob them of childhood itself," connecting play directly with moral and mental benefits.[16]

The rhetoric of McKelway and Fuller warned American adults that industrialization and urbanization were pushing American children away from a "natural" childhood where play was a dominant factor. Such ideas were ignorant of the reality that preindustrial childhood in Europe and America centered on

[12] Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 173.

[13] Sarah E. Chinn, *Inventing Modern Adolescence: The Children of Immigrants in Turn-of-the-Century America*, The Rutgers Series in Childhood Studies (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 19.

[14] Ronald D. Cohen, "Child-Saving and Progressivism, 1885–1914," in *American Childhood: A Research Guide and Historical Handbook*, ed. Joseph M. Hawes and N. Ray Hiner (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), 275.

[15] A. J. McKelway, "Declaration of Dependence," in *The Child Labor Bulletin* 7 (1918). For original publication of the pamphlet, see A. J. McKelway, "Declaration of Dependence by the Children of America," pamphlet (NCLC, 1910), National Child Labor Committee Collection, Library of Congress.

[16] Raymond G. Fuller, "Play Needs and Work Needs of Children," *The American Child* 2 (1920): 345.

labor as well, and that although children's play was inevitable, play and games in general were, in the words of historian Gary Cross, "centered more on the desires and needs of adults than children."[17] Nevertheless, the view that play and games were a natural phenomenon of childhood to be protected was widespread among child studies scholars, who centered organized play as essential to moral and mental development. Mary Haviland, the research secretary of the National Child Welfare Association, released *Character Training in Childhood* in 1921, dedicating the book to "the Fathers and Mothers of America, to whom is entrusted the task of moulding [*sic*] their country's future through moulding her citizens."[18] Haviland's work echoed that of Fuller, arguing that "next to hunger, the play-impulse is the most deeply rooted of all the child's instincts … for the child's play *is* his life."[19] She followed the psychological assessments of others who argued that children who did not know how to play were dangerously malformed either physically or mentally, for "even the pale little inmates of the hospital are eager for such play as their slender strength permits."[20]

Recognizing the important connection between play and the educational formation of a child, progressive educators and child studies theorists—labeled by Dominick Cavallo as "play organizers"—analyzed and attempted to systematize children's play in safe and constructive modes.[21] The playground movement emerged out of this societal concern to promote organized play. Early playground advocates drew on John Dewey's theory that children were, in some sense, miniaturized adults who grew and adapted by exploring their environment.[22] Dewey saw children's play as analogous to adults' work such that "to the child, his play is his activity, his life, his business. It is intensely serious. He is absorbed, engrossed in it. It is an occupation."[23] Similar theories were expressed by G. Stanley Hall, who colorfully illustrated the importance of play in a seminal essay entitled "The Story of the Sand-Pile." Hall told the story of boys who, playing in a sandpile one day, constructed elaborate scenes and infrastructures, including houses, cars, horses, railroads, along with laws and relationships that governed the

[17] Gary Cross, "Play, Games, and Toys," in *The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World*, ed. Paula S. Fass (London: Routledge, 2012), 268. Cross's essay drives home that in premodern Europe, play was a social-pressure release associated with adult activities—drinking, dancing, feasting—rather than with childhood.

[18] Mary S. Haviland, *Character Training in Childhood* (Boston: Small, Maynard and Co., 1921), i.

[19] Haviland, *Character Training in Childhood*, 95.

[20] Haviland, *Character Training in Childhood*, 95.

[21] Dominick Cavallo, *Muscles and Morals: Organized Play and Urban Reform, 1880–1920* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 1–2. Cavallo identifies the leaders of this broad thought coalition as Jane Addams, Jacob Riis, Lillian Wald, and Graham Taylor, among others.

[22] Susan G. Solomon, *American Playgrounds: Revitalizing Community Space* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2005), 8.

[23] John Dewey, "Play and Imagination in Relation to Early Education," *Kindergarten Magazine* 11 (1899): 636–40, reprinted in John Dewey, *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899–1924*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976), 339.

citizens of this sandpile city.[24] Hall's parable stressed the importance of play in the social formation of young boys. Play was elevated as an essential civilizing force in childhood education, fashioning interested, empathetic, and responsible adults.[25]

The pioneering work of Hall and Dewey was vastly expanded by Hall's student, Henry S. Curtis. Curtis, along with figures like Luther Gulick, was instrumental in the 1906 founding of the Playground Association of America (later the National Recreation Association and then National Recreation and Park Association).[26] Curtis's work accounted for the post-child-labor economy, the new psychology which made the child the "center of educational effort," and the renewed "social spirit" expressed in philanthropic efforts to help build a consensus among educated elites as to the importance of an American—and then global—"Renaissance of Play."[27] The creation of the Playground Association marked a significant turning point in the institutionalization of the play movement, placing the burden of accommodating and promoting active children upon the state (until 1906, playgrounds had largely been the work of private benevolent societies).[28] The Association's inaugural meeting in Chicago in 1907 brought together delegates from across the nation's urban centers. According to these delegates, the mission was simple: "to secure for urban children 'their natural birthright—play,' " by organizing structured facilities to alleviate poverty, vice, and political corruption.[29]

The essential status of play in a child's life was rapidly and broadly accepted by the American public of the early twentieth century. By the 1920s, articles appearing in popular domestic magazines like *Good Housekeeping* and *Harper's Bazaar* were diffusing the new child-centered research and the importance of child's play.[30] Theories of play and the spirit of the playground movement were trickling into many facets of social life, and the church was no exception. Congregations began purchasing and building playgrounds, Sunday school curricula were being refashioned to include game times and guided play, and churches were creating their own programs like Vacation Bible School to provide structured play for urban children.[31] The play movement also became an integral

[24] Granville Stanley Hall, *The Story of a Sand-Pile* (New York: E. L. Kellogg and Co., 1897).
[25] Arlene Brett, Robin C. Moore, and Eugene F. Provenzo, *The Complete Playground Book*, 1st ed. (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 20.
[26] Solomon, *American Playgrounds*, 8; Cavallo, *Muscles and Morals*, 32; Cross, "Play, Games, and Toys," 272.
[27] Henry S. Curtis, *The Play Movement and Its Significance* (Washington, D.C.: McGrath Publishing; National Recreation and Park Association, 1927), 9–10.
[28] Solomon, *American Playgrounds*, 8.
[29] Cavallo, *Muscles and Morals*, 36–37.
[30] See, for instance, Christine Terhune Herrick, "Children and Amusements," *Harper's Bazaar*, November 1909; Raymond G. Fuller, "The Truth about Child Labor," *Good Housekeeping*, September 1922.
[31] For a survey of the growth of leisure in American churches, see R. Laurence Moore, "Americans Learn to Play and Religion Learns to Let Them," in *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 90–117. For examples of early twentieth century church recreation literature, see Norman Egbert Richardson, *The Church at Play: A Manual for Directors of Social and Recreational Life* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1922); *All-the-Year-Round Activities for Young People* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1922); William Ralph La Porte, *A Handbook of Games and*

part of the missionary method of the twentieth century, as religious educators and missionaries absorbed the new methods proposed by American child studies specialists. It is to the application of play theory in missionary literature that we now turn.

## Play and Missionary Education at Home

Protestant educators eagerly baptized the new research on children and play into their vision of the renewal of all humanity. Religious education periodicals and church journals were flooded with book reviews and editorials imagining the applications of organized play in church settings. One editorial in a 1913 volume of the Methodist-published *Sunday School Journal* enthusiastically argued for the installation of playgrounds on church properties, noting that in urban school districts with playgrounds, school attendance was up and children were better equipped since "appliances for diversion sustain very important relations to the three R's [i.e., reading, writing, and arithmetic] and to the making of useful men and women and good citizens."[32] "If," the author wondered, "the playground and the gymnasium are the allies of the three R's, they also may be made the allies of the catechism and the Bible class."[33] Reverend Paul Strayer of Third Presbyterian Church in New York City saw play as an essential element in any local church who sought to apply the social gospel to the community. His *Reconstruction of the Church with Regard to Its Message and Program* conceived of the church as, among other things, a "recreational center" for the development of the wholly Christian individual, since "play has an ethical character" and is "as necessary as food."[34]

One way that Protestant intelligentsia pursued their program of formation through play was through what they referred to as "missionary education." Missionary education refers to the active promotion of a modernized, missionary-informed cosmopolitanism in local U.S. congregations with the goal of awakening missionary enthusiasm in American Christians. Missionaries shared their knowledge with local churches in hopes not only that some would go to the nations, but also that American Protestants would be ready to face a rapidly expanding world community with eager expectation, recognizing the human in faces distinctly different from their own.[35] As Brian Stanley and Hugh Morrison examined in the case of the British empire, British children were strategically marketed to by missions organi-

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*Programs for Church, School, and Home* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1922); Warren T. Powell, *Recreational Leadership for Church and Community* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1923).

[32] "The Business of Sunday School," *The Sunday School Journal*, April 1913.

[33] "The Business of Sunday School."

[34] Paul Moore Strayer, *The Reconstruction of the Church with Regard to Its Message and Program* (New York: Macmillan, 1915), 281–82.

[35] William Douglass McKenzie, "The Place of Missionary Education in the Life of the Church," in *The Church and Missionary Education: Addresses Delivered at the First International Convention Under the Direction of the Young People's Missionary Movement of the United States and Canada, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, March 10–12, 1908* (New York: Young People's Missionary Movement of the United States and Canada, 1908), 141–53.

zations for both monetary and moral support.[36] The latter, Morrison suggests, was even more critical to the success of Protestant aims. In his study of New Zealand missions organizations, Morrison notes that these groups self-consciously aimed to "develop a sense of missionary awareness and responsibility amongst children that would last a lifetime."[37] Sources from American denominations reveal the same approach in the United States. Historian Rennie Schoepflin interprets this rise in missionary education awareness as being intimately linked with the devastation of World War I. He notes that as Americans assessed the outcome of the war, they were convicted that "suspicions and misunderstandings of other peoples and their cultures" had resulted in the carnage of war.[38] Postwar missionary education was, in the case of children, a means of ensuring that history would not repeat itself, that the next generation would be competent and confident cosmopolitan Christians. David Hollinger's choice of the term "cosmopolitan" describes well the animating worldview of twentieth century missionaries, a global outlook offered to American Protestants at home, with missionaries supplying "the expertise and energy for one endeavor after another that expanded American horizons."[39] William McKenzie, a keynote speaker at the First International Convention under the Young People's Missionary Movement, exemplified this cosmopolitan spirit, stating the role of missionary education in no uncertain terms:

> If we are to be missionary students, we ought to know something of the peoples of the world; that is to say, we ought to study something of their history, something of their civilization, something of their religious life. How do you know they need the gospel? How do you know they are lost souls? How do you know that their religion is not leading them up into light? How do you know that their civilization is unworthy of the best that God would have civilized human beings become? How do you know these things? You must get to know them by becoming acquainted with the facts as to these various races. . . . As he studies these great regions of the world, he is being brought closer and closer to the great heart, the common heart of man.[40]

McKenzie's conviction that knowledge of different cultures would awaken

[36] Brian Stanley, "Missionary Regiments for Immanuel's Service: Juvenile Missionary Organization in English Sunday Schools, 1841–1865," *Studies in Church History* 31 (1994): 391–403; Hugh Morrison, " 'Little vessels' or 'little soldiers': New Zealand Protestant children, foreign missions, religious pedagogy and empire, c. 1880s–1930s," *Paedagogica Historica* 47 (2011): 303–21.

[37] Hugh Morrison, " 'Little vessels' or 'little soldiers,' " 309–10.

[38] Rennie B. Schoepflin, "The Mythic Mission Lands: Medical Missionary Literature, American Children, and Cultural Identity," in *Religion and the Culture of Print in Modern America*, ed. Paul S. Boyer and Charles Lloyd Cohen (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 90.

[39] David A. Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 2.

[40] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad*, 2.

empathy and, ultimately, a conviction that humanity was a united whole was asserted again and again in missionary education literature.

In the missionary education of children, empathy and world-mindedness were fostered in part through learning about and enacting the games and recreation of other cultures. To this end, numerous "play manuals" and missionary education programs for children were published which stressed the importance of teaching children about the games of "foreign children." The Young People's Missionary Movement, renamed the Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada (MEM) in 1911, became a publishing powerhouse for missionary play resources, recruiting men and—mostly—women experts to report about non-American children's play habits and promote the utility of play in missionary education. Within fifteen years, MEM had become an interdenominational channel for missionary education, with thirty-five missionary and education boards representing seventeen denominations investing heavily in the work of MEM.[41] Of the numerous volumes published by MEM in the early twentieth century, many were manuals for missionary educators, Sunday School teachers, mothers, and other influencers in religious education. Encouraging cosmopolitan play methods was meant to help American children understand that children of other cultures were not so different from them, thus encouraging a general openness to the world and a friendly attitude toward other nations from an early age. As missionary education authority Ralph Diffendorfer put it, "A child who has learned to play a half dozen Chinese games will hardly be afraid of the first Chinese child he sees and will be more likely to become interested in his welfare, both material and spiritual."[42]

One early example of missionary play manuals is *Children at Play in Many Lands,* by Katherine Stanley Hall. Hall wrote in her preface that the book was written to bring American children into contact with foreign children by proxy of learning their games. Since play was thought to be a universal element in childhood, it was a natural point of contact, for in "the simple play sympathy of childhood may surely grow, as the years go by, into that Christian sympathy that longs to bring all lands to the feet of him who draweth all men unto Himself."[43] Hall's book outlined many different children's games, most coming from East Asia—the center of emphasis for much Protestant missionary work in the twentieth century—while including those of African and even Native American children, most obtained from missionary observance. Hall's book also contained a chapter dedicated to costumes, providing patterns as well as tips on how to recreate various clothing items includ-

[41] Franklin D. Cogswell, "The Missionary Education Movement and Education for World-Mindedness" *Religious Education* 21 (1926): 209.

[42] Gilbert Loveland, *Training World Christians: A Handbook in Missionary Education* (New York; Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1921), 138. Ralph Diffendorfer was a recognized authority on missionary education, having served as secretary of the Missionary Education Movement from 1904 to 1916, as well as serving on several missions boards for the Methodist Episcopal Church before finally becoming director of the Home Missions Survey of the Interchurch World Movement in 1919. See Linda Gesling, *Mirror and Beacon: The History of Mission of The Methodist Church, 1939–1968* (New York: General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 2005), 74.

[43] Katherine Stanley Hall, *Children at Play in Many Lands* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1912), xi.

ing turbans, kimonos, burkas, and other apparel from around the world.[44] Dressing American children in costume, it was thought, would provide a striking visual aid for church congregations when children did "missionary entertainment."[45] Numerous other versions of the missionary play manual were forthcoming from MEM's press, including Anita Ferris's expansive *Missionary Program Material for Use with Boys and Girls,* which was divided by region and outlined numerous folktales, games, riddles, and stories about children from around the world.[46]

Wilhelmina Stooker, one of MEM's recurring expert authors, provided a thorough paradigm for missionary education with her *Missionary Education of Primary Children* in 1929.[47] Stooker wrote the book as if a group of parents and teachers were coming together to talk about the successes and challenges they had faced in missionary education. She gave instructions about how to separate children into grade-appropriate groups, avoiding play that glorified war or violence, pointing out the similarities between American games and those of foreign children, and focusing on playing the "homelife" of different people groups.[48] All this energy was directed toward helping American children "to work with God for the coming of understanding and friendliness among the children of the world, and for the brotherhood of all mankind."[49]

MEM was the most aggressive in their promotion of play manuals, but they did not corner the market on such literature. Margaret Applegarth's *The School of Mother's Knee: A Book of World Wide Playtimes,* published by the Women's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, proved influential following its appearance in 1919. Applegarth was a Baptist and ecumenical advocate for missions, writing for the World Council of Churches Council on Missions, and was inducted as an honorary member of Methodist, Presbyterian, Reformed, and Lutheran women's societies. *The School of Mother's Knee* provides an example of how social theory and the rhetoric behind the play movement (i.e., that access to play was a matter of human rights) was baptized by Protestant authors to promote missions. Applegarth wrote in her introduction that

> [God] must have had a very perfect plan when He began by giving His human children twelve care-free years in which to grow up! … He lovingly squanders a dozen years of aimless

[44] Hall, *Children at Play*, 87 ff. Interestingly, Hall's only note for Native Americans was that "costumes for boys and girls can be bought at any large department store."
[45] Hall, *Children at Play*, 87.
[46] For other examples of Missionary Education manuals, see Gertrude J. Hutton, *Things to Make* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1916); Ada M. Skinner, *Heart-of-the-Jungle Tales* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada; 1917); Ethel M. Baader, *Indian Playmates of Navajo Land* (New York: Friendship Press, 1927); Jean Moore Cavell, *Filipino Playmates* (New York: Friendship Press, 1929).
[47] Stooker was the professor of religious education at Auburn Theological Seminary and the coauthor of *The Good American Vacation Lessons* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1920).
[48] Wilhelmina Stooker, *Missionary Education of Primary Children* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1929), 38–57.
[49] Stooker, *Missionary Education of Primary Children,* ix.

> playtimes, and the reason is divine. Hopefully we grope for it, and realize dimly that in all these thousands upon thousands of years since the world began His children have been playing at everything: playing to make their muscles stronger, their wits keener, their sympathies broader, and especially playing at being something else—aping grown-up ways! Physical, mental and social development were included in His program of play.[50]

Applegarth applied the theories of Henry Curtis and G. Stanley Hall, combined with the compelling "divine right" rhetoric of A. J. McKelway, to build a Christian case for studying, teaching, and defending the play activities of children. *The School of Mother's Knee* was a manual for mothers to encourage what Applegarth called "playing Missions," asserting that mothers who instilled a cosmopolitan play ethic would help train children into "light-hearted, eager-souled citizens of God's world."[51]

The Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions likewise publicized the importance of play for child development. The committee was formed by a number of women missionaries during the Ecumenical Missionary Conference of 1900, working over four decades to publish texts for and about missionaries, and distributing over four million copies.[52] Their book, *The Child in the Midst,* written by Mary Schauffler Labaree, was released as a textbook and comparative study on the lives of children in "Christian and Non-Christian Lands."[53] The book is illustrative of establishment Protestant missionary concepts of childhood on many levels, but for the purposes of this study, I note only Labaree's application of progressive social theories about recreation in her missionary text. In her chapter on "The Child at Play and Work," Labaree remarked that "if there are any inherent rights of childhood, the right to play must be considered one of them," since, "play promotes physical and mental development of the child, and that it is no mean factor in his social and moral elevation."[54] Labaree offered numerous examples of "universal" games, including kites, tops, marbles, tag, hide-and-seek, and even an African indigenous version of "London Bridge."[55] Evidence of games known the world over strengthened the assumption that all the world's children shared essential, instinctive characteristics, and that these primal instincts could be a point of connection for those wanting to know more about mission lands.

In sum, the missionary education initiative grew out of the burgeoning postwar cosmopolitanism of American Protestantism aimed at ending war, promot-

[50] Applegarth, *The School of Mother's Knee: A Book of World Wide Playtimes* (Boston: Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1919), 16.
[51] Applegarth, *The School of Mother's Knee*, 12.
[52] Robert T. Coote, *Renewal for Mission: A History of the Overseas Ministries Study Center (1922–2000)* (New Haven: Overseas Ministries Study Center, 2000), 7.
[53] Mary Schauffler Labaree, *The Child in the Midst: A Comparative Study of Child Welfare in Christian and Non-Christian Lands* (Medford, MA: The Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions, 194), v.
[54] Labaree, *The Child in the Midst,* 91.
[55] Labaree, *The Child in the Midst,* 95–96.

ing benevolent cross-cultural encounters, and making U.S. Christians into ambassadors for world friendship. Missionary educators combined this cosmopolitan conviction with the new findings of child studies that emphasized the moral, social, and civic importance of play and recreation in order to project play as a sort of "first contact" between American children and children of the world. Yet, the domestic missionary education arm of Christian play was not the only way play and mission work coincided. In the early years of the twentieth century, Protestants also sought to use the research on play as an aid in the civilizing and Christianizing force of foreign missions. As will be seen below, play became a diagnostic tool in the observation of American missionaries, and perceived deficiencies in play revealed the need of missionary labor in non-Western cultures. To address this felt need, missionaries and missionary-adjacent activists deployed various strategies to ensure that the divine right of play was recognized, strengthened, and defended in "non-Christian lands."

## Exporting Organized Play to the Nations

Mary Labaree's *Child in the Midst* stood not merely as an educational survey of the lives of different children across the world; it was also a manifesto. If play was seen as a divine right, then the deprivation of play was a social sin that had to be dealt with. As Labaree saw it, America could and must provide absolution. "The suggestion is made," Labaree quipped, "that perhaps as Rome gave to the world law, and Greece gave art, so America may contribute play as her share towards the world's progress."[56]

American play advocates agreed and took up the mantle of bringing the gospel of play to the nations as part of the missionary effort. For instance, C. M. Goethe, a leading voice in the playground movement on the West Coast, helped organize the Sacramento Church Federation's Missionary Playgrounds Committee in the early 1920s. Cooperating across denominational lines as a parachurch organization, the Missionary Playgrounds Committee helped fund missionary programs to "make available to all humanity the crystallized recreational experience of America."[57] Goethe himself, along with his wife Mary, went on excursions across the world, including East Asia and Russia, drawing up field studies of various countries and speaking to foreign leaders about the importance of the playground in the advance of civilization.[58]

The cosmopolitanism of ecumenical missions was not one of benign affirmation. As Rennie Schoepflin remarks, "Clearly world friendship did not include an embrace of cultural relativism; Christians had some things to offer to improve the beliefs and behaviors of the non-Westerner."[59] Among these offers was the cultivation of organized recreation in the interest of child development. Utilizing the child studies model of assessment that characterized non-playful children as mal-

[56] Labaree, *The Child in the Midst,* 95.
[57] "Exporting the American Playground," *Record of Christian Work* 40 (December 1921): 930.
[58] C. M. Goethe, *Seeking to Serve* (Sacramento: Keystone Press, 1949), 76 ff.
[59] Schoepflin, "The Mythic Mission Lands," 91.

formed in some way, missionaries gauged non-Christian cultures and religions in part by observing such cultures' receptivity to children's recreation. So, for example, cultures who adopted Islamic religious beliefs and practices were reported as faulty, since some American missionaries perceived the familial and social structures of, for example, Egyptian Muslims, as detrimental to the growth of their children. Charles Watson, president of the American University in Cairo and former Presbyterian missionary wrote in 1937 that

> in our own underprivileged communities there are thousands who have scant measure of all that is the just right of childhood. In infinitely greater measure yet do Moslem children miss what should be theirs. It is chiefly what belongs to the years of twelve to twenty of which they are robbed; these years that should spell freedom from care, playtime and exercise, education and reading; these years that are so crucial in physical development, character training and the blossoming of youth into wholesome womanhood and manhood.[60]

Watson's assessment of children in Egypt was not unlike other stories of children being robbed of the divine right of play in other cultures. A report in the *Missionary Herald,* nearly thirty years prior, from a missionary in Turkey, noted that some of the girls brought into an orphanage in Aintab had been "so distressed" in their "poor, cramped life" that "they did not know how to play … and had to be brought out and shown what it was to play."[61] Chinese children were in a similar predicament, according to a report from the *Reformed Church Messenger*. Missionaries noted that despite Chinese boys' natural love of fun, they were uninterested in playing organized games like the missionaries' own children and were like "little old [men]" until they entered as students in the mission school. "Then," the report assured, "they learn[ed] for themselves the value of exercise …"[62] So too, missionary specialists in Latin America assessed the youths of their mission fields as having "an exaggerated sense of self-importance" and a "sham dignity" that led Latin American children to consider games as beneath them. Introducing American sports reportedly helped "cure" such children and teach them to "unbend."[63]

While, according to missionary reports, Muslim and Chinese children labored under the neglect of play by the adults in their culture, Japan was another story altogether. Missionaries consistently praised Japanese society, even while

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[60] Charles Watson, *What Is This Moslem World?* (New York: Friendship Press, 1937), 42–43. It is interesting to note that Watson's description assigned the key years of a child's life to the years between twelve and twenty, while earlier publications—notably Applegarth's *School of Mother's Knee*—assigned essential years from birth to twelve. This may point to changing perceptions of childhood linked to a broader acceptance of the concept of adolescence and teenage childhood, although such an exploration lies outside the scope of this project.

[61] "Taught to Play," *Missionary Herald* 99 (April 1903): 147.

[62] "Chinese Children," *Reformed Church Messenger* 75 (April 1906): 11–12.

[63] "Survey of Evangelical Education" in *Christian Work in Latin America* (New York: Missionary Education Movement, 1917), 460.

noting their neglect of the gospel, because Japan was seen as—in what had become a common trope by the twentieth century—a "paradise of children."[64] Clara Hepburn, missionary in Japan and wife of noted missionary J. C. Hepburn, wrote that Japan was preeminent among nations in the development of children's sports, and that one reason Japan exceeded most nations in play was that Japanese parents were playful along with the children, "flying kites, spinning tops, etc., for the child's pleasure."[65] American missionary Katherine Fanning, reporting about her time in Japan, noted that Japanese children were well acquainted with ball games, bases, stilts, and a hand game called "John Kem Po" (what we know as Rock, Paper, Scissors).[66] Fanning wrote that it was common to see Japanese children outside playing and "run[ning] all about the streets in as free and unconcerned a manner as you can imagine … because everybody looks out for children."[67] Hall surmised that "I do not believe there is a country in the world where little children are happier than in Japan."[68] Labaree wrote with affirmation in 1914 that the Japanese government had taken interest in the playground movement in view of the "great Christian nations," introducing Japanese playgrounds into urban areas. Developments in Japan further supported her conviction that Americans had something special to offer to even recreationally developed nations like Japan, in the way of play.[69]

Despite the marked emphasis on play in missionary literature, the application of play techniques and the installation of playground equipment was neither immediate nor universal. Publishing houses and special-interest groups had pressed the need for play in missions contexts as early as 1904, marked by Ralph Diffendorfer's edited volume *Child Life in Mission Lands,* but there appears to be little attention given to the question of recreation and education in the formal documents of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910, the most influential conference on missions of its time. Yet, the seeds for later play emphases were sown in the soil of Western child studies, as the report of the Education Committee at Edinburgh noted that education in the new era needed to "be a training and stimulating of the whole nature of the child, and not merely or chiefly the imparting of information, or an appeal to the memory … directed towards qualifying boys and girls for their functions in domestic and national life."[70] Although recreation needs were not mentioned, clearly the child studies emphasis on child-centered and holistic education was compelling to the committee members.

[64] Harald Salomon, " 'A Paradise of Children': Western Perceptions of Childhood in Meiji Japan (1868–1912)," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 11, no. 3 (August 21, 2018): 341.
[65] Clara Hepburn, "Child Life in Japan," in *Child Life in Many Lands*, ed. H. Clay Trumbull (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1903), 95.
[66] Katherine F. Fanning, "Children's Games in Japan," *Mission Studies* 33 (June 1915): 181.
[67] Fanning, "Children's Games in Japan," 181.
[68] Fanning, "Children's Games in Japan," 181.
[69] Labaree, *The Child in the Midst*, 94.
[70] World Missionary Conference, *Report of the Commission III: Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 6.

The play emphasis in mission literature continued to permeate the collective consciousness of ecumenical Protestants such that by the time of the next major world missionary conference in Jerusalem in 1928, those charged with assessing education needs in missions made clear the role that organized recreation would play in future missionary endeavors. Following the "four essentials of education" as laid out by education theorist Thomas Jesse Jones, the commission agreed that an essential element of education in community life was "play, to which modern education is coming to attach more and more importance."[71] The commission reasserted the principles outlined by the Edinburgh committee, emphasizing the holistic needs of a child which included "the forming of right habits and attitudes" and "the expansion of life through play." Within two decades, the moral importance of play had become an established aspect of Christian education to form the child in his or her "training for Christ."[72]

## Conclusion

American Protestant missionary literature in the early twentieth century reveals that missionaries and religious educators took notice of and applied the findings of the burgeoning child studies movement in unexpected ways, promoting play as a primary tool for moral, physical, and social formation of children at home and abroad. Play was but one aspect of the changing direction of childhood education, which by 1930 had shifted toward a child-centered and holistic methodology, seeking to touch on all areas of child development. Moreover, the emphasis on play was, for missionaries, a part of a developing cosmopolitan program to help shape empathetic American Christians who would receive children from all corners of the world under the gospel of inclusive brotherhood. For Protestants at home, play manuals and collections of games from "many lands" served as the springboard for further introspection among American children, seeking to show how they and their foreign peers were not so different, since play was seen as an essential characteristic of every child. For American Protestants abroad, the play of foreign children was a concrete way to gauge the social progress of a culture, while the introduction of the American play movement was one aspect of bringing American Protestant gifts of holistic education to the children of the world.

This research also sheds light on the development of missionary education over the span of a quarter century. The focus on domestic missionary education beginning in the twentieth century is illustrative of important changes, and the emphasis on play makes these changes all the clearer. In many cases, missionary education to colonial subjects or indigenous groups in the nineteenth century began with a stated goal of civilizing or assimilating said subjects to Western social, economic, political, and religious norms. Conversely, domestic missionary education in the early twentieth century operated on the assumption that non-Western cultures, when Christianized, would remain decidedly foreign in some

[71] International Missionary Council, *Report of the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council II: Religious Education* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), 28.
[72] International Missionary Council, *Report of the Jerusalem Meeting*, 62.

crucial ways related to language, dress, worldview, and social relationships.[73] By 1910, Charles Gore, the chair of the Commission on Christian Education in the Edinburgh Missionary conference, spoke of Western missionary aims as proceeding

> through the ministry of evangelists from nations already Christian, but that the Church should pass as rapidly as possible under the control of native pastors and teachers, so that while all Churches hold the same faith, use the same Scriptures, celebrate the same sacraments, and inhere in the same universal religion, each local Church should from the first have the opportunity of developing a local character and colour. It is also the ideal method that the Christian converts should, with their children, continue to share the education and social life of their own race and nation. In this way can "the glory and honour of all nations"—that is, their own distinctive genius and its products—best be brought within the circle of the Holy City.[74]

Facing the reality of fixed cultural difference, the job of the missionary was to 1) convey the Christian message in ways comprehensible to the other and 2) explain these cultures to American Christians as a way of bridge-building. As I have suggested above, games and play were crucial instruments in this vein.

Questions remain as to specific moral, religious, and social applications of play in foreign missionary contexts. While the literature reviewed makes clear that mission theorists and organizational heads were actively pushing the benefits of play, a deeper examination of missionary documents may reveal how and to what degree individual missionaries and mission schools implemented the new research on organized play.[75]

Future scholars may also be interested to explore how world-minded missionary play strategies intersect with Christian sports ministry and play outreach in post–World War II America. The Protestant mainline introduced the necessity of structured play for moral and religious formation, but the idea was later taken up and marketed powerfully by evangelicals in the 1970s, '80s, and '90s. James Mathisen, in a 1992 piece for *The Christian Century,* argued the sports evangelism focus was the latest in a series of American iterations of muscular Christianity.[76] Is Mathisen right, that recreation in evangelical ministries is a reception of mainline

[73] For a summary of this shift, see Brian Stanley, "From 'the poor heathen' to 'the glory and honour of all nations': Vocabularies of Race and Custom in Protestant Missions, 1844–1928" *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34 (2010): 3–10.

[74] World Missionary Conference, *Report of the Commission III: Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 244; see also Stanley, "From 'the poor heathen' to 'the glory and honour of all nations.' "

[75] The records of the Missionary Education Movement for the years 1901–1952, housed in the Presbyterian Historical Society, seem a natural starting point for further inquiry.

[76] James A. Mathisen, "From Muscular Christians to Jocks for Jesus," *The Christian Century*, Jan. 1–8, 1992.

or social gospel ideology? How can historians narrate the transition from Christian missionary games as a form of mainline social reform to a major evangelical missions emphasis, as ministries turn to games and structured play as a tool for evangelism or, in the case of church education, as a means of cultivating world-mindedness? How does the Progressive Era emphasis on play and recreation in missions help us better tell the story of the relationship between American Christianity and sports?

The impact of play and its implications for mission strategy remains a promising and largely unnoticed aspect of twentieth-century mission studies to this point, suggesting numerous paths forward through both geographic and chronological case studies, denominational studies, and transatlantic comparative research.

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**REFLECTION**

# CARL SPAIN AND THE 1960 ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE LECTURESHIP

**TIMOTHY BENCH**

Abilene Christian University is a Church of Christ-affiliated institution of higher learning in Abilene, Texas, founded in 1906 as the Childers Classical Institute and known as Abilene Christian College until 1976. Generations of my family have attended ACU, including my grandparents in the 1930s and my parents in the 1960s. I completed a bachelor's degree in business there in 1990. I later worked at the school, and I can say without hesitation that I love ACU, I embrace its mission, and many of the people there are some of my dearest friends. In 1990, however, I was not aware of some of the darker history of the university.

Fifteen hours of biblical coursework were required for all majors, and in 1988, I completed a New Testament Bible course from Dr. Carl Spain. He was certainly an effective teacher, and he was nearing the end of a long and prestigious career as a Bible professor and preacher in the region. I enjoyed and benefited from the course materials tremendously, but it was only later when I learned of a far greater impact Spain had on the university some twenty-eight years earlier, an impact which would echo for years to come within churches and universities throughout Texas and beyond. I simply had no idea at the time the dark forces Dr. Spain had battled earlier in his career.

African Americans were not allowed to enroll as students at Abilene Christian College in 1960. When I first learned that bit of school history, I was stunned. I had many Black classmates in the 1980s, enrolled in seemingly every major across campus, and it startled me to hear that a mere generation earlier, their presence on campus was forbidden. I knew the stories of integration from Mississippi from the 1960s, specifically the "Battle of Oxford" at the University of Mississippi in 1962, but I could not fathom a Christian school that I loved so dearly engaging in such shocking racism and exclusion. I retrieved my grandparents' yearbooks from the 1930s, certain that such blatant racism could not have been the norm so recently, historically speaking. Sure enough, and much to my dismay, there was not a Black student to be found in the yellowing pages of those yearbooks. Simply stated, Blacks were not allowed at this Christian institution of higher learning, from its

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founding 1906 all the way up to 1960.

ACU, like many Church of Christ-affiliated colleges and universities, sponsors an annual lectureship event on campus, featuring preachers, biblical scholars, professors, and speakers on an array of topics, with many hundreds of people attending. These lectureships have gone on since 1911 and draw attendees from across the nation. It was during the 1960 lectureship, as an Abilene Christian Bible professor, that Spain presented a now almost-legendary talk titled "Modern Challenges to Christian Morals." Mincing no words, he said, "Marching under the standard of the god of mammon and bluffing his way with ballots and bullets, the white man put his big white foot on the Negro's neck, quoted the pledge of allegiance to the flag, and piously recited platitudes about all men being born free and equal."[1] He continued with a story of the Southern community where he grew up:

> A few law-abiding, humble-hearted Negroes wanted to attend a service of the church of Christ. They had listened to me preach on the radio. These souls didn't know anything about an organization for the advancement of colored people. They traded with my beloved step-father, who seemed to be interested in their souls. They loved him like a mongrel dog would love a man who fed him and spoke kindly to him when he was accustomed to being cursed and kicked. When our colored friends timidly asked if they could attend a service of the white folks and learn more about the church of Christ, I made the mistake of telling them that they would be more than welcome. And they trusted me. They came in timidly and took the seats that were as far back as they could get and still be inside. I shall never forget the agony on their faces when white Christians made it very plain to them that they were out of place and glared at them like a Jew would have looked upon a "Samaritan dog." The Negroes left the assembly of the saints.[2]

This story set Spain up for his conclusion, which led to disinvitations from churches as well as anonymous death threats:[3]

> I feel certain that Jesus would say: "Ye hypocrites! You say you are the only true Christians, and make up the only true church, and have the only Christian schools. Yet, you drive one of your own preachers to denominational schools where he can get credit for his work and refuse to let him take Bible for credit in

[1] *Christian Faith in the Modern World: The 1960 Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures* (Abilene, Tex.: Abilene Christian College Students Exchange, 1960), 214.
[2] *Christian Faith in the Modern World*., 215.
[3] Abilene professor Jerry Taylor said in a 2018 speech, "This act of valor virtually ruined Spain's preaching career. Churches canceled the meetings he was scheduled to preach. Anonymous letters and phone calls made threats on Spain's life. His own brothers in Christ made his life a nightmare." Quoted in Dyon Daughrity, "Carl Spain's Waves: How a Powerful Lecture Ended Segregation in Church of Christ Colleges," *Journal of Discipliana*, Volume 75, Issue 1.

> your own school because the color of his skin is dark!"
>
> Our moral attitudes are so mixed up that we use the story of Philemon and Onesimus to justify refusing a Negro admission to study Bible in our graduate school of Bible. A Methodist college will admit our own Negro preacher brethren and give them credit for their work. Baptist colleges in Texas will do as much. Our State universities will admit them. There is no law of our State or nation that will censor us. The Bible does not rule against it.
>
> Are we moral cowards on this issue? … We fear the mythical character named Jim Crow more than we reverence Jesus Christ.[4]

Other voices at Abilene Christian had been speaking up for racial equality for years before 1960. At the 1946 lectureship, speaker Mack Kercheville said, "It is and always will be impossible for us to influence people as long as we feel superior to them. If there were nothing else wrong with our custom of racial discrimination but the fact that it hinders our efforts to preach the Gospel to the whole world, it would have been enough to condemn it."[5] H. L. Barber, president of Southwest Christian College in Terrell, Texas, stated in the 1954 lectureship,

> I doubt seriously today in the sight of our great Master that souls are tinted black, white, red, or yellow. When the day of Judgment comes, I doubt seriously that our Father will say to those gathered before Him, "You that are white approach my throne through the front gate, and you of other colors will be shown to the back door where you will be judged by some of my lesser helpers." A thousand times no! I do not believe that one soul is more important in the sight of God than another. Regardless of the color of the body in which that soul is temporarily housed.[6]

Two years later, Barber was even more blunt while addressing the Abilene crowd. He asked them, "In this land of 150,000,000 people where at least five skin colors number in the millions, is there a master race? Think carefully, my Christian friends; the Nazis believed in the theory of master race. Do Christianity and Nazism go hand in hand?"[7]

In addition to outside lecturers, Abilene faculty and students pushed

[4]1960 Abilene Christian College lectures, 217–218.
[5]Mack Kercheville, "The Latin American Field," 1946 ACC Lectures, online at https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/sumlec_man/15/.
[6]H. L. Barber, "Southwestern Christian College," 1954 ACC Lectures, online at https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/sumlec_man/21/.
[7]Barber, "The Work at Southwestern Christian College," 1956 ACC Lectures, online at https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/sumlec_man/19/.

the institution toward justice. In a 1953 chapel address, New Testament professor Everett Ferguson said, "As Americans, citizens of a democracy, we give lip service to the principle that all men are created equal – not an arbitrary equality, but equal as to rights and opportunities. Yet, in daily living we deny equal rights and equal opportunity to a large segment of our populations."[8] In 1957, the school's newspaper, *The Optimist*, carried the following observation, generally attributed to Joe Schubert, father of current ACU President Phil Schubert: "Our colored brethren are sons of God. We, too, are sons of God. Are we any more sons of God than they? … If God will accept them in heaven, can we not accept them in school? If not, why? … When we gather at the throne of God to sing praises to his name, will God want us any closer to His throne than the Negro? Every race on the face of the earth is permitted to attend ACC except the Negro. Why?"[9]

None of this long-mounting pressure affected the campus as much as Spain's 1960 address, however. In an interview, Ed Enzor, a communications professor who began his career at Abilene Christian in 1958, said,

> The impact of his 1960 lectureship speech was seismic in its effect. He infuriated many people, which is reflective of the racial environment of the day, not only in Texas and the Deep South but for some folks even within the churches in those regions. Carl suffered mightily for his speech and his views, and I know the amount of venom and long-lasting opposition he endured from a certain few "brethren." But to him, that mattered far less than opening the doors of the university to enrollment of black students, and Carl was willing to pay that price to see justice and equality served.[10]

Three main points seem especially worthy for consideration from the story of Carl Spain. First and foremost, the hypocrisy of so many Christians just a few years ago almost defies belief. White American Christians were willing to send Black soldiers to war and collect their taxes but refused to see them as citizens. Even white people, like Spain, who spoke up for African Americans saw their reputations tarnished, their career opportunities thwarted, and their lives threatened. Such stories are not unknown, but they must be repeated while a new generation of white Christians seeks to exonerate their ancestors by erasing the historical record.

Second, systemic racism is not some relic of a bygone era centuries past. The year 1960 was simply not that long ago. Very recently, Black Americans were systematically denied simple educational rights, access, and freedoms that most all of us would take for granted today. A group of students were flatly refused entry into academia not on the basis of their intellect, or qualifications, or desire to learn and study theology, but merely on the color of their skin.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, we see the social change that can be promoted when both citizens and Christians stand with resolute courage for their

[8]Everett Ferguson, "Race Relations," chapel speech delivered at ACU, Spring/Fall 1953.
[9]Paul Anthony, "Optimist gave a vote to Pro-Integration Advocates," *ACU Today* (Fall 2012), 14.
[10]Interview with author, May 6, 2014.

beliefs. Beginning in 1961, African Americans were allowed to enroll at Abilene Christian. A special board-appointed committee was already considering the issue of racial integration before Spain's speech, but his words catalyzed the change, helping to open doors of opportunity for thousands of Black students in the decades afterward.[11]

In 2018, Abilene Christian University established the Carl Spain Center on Race Studies and Spiritual Action. Its mission states, "The Carl Spain Center on Race Studies and Spiritual Action was created to honor the legacy of Carl Spain by conducting research on the historical and contemporary role of race and racism in the church and its Christian institutions. The center heavily emphasizes spiritual formation by utilizing prayer, solitude, biblical meditation, and silence as methods to address racism that is often 'spiritualized' in the hearts of Christians." Ironically, as the state of Texas moves to severely limit discussion of racism in public universities, confrontation of this sin past and present can continue at private universities such as ACU. Christianity, when misapplied, can and often has served as the very foundation of institutionalized racism, but Christianity also serves as the antidote to such poisonous views.

[11] "Early in 1960, the ACC Board of Trustees, like so many southern institutions, found itself divided on the issue of segregation and integration. At that time, the board appointed a special Integration Committee to examine the issue closely and report back with a recommendation. The committee made long-range plans to desegregate the college, but Spain's speech seems to have increased the speed of those plans. Following the event, Spain's employer, ACC, desegregated its graduate school, leading to the desegregation of the entire student body." Theodore Wesley Crawford, "From Segregation to Independence: African Americans in Churches of Christ," PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 2008, pages 126–127.

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## FORUM: COVID-19 IN CONTEXT

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## INTRODUCTION

### JONATHAN D. RIDDLE

When COVID-19 emerged as a pandemic in early 2020, the world turned its attention to understanding the virus, developing vaccines, and debating how best to stop the spread of disease. Alongside the quest for these medical insights, people also searched for historical understanding. People wanted to know whether there was precedent for such a pandemic, whether as a biological or a social phenomenon. How did COVID-19 compare to the early twentieth-century influenza pandemic? Did people in previous disease outbreaks fight over public health interventions, too? How did religious groups respond to such crises in the past? In short, people turned to the past for the contexts in which to understand the upheavals of the COVID-19 pandemic. Historians have been hard at work meeting this demand for the past three years. In 2022, Conference on Faith and History president John Fea invited the four of us (Jonathan D. Riddle, Pepperdine University; Aishah Scott, Providence College; Nancy Tomes, Stony Brook University; and Andrew M. Wehrman, Central Michigan University) to join in that effort—to reflect on COVID-19 in context.

As historians of health and medicine in the United States with widely varying interests and expertise, we turned to different contexts to understand COVID-19. Yet, despite these differences, we discerned common themes running through our reflections. The question of responsibility emerged as an especially prominent and vexing issue uniting crises across four centuries. When diseases become disease outbreaks, the questions surrounding who is responsible for stopping the spread and how they should do so take on added urgency. These questions hinge on beliefs about obligation and duty and therefore also morality. Who bears what

moral obligation during a pandemic? Or, as this query often appears in its more negative guises, who bears what blame and what shame?

Andrew M. Wehrman was already writing a book about the smallpox epidemic that raced across North America during the American Revolution when COVID-19 hit. He therefore uses the regional differences in colonial responses to smallpox to better understand the present-day politics of public health interventions. Northeastern colonies shared an understanding that their governments would exercise police powers to impose stringent measures controlling inoculation and quarantine. Southern colonies, however, grew to consider such interventions as infringements on freedom and therefore adopted laxer policies. While religious understandings of moral obligation did not divide the colonies on the smallpox issue, their divergent views on the role of the government in a medical crisis certainly presage our own debates about federal, state, and local authority to impose public health interventions.

To understand present controversies over who bears responsibility for responding to COVID-19, Jonathan D. Riddle turns to one of the next major epidemics to strike the United States: the cholera outbreaks of the early 1830s. He explains how leaders of the antebellum health reform movement saw in cholera an opportunity to impress upon Americans the duty of taking personal responsibility for their health. Self-consciously departing from Puritan providentialism, these reformers did not blame God for cholera. Rather, they blamed the sick and suffering for living unhealthy lives and therefore rendering themselves vulnerable to disease. The people on the margins of antebellum society, however, knew better. They knew that the same injustices that rendered them poor, enslaved, or displaced also placed them at greater risk of contracting cholera. The history of the first cholera outbreak thus provides context for understanding the long, contested history of personal responsibility as a medical and moral rubric for understanding health and disease.

Aishah Scott carries the theme of responsibility forward into the late twentieth century by thinking about COVID-19 in light of the respectability politics that shaped public responses to the AIDS epidemic. Rather than addressing structural barriers to health care, officials and commentators spent much of the 1980s blaming AIDS victims for the supposed moral failures that caused them to contract the disease. Similarly, Scott argues, during the COVID-19 pandemic the media focused on vaccine hesitancy among Black Americans rather than the practical impediments that prevented them from getting vaccinated. Commentators used the narrative that African Americans distrusted medicine due to historical memory to shift responsibility—and thus blame—for lagging Black vaccination rates from structural inequities to individual Black people. As in the AIDS epidemic, grassroots organizations stepped up to help underserved communities gain access to the health care they needed. Once they did so, the racial differences in vaccination rates narrowed. Thus, Scott shows, focusing on vaccine hesitancy put the onus of disparities on Black people instead of where it belonged on government and public health leaders.

Finally, Nancy Tomes brings our conversation up to the present by exploring the creation of narratives of responsibility during the COVID-19 pandemic. When she began studying the history of vaccine resistance, Tomes quickly encoun-

tered a common storyline blaming white evangelicals for our present troubles: if only white evangelicals had accepted the COVID-19 vaccine, the story goes, or if only they had been willing to wear masks or attend church online, then, surely, we could have contained this pandemic sooner. Tomes recognized this as a particular historical narrative and sought to uncover how the media came to attribute the difficulty of combating COVID-19 to white evangelicals alone, often in the absence of compelling data and to the exclusion of contradictory or complicating factors. Ultimately, Tomes concludes, journalists may write the first draft of history, but historians must be careful to historicize the narratives they hand down to future chroniclers.

From smallpox to cholera to AIDS to COVID-19, beliefs about responsibility, obligation, and blame have shaped how Americans understand both the medical and moral valences of disease outbreaks. To understand our present pandemic, along with any more that may come our way, our reflections suggest that we should be attuned to these political, religious, and moral conversations as much as to epidemiology and public health.

## ARTICLE 1: REFLECTIONS ON COVID-19 AND SMALLPOX: THE VIEW FROM PHILADELPHIA IN 2023 AND 1776

ANDREW M. WEHRMAN

My book *The Contagion of Liberty*, which was published in December 2022, helps put COVID-19 into historical context, or so its early readers and reviewers have told me.[1] Of course, I didn't know that's what the book would do when I started researching and writing it more than a decade ago. I just wanted to understand the American Revolution better. While searching for a dissertation topic—and it was a long search—I wanted to understand how ordinary people experienced the American Revolution. It turned out that many ordinary Americans experienced the 1760s and 1770s through the lens of epidemic disease. By demanding government interventions during outbreaks of smallpox, namely quarantines and inoculations, colonists developed ideas about what their ideal government should look like and how it should protect all people during and after a crisis. I found that this was a part of the Revolution that had not been studied much and that it had not been incorporated into the broader political context of the Revolution. So, I wrote a dissertation, and slowly—in fits and starts—I turned it into an ever-lengthening book.

When COVID-19 hit as I was completing the final draft, suddenly I was someone who could put this global crisis in historical perspective. I didn't ask for it, but it happened, and I realized that I could lend the expertise that I had built up to help us understand what we were going through and to help advocate for better solutions. I wrote op-eds for a number of news outlets including *The Washington Post* and NBC News and was interviewed by reporters from the *New York Times* and *Voice of America,* among others, well before my book came out. When people asked me what it was like to have a book project that is of such sudden interest, I think they expected me to be excited about it. It was thrilling in a sense. But the biggest feeling that I think I got was a kind of depression. I felt like I had seen this before, and I thought, especially in the early going in 2020, that even the people I study who didn't understand germ theory handled their epidemic better than we were doing.

I knew a lot of stuff about the past, but it didn't do a whole lot of good in the present. In fact, it skewed my expectations. I remember being at a meeting with

[1]Andrew M. Wehrman, *The Contagion of Liberty: The Politics of Smallpox in the American Revolution* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2022).

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some campus officials discussing students coming back to campus after having gone virtual in the spring of 2020, and they talked about having a quarantine dorm. I asked if it was a legal quarantine and who was going to enforce it –campus police, city police, or the sheriff? —and they looked at me like I had three heads. They said, "No, this would be a self-quarantine." There would be no guards. No punishments. Just the honor system. Oh, and people could visit and make deliveries, just no overnight stays, but again no one was really watching. The quarantine dorm would simply be a place where students were recommended to stay if they had voluntarily tested themselves and tested positively. That's when I knew for sure that this was going to be a long, long battle. The people I study had no concept of a self-quarantine. Quarantines in eighteenth century America were highly regulated and were implemented by whole communities with harsh penalties for non-compliance. There was no "honor system" during a smallpox epidemic.

We are in a good place to put COVID-19 in historical context: Philadelphia. Let's go back to 1776 where another conference met. In January 1776, the Second Continental Congress was meeting just a few blocks from where we are now. January is always a bad month for disease. As windows shut out the cold and people huddle closer around the fire, noses run and germs spread. As the Second Continental Congress met, there were reports of smallpox outbreaks coming in from other parts of the colonies and from the Continental Army in Canada.[2] The members of Congress didn't know to wear masks. Masks would have been very effective against smallpox, which spread through water droplets exhaled by infectious people, and I suspect that if the delegates had known about the effectiveness of masks, they would have worn them.[3] There was no inoculation mandate for members of the Second Continental Congress, but they were highly encouraged to undergo the procedure, knowing full well the danger that the disease posed. Sound familiar?

Inoculation for smallpox was a precursor to vaccination, and by 1776, it had been practiced in the colonies for fifty-five years with demand ever increasing. First introduced to Colonials by an enslaved man named Onesimus through his legal owner, Cotton Mather, inoculation involved the implantation via incision on the arm of a tiny amount of pustular matter. Once bandaged up the patient would typically receive a mild smallpox infection lasting several weeks, during which time they were still infectious for smallpox. But at the end of that convalescence, they would become immune for life. In the decades following Onesimus's revelation, inoculation become more and more in demand.[4]

It was clear to many of the delegates that inoculation on arrival in

[2]Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001).

[3]Dora Mekouar, "What Would US Founding Fathers Say to Anti-Maskers?" *Voice of America News*, March 24, 2021: https://www.voanews.com/a/usa_all-about-america_what-would-us-founding-fathers-say-anti-maskers/6203646.html

[4]For recent studies of Boston's 1721 epidemic, see Amalie M. Kass, "Boston's Historic Smallpox Epidemic," *Massachusetts Historical Review* 14 (2012): Margot Minardi, "The Boston Inoculation Controversy of 1721-1722: An Incident in the History of Race," *William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (2004); and Stephen Coss, *The Fever of 1721: The Epidemic That Revolutionized Medicine and American Politics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016).

Philadelphia was absolutely necessary. Some of the delegates had immunity from previous infections. Others had already been inoculated, including John Adams in Boston in 1764 and Thomas Jefferson in Philadelphia in 1766. Some had been inoculated before the First Continental Congress in 1774, including Patrick Henry.[5] There were no anti-vaxxers in this crowd. No one in Congress opposed inoculation. It was broadly popular, but difficult to deliver. Doctors charged a lot for it, and it took a month to recover while in quarantine, robbing the inoculee of time and money. Josiah Bartlett of New Hampshire regretted that he would miss "at least a fortnight" of work but ultimately sought out an inoculation in Philadelphia after his daughter told him of her concern that he "might bring smallpox home to my family as Col. Mouton did to his."[6]

However, in January 1776, Samuel Ward of Rhode Island tried to assure his concerned wife Deborah that there was "very little of the Small Pox now in the city."[7] Ward was one of the leading figures in the Congress. He had twice served as the governor of Rhode Island. He was governor during the Stamp Act crisis, and he was the only colonial governor to stand against the despised act of Parliament, quickly making him a recognized leader of colonial resistance. In the Continental Congress Ward was the chair of the critically important and awesomely named "Secret Committee." Secret Committee was charged with acquiring gunpowder and arms for the Continental Army and sneaking them past the British navy. Ward did not want to interrupt this crucial work by taking weeks off to be inoculated.

It is important to note, and this one of the contextual points I want to make, that the colonies were a patchwork of laws and regulations regarding smallpox and inoculation. Rhode Island had the strictest quarantine laws of the thirteen colonies and some of the most restrictive quarantine laws in the world. While port cities like Philadelphia, Boston, and Charleston suffered from smallpox epidemics in the eighteenth century, Newport never did. They quarantined incoming ships and quickly reported and isolated cases. Rhode Island's laws became particularly vigilant when smallpox became "Prevalent in the Town of *Boston*, or in any other Town in *New-England*." Guards were posted at every bridge, ferry, and port of entry into the colony. Any person arriving at one of these ports, with the exclusion of the post, was required to stay at the border for five days to ensure that he or she was asymptomatic. Further, any keeper of a public house or anyone who kept boarders in his or her home was required to report to the authorities anyone who seemed ill,

[5]Stephen Fried, *Rush: Revolution, Madness, and the Visionary Doctor Who Became a Founding Father* (New York: Crown, 2018), 110.

[6]Bartlett's daughter was concerned that he "might bring home the smallpox to my family as Col. Moulton did to his." This was a reference to a recent case in New Hampshire where Colonel Moulton was thought to have brought smallpox home from the army, whereupon it infected and killed his wife Abigail. Some have suspected that he did it on purpose. For the interesting story, see Sarah Schuetze, "Carrying the Enemy Home," *Early American Literature* Vol. 53, No. 1 (2018): 106-108.

[7]Samuel Ward to Deborah Ward, January 2, 1776, Paul H. Smith et al., eds., *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789*, 26 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1904-1937), 3: 448.

on penalty of a strict fine.[8]

No other colony put as much public money or effort behind disease prevention or imposed harsher penalties on violators than Rhode Island. According to a 1743 act, anyone convicted of "willfully and purposefully spreading the smallpox... shall be adjudged to suffer the Pains and Penalty of *Death*, as in the Case of Felony, without Benefit of the Clergy." Further, anyone caught "wickedly endeavoring," that is planning, to spread it via inoculation or otherwise without permission, "shall be sentenced to be whipped, not exceeding *Thirty Nine Lashes*, and suffer Six Months Imprisonment, and be kept to hard Labour."[9] But colonists in Rhode Island could justify these stiff penalties, because everyone in the colony was so committed to the common cause of disease prevention. Inoculation, then, was effectively prohibited within the colony, but town councils could authorize it if they felt all other efforts had failed. Rhode Island's regulations were so successful that there was little public pressure for inoculation access. The wealthy in the colony could and did travel to other provinces, especially New York, to be inoculated, but the average person was also protected by virtue of strong laws and the persistent efforts by public officials, friends, and neighbors to keep disease out of the colony. There was no real smallpox threat there until the outbreak of the Revolution.

Having grown up in Newport and having lived his life under these strict quarantine measures, Ward never really feared smallpox, but this made him overconfident in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia was different. It had quarantine laws and a vigorous local government too, but its larger size made it more susceptible to outbreaks. The city also typically permitted inoculators to practice freely. They were required to quarantine their patients, but inoculation was less regulated in Philadelphia than it was in Rhode Island and the rest of New England. This was true throughout the middle colonies, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Colonists from more restrictive places often traveled to Philadelphia for the procedure, as Thomas Jefferson did in 1766.

So, despite having earlier warned about the dangers of smallpox spreading, Ward attempted to carry on his duties as chair of the important Secret Committee without taking time away for inoculation. It worked for a few weeks, but on March 13, his fellow representative and rival from Rhode Island Stephen Hopkins, noticed that Ward "found himself a little out of order," but Ward still attended Congress for two more days before smallpox broke out on his body March 16, 1776. As his conditions worsened, thousands of pocks appeared on his face "which soon became one entire blister." He was cared for by Dr. Thomas Young, who had famously illegally inoculated Ethan Allen in 1764, along with William Shippen and Benjamin Rush. His breathing became difficult, and his throat was "much obstructed by phlegm." Ward died a few days later. Congress and the city of Philadelphia staged an elaborate funeral procession for him, and he was buried in the Baptist burying ground. An enslaved man Cudgoe, who was legally owned by Ward had accompanied him to Philadelphia. Cudgoe and other close contacts of Ward were immediately inocu-

[8] *Acts and Laws of His Majesty's colony of Rhode-Island, and Providence-Plantations, in New-England, in America, Printed by the Widow Franklin* (Newport, R.I., 1745), 275-280.
[9] *Acts and Laws of His Majesty's colony of Rhode-Island*, 280.

lated after Ward's symptoms were discovered. Cudgoe had an easy experience with inoculation, and after his recovery returned to Rhode Island with Ward's belongings.[10]

It's worth noting here that while nearly all white colonists by the time of the Revolution desired inoculation as protection from smallpox, most enslaved people were kept from it by their enslavers. There's a cruel irony that smallpox innoculation was introduced by an enslaved man in colonial America and later the procedure was often denied to them. Inoculating one's slaves meant an expensive doctor's bill and lost time and labor for the enslaver. In the Southern colonies, inoculation was often not performed out of fear that the disease would spread to uninoculated slaves. The trespasses of armies and militias during the Revolutionary War would upend this uneasy balance and spread smallpox throughout the South where it especially attacked the uninoculated and often malnourished enslaved Black population, many of whom had attempted to run to British lines for freedom only to be halted by smallpox.[11]

This echoes the earlier point about different attitudes and outcomes for minorities during epidemics. This has been part of the United States since its beginning as has the patchwork of regulations. George Washington's inoculation order created a national plan for inoculating soldiers, but Washington did not force Southern governors to build smallpox hospitals as he did New England governors.[12] The result was a massive difference in the experience of smallpox by location during the war. New England largely escaped it through careful regulations and quarantine. The middle colonies fared well and inoculated large numbers of Americans, and the Southern colonies lagged behind, with the worst results felt by African Americans.

[10] Dr. Thomas Young to Henry Ward, March 27, 1776, Clifford P. Monahan, ed., *Correspondence of Governor Samuel Ward, May 1775-March 1776* (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1952), 201-204; Stephen Hopkins to Henry Ward, March 27, 1776, Paul H. Smith et al., eds., *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789*, 26 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1904-1937), 3: 451-452.

[11] I could only give a brief overview in this short conference paper, but for more on enslaved people and smallpox in the South during the Revolution see: Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana*, 104-134; Peter McCandless, *Slavery, Disease, and Suffering in the Southern Lowcountry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 84-104; and Andrew M. Wehrman, *The Contagion of Liberty*, 219-249.

[12] Wehrman, *The Contagion of Liberty*, 236.

# THE LONG HISTORY OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY: FROM CHOLERA TO COVID-19

JONATHAN D. RIDDLE

As a historian who studies the intersection of religion and medicine, I have spent the last three years tracking the moral discourses pervading debates about the proper responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. I have paid particular attention to the ethic of personal responsibility. This ethic has long shaped American understandings of health, including everything from diet and exercise to disease outbreaks. The present pandemic proved no exception to that long history.

In the context of COVID-19, personal responsibility has served primarily as a politically conservative principle invoked against government-imposed public health measures, such as lockdowns or mask and vaccine requirements. In the spring of 2021, for example, Oklahoma governor Kevin Stitt signed a bill forbidding public schools from mandating masks or vaccines. "This is about personal responsibility," Stitt explained. "This is about freedoms."[1] Texas governor Greg Abbot agreed, declaring that "we're past the time of government mandates, we're into the time for personal responsibility." While Abbott urged Texans to get vaccinated against COVID-19, he believed the responsibility to make this decision rested with people rather than the government.[2]

Public health scholars and advocates, meanwhile, have criticized the use of personal responsibility as a framework for responding to a pandemic in which our actions bear on one another and in which structural inequities shape the risks people face. So, in the summer of 2021, when Centers for Disease Control and Prevention director Dr. Rochelle Walensky told Americans that "your health is in your hands" as her agency relaxed masking recommendations, she faced swift backlash from those who believed her language failed—epidemiologically and morally—to account for the social determinants of health.[3] "During a pandemic," wrote *The*

[1]Kaylee Douglas, " 'This Is About Personal Responsibility,' Stitt Stands Firm on State of Emergency, School Mask Mandates Despite Climbing COVID-19 Numbers Across Oklahoma," *KFOR-TV*, July 23, 2021.

[2]Ciara Rouege, "'It's Time for Personal Responsibility': Gov. Greg Abbott Remarks on Calls for Mask Requirement in Schools," *KHOU11*, July 21, 2021.

[3]Cecília Tomori et al., "Your Health Is in Your Hands? US CDC COVID-19 Mask Guidance Reveals the Moral Foundations of Public Health," *EClinicalMedicine* 38 (2021). See also Lindsay F. Wiley and Samuel R. Bagenstos, "The Personal Responsibility Pandemic: Center-

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*Atlantic* columnist Ed Yong, "no one's health is fully in their hands."[4]

In addition to debates about who determines what preventive measures to take against COVID-19, the language of personal responsibility has also featured in exhortations to comply with those measures. In discussing how to convince skeptical people to get vaccinated, for example, columnist Elvia Díaz insisted that for those people "personal responsibility has to kick in at some point."[5] Others have taken this imperative understanding of personal responsibility even further, suggesting that those who refused to follow public health recommendations and then contracted COVID-19 somehow deserved the disease as punishment for their intransigence. This implication of blame appeared in the way news outlets framed the death of Herman Cain and in the subsequent popularity of a Reddit channel that dispenses a "Herman Cain Award" to sick and dying COVID-19 deniers.[6] While most people might reject such crass mockery, the same moral reasoning seems to inform mainstream public health communications, such as the phrase deployed by the Biden administration, "the pandemic of the unvaccinated."[7]

Whatever their intent, when Americans discussed the ethic of personal responsibility amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, they invoked the histories of people grappling with obligation and blame in matters of health. In my current book project, entitled *The Gospel of Health*, I explore one such history. I show how early-nineteenth-century health reformers wove together threads from medical science, religion, and capitalism to craft an understanding of well-being predicated on personal discipline and diligence. This history provides context for our present debates in two ways. First, it traces the origins of belief in personal responsibility back to theological reflections on human agency, explaining, in part, the moral freight the ethic carries. Second, this history highlights the fact that Americans have long recognized both the power and the limitations of relying on personal responsibility to explain health outcomes.

## Health reform

The health reform movement emerged at the height of the reform era of the 1830s, sharing an ameliorative impulse with abolitionists, women's rights advocates, and utopian experimenters. But, while activists in those efforts sought to remake society

ing Solidarity in Public Health and Employment Law," *Arizona State Law Journal* 52, no. 4 (2020): 1235–1302; Aziza Ahmed and Jason Jackson, "Race, Risk, and Personal Responsibility in the Response to COVID-19," *Columbia Law Review* 121, no. 3 (2021): 47–70.

[4]Ed Yong, "The Fundamental Question of the Pandemic Is Shifting," *The Atlantic*, June 9, 2021.

[5]Elvia Díaz, "The Unvaccinated Are Causing a New COVID-19 Wave. What About Personal Responsibility?" *The Arizona Republic*, July 19, 2021. See also David Litt, "Republicans Used to Laud 'Personal Responsibility'. Not with Covid," *The Guardian*, July 30, 2021.

[6]"Herman Cain, Ex-Presidential Candidate Who Refused to Wear Mask, Dies After COVID-19 Diagnosis," *Reuters*, July 30, 2020; F. Diana Barth, "Reddit's Herman Cain Covid 'Award' Is a Depressing Sign of Our Times," *NBC News*, October 2, 2021.

[7]For a study of related phenomena in the United Kingdom, see Fred Cooper, Luna Dolezal, and Arthur Rose, *Covid-19 and Shame: Political Emotions and Public Health in the UK* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023).

in some way, the white Protestant physicians and ministers who led the health reform movement focused on changing individuals. They urged Americans to discipline their personal habits, especially their diets. If people adopted vegetarianism and teetotalism, reformers promised, they would enjoy perfect health, spiritual well-being, and increased productivity.

This plan for personal uplift drew on both contemporary physiology and contemporary theology. The most prominent health reformer, Sylvester Graham, illustrates this combination well. Graham read widely in European and American physiology, distilling from eclectic sources an understanding of human health centered on the stomach. When people ate unhealthy types or quantities of food, Graham argued, they stimulated the stomach too much. Excessive stimulation exhausted and irritated the stomach. This irritation then spread sympathetically to the rest of the body. In this way, Graham believed that something people can control—namely, their poor diets—served as the source of almost all disease and discomfort.[8]

Theology also shaped how Graham viewed human health. Following the vocation of his grandfather and father, Graham began his career in the 1820s as a Congregationalist minister in New England. As he moved from preaching Christ to preaching dietary diligence in the 1830s, however, Graham joined many of his contemporaries in shedding his Calvinist inheritance for an Arminian theology that stressed human agency. Graham believed in a good God who wished people only health and happiness, but who empowered people to secure those blessings themselves through obedience to the laws of life. In articulating this theology of health, Graham rejected the providentialism of his forbearers. He argued that believing God caused illness denied divine benevolence, disregarded the natural (and discoverable) laws that governed human health, and diminished the human power to act. Graham therefore told Americans to stop blaming God for their poor health and to investigate their own unhealthy behaviors instead. "Our disquietudes, and diseases, and untimely death," he wrote, "must therefore spring, not from the fulfilment, but from the infraction of the laws of God."[9] For Graham, belief in human agency meant belief in human responsibility.

Others in the health reform movement made explicit the connection between Arminianism and the imperative of maintaining good health. With free will, they argued, came the responsibility to manage the connection between actions and outcomes. This duty applied equally to spiritual and bodily health. "Has [God] made every man responsible for his moral character—for the health of his soul," one reformer asked, "and does He lay upon him no responsibility in regard to the health of the body?" That responsibility was grave, indeed, for people would be judged for how they tended their bodies as well as their souls. "Every man is the keeper of his own health," the reformer insisted. "We cannot throw off this responsibility upon the regular doctor, the nurse or the quack; upon chance, fate, or the

[8]The best study of Graham's scientific views remains Stephen Nissenbaum, *Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America: Sylvester Graham and Health Reform* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980).

[9]Sylvester Graham, "Study of Physiology a Duty," *Graham Journal of Health and Longevity* 1, no. 28 (October 17, 1837): 219.

Divine decrees…we have no more right to say we could not help being sick than we have to say that we could not help getting drunk or stealing. All are alike our own acts, after we arrive at years of discretion." Whenever people suffered in their bodies, they should hear "as unequivocally as conscience sounds remorse in the ear of the morally guilty, a voice saying, 'THOU ART THE MAN!' "[10]

Health reformers did not shy away from the harsh implications of their theology of health. If people were responsible for their own health, they argued, then the sick were not only to blame for their own suffering, but they were also guilty of wrongdoing. One reformer acknowledged that this was a "hard doctrine," but he maintained his belief that "all disease and sickness is crime."[11] Another frankly declared that "it is disgraceful to be sick."[12]

## Cholera

Graham believed the ethic of personal responsibility held during epidemics as well as in daily life. In the early 1830s, as Graham launched his career as a public lecturer, the second cholera epidemic of the century swept across Asia, Europe, and North America.[13] Most people with means fled American cities. Graham, however, remained in New York City to deliver lectures. In these lectures, Graham entered the debates among American doctors about the nature of cholera and what caused it to spread. Like most physicians, Graham did not consider cholera a specific disease entity and so did not focus on containing contagion through quarantines. Nor did he unqualifiedly endorse the alternative explanation that environmental causes like filth or noxious air gave rise to cholera. He therefore did not emphasize sanitation. Instead, Graham endorsed a version of what historian Charles E. Rosenberg calls the "doctrine of predisposing causes." In this view, poor diet, intemperance, and unclean living undermined people's health and left them vulnerable to diseases, including cholera. The true cause of cholera, then, was an unhealthy lifestyle. To avoid contracting the disease, Graham recommended people take up his prescribed regimen as soon as possible. The doctrine of predisposing causes thus enabled him to turn cholera into an ally of health reform.[14]

Graham used his theology to add a moral imperative to his prescription. During the epidemic, many conservative Protestant commentators speculated about who God sought to punish with cholera, especially as the disease disproportionately afflicted the poor people they considered immoral. Given his rejection of providen-

[10] D., "Every Man Makes His Own Health," *Graham Journal of Health and Longevity* 2, no. 4 (February 17, 1838): 61.

[11] "American Health Convention," *Graham Journal of Health and Longevity* 2, no. 14 (July 7, 1838): 217.

[12] John B. Jansen to Sylvester Graham, June 15, 1833, in Sylvester Graham, *The Æsculapian Tablets of the Nineteenth Century* (Providence, R.I.: Weeden and Cory, 1834), 92.

[13] For an overview, see Christopher Hamlin, *Cholera: The Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[14] Sylvester Graham, *A Lecture on Epidemic Diseases Generally, and Particularly the Spasmodic Cholera*, revised and enlarged ed. (Boston: David Cambell, 1838), 78, 17–26, 44–47; Charles E. Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years: The United States in 1832, 1849, and 1866* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 40–47, 72–79.

tialism, Graham joined the liberal Protestants who interpreted the outbreak not as visitation of divine wrath but as the normal outworking of divinely-established laws.[15] Indeed, Graham never discussed providence in his lectures on cholera. Instead, he placed responsibility for the epidemic on people who put themselves at risk by unhealthy living. Whether someone will contract cholera, Graham said, "depends on the condition of his body; and that condition depends very much, if not entirely, on his own voluntary conduct." Graham closed his lecture with a biblical injunction drawn from the book of Genesis that made it clear that people bore personal responsibility to avoid the disease. "Remain not an hour in the Sodom of your pernicious habits and indulgences!" Graham urged. "'Escape for your lives!—Look not behind you; neither stay ye in all the plain!—escape to the mountain, lest ye be consumed!'"[16]

## Limitations of the Grahamite gospel

Graham and his fellow health reformers preached an individualistic yet universalizing gospel; they believed it applied equally to everyone. To reach this conclusion, they had to assume that everyone enjoyed the same degree of control over their bodies, routines, and diets that they enjoyed. This assumption required overlooking the women in their households—including wives, daughters, mothers, and servants—tasked with preparing their vegetarian meals but given little choice in the matter.[17] It also required overlooking the several million enslaved African Americans who faced an even more daunting challenge in exercising control over their health. While Graham argued that both free and enslaved people should adopt his system, the abolitionist Elizur Wright, Jr. countered that intentional self-denial was a luxury of the privileged. "My Anti-Graham philosophy will only pass for what it is worth, of course," Wright explained to a fellow abolitionist. "Every southern slave I ever saw, complained bitterly about the prevention of meat."[18] Enslaved, starved people had neither the freedom nor the need to diet.

The cholera epidemic only exacerbated these disparities. In a recent, much-needed article, historian Paul Kelton traces the experiences of Irish immigrant workers, enslaved African Americans, and displaced Choctaws during the 1832 epidemic. He shows how people in each of these groups were exposed to cholera by forces beyond their personal control. The Irish immigrants digging the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, for example, contracted cholera through contaminated drinking water served in unsanitary camps. Witnessing the toll the disease took on their comrades, some of these workers made the difficult decision to leave their jobs. Other marginalized groups, however, did not have even this option.

[15] Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years*, 40–54.
[16] Graham, *A Lecture on Epidemic Diseases*, 46, 81.
[17] See Kathryn R. Falvo, " 'Free Him Wholly from the Lusts of the Flesh Pots': Vegetarianism and the Body in Nineteenth Century America" (PhD diss., Pennsylvania State University, 2018).
[18] Elizur Wright, Jr. to Theodore Dwight Weld, July 28, 1836, in Gilbert H. Barnes and Dwight L. Dumond, eds., *Letters of Theodore Dwight Weld, Angelina Grimké Weld, and Sarah Grimké, 1822-1844*, vol. 1 (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), 320–21.

Slave traders continued to move enslaved African Americans southward during the epidemic, despite knowing that cholera traveled with their captives in coffles and on steamboats. At least one slave trading firm simply buried the enslaved cholera victims in shallow graves alongside the road and kept moving. Choctaws also fell victim to cholera on the road. Forced by Andrew Jackson to march from their homelands in the Southeast to what became Oklahoma, Choctaws traveled through regional cholera outbreaks even as the deprivations of the journey rendered them less capable of fending off the disease. In short, Kelton concludes that "the great injustices of American history—the exploitation of immigrants, the trafficking of African American captives, and the ethnic cleansing of Indigenous peoples—enhanced the spread of a novel pathogen and subjected the poor, enslaved, and dispossessed to great risks."[19]

While antebellum Americans did not know about the *Vibrio cholerae* bacteria that caused cholera, they did understand that structural inequities determined, in part, who suffered from the disease. Almost everyone during the early 1830s epidemic recognized that cholera harmed the poor worse than the rich. Moralizing commentators like Graham attributed this disparity to the improper behaviors which made the victims poor in the first place. But there were others who saw the social dynamics that shaped these outcomes. When Irish immigrants fled infected worksites, for example, they testified to their awareness of the distinctly dangerous conditions they faced as manual laborers on the canal. Similarly, Catholic Bishop John Baptist Purcell blamed "the filthy and disgusting hovels where the poor are compelled to congregate" for exposing them to the disease.[20] The *Missionary Herald*, meanwhile, recognized that it was "the fatigues and exposures" of removal, combined with the lack of adequate provisions, that rendered Choctaws "peculiarly liable" to cholera.[21] Simply assigning guilt to these groups for contracting cholera, critics argued, failed to account for the context in which they were exposed.

Discussions of responsibility in the 1830s thus paint a complicated picture. Health reformers embraced responsibility for their own health as an empowering rejection of what they considered providentialist passivity. Yet this same theology of health entailed blame for the sick and suffering. Americans at the time recognized the unfairness of this doctrine. Long before public health scholars spoke of the social determinants of health, abolitionists, allies of the poor, and opponents of Choctaw removal recognized that not everyone enjoyed equal opportunities to be well. They highlighted the long-standing need for an ethic of health care that comprehends agency in its full complexity.

[19] Paul Kelton, "Pandemic Injustice: Irish Immigrant, Enslaved African American, and Choctaw Experiences with Cholera in 1832," *The Journal of Southern History* 88, no. 1 (2022): 75.
[20] Quoted in Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years*, 146.
[21] Quoted in Kelton, "Pandemic Injustice," 107–8.

# CONVERGING CRISES: HIV/AIDS, COVID-19, AND THE POLITICS OF RESPECTABILITY

**AISHAH SCOTT**

This work examines the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Black America, its implications on racial health disparities regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and the role of respectability politics and the Black Church on combating both health crises in the community.

Currently, I am working on my book manuscript entitled *Respectability Can't Save You: The AIDS Epidemic in Urban Black America,* which focuses on the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the African American community and the role of "respectability politics," or moral policing, on its leadership during this period. In particular, my work addresses how several forces shaped the national, local, and community responses—or lack thereof—toward the African American HIV/AIDS epidemic, especially in New York City. These forces include: the influence of the Black Church, the impact of respectability politics from federal and local government, class dynamics and gender relations. These forces also played pivotal roles in responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Black and Latinx communities that I will discuss today. Unfortunately, New York City was also an early epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic making it a very suitable point of comparison of responses to the two public health crises.

The manipulation of respectability politics and Black health with respect to COVID-19 is most clearly exemplified in the discussion of "vaccine hesitancy." There has been much conversation about "vaccine hesitancy" among Black people in the United States because of the long-standing distrust between the community and medical professionals for both historical and continuous neglect and experimentation due to systemic racism. Classic examples of this legacy date back to slavery with Dr. Marion Sims experimenting gynecological procedures on enslaved Black women, the Tuskegee experiment from the 1930s where nearly 400 Black men with syphilis were lied to and denied proper treatment for forty years, and the harvesting of the famous HeLa cells used to create the polio vaccine from Henrietta Lacks without her or her family's consent. Historical memory is not the only source of this distrust. The current lived experiences of Black people with medical professionals inform the current state of relations with the Black community. History of race and medicine scholars Sharla Fett and Deirdre Cooper Owens noted in 1850,

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enslaved infants died before one year of age at a rate 1.6 times higher than that of white infants.[1] In 2016, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) showed that today Black infant mortality is 2.3 times higher than mortality among non-Hispanic white infants which means Black babies die at higher rates today compared to their white counterparts than they did during the period of enslavement.[2] Currently Black women are three to four times more likely to die during childbirth than their white counterparts, and the mortality rates of Black babies are cut in half when the doctor of record is also Black.

While warranted distrust of medical professionals due to historical and contemporary instances of bias and neglect to the Black community certainly impacted early vaccine hesitancy, this narrative was also exploited to create a myopic view that most Black people did not want to be vaccinated and lacked understanding of what the vaccine would mean for protecting themselves and their loved ones. However, data from the Pew Research Center, told us as early March 2021 that Black adults in the U.S. across the board had heightened concerns regarding COVID-19 compared to the rest of the population with 94 percent of Black respondents wearing masks in public spaces.[3] In fact, sixty-one percent of Black adults surveyed said they would get vaccinated lagging the national average by only 8 percent. Nonetheless, we saw consistent reports that vaccinations in Black and Latinx communities across the country were significantly lagging their white counterparts. While "vaccine hesitancy" surely accounted for a fraction of this disparity it was also used as scapegoat to avoid the more pertinent and costly task of tackling socioeconomic inequalities. Pediatrician and public health advocate Dr. Rhea Boyd penned a *New York Times* article entitled "Black people need better vaccine access, not better vaccine attitudes," and gave an interview where she highlighted unequal access to broadband internet, phone service, regular health care providers, health insurance, and resident proximate pharmacies as being at the root of low vaccination rates in Black communities.[4] Vaccine hesitancy provided a public narrative that pathologized Black people as responsible for being disproportionately under-vaccinated as opposed to highlighting the systemic gaps that prevented equal access to the vaccine.

By the end of 2021, the racial gaps in vaccination rates have narrowed. Black people were at a 55 percent vaccination rate compared to their white counterparts who were at 61 percent, lagging by only 6 percent.[5] These rates are reflective

[1]Deirdre Cooper Owens and Sharla M. Fett, "Black Maternal and Infant Health: Historical Legacies of Slavery," *American Journal of Public Health* 109, no. 10 (September 4, 2019): 1342-1345, https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2019.305243.

[2]Owens and Fett, "Black Maternal and Infant Health."

[3]"Black Adults Express Heightened Concern about COVID-19, Lower Trust in Vaccine R&D Process," Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, March 9, 2021), https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/03/09/black-americans-stand-out-for-their-concern-about-covid-19-61-say-they-plan-to-get-vaccinated-or-already-have/ft_2021-03-09_blackamericanscovid_02/.

[4]Boyd, Rhea. Twitter post. March 14, 2021, 2:14 PM. https://twitter.com/RheaBoydMD/status/1371162918402752515

[5]"Black Adults Express Heightened Concern about COVID-19, Lower Trust in Vaccine R&D Process."

of the early survey conducted when vaccines first became available. The critical question became what changed over time and the answer was access to the vaccine. Vaccine sites opened in trusted spaces in the community like churches, began taking walk-in patients to circumvent lack of access to internet and phone service, and operate for longer hours and weekends for those who were unable to take off from work between nine a.m. and five p.m. Additionally, state leaders began tapping members of trusted community-based grassroots organizations to serve as bridge to underserved communities.

In early 2021, Black Church organizations including the National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) and the Conference of National Black Churches stepped up in a major way to engage a coordinated effort to educate the Black community about the vaccine and provide the people access to get one. NBCI, a coalition of over 150,000 African American churches, is working with Latinx community partners including the National Hispanic Medical Association to execute a plan to vaccinate over 106 million Black and Latinx congregants across the country. In February 2021 when the plan was announced NBCI and partners had secured commitments from 3500 Black and Latinx doctors, but needed 2.5 million volunteers to execute and $100 million dollar grant to be sustainable past its first year.[6] It was "the largest, faith-based mobilization of African American and Latino Protestant denominations in the country to achieve a single health goal."[7] Reverend Anthony Evans, president of NBCI, spoke of the Biden administration stating, "Mr. President, we helped you. It is time for you to provide the resources for our community to help us." By September 2021, NBCI set up more than 150 vaccine clinics in the country, and is active in five states and fourteen cities.[8] Rev. Evans spoke to Baltimore community members saying "Please, in the name of Christ ... get vaccinated immediately, we are not in the business of conducting your funeral."[9] Among NBCI's COVID-19 initiatives is "VACCNEWS," an educational newsletter that discusses the benefits and addresses concerns about the COVID vaccine. The newsletter is meant to be circulated between churches and with the larger communities they serve to bridge trust gaps between the medical establishment and marginalized communities. Rev. Evans stated, "If you [cannot] trust anybody else, can you trust the church?"[10]

The Conference of National Black Churches represents 80 percent Black American Christians, approximately 30,000 congregants. Through a roughly 1.5-million-dollar CDC grant the Conference implemented an action plan called

[6]"Health Emergency Declaration," National Black Church Initiative (National Black Church Initiative, February 1, 2021), https://www.naltblackchurch.com/health/.
[7]"Health Emergency Declaration."
[8]Sarah Y Kim, "Black Churches Work to Boost Baltimore Vaccination Rates," WYPR- 88.1 FM (NPR, September 6, 2021), https://www.wypr.org/wypr-news/2021-09-06/black-churches-work-to-boost-baltimore-vaccination-rates.
[9]Kim, "Black Churches Work to Boose Baltimore Vaccination Rates."
[10]Lex Juarez, "National Black Church Initiative Releases VACCNEWS Paper to Members," DC News Now (DC News Now , October 14, 2021), https://www.dcnewsnow.com/news/local-news/washington-dc/national-black-church-initiative-releases-vaccnews-paper-to-members/.

"Mobilizing Black churches in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, trusted voices, trusted content, trusted spaces."[11] This grant made it possible to educate more than 3,000 pastors making them certified in understanding the history of vaccines in the African American community, the science behind vaccines, and understanding the challenges facing the community as it relates to the overall mistreatment and lack of confidence in health care in this country.[12] We witnessed the important work of the Black Church playing out in Black and Latinx communities across the country. An older Black woman at First Baptist Church in Queens, NY, said she felt great about receiving the vaccine and coming to a place that she knew because it felt like home.[13]

The Black Church in the United States is an intricate, complex, and historic institution that serves as both a space for faith practice and community mobilization and health activism. I explore the Black Church as both a victim and perpetrator of respectability politics, as a tool of oppression over time, and the impact it had on the HIV/AIDS epidemic.[14] As the longest standing institution in the African American community, often the central space for organizing, the Black Church played critically important roles in the formation of African American identity.

Often criticized by HIV/AIDS advocates for their early silence on the epidemic in the African American community, the Black Church was far from silent during the '80s. However, their battle cries most certainly reflected the national political agenda of the day. The president of the United States, Ronald Reagan, was hard on drugs and silent on HIV/AIDS. In many ways, Black Church advocacy reflected this image, a product of the nation's respectability politics. The negative impact of Black Church leadership's silence on the epidemic is without question, as it muted the voices of the afflicted in the community through erasure. Reverend Irene Monroe stated, "We [Black clergy] knew that HIV/AIDS was killing African Americans before the CDC because they were coming to us first. We were visiting them at home and in the hospitals when they were sick and dying. We were the ones performing the funerals."[15] Through an analysis of the important and complex relations between Black church leaders at the local and national levels I examine

[11] "Black Faith Leaders Awarded $1.56 Million Grant to Ensure Equitable ...," Conference of National Black Churches (Conference of National Black Churches, April 13, 2021), https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ce829b97cff9a0001025452/t/60789347566aa43928403e79/1618514759654/cnbc+-+cdc+press+release+4-13-2021.pdf.

[12] "Black Faith Leaders Awarded $1.56 Million Grant to Ensure Equitable ...,"

[13] Angélica Acevedo, "Corona Church Becomes Pop-up Vaccine Site with Help from Queens Congresswoman," QNS.com, March 9, 2021, https://qns.com/2021/03/corona-church-becomes-pop-up-vaccine-site-wiith-help-from-queens-congresswoman/.

[14] For more information on the Black Church and the HIV/AIDS epidemic see works by: Brad R. Fulton, "Black Churches and HIV/AIDS: Factors Influencing Congregations' Responsiveness to Social Issues," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 50, no. 3 (September 2011): 617-630, doi:10.1111/j.1468-5906.2011.01579.x; Angelique Harris, *AIDS, Sexuality, and the Black Church: Making the Wounded Whole* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010).

[15] Monroe, Irene. "Homophobia in the Pulpit." Lecture, The LGBTQ Experience in Communities of Color, Stony Brook University: Humanities Institute, Stony Brook, November 17, 2015.

their stark difference in perceptions of respectability politics in the 1980s and its subsequent impact on responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In the absence of HIV/AIDS advocacy for the community from Black Church leaders there was a rise in grassroots activism via nonprofit organizations [like Gay Men of African Descent (GMAD), the NBLCA in '87, and Balm in Gilead in '89] in the late 1980s and early 1990s to combat the epidemic. Each made efforts to bridge the gap between the church and community regarding HIV/AIDS. GMAD appealed to the community to see them as their brothers and sons and recognize that homophobia was yet another manifestation of white supremacy. Balm in Gilead functioned to provide clergy with the language they needed to help those living with the illness. While the efforts of grassroots organizations made strides in bringing Black Church leaders into the fight against AIDS, there were still figures like Pastor Jordan who felt AIDS was God's curse on homosexuality. This work does not seek to excuse the silence and slow response of Black Church leaders to the epidemic, but it does contextualize the response within the complex respectability politics of the Black community in the 1980s.

Similar to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, grassroots organizations have been a critical component in combating COVID-19 in Black and Latinx communities. Many of the same organizations who built community frameworks that provided the most marginalized of these communities with resources to combat HIV/AIDS are currently bridging the same gaps for COVID-19. The National Black Leadership Commission on Health (formerly known as NBLCA) partnered with NYC Health and Hospitals to create test and trace programs in Black communities with zip codes reporting the highest rates of infection.[16] Between July and November 2020 Black Health leveraged their relationships to host over 600 events, connecting with over 100,000 New Yorkers high risk communities, distributed over half a million masks along with resources for COVID-19.[17] The president of the National Latino Commission on AIDS and founder of the Hispanic Health Network Guillermo Chacon was tapped by former New York Governor Cuomo to serve on the COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Task Force.[18] Chacon is joined by nineteen other leaders of nonprofit, faith-based, or community-based organizations that focus on shrinking inequities in communities of color.

As Dr. Rhea Boyd discussed the misnomer of "vaccine hesitancy" in her interview, she also mentioned that when vaccination sites with appointments that don't require internet access were created within Black communities the people show up. This was evidenced by the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium in Philadelphia, that created the first 24-hour mobile testing and vaccination unit

[16]C. Virginia Fields et al., "Black Health's Response to COVID-19," National Black Leadership Commission on Health (National Black Leadership Commission on Health, December 2020), https://nblch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Black-Health-Response-to-COVID-19_Jan-20-1.pdf.

[17]Fields et al, "Black Health's Response to COVID-19."

[18]"COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Task Force," New York State (New York State), accessed February 1, 2022, https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-equity-task-force.

in February 2021.[19] It allowed people to come for walk-in appointments on a first-come, first-served basis. The Consortium outpaced the city's average of 3500 vaccinations a day by vaccinating 4,000 residents during the first 24-hour walk-up site.[20] Even more remarkable, three out of four Philadelphians vaccinated at the city's first round-the-clock walk-up site were people of color. The diversity of participants was particularly significant because in a city where white people made up just 40 percent of residents, fifty-five percent of people who received the vaccine to that point were white.[21] This model spread across the country and initiatives like this one that targeted disparities in underserved communities narrowed that racial gap in vaccinations. As the pandemic raged on, the Black Doctor's Consortium of Philadelphia dropped the COVID-19 from their name and opened a primary care clinic as it became clear to them that racialized health access issues in North Philly went far beyond COVID-19.[22] The Consortium saw the clinic as an opportunity to disrupt the systemic issues that leave Black and Brown people of Philadelphia disproportionately impacted by poor health outcomes.

When I first wrote the epilogue of my manuscript pre-pandemic, I had a sentence that read "Ultimately, a cure for HIV/AIDS could be found tomorrow and a new disease would emerge wreaking the same havoc on the African American community because the structural racism that prevents access to necessary resources have not been addressed." Little did I know that disease was less than a year away with the onset of COVID-19 disproportionately impacting Black and Brown communities. As long as respectability politics are weaponized in a way that wields stereotypes about criminality, hyper-sexuality, and laziness regarding racial minorities, government policies will continue to reflect bias and promote disparities across lines of housing, employment, and ultimately health.

[19] Ellie Rushing, Oona Gooding-Smith, and Anna Orso, "The Black Doctors Covid-19 Consortium Vastly Outpaced Philly in Vaccinating Black Residents," https://www.inquirer.com (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 25, 2021), https://www.inquirer.com/health/coronavirus/philadelphia-coronavirus-vaccine-black-doctors-covid-consortium-20210225.html.
[20] Rushing, Gooding-Smith, and Orso, "The Black Doctors Covid-19 Consortium."
[21] Rushing, Gooding-Smith, and Orso, "The Black Doctors Covid-19 Consortium."
[22] Nina Feldman, "Black Doctors Consortium Opens New Primary Care Clinic in North Philly," WHYY (WHYY, October 27, 2021), https://whyy.org/articles/the-black-doctors-consortiums-primary-care-clinic-in-north-philly-is-now-open/.

# WHITE EVANGELICALS AND COVID-19 VACCINATION: BEWARE THE TEMPTATION OF THE EASY SCAPEGOAT?

NANCY TOMES

In my current research project, I have been thinking a lot about journalism as the "first rough draft of history" and how initial storylines about epidemics can take on a life of their own.[1] These reflections are part of a broader interest in the way different actors (scientists, policy makers, politicians, media professionals) have historically defined information and misinformation, and the impact of the Internet and social media on the making and enforcing of those definitions. In that work I'm trying to complicate magical thinking about information: that giving people the "right" kind of information (whatever that is) will neutralize all their fears and biases and lead them to do the "right" things.

As part of that larger inquiry, I have become fascinated by a storyline that has gained some prominence in reporting about COVID-19: that among all the faith traditions, white evangelical Christians have been the most resistant both to vaccination and to social distancing measures. When I was invited to be on the AHA panel, I thought, great, here is my chance to put that resistance in historical context as both a theological and a social phenomenon. My interest was personal as well: I am a strong supporter of both vaccination and social distancing measures, as a regular churchgoer in a mainline Protestant denomination, and someone who identifies with the progressive wing of the Christian faith. I share this to be transparent about my mindset as I began this research: I was ready to get "judgy." But once I started doing more research, I had to question some of my initial assumptions.

Certainly, what I found confirms John Fea's observation that vaccine resistance is a very new phenomenon in white evangelical communities, and that its appearance is strongly linked to the populist politics of Donald Trump.[2] Prior

[1]The statement "Journalism is the first rough draft of history" is often credited to Philip L. Graham, long time publisher of the *Washington Post*, but like many famous phrases, it summed up a much older tradition in American journalism. See Jack Shafer, "Who said it first? Journalism is the 'first rough draft of history.' " *Slate Magazine*, August 30, 2010. https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2010/08/on-the-trail-of-the-question-who-first-said-or-wrote-that-journalism-is-the-first-rough-draft-of-history.html

[2]John Fea, "We Thank God for Dr. Salk and the New Polio Vaccine." *Current* (blog),

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to 2016, so far as we know, white evangelicals were no more likely than other groups of white Americans to resist vaccinations. So far so good. But as I read more about this recent development, I became aware of the mainstream media's tendency to pick up on that hesitancy as a key to understanding the broader failure of COVID-19 containment. The implication seemed to be, if it hadn't been for the white evangelicals, COVID would have been more easily defeated.

Being in the midst of reading about the media's role in the "social amplification of risk"—how decisions about what to cover and what not to cover influence the perception of threat—I was struck first by the quick acceptance of the claim that white evangelicals had a particularly important role. In fact, reliable "big data" about who did not get vaccinated and why was very limited during the first year of the pandemic. It still is.[3] It will be years, perhaps decades, before epidemiologists will have a solid understanding of why COVID-19 was and remains so hard to control.[4] Having started this research ready to blame white evangelicals, I pivoted instead to a different set of questions: Where did this story line get its momentum, and why might this "first rough draft" of history need some revision?

Inadvertently, I think the Pew Research Center's commendable efforts to document American religious beliefs helped fuel the focus on vaccine resistance among American evangelicals. Evident in the creation of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life in 2001, the Center has made religious beliefs a focus of its high quality survey research.[5] Because of its long-standing focus on religious views, the Pew Center could report as early as February 2021 that their survey results showed high rates of vaccine resistance among white evangelicals compared to Protestants, Roman Catholics, and other Christian groups.[6] Although white evangelicals constitute only a little more than 14 percent of the American popula-

September 11, 2021. https://currentpub.com/2021/09/11/we-thank-god-for-dr-salk-and-the-new-polio-vaccine/. Curtis Chang notes that as of 2016, Pew Research polling showed that 76% of white evangelicals supported vaccine mandates. He is quoted in Michele Boorstein, "Marcus Lamb died of Covid-19 after his network discouraged vaccines. But some Christian leaders don't want to talk about it." *Washington Post*, December 3, 2021.

[3]At present, data on vaccinations is most reliable in its break down by age. Race and ethnicity have been so unevenly reported that the CDC does not report state-level data broken down by those categories. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. COVID Data Tracker. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2023, February 15. https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker. CDC https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#-vaccinations_vacc-people-booster-percent-pop5.

[4]For a good overview of just how much remains to be understood, see World Health Organization, "Statement on the fourteenth meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee regarding the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic." https://www.who.int/news/item/30-01-2023-statement-on-the-fourteenth-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-(2005)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-coronavirus-disease-(covid-19)-pandemic.

[5]Pew Research Center, "Our History." https://www.pewresearch.org/about/our-history/ Religion is one of Center's featured research topics. See Pew Research Center, "Religion." https://www.pewresearch.org/topic/religion/

[6]Pew Research Center, "White evangelical Protestants less likely to have been vaccinated for COVID-19 than other religious groups." September 17, 2021. https://www.pewresearch.org/ps_2021-09-15_covid19-restrictions_a-01/.

tion as a whole, those numbers attracted press attention at a time when frustration over vaccine hesitancy was growing.

A good example of the emerging story line about white evangelicals appeared in an April 2021 story in the *New York Times* titled "White Evangelical Resistance Is Obstacle in Vaccination Effort." In that article, reporters Elizabeth Dias and Ruth Graham (no relation to Billy Graham) explored the beliefs behind those numbers. Evangelicals they interviewed gave various reasons for their objections to COVID-19 vaccination, including the supposed use of "aborted cell tissue" and a faith in God's power to protect and heal. Whatever their reasons, Dias and Graham wrote, "across white evangelical America, reasons not to get vaccinated have spread as quickly as the virus that public health officials are hoping to overcome through herd immunity." The article did note that white evangelicals were in fact divided over the issue. The "old guard" leadership represented by Franklin Graham and the powerful Southern Baptist conference supported vaccination. The high rates of unvaccinated white evangelicals suggested that the old guard was losing control, that Sean Hannity had more influence over the faithful than did Franklin Graham. Thus, white evangelicals had become an "obstacle" to COVID-19's containment. That story line remains a part of the "first rough draft" of COVID-19 history.[7]

As a chapter in the modern history of the evangelical right, this COVID-19 story line seems consistent with what scholars such as John Fea and Kristin Kobes Du Mez have written about the importance of the 2016 election as a turning point in the history of the late twentieth century white evangelical movement.[8] The new Christian nationalism that has cohered around the populist politics of Donald Trump represents a very different orientation toward national security and the power of the state. In the early Cold War era, Billy Graham could support polio vaccination without being accused of ungodliness. At a personal level, white evangelical families experienced the fear of polio as "real"; Graham's sister Jean had contracted polio at age 11, along with many other affluent white children. At a more general level, political leaders from both parties endorsed mass vaccination campaigns as part of the postwar battle against Communism; harnessing the wonders of modern biomedicine went hand in hand with defeating the Soviet Union and its allies. So being pro-vaccination fit the evangelical realignment with Cold War security concerns documented by Kristin Kobes Du Mez in *Jesus and John Wayne*.

The COVID-19 evangelical story line also is consistent with Du Mez's account of the post-1980s trends that ultimately laid the foundation for Trump's popularity among white evangelical voters in 2016. I want here to underline one aspect of the story she tells as especially important to understanding the divisions over COVID-19 vaccination: the importance of a changing media landscape. Start-

[7]S. Nagar and T. Ashaye T. "A Shot of Faith—Analyzing Vaccine Hesitancy in Certain Religious Communities in the United States," *American Journal of Health Promotion* 36, no. 5 (2022): 765-767.

[8]John Fea, *Believe Me: The Evangelical Road to Donald Trump* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2018); Kristin Kobes Du Mez, *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation* (New York: Liveright Publishing Co., 2020).

ing in the 1970s, a combination of cultural trends (skepticism of experts, demands for transparency, bottom-up health activism) and media/technological innovations (cable TV, FM-AM and the rise of talk radio, the Internet, and digital media) have broken down traditional controls and filters over media content. These broad trends have fractured standards of what constitutes reliable information and credible news in general; they have also made "culture wars" into a reliable means for media entrepreneurs to build new empires.[9] Those media trends have greatly complicated evangelical politics as well. First cable TV, then the Internet and social media, made it easier and easier for independent pastors to develop their own unique theological and political positions. That freeing up of the evangelical media presence helped cement the importance of white evangelicals as a voting bloc, but it came with increased exposure for missteps and scandals.[10]

This media context is useful in understanding both the divisions within the evangelical community over COVID-19 and its coverage in the mainstream news media. The anti-vaccination argument has been strongly associated with "new" media evangelists who operate without the doctrinal or institutional constraints imposed by the Southern Baptist Convention. A case in point is Marcus Lamb, the Georgia-born evangelist who in 1980 founded (with his wife Joni Lamb) the Word of God Company and in 1997 launched the Daystar network, which by 2010 was the second largest Christian television network in the world.[11] Lamb used that global Christian network to warn people that COVID vaccines would destroy their immune systems and to encourage them to take Ivermectin, an antiparasitic medication shown to have no effectiveness against the disease. The network hosted proponents of various conspiracy theories about the pandemic's origins. Predictably, Lamb got among the most extensive press coverage of his long career by dying from COVID in December 2021.[12] To cite but one example, Michelle Boorstein's story for the *Washington Post* emphasized the unwillingness of conservative evangelicals to confront their divisions over COVID-19. When asked about Lamb's death, Franklin Graham expressed respect for Daystar's decision to take a position different from his own, and concluded "like all medical treatments, vaccines are a personal choice."[13]

Meanwhile, another story line was shaping up that received far less media attention. Whatever the divisions among high level evangelical leaders, change was occurring at the congregational level. Some pastors initially skeptical of the vaccine began to reconsider its value. Some faith-based leaders compiled biblical insights

[9] There is a huge literature on these transformations. For a case study in relation to the early HIV epidemic, see Nancy Tomes, "A 'Creation of the Media': AIDs, Sensationalism, and Media Portrayals of Epidemic Risk," *Feminist Media Histories* 8:4 (2022): 85-116.

[10] Du Mez, *Jesus and John Wayne*, provides a good overview of the impact of new technologies on evangelical outreach and politics.

[11] Sam Hodges, "Daystar Scandal Brings More Glare Than Just TV Lights," *Dallas Morning News*, December 27, 2010. The article summarizes Lamb's career and quotes his statement about Daystar's status as the second largest Christian television network in the world. The largest network is the Trinity Broadcasting Network.

[12] The Wikipedia listing for Marcus Lamb includes links to stories by CNN, NPR, *USA Today*, and the *New York Times*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Lamb.

[13] Boorstein, "Marcus Lamb died of Covid-19."

to go along with scientific evidence to build a Christian case for vaccination. A notable example was the website "Christians and the Vaccine" created in 2021 by Curtis Chang, former pastor of an Evangelical Covenant Church in California, in partnership with the National Association of Evangelicals.[14] Those efforts apparently produced results. On February 11, 2022, the Pew Research Center released another survey that showed that 62 percent of white evangelicals had had at least one COVID-19 shot.[15] Other studies documented that having pastors advocate for vaccination helped overcome hesitancy among their parishioners. Yet those news items got virtually no mainstream press coverage; you must look hard to find them, primarily in religious-oriented publications.[16]

So, for historians of evangelical religion in the United States, the COVID-19 vaccination story line does present some interesting insights into its recent history. We should investigate and teach about the pandemic using these insights. But I suggest some caution about amplifying the larger media messages that have accompanied stories about white evangelical vaccine hesitancy. I understand why that hesitancy has made for compelling coverage: that deeply religious Christians could assert individual choice and defiance of the "deep state" as more important than the "love thy neighbor as thyself" doctrine was (and is) disturbing and thus newsworthy. But taken out of context, that story line may be misleading.

First, we need to make sure we update the story as new information comes in: efforts to overcome evangelical vaccine hesitancy have worked, much as similar efforts to overcome vaccine hesitancy among communities of color have worked. No more than any group of Americans, white evangelicals should not be abandoned as uneducable.

Second, the evangelical resistance story needs to be put in comparative perspective. There are other examples of vaccine hesitancy that seem to me equally startling and significant that have gotten far less media amplification: vaccine resistance and hesitancy among health care professionals, especially nurses, as well as police and firefighters. The Pew Research Center has not done in-depth surveys of what these occupational groups think about COVID and vaccination; hence they have not gotten the same degree of scrutiny. Given health care professionals' commitment to science and the well-being of their patients, nurses who say no to

[14] On Curtis Chang and his vaccine work, see Andrea Guzman, "This Former Pastor Is Changing Evangelicals' Minds on COVID Vaccines," *Mother Jones*. August 17, 2021. https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2021/08/this-former-pastor-is-changing-evangelicals-minds-on-covid-vaccines/ The website is "Christians and the Vaccine." https://www.christiansandthevaccine.com/.

[15] Pew Research Center, "Increasing Public Criticism, Confusion Over COVID-19 Response in U.S.," February 9, 2022. https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2022/02/09/increasing-public-criticism-confusion-over-covid-19-response-in-u-s/.

[16] Ryan Foley, "62% of white Evangelicals have had at least 1 dose of COVID-19 vaccine: poll," *The Christian Post*, February 11, 2022. https://www.christianpost.com/news/62-of-white-evangelicals-have-had-at-least-1-covid-19-shot-poll.html; Mya Jaradat, "Why so many white evangelicals are shifting from vaccine hesitance to acceptance," *Deseret News*, August 11, 2021. There has been some press coverage of Curtis Chang's work; the website "Christians and the Vaccine" documents efforts to reach Christians through pastors and other faith leaders.

COVID vaccination would seem to be as newsworthy as white evangelicals doing the same, and yet there has been little media exploration of that phenomenon. There has been a little more media coverage of police vaccine hesitancy primarily because it has resulted in union actions and threatened work stoppages.[17] But I have yet to see a *New York Times* or *Washington Post* article suggesting that unvaccinated nurses or policemen are the reason we do not have COVID under control.

My point here is not to offer up nurses and police officers as more appropriate scapegoats than white evangelicals. Rather I want to encourage us to avoid easy scapegoats of any sort. To repeat my earlier observation: we do not yet know, and we may never know why COVID has been so hard to control, and the extent to which specific groups' refusal to get vaccinated contributed to its unmanageability. There are biological reasons, such as the virus's capacity for rapid mutation, as well as practical reasons, such as the understandable delays in vaccinating children and infants, that may be as consequential, if not more so, than the refusal of specific groups--white evangelicals, nurses, or police officers--to get vaccinated.

Going forward, I take from this research the need to be less judgmental, as much as I can be. I still find it distressing that people of faith do not agree over what it means to "love thy neighbor" during a pandemic. But as a scholar, I have realized the need to be more careful about accepting those "first rough drafts" of epidemic history.

[17] See for example Sandy Gardner, "The Impact of the COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate on the Nursing Profession," HealthESource, American Bar Association, July 27, 2022, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/health_law/publications/aba_health_esource/2021-2022/july-2022/the-impact-of-covid-19-vaccine-mandate-on-the-nursing-profession/;
Jason Laughlin and Anna Orso. "Nearly Half of Philly's Firefighters and Police Have Skipped COVID-19 Vaccines, Unions Say." *Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 12, 2021; Darryl Coote, "Union: 'Dozens' of Massachusetts Troopers Quit Following State's Vaccine Mandate." *UPI Top News*, September 27, 2021.

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# ROUNDTABLE: GEORGE MARSDEN'S *THE SOUL OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY* REVISITED

## INTRODUCTION

A panel of scholars convened at the 2022 biennial meeting of the Conference on Faith and History to discuss the second, updated edition of George Marsden's book *The Soul of the American University*, originally published in 1994.

Contributors:

Michael Lee, Eastern University
Andrea L. Turpin, Baylor University
Ethan Schrum, Azusa Pacific University
John Schmalzbauer, Missouri State University

Response:

George Marsden, professor emeritus University of Notre Dame

## COGNITIVE DISSONANCE AND CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

**MICHAEL LEE**

Let me begin by sharing something personal about this book. I attended Yale University in the mid-'90s. At the time, I had a vague aspiration to be a serious Christian and a serious thinker. The problem was that for most of my young life, those two things seemed to exist in separate and mutually exclusive spheres. I knew a lot of people at church who really loved God and were deeply pious, but they didn't apply or subject their faith to any intellectual examination or scrutiny, or at least not in very sophisticated ways. On the other hand, I knew some really smart and learned people—in particular, my teachers at my school. I loved and respected them, but they had no respect for Christianity. I thought these two worlds needed to be bridged. I just didn't know how that was going to happen, and my experience at Yale was not helping.

While I was a student, I lived in a residential college called Pierson College. It was named after the Puritan minister Abraham Pierson, who was one of the first teachers at what would later become Yale University. On the way to the dining hall every day, I passed by Jonathan Edwards College. I knew a little about the history of Yale at the time. I found it so strange that a place that was created by Puritan pastors to train generations of pastors would become in 300 years a place that would be so aggressively hostile to Christianity.

A few years after I graduated from Yale, I was studying church history at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, an evangelical seminary. I distinctly recall a professor of church history telling the class that we really ought to read this new book by a George Marsden called *The Soul of the American University*. That book changed my life. I finally had some answers to the question that had been troubling me at Yale. It also addressed bigger issues that haunted me my entire life. The Christians I knew were excellent and commendable people. However, they did not critically apply their minds to their faith. And, the intellects in my world, the media, the dominant culture, seemed so antithetical to my faith. I lived with a sort of deep cognitive dissonance.

The book didn't singlehandedly answer all my questions, but it got me on the right road. It helped me to figure out what else I should read: Mark Noll's *Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, James Turner's *Without God, Without Creed*, Nathan Hatch's *Democratization of American Christianity,* and many other books. A few

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years later, I was a graduate student at Notre Dame, and I met and took classes with George Marsden.

Now I'm at this roundtable talking about this book. At the risk of being maudlin, let me say, "Thank you George for writing this book. It quite literally changed my life." And I'm quite sure that my story is not unique.

This book has been thoroughly discussed for the past twenty-seven years. Finding something new and interesting to say about it is challenging. But let me see if I can add a few thoughts for discussion coming at this topic from a different perspective. What follows is something of an oral history.

I am a Korean American. The 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act and the revocation of the quota system enabled a massive tide of immigrants from South Korea. My family came to the U.S. in the early 1970s. When Koreans arrive in the U.S., they set up churches, usually Presbyterian ones. My childhood was a typical one for Korean Americans. I studied a lot, and I went to church a lot. My parents had two priorities for me: get into an Ivy League university and be a good Christian.

When I got to Yale, I checked out the evangelical student parachurch organizations on campus: Campus Crusade for Christ and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. I noticed something very peculiar. They were at least 80 percent Asian, Korean Americans being the largest share of the Asians. When I would visit my friends at various other schools, such as Brown, Cornell, MIT, and Harvard, I discovered the same phenomenon. Their campus fellowships were overwhelmingly Asian American. I heard anecdotally, from the parachurch staff workers, that for many years, membership in the organizations had been dwindling. Sometimes, meetings consisted of between five to ten people. It seems, however, when the children of the first wave of Asian immigrants came of age and entered competitive universities, the population of evangelical students rose.

I recently talked to my classmates, and we reflected on our undergraduate experience. Though we have many positive things to say, our Christian experience was lacking in intellectual rigor. We had an emotional faith, but it was not rooted in any sort of theological framework. To paraphrase something I heard George say many years ago, we had elementary school faith and college-level brains. This phenomenon, the "Asian example," if you will, demonstrates the vital importance of a robust education offered by Christian universities. They can help to solve the problem—the bifurcation of piety and intellect—that George had long ago identified and continued to focus on even in the recent updated edition of his book.

The Korean American Christians I knew at places such as Harvard, Yale, and MIT were extraordinarily intelligent and diligent. They would go on to get PhDs in engineering and MDs from top tier schools. However, the vast majority never studied theology, beyond some devotional and pietistic experiences in environments such as InterVarsity. Their considerable intellect and technical expertise were devoid of theology. In retrospect, it's odd. In our high school years, we were deeply pious, but it never occurred to us to even consider a Christian college. We saw college primarily as a pragmatic step towards a profession. That is to say, we did not see college as an institution that would shape our souls and character in a distinctive way.

These Korean American students may seem like outliers, but I argue that they might become the norm in the very near future. I have been informed by consultants that the ways in which Christian high school students make choices about which colleges they will attend is changing. To put it simply, twenty years ago, Christian families would send their children to Christian colleges. However, that is no longer the case. They now will choose schools for a variety of factors: cost, sports, return on investment, prestige, etc. Christian colleges will have to become pragmatic and functionalist in order to be competitive and survive.

However, they risk losing their Christian distinctives. Arthur Levine and Scott Van Pelt, in their book *The Great Upheaval* (2021), see higher education undergoing the same transformation that reshaped the music, film, and newspaper industries. They anticipate "the rise of anytime, anyplace, consumer-driven content and source agnostic, unbundled, personalized education paid for by subscription." Higher education will be a product consisting of content that the consumers (or students) will purchase. Students want "the same kind of relationship with their colleges that they have with their banks, supermarkets, and internet providers." Who provides the content is not particularly important.[1]

I hope Levine and Van Pelt are wrong, but what if they are right? One response is to make the Christian college look like other schools. In order to survive in an increasingly competitive marketplace, Christian colleges will have to improve their sports, online classes, convenience, and customer service. Managerial skills, bureaucratic expertise, and efficiency will become ends in themselves.[2] If students see college not as a distinctive community that shapes their soul and character, but instead as a series of discrete modules of technical competencies that will pave the path to a profession, in order to offer what the consumers want, Christian colleges may choose to minimize or mute their Christian identity. If students are seeking to enter their profession in the least amount of time and for the least amount of money, is there room for theology and Bible classes?

Many times, Marsden called for theology to be the center of the intellectual life of a university. Academic departments and disciplines ought to be deeply and profoundly shaped by the school's particular theology. Has that been the case, though? To what extent have evangelical colleges been able to shape their disciplines, language, and practices by their theology? Or are Christian colleges mostly methodologically secular and naturalistic—but with a Bible department?

The origin of the present situation is actually in the past that Marden had written about in *The Soul*. After the colonial Christian colleges absorbed the new science and Enlightenment ideas, the ethical and intellectual goals of the American Christian colleges were growing increasingly distant from a distinctly Christian understanding of the world. For example, Christian intellects were increasingly less likely to believe that God directly intervened in natural events. Morality and ethics

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[1]Arthur Levine and Scott Van Pelt, *The Great Upheaval: Higher Education's Past, Present, and Uncertain Future* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2021), 212.

[2]Alistair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015 [1981]), 107 and George Ritzer, *McDonaldization of Society* (Newbury Park, Calif.: SAGE Publications, 2012).

could be arrived at through naturalistic means.[3] Well-meaning Christian intellectuals defended the Bible from skeptical deistic attack by naturalistic methods.[4] God went from being essential, to peripheral, to optional, and ultimately unnecessary. Beginning in the eighteenth century, Christian colleges unwittingly utilized secular means to achieve secular ends. The colonial Christian college was not particularly Christian, or not Christian enough. However, the pervasive culture was sufficiently "Christian" that the cracks and weaknesses of the foundation were not apparent. That is no longer the case.

What about the Christian students who go on to elite secular schools? Parachurch organizations such as InterVarsity and Campus Crusade are particularly good at evangelism and discipleship. They are not particularly good at cultivating the life of the mind. They are simply not equipped for that. In recent years, there have been a few centers of Christian thought that are not part of universities but are literally next door to universities: Collegium Institute at University of Pennsylvania (founded 2013), Anselm House at the University of Minnesota (founded 2016), Rivendell Institute at Yale University (founded in 1995), and Witherspoon Institute at Princeton University (founded in 2016). They all have some things in common. They are engaging in the life of the mind and scholarship from a Christian perspective. They engage Christian faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates. They are trying to carve out a space where Christian thought and scholarship can grow, flourish, and spread in a secular university.

The future is uncertain. There is both peril and possibility. History teaches us that the world is unpredictable and often surprising. George documented the secularization of Christian colleges. Economic stressors may force another round of secularization of Christian colleges and universities. Hopefully, we will all continue to read George's book to avoid the pitfalls of the past.

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[3]Mark Noll, *Princeton and the Republic, 1768–1822: The Search for a Christian Enlightenment in the Era of Samuel Stanhope Smith* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2004).

[4]Michael Lee, *The Erosion of Biblical Certainty: Battles over Authority and Interpretation in America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

## A NEW UNIFYING MORALITY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION? THE POSSIBILITIES AND PITFALLS OF PLURALISM

**ANDREA L. TURPIN**

At the History of Education Society annual meeting in Fall 2019, I served alongside Andrew Jewett, Adam Laats, and Ethan Schrum on a panel commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of George Marsden's *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief*. It is a delight to have the opportunity to update those reflections in light of the 2021 release of the second edition, now entitled *The Soul of the American University* Revisited: *From Protestant to Postsecular*.[1]

First, a bit of retrospective context: I matriculated at Notre Dame to study the history of religion in American higher education with George Marsden and Jim Turner in 2005. But when Marsden first published *Soul* twenty-seven years ago, I was a freshman in high school. Unbeknownst to my younger self, my subsequent high school and college years would be an extraordinarily productive decade of reexamining the history of religion's role in American higher education. While a host of authors wrote book-length treatments of this subject, *The Soul of the American University* arguably made the biggest splash at the time and has had one of the largest ripple effects as well. *Soul* articulated a historical explanation for the "secularization" of the academy—and in a postscript, a controversial program for creating a more robustly pluralistic modern academy in which religious viewpoints would have a seat at the table, but not control of the discussion. Marsden believed secularization had been a gain in many ways—it allowed for more participants in higher education, for example—but a loss in others. The loss he highlighted was that no consensus had emerged as to what would replace the ousted broad Protes-

[1]"Book Session: 25th Anniversary Retrospective on George Marsden's The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief," *History of Education Society 59th Annual Meeting*, October 31–November 3, Columbus, Ohio, https://www.historyofeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019-HES-Conference-Program-Print-Version-10-21-19-Final.pdf, 41; George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University* Revisited: *From Protestant to Postsecular* (New York: Oxford University, 2021).

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tantism as a moral underpinning for higher education.

Marsden focused on the effects of the tension between the religious origins of most American colleges and the understanding that colleges should serve the entire public, that is, students from a variety of faiths—if not always races, sexes, and class backgrounds, I would add. Navigating these two realities led higher educational leaders to insist that their theological position, and hence their educational institution, was what truly constituted being "nonsectarian," which was the goal that fused religious purpose and public good in this style of thinking. Marsden noted that this historical approach was not pluralism; it was more like imperialistic blandness, declaring your own approach sufficiently broad to cover everyone. Anyone who disagreed was either overly narrow on one side or heretical on the other. And he blamed people from his own religious tradition—Reformed Protestantism—for pioneering this approach. In the mid-nineteenth century, broad-minded evangelical college leaders made this sort of nonsectarian argument against smaller denominational schools. Then, at the turn of the twentieth century, more liberal Christian scholars used it to take power from the evangelicals. Later in the twentieth century, secular scholars in turn used it against liberal Christians.

To piece together the story of what happened, Marsden sought his answers at the top, which is to say he gave pride of place to the religious and philosophical convictions of college and university administrators, who he believed had the power to set the trajectory of their institutions. He thus spent less time on factors like admission patterns or student life. Marsden also focused on the prestigious institutions at the top—the "usual suspects" in the history of American higher education, or what we now call "aspirational peers," those institutions that set the parameters for what constituted prestige in American higher education. To be fair, selectivity is necessary to tell a coherent story over a large span of time, and the book's extensive chronological scope is one of its strengths. Still, this focus on famous, trend-setting institutions, particularly those that would become research universities, necessarily constrained the story he told. While Marsden paid some attention to issues of class and financial access to education, *The Soul of the American University* said very little about how the educational aspirations and increasing educational access for women and people of color fit into his narrative.

As should surprise no one familiar with my work, I advocate using both intellectual and social history to analyze the changing role of religion in American higher education—which is to say weaving race, class, or gender as a significant variable throughout the narrative. What I found by zeroing in on the factor of gender is that college and university leaders sought to enhance their institutions' national reputation not merely by downplaying their denominational, or even broadly evangelical identity, but also by playing up how they contributed to the national good by educating men, women, or both for unique social contributions tied to the sex of the students the institution served. This shift opened up some doors for students but closed others. Arguments about the nature of moral knowledge or the way to transmit morality to undergraduates did not take place in a disembodied void: it mattered who was doing the thinking and the learning at these institutions and who they did and did not envision as their conversation partners.[2]

[2]Andrea L. Turpin, *A New Moral Vision: Gender, Religion, and the Changing Purposes of American*

I was therefore intrigued to see how more recent scholarship on these sorts of questions would influence the updated version. First of all, let's get this on the table: I completely own up to doing that thing we all do and running a search in the revised edition for references to my own work. They're in there! Which is to say, Marsden did not only add new material at the end to bring the story up to the present; he also worked in subsequent scholarship to the way he told the narrative in earlier years. That's quite impressive. (My research on the topic, for example, spans the 1830s through the 1920s.) Still, my favorite chapter was one of the two new ones: "The Twenty-First-Century Postsecular University." It reminded me of why I have always so appreciated Marsden's work: it is written with such graciousness and precision. In this chapter, he grapples with the implications of contemporary pluralism, in both its intellectual and social versions. I encourage you to read it and grapple with it too.

First, Marsden surveys the recent "crisis" literature on the state of American higher education. Now, as Marsden knows, literally every generation has been convinced that American higher education is in a state of crisis. That said, those of us who love it do well to pay attention to the nature of our current crisis, which I believe Marsden articulates well: "universities are driven even more than ever by economic interests … . [They] subordinate the humanities and concerns for what it means to be human" (351–352).[3] The loss of a coherent religious framework to provide a common moral purpose was originally replaced by the humanities in the early twentieth century, but now, he notes, with the humanities receding, it is replaced by a sole remaining moral commitment to diversity. And here we have something I really appreciate about Marsden's careful thought: he is not telling an unnuanced declension narrative. He specifies that this new moral framework is beneficial is some ways, just as it is harmful in others—exactly the same analysis he gave of previous evangelical and liberal Protestant and secular humanities-centered attempts to provide a unifying moral vision for American higher education.

The strength of a commitment to diversity is multifold. Even at institutions that are mostly concerned with setting students up for economic success, this commitment at least works to grant this opportunity to more people. Diversity as a framework also lends itself to the very sort of ideological pluralism that Marsden called for in the first edition of *Soul*, namely the opportunity for explicit faith perspectives to have a seat at the table of scholarly conversation. Plus, a commitment to ideological and social diversity is necessary for a modern democracy to succeed, so it is a worthy mindset in which to train students.

As someone who is strongly committed to all these types of diversity in higher education, I also appreciated and was challenged by Marsden's analysis of its pitfalls. In short, humans are naturally tribal creatures, and if universities make the one moral value diversity without a concurrent attempt to provide some sort of unifying vision of the good, we are all rather likely to retreat into our subcultures and to perceive other groups distrustfully. Marsden therefore joins contemporary commentators calling for some modern version of Martin Luther King Jr.'s beloved community. He realizes the challenges: What is outside the pale? When

*Higher Education, 1837–1917* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2016).

[3]Marsden, *Soul of the American University* Revisited, 351–352.

ought a campus to exclude a student group or an intellectual perspective for being insufficiently tolerant, and when is that itself intolerance? It's actually not an easy question; all readers of this essay would probably agree that *some* things ought to be excluded, but we would likely disagree on where the line is.

Because Marsden identifies the problem of pluralism, namely how to do it well, as the higher education moral question of the moment—and rightly so I think—I found the epilogue to this edition perplexing, even as I appreciated much about it. Entitled "An Unexpected Sequel: A Renaissance of Christian Academia," the epilogue traces the rise of interest among communities of scholars broadly associated with evangelical Protestantism in giving concerted thought to relating their faith to their scholarship and teaching. It covers the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. And unless I missed it, there is not a single woman or person of color mentioned among the many names discussed in the chapter. As a reminder, Marsden does integrate the contributions of diverse Christian (and non-Christian) scholars, by name, into earlier parts of the book. So he is not ignoring that part of the Christian scholarly community. But he misses an opportunity to analyze the increasing importance of these scholars to the conversation about Christian scholarship in the book's conclusion.

Now some of this is because Marsden gave pride of place in his narrative to the discipline of philosophy, which is notorious for how slow it has been to incorporate scholars who are women and people of color. He did so in part because of the discipline's chronological priority—particularly in its Calvin College incarnation—in framing the contemporary conversation on these issues. But in part I suspect he also did it out of humility, as the story could just as easily have been told through the lens of our discipline of history. Yet even if you told the story through our lens, Marsden's generation of evangelical scholars would look a little more inclusive, but not much.

So I think we need to bring the story more robustly up to the present. The twenty-first century section of the chapter talks in more generalities, rather than in terms of particular figures like those discussed in the earlier section. This approach makes some sense inasmuch as the contemporary era has witnessed the flowering of Christian academic institutions, not just individuals. He shouts out Baylor—thanks, George!—as a relative success in thoughtfully integrating a distinctly Christian identity into a Protestant research university. This section of the book also contains its single greatest passage: "By the 1990s, one of Notre Dame's aspirations was to be ranked as high academically as it was in football. That goal was surpassed some years later, though due only partially to a rise in academic standing."[4] He likewise notes the increasing intellectual cooperation between Protestant and Catholic scholars, and not just because of our common experience with football fluctuations.

What is missing, I think, is an analysis of how this chapter and the previous chapter tie together. What do Christian scholars and institutions have to offer an American higher educational landscape that is right to emphasize the need for social diversity, but is crying out for a compelling vision of the good that crosses social categories? Marsden briefly notes the tension that faculty at Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) institutions were generally more politically

[4]Marsden, *Soul of the American University* Revisited, 384.

and socially diverse than donors. Because most evangelical Protestant traditions lack any sort of magisterium to say what is in and out of doctrinal bounds, as Adam Laats has argued in *Fundamentalist U*, these institutions always have to play instead to public opinion within the tribe, to a certain extent, which makes moving the intellectual or political needle of the church tricky. By contrast, Marsden notes that "unlike more conservative Protestant constituencies and institutions, the outlooks of serious practicing Catholics come in a wide variety, from ultraconservative and traditionalist to highly liberal and progressive. These Catholics may worship together but seemingly disagree on just about everything else."[5]

But as I have argued in *Fides* before, all branches of Christianity have the resources to do this: "[A]t least one of the reasons that there will be women and men from every nation, tribe, people, and language worshipping God together in the life to come (Rev 7:9) is that each sex and each culture has a unique experience of the effect of the gospel on our lives. Like facets of a diamond reflecting the divine image, we need to see and hear from one another in order to appreciate the fullness of the beauty of who God is."[6]

Perhaps this is a way that Christian scholars and Christian institutions of higher education at our best can help to solve the problem of pluralism: by modeling it. If we are already platforming and listening to Christians different from us—be it in terms of sex, race, denomination, or politics—we can continue. If we see deficiencies here in our own lives, we can grow. Our common commitment to Christ enables us to do what it seems odd in the world to do: To disagree vehemently and still come together around a common purpose. Then the beautiful way that Marsden closes this edition may come true:

> One lesson of the past would seem to be that Christian and other religiously based higher education is better off when it recognizes, as is easy to do in our postsecular age, that it is a minority enterprise in a richly diverse society. As such, it will not be able to impose its will on others, but, rather, its challenge will be to make itself so attractive in its practices and outlooks that, despite its inevitable imperfection, others will admire it and want to emulate some of its qualities. As Thomas Kuhn observes in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, people are persuaded of the merits of an alternate view not so much by argument as by how that view works for its followers: "They can say: I don't know how the proponents of the new view succeed, but I must learn whatever they are doing, it is clearly right."[7]

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[5]Adam Laats, *Fundamentalist U: Keeping the Faith in American Higher Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018); Marsden, *Soul of the American University* Revisited, 388.
[6]Andrea L. Turpin, "Whose Stories We Tell and How We Tell Them: Honoring Christ in Choosing Topics and Analytical Lenses," Roundtable on Christian Scholarship: For Such a Time as This, *Fides et Historia* 51:1 (Winter/Spring 2019): 94–99, 95–96.
[7]Marsden, *Soul of the American University* Revisited, 389.

## RE-TRACING THE NEO-ORTHODOX EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

ETHAN SCHRUM

The new version of George Marsden's *The Soul of the American University* contains a section with a very small change that points to an opportunity for continuing to advance our understanding of Marsden's topics beyond what he has provided in his revision. In the first section of the chapter "Searching for a Soul," Marsden has a single paragraph on whether neo-orthodox theology offered anything to help academia navigate the crisis of Western culture in the 1930s. In the original book, Marsden stated that neo-orthodoxy "had no program to offer" academia; in the revision, he says it had "only a limited program to offer." He does not specify this limited program, for the next sentence is the same as in the original. In it, Marsden states that neo-orthodoxy "did not systematically challenge the essential scientific definitions of the academic disciplines as havens immune from theological critique."[1]

This section is a missed opportunity for a more significant revision that could have given neo-orthodoxy its due. Marsden overlooks at least two key areas in which Niebuhrian thought had significant influence at high levels of American academia. The first is that Reinhold Niebuhr's critique of social science, in conjunction with his more direct commentary on the nature of power and the behavior of states in his 1940 collection *Christianity and Power Politics*, strongly shaped at least one (admittedly liminal) academic discipline, international relations. George Kennan and Hans Morgenthau, the leading advocates of foreign policy realism from the 1940s, both praised Niebuhr in highly exalted terms as a major inspiration for their views.

The other area of neo-orthodox influence on American academia came from a circle of Niebuhr acolytes at Princeton University under the leadership of longtime president Harold Dodds, who was a sponsor of Niebuhr's magazine, *Christianity and Crisis*. This Princeton circle was a hub of a larger Protestant academic revival in the middle decades of the twentieth century. Marsden acknowl-

[1]George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 374; Marsden, *The Soul of the American University* Revisited*: From Protestant to Postsecular* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 296.

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edges, as is typical, University of California president Clark Kerr's popularization in 1963 of the term "multiversity" to describe the character of the American research university by that point. Few people realize that Kerr did not coin the term. Indeed, the term "multiversity" had Christian origins—specifically in the transatlantic Student Christian Movement of the 1930s. Some of the student responses to the multiversity of the 1960s described by Marsden were already present in the reflections of these Christian students in the late 1930s. Princeton leaders picked it up from there and used it to criticize the direction of the American research university in the 1950s. Their Protestant inspiration led them to believe that the university must preserve the unity of truth, closely connected to liberal learning, in order to avoid becoming a multiversity.

These ideas led in the early 1950s to the creation of Princeton University's Council of the Humanities, which along with the Department of Religion (1940s) are the major institutional legacies of the Protestant revival at Princeton. Dodds raised millions of dollars to endow the Council of the Humanities, spearheaded by Department of Classics chair and Niebuhr friend Whitney J. Oates. Oates intended the Council to explore the unity of truth and combat relativism. For Oates, "The shift to the multiversity [was] 'the greatest obstacle blocking the way to the achievement of excellence.'" In the multiversity, disciplines were separated, as were facts and values. Channeling Niebuhr, Oates wrote, "A university can best exercise its excellence if in all its aspects it makes an unrelenting effort to understand the full implications of the tragic view of man's nature," which makes three assumptions: "the dignity and worth of the individual person," "the freedom of human will and the corollary of moral responsibility," and that "man lives under some kind of superhuman power over which he has no control."[2] Oates even brought Niebuhr to Princeton to teach a course in fall 1962.

To be sure, currents that ran contrary to Niebuhr's views had triumphed in these areas by the 1960s, as I show in my book, *The Instrumental University*.[3] Still, the Niebuhrian countercurrents ran strong for a time and remain possible resources for Christian thinking about the nature of the university today.

The most substantial material added to the original chapters in the revised book appears to be at the end of the last chapter, "Liberal Protestantism Without Protestantism," where Marsden has replaced the final five paragraphs of the original with about five pages of material under a new section heading, "The Cultural Triumph of Liberal Protestantism?" There, he evaluates an argument some scholars have made: "many of the ideals of liberal Protestantism have triumphed despite the sharp decline of the Protestant mainline as an institutional force." Marsden urges caution about this claim. He states, "All of these interpretations contain elements of truth, but the whole truth is more ambiguous."[4]

As we seek to understand the role of liberal Protestantism in what happened to the soul of the American university, a fruitful avenue is to pursue detailed

[2]Whitney J. Oates, "University or Multiversity?" *University: A Princeton Quarterly* 2 (Fall 1959): 29–31.

[3]Ethan Schrum, *The Instrumental University: Education in Service of the National Agenda after World War II* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2019).

[4]Marsden, *Soul* Revisited, 345.

accounts of specific scholars, programs, and institutions to understand why the Niebuhrian mainline Protestant academic revival collapsed. One issue was the growing prominence of specialized research in the humanities, especially in analytic philosophy. There is a paradox that analytic philosophy was part of the way forward into specifically Christian arguments for the likes of the leaders of Reformed epistemology that Marsden features in one of the new chapters. At the same time, professionalized philosophy, sometimes in an analytic vein, correlated with movement away from Christian concerns for two institutionally important philosophers, Gregory Vlastos and Samuel Stumpf, both of whom were ordained ministers in mainline Protestantism. Both were connected with Niebuhrian circles. Both are credited with being the prime builder of a major philosophy department around the 1960s, Vlastos at Princeton and Stumpf at Vanderbilt. In 1955, Princeton hired Vlastos to help maintain a representation of theism in its philosophy department. By the time of his retirement twenty years later, he had moved away from those concerns.

Detailed accounts of specific places can add nuance to Marsden's claim about the lack of Christian influence in university curricula after World War II.[5] At Vanderbilt, leadership in tying Christian concerns to the curriculum came from the chancellor B. Harvie Branscomb (1945–1963), liberal biblical scholar and former dean of Duke Divinity School. At his inauguration, he cited three major goals for his tenure. Two were typical of the instrumental university: Internationalization and promoting the economic development of the university's region. But Branscomb's third goal was that Vanderbilt would transmit cultural heritage and spiritual values—strongly shaped by Christianity, in his view. His two principal tactics for achieving this goal were strengthening the philosophy department and reviving a liberal education grounded in Western civilization under Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Ewing Shahan. To build a philosophy department, Branscomb in 1952 moved Samuel Stumpf, a professor of religious ethics in the Divinity School and an ordained Baptist minister, to the College of Arts and Sciences and made him chair of philosophy. Stumpf brought in another vestigial Protestant, John Compton (son and nephew, respectively, of famous physicists and university leaders Arthur and Karl Compton, from a Presbyterian family), and created a doctoral program. Branscomb and Stumpf believed that American democracy was based on a religious view of the world, which must be preserved in order for democracy to survive. Stumpf molded the philosophy curriculum in accordance with this belief. He taught a course titled "Christianity and Democracy," which was eventually changed to "Philosophical Basis of Democracy."[6] He also changed the existing course on pragmatism to one on American philosophy, explaining that "this change will enable us to incorporate a presently neglected area of philosophy by adding to the pragmatic philosophers other great American thinkers without adding a new course to our curriculum. We have in mind adding such men as Santayana, Royce and even Jonathan Edwards to Peirce, James, and Dewey."[7] Stumpf's proposal came a

[5]Marsden, *Soul* Revisited, 318.

[6]Minutes of Curriculum Committee, 27 May 1952, College of Arts and Sciences records, RG 510, Box 634, Folder 7, Vanderbilt University Archives.

[7]Samuel E. Stumpf to Ewing Shahan, 30 March 1953, College of Arts and Sciences records, RG 510, Box 634, Folder 7, Vanderbilt University Archives.

few years after Perry Miller published his Edwards book.

Stumpf also played a leading role in a revived academic conversation about Christianity and law in the 1950s. He published "Christian Theology and Juristic Thought" in the *Journal of Religion* in 1950. That same year, he began to team-teach the jurisprudence course at Vanderbilt Law School with law professor John W. Wade, who became dean in 1952 and transformed the school into a nationally-regarded institution during his twenty-year deanship. It was more than a little unusual to have a religion professor and ordained minister teaching jurisprudence. Stumpf engaged with some of the world's leading legal thinkers, including Karl Llewelyn, H. L. A. Hart, and Supreme Court justices. He also facilitated a symposium on law and Christianity in the *Vanderbilt Law Review* in 1957.

Limited archival material makes it difficult to discern exactly what happened to this project, but it is safe to say that the 1960s were not kind to notions of a unified cultural heritage for the United States. I hope that we will see more research on the fate of other such programs. But I would like to conclude on a speculative yet potentially foreboding note. The likes of Branscomb implied that a vestigial cultural Protestantism—an agreed upon tradition to transmit—powered the liberal arts. Is that necessarily the case? Of course, the liberal arts in some form predated Christianity. But in 2022, I wonder about a possible connection between two trends. One is the cultural collapse of support for the liberal arts, slowly over decades but more sharply since 2008. The other is the rise of the so-called nones. The Pew Research Center recently reported that the percentage of Americans who say they are religiously unaffiliated rose from 17 percent in 2009 to 26 percent in 2019, while the percentage who say they are Christians declined by 12 percent.[8] Could there possibly be a correlation between the decline of cultural Christianity and the decline of the liberal arts in the United States?

[8]Pew Research Center, "In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace," October 17, 2019, https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/.

## WHO BELONGS ON THIS MOUNT RUSHMORE?

**JOHN SCHMALZBAUER**

Nearly thirty years ago (I have my datebook right here in my hand), I interviewed George Marsden about his vocation as a Christian historian. I was a young graduate student of twenty-six, and I was eager to speak with an author who had shaped the way I saw the world.

*The Soul of the American University* had just come out. That same week I showed my brand-new copy to Mark Noll in his office at Wheaton College. He had not yet seen the book. I still remember Noll smiling when he saw Marsden's dedication to Berkeley historian Henry May.

I spoke with Marsden on a spring day in 1994. A willing interviewee, he was candid about the roots of his own scholarship. Marsden said that most authors will acknowledge that their books are versions of their own autobiographies. That was certainly true of *Soul*, which chronicled the transformation of American higher education "from Protestant establishment to established nonbelief," a shift that was all too real for the author's family.

Like its predecessor, *The Soul of the American University* Revisited reflects the autobiography of its author but in an ironic way. Ironically, the conversation ignited by the first version of *Soul*, the 1994 version, helped set in motion an intellectual movement that later undermined Marsden's conclusion. Perceived as a declension narrative, the 1994 *Soul*, along with a library of similar books funded by the Lilly Endowment and the Pew Charitable Trusts, helped to launch a thousand initiatives to strengthen the place of religion in American higher education.

As one Mennonite educator observed, "The recent studies of George Marsden and James Burtchaell have put the fear of God into church-related colleges and universities."[1] Colleges paid more attention to mission and identity after reading Marsden.

Of course, Marsden did not do this all by himself. The aforementioned Lilly- and Pew- funded publications played a significant role. So did initiatives funded by the same foundations, like the Lilly Fellows Program, NetVUE, and the Pew Christian Scholars Program.

Marsden chronicles many of these developments in chapter 21 of *The*

[1]Paul Keim,"The Ethos of Anabaptist-Mennonite Colleges," in Paul Dovre, ed., *The Future of Religious Colleges*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 264.

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*Soul of the American University* Revisited, as well as in the epilogue. For evangelical readers, there are many familiar characters, like Inklings aficionado Clyde Kilby, who helped introduce C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien to American evangelicals. I especially appreciate the attention given to lesser-known figures like Arthur Holmes, the son of a Baptist lay preacher, who built the philosophy program at Wheaton, a program that has produced more than one hundred philosophy PhD's, as Marsden notes in the book. Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff did not do it all by themselves.

Gone from the updated edition is the "Concluding Unscientific Postscript" that raised so many hackles in the 1990s. The introduction is also different. Instead of lamenting the exclusion of religious voices, it points to the possibilities for religion in the postsecular university, echoing several recent books.

We should be grateful to Marsden for incorporating much of this recent scholarship in *The Soul* Revisited and for changing the subtitle. Yet none of us are done. There are still gaps in the literature and groups that have been excluded from the story of religion and American higher education (or who only show up as bit players rather than as main characters). I'd like to call attention to three groups that deserve more attention from all of us who study religion on college campuses.

First, I'd like to call attention to the Rodney Dangerfields of the historiography of American higher education, campus ministries and student movements, which too often don't get the respect they deserve. In both editions of *Soul*, they receive some attention, but Marsden's main focus is on research and teaching. That is understandable. But we should be careful not to underestimate the influence of student religious movements on the rest of the university and on the history of religious thought.

As a Methodist T-shirt proclaims, "John Wesley was a campus minister." Closer to our own times, the Methodist John R. Mott, the Lutheran Nathan Söderblom, and the Anglican William Temple paved the way for the World Council of Churches. All three were involved in student movements. The great social movements of the twentieth century were birthed in student religious organizations. This was intellectual work that connected seminary classrooms and campus ministries, not just a weenie roast at the Wesley Foundation. Figures such as Peter Berger, Harvey Cox, and the Eastern Orthodox thinker Alexander Schmemann all published work commissioned by the Student Christian Movement, which had its own press, SCM Press in the United Kingdom and the Association Press here in the states.[2] More recently, InterVarsity Press has united campus ministry with academic publishing. This is not the center of the story, but it is more important than many give it credit.

A second neglected area of research I would call the three Ms: metaphysicals, meditators, and mindfulness. Today we might call them the spiritu-

[2]Peter Berger, *The Noise of Solemn Assemblies: Christian Commitment and the Religious Establishment in America* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961), Harvey Cox's *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), and Alexander Schmemann's *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Athens, Ohio: National Student Christian Federation, 1963) were all commissioned by the ecumenical Student Christian Movement.

al-but-not-religious.[3]

As Catherine Albanese and Leigh Schmidt have shown, the metaphysical tradition is a missing thread in the history of American religion.[4] It also has a long history in American higher education, from the Transcendentalists to the Metaphysical Club to the New Age. As Harvey Cox wrote back in 1977: "In recent years, Cambridge has also become something its Calvinistic founders could hardly have foreseen. It is one of the four or five most thriving American centers of the neo-Oriental religious surge."[5]

Fast forward to the twenty-first century when the mindfulness and meditation movement is all the rage, not just in campus wellness centers, but at neuroscience conferences and MIT, as well as leading medical schools. It's also part of the conversation about American higher education. In the early 2000s, the most cited figure in higher education research, Alexander "Sandy" Astin, led a Templeton Foundation project on spirituality on campus.[6]

I wish Marsden would have looked at some of this territory. The word "spirituality" appears just once in *Soul* Revisited, in a footnote about Harvard on page 460 (it is actually in a URL for a website). The word "spiritual" shows up more frequently, though often as a synonym for religious. "Spiritual but not religious" is used just once. In evangelical circles, we are tempted to turn away from this world because we're not a part of it. But if we ignore it, we miss one of the reasons why Max Weber's prophesies of a disenchanted university have not come true.

A final blind spot in the historiography on religion and American higher education is the neglect of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and African American intellectual life more generally. To his credit, Marsden discusses the religious evolution of Howard University and its modernist president Mordecai Wyatt Johnson. Martin Luther King Jr. makes an appearance in three chapters, though Dr. King hasn't been fully integrated into the stories we tell about religion on campus. Few of us have done justice to the intellectual tradition that Gary Dorrien calls the "Black Social Gospel," a tradition that runs right through student religious movements like the YMCA and the YWCA, HBCUs like Morehouse and Spelman, African American studies at Harvard and Princeton, and the world of Black public intellectuals.[7]

In both editions of *Soul*, Marsden grafts the story of HBCUs onto the

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[3]Schmalzbauer, John; Mahoney, Kathleen A. *The Resilience of Religion in American Higher Education* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018): 309.

[4]Catherine L. Albanese, *A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2007); Leigh Schmidt, *Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2012).

[5]Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001); Harvey Cox, *Turning East: The Promise and Peril of the New Orientalism* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1977), 10.

[6]For more on the Templeton Spirituality in Higher Education study, see the project website at https://spirituality.ucla.edu/. On Astin's visibility in the higher education literature, see John M. Budd and Lauren Magnuson, "Higher Education Literature Revisited: Citation Patterns Examined," *Research in Higher Education* 53, no. 3: (2010): 294–304 (2010)..

[7]Gary Dorrien, *Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Black Social Gospel* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2018).

secularization narrative. Figures like E. Franklin Frazier and Ralph Bunche fit that storyline. Yet the secularization narrative doesn't fit everyone in African American higher education. Recent surveys show that faculty at HBCUs are much more likely to view spiritual formation as a central goal of their institutions. They look more like faculty at religious colleges than faculty at public universities. And African American studies has never been secular. Figures like Henry Louis Gates (who just finished a PBS documentary on the Black Church), Cornel West, Albert Raboteau, Nell Painter, Eddie Glaude, and Toni Morrison have drawn on their own autobiographies as people of faith. As African American public intellectuals, they have sung the songs of Zion in a very strange land: the Ivy League. Further back in the twentieth century, figures like Howard Thurman, Mordecai Johnson, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Benjamin Mays served as "schoolmasters of the movement" (see the Randall Jelks biography of Mays).[8] They connected knowledge and vital piety, mysticism and social action, religion and American public life in ways that must never be forgotten. Some show up in *Soul* Revisited. Others do not.

In closing, I want to ask a question. To borrow a metaphor from Martin Marty, Who belongs on the Mount Rushmore of religion and American higher education? Does Kuyper matter more than King? Wheaton more than Morehouse? While there is room for all God's children in the history of American higher education, some have shaped America's moral imagination more than others. In that spirit, I'd like to share a quotation from Union Seminary professor Gary Dorrien: "On the road, campaigning to break white supremacy, [Martin Luther] King carried a copy of [Howard Thurman's] *Jesus and the Disinherited*. American Christianity has no greater legacy than what King got from Thurman and Mays."[9]

In the end, Marsden knows this, turning to King, rather than Kuyper, at a key moment in the book. Responding to the fragmentation and division of contemporary American society, he invokes Dr. King's vision of common ground. This reference is another new addition to *The Soul of the American University* Revisited. Such additions are a big reason why this revised version of *Soul* is such a gift.

In closing, let me say how grateful I am that George Marsden wrote both versions of *The Soul of the American University*. They have played a formative role in my intellectual journey and continue to shape the way I see religion and American higher education. I know that is true of so many others.

[8]Randall Jelks, *Benjamin Elijah Mays: Schoolmaster of the Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).
[9]Dorrien, *Breaking White Supremacy*, 232.

## RESPONSE

GEORGE MARSDEN

I am honored and very grateful for this panel. And it is especially gratifying to hear that one's work has had some positive impact. My thanks is due to all the panelists for their own work in relating Christianity to higher education in their research and teaching.

While that project has been a more-or-less common one, we have each approached it in our own way. The differences in our approaches reflect our autobiographies that have in turn shaped the scholarship and teaching of each of us as Christians in the contemporary American academy. As might be suspected then, a good many of the criticisms of the book have to do with topics that have been prominent in the panelists' research and experience and that I have in various degrees neglected.

One of the main sorts of criticisms that I get of the book—and one that has been expressed in various ways here—is that I concentrated too much on elite universities and so left out lots of other segments of American higher education where the role of religion was quite different. I did have some reasons for telling the story the way I did, even though I was aware that a good bit would have to be left out. One reason is (as Andrea suggests) that in a history that covers this expanse of time, one wants to have a coherent narrative and a reasonable length. If one tried to write a history of the role of religion in all of American higher education, it would soon turn into something approaching an encyclopedia. There are so many varieties: Catholic higher education, mainline Protestant colleges, women's colleges, African American schools, Mormons, Adventists, and other religions, and all sorts of evangelical schools. And most of those categories have a great variety of subcategories in which the stories of religion and secularization are different. So I concentrated on the elite schools that had specifically Protestant origins because they could provide the basis for a more-or-less coherent story. Also, being elite, they had the most influence in shaping the dominant educational ideals in the culture, even if others followed their lead in bewilderingly different sorts of ways—or rejected their lead almost entirely.

I do think I might have been able to give more attention to African American schools and scholars, which in addition to providing some illuminating stories in their own right might have provided a helpful contrast to the story of white Protestants. Historically African American colleges have been able to retain

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more of a place for their Christian heritage if they choose to do so. Also, I think it is an excellent point that I should have pointed out the roles of prominently religious African American scholars in the academic mainstream and that they have felt freer to speak from their religious perspectives than have been many of their white counterparts.

In short I think there should be a really good book out there on the soul of African American higher education.

Another focus in my approach that can also be seen as a limitation is that I emphasize the role of Christianity in what is taught in the classroom much more than its role in chapel services, for instance, or in campus religious organizations.

Here my autobiography offers an explanation. When I started this book, I had taught for twenty years at Calvin College, where "the integration of faith and learning" was the standard. I then taught for a semester at the University of California at Berkeley. I realized that Berkeley, like most of the highest ranked universities, had a Protestant heritage. It had, in fact, once been a Presbyterian college. Yet by the 1980s "the integration of faith and learning" would have seemed totally foreign to the vast majority of academics at Berkeley. Further, I realized that these elite schools, while they had often been conspicuously Christian in many respects, had never developed the notion of systematically integrating faith and learning the way the Dutch had. That gave me a really nice question around which to sharpen my research: What factors in the mainstream American Protestant heritage made its ways of relating faith to academic life so often superficial so that it did not produce many strong alternatives to the secularized academic outlooks of the twentieth century? There are a lot of factors involved in the answer to that question that I attempt to sort out and identify.

Central among those factors was that the early United States had an informal Protestant establishment, so its colleges and universities were generically Protestant. But Protestants came in many varieties, and these schools aspired to serve a wide constituency. So one of the virtues of these schools was that they typically involved a good bit of tolerance. That tolerance, although a desirable feature for institutions that served the public, had the downside of treating Christianity as largely a supplement to the intellectual activities in the classrooms. With some notable exceptions, early nineteenth-century American academic institutions largely took for granted that the best of Western learning was compatible with traditional Christian principles. That involved a good bit of confidence in the reliability of what they saw as objective principles of intellectual inquiry. So, while they sharply criticized those aspects of Enlightenment thought that were critical of Christianity, they believed that objective science and reason should confirm essential Christian teachings, such as there had to be a Creator who established discoverable principles of morality.

That left leading Protestant academics largely unprepared to meet the challenges to Christian assumptions and principles that flooded Western thought in the era after Darwinism. That same era, starting in the late nineteenth century, was also the time of the transition from colleges to universities in America. Up until that time the attitude of most Protestant leaders had been that the sciences and humanities should be left to develop on objective bases that would in the long run prove

to confirm a Christian outlook. Yet by the early twentieth century, much of higher learning was sharply at odds with traditional Christian assumptions and principles. Christian teachings continued to be offered in chapel, and by the early twentieth century voluntary religious organizations helped preserve some vital Christian presence. By the 1930s such influences were largely gone at mainstream universities, and what the universities typically offered in classrooms was essentially secular.

With the religious revival after World War II there were indeed some substantial efforts to rebuild a mainstream Protestant presence. Ethan Schrum is probably correct that I tend to play down the significance of these, and I thank him for telling more of that story. But, while Reinhold Niebuhr has long been one of my heroes as a Christian ethicist, and I do devote a couple of pages to his views,[1] I do not think the mainline Protestant renewal movements of the 1950s effectively challenged the overall naturalistic directions in which twentieth century higher education was moving. My view, in sum, is that by the end of the 1950s the Protestant establishment had become a very thin canopy over an essentially secular and predominantly naturalistic educational enterprise. So it collapsed almost completely in the face of the cultural upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s and left almost only secularist and naturalistic alternatives. As always, there were some significant exceptions. But by the 1990s that made sense as a dominant story line.

In the first edition of this book, I think I overstated a bit the degree to which by the 1990s the informal Protestant establishment had been replaced by an informal secularist-naturalistic establishment. While I acknowledged some continuing Christian presence here and there, there was also at that time a prominent segment among the professoriate who insisted that introducing traditional religious perspectives in the classroom was beyond the pale. I documented and responded to such reactions in the sequel, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (1997). But in revisiting the subject in the 2020s for the present version, it seemed to me that such militant secularists might be a dying breed and that by most accounts American university education had become so fragmented, commodified, and directionless, that there was probably more room for religious perspectives in universities than there had been a quarter century ago. In documenting that shift, I was helped especially by the work of John Schmalzbauer and Kathleen Mahoney on the *Resilience of Religion in Higher Education* (2018). They cast a wider net than I do in looking for campus religion, including topics such as metaphysical spirituality, that do not fit with my specifically Christian interests. And both John and Michael Lee also suggest that I might include more attention to the roles of voluntary campus religious organizations. I especially agree with Michael that campus study centers have proven to be some of the most successful ways of relating the increasingly rich resources of Christian academic thought to university settings.

Andrea correctly faults me for not pointing out the role of women and African American scholars in what I call the renaissance of Christian scholarship. That, especially the prominence of women scholars, has indeed emerged dramatically, especially in the past twenty years. In my telling of the story of the recent burgeoning of Christian scholarship, I might also have put more emphasis on a number

[1]In *The Twilight of the American Enlightenment* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), Niebuhr is a central figure in my explorations of why such often-insightful efforts failed.

of additional things. In my telling I concentrate largely on schools and scholars in a network most strongly represented in schools of the CCCU, though including some mention of Catholic counterparts, and just mentioning the Lilly Network. I might have said more about mainline Protestant colleges and seminaries and about historically African American schools.

My highlighting the CCCU types in recounting this renaissance reflects both my own experience and my desire to point out a dramatic story. When in the 1960s I first became involved with evangelical higher education, the schools that later became part of the CCCU were largely written off as leftovers from fundamentalism and consequently irrelevant to the academic mainstream. Today schools and scholars who identify with this tradition constitute some of the most vital academic sub-communities in the world. In almost any field, Christian scholars who might think of themselves as "mere Christians" can find rich communities from all over the world who are publishing high-level scholarship. The Conference on Faith and History and this journal offer admirable examples.

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# ROUNDTABLE: GAMING PEDAGOGY AND TEACHING VIRTUE IN THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM

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## INTRODUCTION: PLAY, PEDAGOGY, AND PRACTICING ETHICAL FORMATION

**LYNNETH MILLER RENBERG AND TIMOTHY J. ORR**

How can the incorporation of various forms of play and game, from board games to role-playing games to video games, enhance our pedagogy in the college classroom? This is the question that framed a roundtable conversation at the Conference on Faith and History's meeting at Baylor University in spring 2022. Play as a pedagogical tool is a subject that has received increasing attention in the last several years as new learning modalities have become popularized, such as Kahoot and Reacting to the Past. Our goal for this roundtable was to further this discussion by exploring other options and possibilities, such as using video games, traditional board games, or even having students design their own games. The participants in this roundtable approached this question from a variety of angles, considering how the use of play has enhanced student understanding of material, developed historical skills, taught historical humor, or engaged students who might not otherwise realize their interest in historical study. Each contributor drew from the scholarly conversation about play as pedagogy both in designing the classroom experiences considered here and in evaluating the success and challenges of each incorporation of play.

However, in the conversation that began with planning this session and continued during the session itself, a gap in the current scholarly literature became apparent, as a surprising secondary theme—that of teaching virtue and the ethics of play—emerged. In conversations among the contributors, it became clear to us that one common outcome of using these mediums to explore history was an expanded space to wrestle with morality and what it means to be a Christian who engages the past. Using games in the classroom did not just create new ways for students to engage with the past, but also pushed students to grapple with the moral ramifications of acting as an agent of the past within the context of these games. This gave their pedagogical experiences with these games a surprising degree of gravity, as many students struggled with the ethics by which they treated their fellow players, the gamification of real historical figures and actors, and emotional investments that went above what most students were accustomed to experiencing in a classroom setting. These feelings and reactions then transitioned in most cases into conversations about how we, as Christians, should approach our work as historians and what it means to play with virtue. The following contributions offer examples of different games and frameworks of play that have been used in college classrooms alongside analysis of how they have proven effective or difficult to adapt. These pieces also encourage contemplation of play as pedagogy and as a means of ethical formation, expanding the current scholarly conversation about games and pedagogy by reflecting on the ways these games allow students to view history as a lived experience of those in the past as they grapple with the complexity of their choices, consequences, and emotions.

## TEACHING GEORGE WASHINGTON PLUNKITT WITH TAMMANY HALL

JONATHAN DEN HARTOG

My story begins with an ordinary U.S. history survey class, albeit from before the COVID-19 pandemic. At that point, I annually taught the second half of the U.S. History survey. We would see history majors and minors, social studies education students, and increasingly dual-enrolled high schoolers. This class occurred in a well-lit classroom with great windows, about a month into the spring semester. We were in the Gilded Age, and we were working through a short book, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall*. It's a colorful, approachable primary source by George Washington Plunkitt, as recorded by the journalist William Riordan.[1] In short, Plunkitt is a boss, not just in a political machine, but in the most infamous political machine: the New York City Tammany Hall Democratic machine. In the midst of this discussion, one of my students was alert enough to make a connection and asked, "Did you know there's a game called *Tammany Hall*?" I was curious, especially as he volunteered to bring in the game for a play session, which we set up for a subsequent afternoon.

As part of my vocation, I seek to be reflective in my pedagogy. Teaching should be informed by theory and research, but it must also be applied in the classroom and in interactions with specific students and groups of students. Reflective pedagogy thus connects the general with the specific and makes sense of meaningful teaching experiences. In this way, good teaching requires prudence, the practical wisdom of a craftsman who inhabits his or her craft.[2] The following reflects upon an unplanned but serendipitous teaching experience with *Tammany Hall*.

The original goal of the class session lay in helping students understand

[1]William L. Riordan, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall: A Series of Very Plain Talks on Very Practical Politics* (New York: Signet Classics, 1995). I find the Signet version very satisfactory for teaching, but the source is also available as *Riordan, Plunkitt of Tammany Hall*, ed. by Terrence J. McDonald (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1993). Quotes are from the Signet version.
[2]On teaching prudence, consider Thomas Albert Howard, "Virtue Ethics and Historical Inquiry: The Case of Prudence" in *Confessing History: Explorations in Christian Faith and the Historian's Vocation*, ed. by John Fea, Jay Green, and Eric Miller (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), 83–100. Lee Trepanier, in his review of the book *Super Courses* by Ken Bain, points out the need for trusting faculty to teach with prudence. See Trepanier, "The Compliant College Classroom," Law and Liberty, August 15, 2022, https://lawliberty.org/book-review/todays-compliant-college-classroom/.

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and analyze Plunkitt's ideas and view of the world in the late Gilded Age. The book, after all, bills itself as "A Series of Very Plain Talks on Very Practical Politics." As evidence, the book documents the "strenuous life" of such a politico: He will be awakened in the middle of the night to bail out a saloonkeeper. After a few more hours of sleep, he will start the day helping to get men arrested for drunkenness out of prison. He will attend two funerals (one Italian, one Jewish) and one wedding. He will show up at a church fair to make a donation. Later he will arrange four jobs for constituents. In other chapters, Plunkitt details additional activities that Tammany Hall provides: a baseball team, an annual picnic, a glee club, a huge Fourth of July celebration. He observes, "It's philanthropy, but it's politics, too—mighty good politics" (27). Why do this? Plunkitt believes the key to success is to "study human nature and act accordin'" (24). Clearly, the human nature Plunkitt appeals to lies in the basic needs and desires felt by his immigrant New York City district.

Such service, however, brought with it expectations of "loyalty" (34) and "reciprocity" (36). Of course, this would start with a vote at election season. It would also include sharing insider information to help Plunkitt. He thus revealed how he pursued "honest graft" (3–6). Honest graft in Plunkitt's terms occurred when a public service was provided while simultaneously enriching Plunkitt and his friends. Buying up land in advance of an urban project or reselling large lots of bricks helped feather Plunkitt's nest. Or, as he asserted, "I seen my opportunities—and I took 'em" (3). Plunkitt is brazen in admitting to his motivations and underhanded tactics.

From an academic perspective, Plunkitt can be historicized in multiple ways. The most obvious lies in his colorful involvement in the Tammany Hall Democratic political machine. Thus, Plunkitt rightfully finds a prominent place in histories of Tammany—whether in the traditional negative interpretation or the more recent documenting of the services they provided.[3] At the same time, Plunkitt's Tammany can be connected and contrasted to other developments within the Democratic Party. It is worth remembering that Plunkitt lived at the exact same time as William Jennings Bryan.[4] He critiqued the Boy Orator of the Platte's focus on silver and instead endorsed the observation of his Tammany colleague, "I'm in favor of all kinds of money—the more the better" (83). At the same time, Plunkitt resisted other reformers. His Tammany approach collided with the reform efforts of the new, energetic New York City police commissioner Theodore Roosevelt. He knew of, but dismissed, Lincoln Steffens's *The Shame of the Cities* (28–31), and he had little use for reformers like the minister Charles Parkhurst.[5] Tammany's rise also

[3]For an older recounting, see Oliver E. Allen, *The Tiger: The Rise and Fall of Tammany Hall* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1993). Gerald M. Pomper traces the structure and activities of machine politics in *Passions and Interests: Political Party Concepts of American Democracy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992). A more recent reappraisal comes from Terry Golway in *Machine Made: Tammany Hall and the Creation of Modern American Politics* (New York: Liveright, 2015).

[4]For Plunkitt's resistance to trends in the national Democratic Party, see Daniel Klinghard, "'Plunkitt of Tammany Hall' in the Context of Late Nineteenth Century Party Nationalization," *Polity* 43, no. 4 (October 2011): 488–512. On Bryan, consider Michael Kazin, *A Godly Hero: The Life of William Jennings Bryan* (New York: Knopf, 2006).

[5]This period of Roosevelt's life is covered in Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*

occurred amidst the backdrops of urban growth and significant immigration.[6]

Informed by these backgrounds, I led my classes to consider historical trends. We discussed the needs new immigrants experienced in an urban environment with few public services. Thematically, I wanted to connect Plunkitt to the world inhabited by Jacob Riis and his photographic subjects.[7] We also traced the need for civil service reform and the challenges it encountered. In fact, many of the cartoons that Thomas Nast drew were of Plunkitt's own Tammany contemporaries.[8] To Plunkitt, reformers were no more than "mornin' glories" (16)—lacking an established constituency, they would pop up, only to wilt quickly under the political heat.

With this background, I was intrigued to see how *Tammany Hall* would operate and how it would connect with the themes of the Gilded Age. *Tammany Hall* is a European-style strategy board game. We were not simply moving our markers around a *Monopoly* board! It was designed by Doug Eckhart and produced by IDW Games and Pandasaurus Games, published in 2014. The game is beautifully illustrated with a Gilded Age New York theme. The map breaks down the city into its wards. Role cards carry satirical illustrations from political cartoonist Thomas Nast. As to gameplay, the emphasis is largely on area control, dominating the most wards possible. Your influence grows by controlling varied ethnic immigrant groups who have arrived at the Castle Garden entry station—green for the Irish (of course), orange for Germans, blue for Italians, and white for English. Your ward bosses can further solidify control. You can advance your position by slandering your opponents, causing them to lose support. Currency is counted in political favor chips. Victory points are earned at election season, which determines leadership going into the next round. The game design encourages table-talk and short-term alliances—agreements that you are free to honor or ignore.

Building on that lively afternoon of class gameplay, I want to reflect further on the game itself, the use of games, and their benefit for pedagogy. I offer this analysis to generate better thought and practice—not just to bemoan the fact that I lost to college sophomores. In the process, reflection on teaching with board games can contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning.[9]

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(New York: Random House, 2010). Warren Sloat, *A Battle for the Soul of New York: Tammany Hall, Police Corruption, Vice, and Reverend Charles Parkhurst's Crusade against Them, 1892–1895* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2002).

[6]This growth is tracked in Edwin Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[7]Very useful here is Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives, With Related Documents*, 2nd ed., ed. by David Leviatin (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2010). My teaching of Riis is inflected by the interpretation advanced by James West Davidson and Mark Lytle in *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*, 6th ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2009), 203–228.

[8]John Chalmers Vinson, *Thomas Nast, Political Cartoonist* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1967, 2014) and Fiona Deans Halloran, *Thomas Nast: The Father of Modern Political Cartoons* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

[9]The scholarship of teaching and learning, applied to history, is large and growing. Significant books include Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001); Stephane Levesque, *Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-First Century* (Toronto: University

As a class activity, the game had both benefits and weaknesses. On the plus side, the game did simulate the struggle for political control in Gilded Age Manhattan. The wide-open competition illustrated the daily political activity of Plunkitt. The mechanism of working with varied ethnic groups illustrated the diverse nature of the city. The game also encouraged the consideration of whether choices would be viewed as honorable or whether the benefit of winning at all costs justified betraying another player. So, for participants, the game helped give a richer sense of the political jostling in a heterogeneous metropolis which Plunkitt described. Further, for those who chose to play all the way through, it was an engaging strategy game. It drew in unexpected participants, including some of the quieter male students. The whole experience of hosting the game built class camaraderie, and the energy carried through the rest of the semester.

On the other hand, the experience demonstrated several limitations. Because of complex rules, the game had a steep learning curve and certainly took longer than the 90-minute estimated play time. It was not easy to step in for "newbies." Further, this game is only designed for three to five players, so even playing as teams limited the number of people who could actively participate. Other students who showed up to watch soon lost interest and drifted away. As an entire class experience, then, its value was limited.

Further, this game calls out for moral reflection—the type of moral reflection historians can and should engage in for their research and teaching.[10] First, the game sets up a moral temptation. How much should we endorse a game that allows—maybe even encourages—making and then breaking alliances? The game's tagline, after all, is "A board game of backstabbing, corruption, temporary alliances, and taking power at all costs." Are we forming students who think that in certain cases winning at all costs is the way to go? This may lead to an implicit interpretation of not only Gilded Age politics, but life. Just as David I. Smith has warned about the unstated formation that takes place in a classroom, too much cheering for backstabbing politics may incline students not only to expect bare-knuckled politics, but to wade into, participate, and contribute to them.[11] Additionally,

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of Toronto Press, 2008); and Sam Wineburg, *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018). A significant discussion originated in the *Journal of American History*, kicked off by Gary J. Kornblith and Carol Lasser, "Beyond Best Practices: Taking Seriously the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning," *The Journal of American History* 92, no. 4 (March 2006): 1356–57. A further roundtable was presented by Scott Casper five years later. Casper, "The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and the History Classroom," *The Journal of American History* 97, no. 4 (2011): 1048–49. For Christian pedagogy, good work has come from David I. Smith & James K. A. Smith, eds., *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith & Learning* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), *passim*, but especially 157–176 and David I. Smith and Susan M. Felch, *Teaching and Christian Imagination* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016).

[10] John Fea, *Why Study History? Reflecting on the Importance of the Past* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2013), 94–107.

[11] For unspoken formation, consider David I. Smith, *On Christian Teaching: Practicing Faith in the Classroom* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018), 41–52, 74–79.

we cannot guarantee that all students will have the same expectations of a rough-and-tumble game going in. A player who gets "thrown under the bus" may be less willing to work with the perpetrator in a small group activity later in the semester. On top of that, a professor who breaks his word in the game could lose a student's trust for the entire course—or longer.

Further, representing ethnic interests as colored cubes certainly risks depersonalizing them. Might we be tempted to view immigrants the same way the political machines did—just as tools for accomplishing our aims? That is, does simply counting ethnicities cause players to lose the sense of the *imago dei* in immigrant communities? More than ever, failing to appreciate and value the personhood of immigrants at any point in American history risks a failure to love our neighbors in the present. I wish I had thought to raise these questions with the class—I can think of several participants who needed to think more deeply about these specific issues.

From the experience, I would draw three conclusions. First, there certainly is a value of playing history-themed games with students. Although they simplify the historical experience, they can still carry value for helping students connect one type of historical memory with what they are learning in class. By setting an historical framework but then leaving the outcome open, such games encourage students to consider the contingency of the outcome and the responses of the game mechanism to the agencies of human choice. Well-designed and illustrated games can draw students into greater engagement.[12]

Second, faculty should carefully consider the issue of scalability. For a class, it may be necessary to secure multiple copies of the same game or vary the times that students would use it. Consider setting aside times to engage with the game as a "lab" experience. Check with other gamers or your local public library for additional copies. For a department, history club, or Phi Alpha Theta chapter, a wonderful social event can occur with a general history game night, in which students could choose from several historical options. Great history-themed games include *7 Wonders* (Repos, 2010), *Battle Line* (GMT, 2000), *Carcassonne* (Rio Grande, 2000), *Biblios* (iello, 2007), *San Juan* (alea, 2004), *Guillotine* (Wizards of the Coast, 1998), and *Ticket to Ride* (Days of Wonder, 2004). All of these are much easier to learn and demand less to enable students to start playing.

Third, the pedagogical value grows as we engage students with questions that will cause them to consider the design of the games and the ways playing them form students' thinking about the past and the world they inhabit. In this way, we will be conducting the moral reflection that we value in our classrooms. An example of such moral reflection is on display in an article by Patrick Rael, where he reports

[12]I subsequently discovered that game simulations, broadly defined, are of growing interest in pedagogical research. Simulations have been proven to advance deep learning, content understanding, and higher-order critical thinking. Among students, they promote learner motivation and engagement in the class. These findings are discussed in Dimitrios Vlachopoulos and Agoritsa Makri, "The Effects of Games and Simulations on Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review," *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* 14: 22 (2017): 15–27, DOI 10.1186/s41239-017-0062-1. Chris Silvia documented findings about higher-level learning in Silvia, "The Impact of Simulations on Higher-Level Learning," *Journal of Public Affairs Education* 18, no. 2 (Spring 2012): 397–422.

on teaching with the strategy game *Puerto Rico* (Alea, 2002) and using the moment to highlight its treatment (or actual lack of treatment) of the role of slavery in the colonial plantation economy.[13]

I am thus grateful for my student in a U.S. History survey who realized the connection between a primary source we were reading in class and a game he enjoyed and then introduced it to me and to the class. That spark of interest shaped not only an afternoon of gaming and an energized semester, but subsequent reflection on my teaching. Using history-themed games properly can advance our students' historical thinking and their engagement in moral reflection, thereby furthering the education mission of our departments and institutions. It turns out that in breaking out the board games—we aren't just playing around.

[13] Patrick Rael, "Playing with the Past: Teaching Slavery with Board Games," *AHA Perspectives* 59, no. 8 (November 2021): 18–20.

## *THE ROAD TO CANTERBURY* AND UNDERSTANDING MEDIEVAL ESTATES SATIRE

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Instructors of historical literature often face similar pedagogical questions as our colleagues teaching history: How do I make the past—especially the more distant past—accessible for young people who consider "the 1900s" to be long ago? How do I balance which people groups and cultures are represented in the texts we read to reflect both the realities of the past and the current political climate in my institution's location? How do I help students understand evolving power dynamics that involve parties and actors with names that feel alien and irrelevant to today? Moreover, as an instructor of literature, how do I help students understand these concepts efficiently so that as a class we can spend discussion time considering not just the historical context of a particular author, but also textual and poetic features of their literature and interpretations that illuminate values held by people in the past and present? As James M. Lang points out, one of the challenges of teaching historical survey courses is the fact that they cover "massive amounts of literary and historical territory" and lend themselves most immediately to a lecture model of pedagogy.[1] Literary pedagogy has recently looked more favorably on the lecture format than in previous decades; however, most scholars still agree that engaging students in more active learning—discussions, small group work, acting out scenes, drawing settings, etc.—promotes deeper learning and better retention of key concepts.[2] So while I do use short lectures when introducing new time periods in many of my classes, I also constantly hunt for ways to make historical and literary concepts into opportunities for active learning.

One of the active learning methods I have used in the past is to integrate board games into the classroom, and perhaps the most effective game I have found for this purpose is The Road to Canterbury, a turn-based game in which players take on the role of the infamous Pardoner from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Before discovering this game, I had already employed the active learning techniques modeled by my own professors: I assigned students short presentations on philosophical

[1]James M. Lang, "Introduction," in *Teaching the Literature Survey Course: New Strategies for College Faculty*, ed. Gwynn Dujardin, James M. Lang, John A. Staunton (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2018) 2–3.
[2]See, for instance, Lang, 2–4.

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concepts (courtly love, fortune, pilgrimage) and short essays in which they "adopted" a pilgrim from the "General Prologue" and were responsible for providing insight on their pilgrim anytime they appeared in our reading or discussion. Despite these tactics, though, I found that nearly all the students still had difficulty understanding the rigid hierarchy and multitudinous roles associated with the medieval Catholic church. To be fair to the students, twenty-first century life does not provide many opportunities to learn about prioresses, nuns, monks, cannons, priests, bishops, archbishops, pardoners, summoners, and friars; and suddenly encountering several of these figures in a medieval text can be overwhelming. In both my British Literature survey and my Chaucer seminar, this was a problem. The satiric humor of both the "General Prologue" and the individual tales relies on readers already having a certain depth of knowledge for what these people do—or are supposed to do—for a living.[3] Knowing I had limited time in the semester for both classes, I decided to focus my attention on Chaucer's Pardoner as a representative case, and to use The Road to Canterbury as an entrée to medieval church professions and corruption. As the rest of this essay will show, integrating this game into the classroom proved successful for introducing students to an unfamiliar church profession, but also effective for developing the depth of knowledge necessary for appreciating Chaucer's literary achievements in satiric storytelling.

I should begin by noting that I had some reservations about devoting precious class time to playing a board game. Not only would it take up an entire class period—in which time I might have assigned another short tale or perhaps some of Chaucer's source material—it would also run the risk of being considered "lame" by students, a ploy on the part of the instructor to make learning "fun." After all, as Izabela Hopkins and David Roberts point out, "any game in which play is imposed, as it will be in a classroom environment, inevitably becomes … 'chocolate-covered broccoli', and by default a bad game."[4] Especially in my early days of teaching as a graduate student and then in my first years of teaching full time, I dreaded gaining a reputation as a "try-hard" professor who attempted to reach the youth of America by pretending to be hip with medieval board games. However, from the simpler games I had played in the past with my literature and composition classes—home-brewed competitions like the MLA Citation Challenge and review Jeopardy!—I knew that putting some concepts into game formats was useful in changing up the classroom environment and getting students to interact with material in ways that led to stronger retention. This phenomenon is explained by Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman in their influential book *Rules of Play*. They write that games "make use of existing structures to invent new forms of expression," which can in turn produce what they call "transformative play."[5] This kind of play changes how participants interact within the system of the game, but also influences how players think

[3]Jill Mann, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire: The Literature of Social Classes and the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 1–10.
[4]Izabela Hopkins and David Roberts, " 'Chocolate-covered Broccoli'? Games and the Teaching of Literature," *Changing English* 22, no. 2 (2015): 228.
[5]Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman, *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004): 305.

about game concepts and relationships outside of the game, which has always been my goal with games in the classroom. Salen and Zimmerman caution, though, that not all instances of play result in transformative play, and that achieving transformative play depends in large part on "the way we frame the play experience."[6] While I hadn't read Salen and Zimmerman when I first introduced The Road to Canterbury, I knew I needed to be purposeful and explicit in communicating my goals for the game to my students in order to realize the benefits that the game could offer.

When we arrived at the beginning of the *Canterbury Tales* in both my survey and seminar courses, I was more careful than usual to lay out for students the next few days' worth of material; on the day we began to read and discuss the *Canterbury Tales,* students read the first half of the "General Prologue," and a small group of students presented on the concept of medieval pilgrimage and especially fourteenth-century pilgrimage to Canterbury Cathedral to visit Thomas Becket. We also discussed Jill Mann's concept of "estates satire"—Chaucer's ironic treatment of social stereotypes found within the traditional medieval estates: those who pray, those who work, and those who govern.[7] On the second day, students read the remainder of the "General Prologue" and were assigned to "adopt a pilgrim" by writing a brief profile of one of the pilgrims from the "Prologue." While the Prologue contains portraits of many characters whose medieval church professions are unfamiliar, the Pardoner is perhaps the most alien for students who have never considered literally purchasing indulgences or pardons with cash to alleviate the punishments for sin. Adding to the difficulty, as Mann observes, "[t]he different ranks of the clergy are the estates most frequently and fully treated by satirists," and Chaucer does indeed spend the largest portion of the "General Prologue" lampooning church professionals like the Pardoner.[8] Therefore, we spent extra time in class discussing the Pardoner's unpleasant appearance, especially his hair:

> This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
>
> But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex;
>
> By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,
>
> And therwith he his shuldres overspradde;
>
> But thynne it lay, by colpons oon and oon.
>
> [This pardoner had hair as yellow as wax, which hung smoothly down like a bundle of flax; in small segments hung his locks, and he took care to spread it over his shoulders; but it lay thin, by single strands.][9]

[6]Salen and Zimmerman, *Rules of Play*, 305.

[7]Jill Mann, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire: The Literature of Social Classes and the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 1–10.

[8]Mann, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire*, 17.

[9]Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales, in The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edition, ed. David

We also lingered over the Pardoner's pardons and fake relics that he sells to unsuspecting pilgrims and locals, making more money than the local parsons:

> But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
>
> A povre person dwellynge upon lond,
>
> Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye
>
> Than that the person gat in monthes tweye;
>
> And thus, with feyned flaterye and japes,
>
> He made the person and the peple his apes.
>
> [But with these relics, when he found a poor person dwelling out in the country, on any given day he got himself more money than the local parson in twelve months. And thus, with feigned flattery and tricks, he made the parson and the people his apes.][10]

The trope of the corrupt churchperson is not unfamiliar to students, but the antics of this particular man and Chaucer's ironic evaluation of the Pardoner as a "noble ecclesiaste" do cause confusion for students.[11] Therefore, for the next class period I assigned students to watch a YouTube video tutorial on the game, and in class, we played The Road to Canterbury.

Hopkins and Roberts observe that "[l]ike literary texts …, games are refracted representations of the worlds they appear to reflect"[12] and that furthermore, a well-designed game can " 'capture the essence' of an experience"[13] by condensing it into a discrete event to be experienced by the players. This is exactly what happened to students playing The Road to Canterbury. In the game, players act as pardoners tempting unsuspecting pilgrims into committing various sins and then conveniently selling them pardons for the very sins they led the pilgrims into. Their goal is to make the most amount of money, not save souls, although they do earn bonuses for performing the last rites when a pilgrim dies of the sins they have accumulated. The game is played in rounds that are tracked on a map of the road from London to Canterbury, ending when the pilgrims reach the cathedral and St. Thomas's tomb. With these simple mechanics and goals, it is a fairly easy game for

Benson (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), I. 675–78. References to the *Canterbury Tales* include fragment and line number. Translations are my own.

[10]Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales,* I. 701–06.

[11]Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, I. 708.

[12]Hopkins and Roberts, " 'Chocolate-covered Broccoli,' " 225.

[13]Hopkins and Roberts, " 'Chocolate-covered Broccoli,' " 229.

students to master, but it is also very easy for them to slip into the mindset of the Pardoner from the *Canterbury Tales*—the "essence of the experience" that Hopkins and Roberts describe.

Within ten minutes of starting the game, students were strategizing among themselves[14] which pilgrims represented easy targets for temptation, and which pilgrims could most "benefit" from the pardons they had to sell. There was much rubbing of hands, evil cackling, and money-bag-jingling as students fell into character and made their way through the various points on the map. Near the middle of the game, when students had collected several cards representing sins and pardons, we paused to appreciate some tricky lines from the "General Prologue": "His wallet, biforn hym in his lappe, / Bretful of pardoun comen from Rome all hoot" [His travel pouch, in front of him on his lap, was brimful of pardons freshly come from Rome].[15] In one of the classes, a team had obtained so many pardon cards that it took two students to hold them all, and they were particularly pleased with their "bretful" collection of indulgences.

Another element of the game that helped students capture the essence of the medieval pardoning experience was the game's mechanic featuring relics. In the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer enumerates the many supposed relics that the Pardoner carries with him on the road to Canterbury:

> [I]n his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
>
> Which that he seyde was Oure Lady veyl;
>
> He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl
>
> That Seint Petere hadde, what that he went
>
> Upon the see, til Jhesu Crist hym hente.
>
> He hadde a croys of latoun ful of stones,
>
> And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.
>
> [In his travel case he had a pillowcase, which he said was Our Lady's veil; he also said he had a chunk of the sail that St. Peter had when he sailed upon the sea until Jesus called him. He had a tin cross decorated with rocks, and in a glass reliquary he had some pig bones.][16]

While relics continue to be important in many faith traditions today, they

[14]The game allows for two to three players, so for class I put students in small teams. Not only did this allow more people to get involved, it also alleviated the responsibility for students who were less familiar or enthusiastic about modern board games.

[15]Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, I. 701–06.

[16]Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, I. 694–700.

are usually kept in churches or museums. As a result, students are often confused about the easy access that people in the Middle Ages had to such important relics; however, they begin to see the extent of corruption and humor in this passage when they realize that the Pardoner is the medieval equivalent of an oily used car salesman (complete with greasy hair in this case). The Road to Canterbury capitalizes on the ironic gravitas that Chaucer gives these relics by incorporating relic cards that players can deploy to create chaos within the game. For example, one card labeled the "Knickers of Saint Nicholas" contains the flavor text "Some gifts are best left unopened" and allows a player to play multiple cards that will likely lead to the death of a pilgrim. Another card is labeled the "Scrambled Eggs of Saint Benedict" and allows a player to exchange a random card with an opponent. While none of the relic cards exactly match the relics described in the "General Prologue," they all highlight the absurdity of the Pardoner's fake relics, and they help students understand that Chaucer's point is not that this Pardoner is particularly good at procuring relics, but rather that he is good at tricking people into buying obviously phony ones.

For both the survey and seminar classes, I reserved the last ten minutes of the class period to discuss students' vile behavior as pardoners and to compare their experience to the description of the Pardoner in the "General Prologue." Students enthusiastically pointed to the pardons and relics they had sold in the game that were much like the pillowcase and pig bones the Pardoner sells in the text, and one student used the discussion time to dramatically spread her straightened hair over her shoulders in clumps and leer at her friend in the next row. Others commented on the kind of person who could perform these actions without shame or pity for their targets; in the game, once a pilgrim dies of accumulated sin, they are simply removed from the board and replaced by another unsuspecting victim. Because I had intentionally framed the game with two class periods on the text and this discussion of the game's ability to mirror the experience described in the text, the game was received as a success among the students—a valuable learning tool rather than a sad attempt by a teacher to make medieval literature cool.

The instructional value of this game continued beyond our discussion of the "General Prologue," too. Because students had achieved a deep understanding of the satire applied to one of the pilgrims, they immediately became skeptical of *all* of the pilgrims, a safe approach considering most of Chaucer's pilgrims are flawed individuals.[17] Students were suspicious of the motives of each pilgrim as they told their stories, which allowed us to see more easily how Chaucer sets up most tales to "requite" or "get revenge on" the story that was told before it.[18] Furthermore, when the Pardoner returned in a later class period with his individual "Prologue" and "Tale," students greeted him like a long-lost friend, even as they knew—perhaps much like Chaucer's original audience—that they should not trust *anything* this narrator said. Indeed, in his "Prologue," the Pardoner lays out for his audience exactly how he pitches his voice and presents his counterfeit wares for maximum

[17] Jill Mann comments on the necessary selection and distortion inherent to the satire genre. See Mann, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire*, 8.

[18] See, for example the bridge between the first two tales proper, in which the Host asks the Monk to "quite" the "Knight's Tale," and the drunk Miller interrupts with his own tale to "quite" it instead. Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales,* I. 3119, 3127.

financial gain. His "Tale" is a moral tale about the dangers of greed and money that he says he often tells as a sermon. At the very end of the Pardoner's "Tale," the Pardoner banks on the story having its usual effect (despite the other pilgrims' knowledge of his schemes) and offers a fake relic to the host, and students were able to see right through the ruse and actually laugh at the comic situations presented in the tale. Finally, one of the criteria for the storytelling contest that makes up the *Canterbury Tales* is "sentence" [moral knowledge or wisdom], and our subsequent discussion of whether an immoral narrator can tell a moral tale was enriched by students' deeper understanding of the Pardoner's character gained earlier in the semester.[19]

Overall, I was deeply satisfied with the success of The Road to Canterbury in both my survey and seminar courses. I had begun this gaming approach with trepidation, especially considering time constraints of the semester and what Salen and Zimmerman call the "emergent" and "unpredictable" nature of play in general, not to mention playing games in a classroom where the participants come with a range of experience with board games and familiarity with fellow players.[20] However, with careful scaffolding and explicit communication of the teaching objectives for this game, it was a very successful pedagogical tool. It helped students understand the important foundational concepts of the "General Prologue," and it set them up with valuable strategies for approaching the following tales with skepticism for the Chaucer's often-unreliable narrators and an ear honed for detecting Chaucer's irony. In this case, the investment of precious class time reaped substantial rewards as students captured the essence of decadence and corruption in medieval church professions and appreciated literature in ways that would have been impossible without the game. There is nothing like independently understanding a matrix of six-hundred-year-old jokes as a college student, and there were many superior, in-the-know looks in the classroom on the days that students were able to participate in the sardonic joy and despair that comes from interacting with satire in any century.

[19] Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, I. 798.
[20] Salen and Zimmerman, *Rules of Play*, 305.

# REFORMING THE CLASSROOM: GAMES IN A REFORMATION HISTORY COURSE

LYNNETH MILLER RENBERG

What can the incorporation of various types of games contribute to upper-level history courses? For a course where the enrolled students are already majors or minors, are games still a worthwhile pedagogical tool? In short, my answer to these questions would be "a lot" and "yes," respectively. Like so many other college professors and teachers, I first used games in my classroom in survey courses: trying to find ways to keep students engaged, to add interaction and different types of learning, and to show students some of the ways that causation and contingency play out in history. Scholarship has shown that the use of games in the classroom is an effective pedagogical strategy for increasing knowledge of historical content and analytical skills, both for the history classroom and for teaching in general. From digital games like alternate reality games to more traditional board or card games, play-based pedagogy has been shown to lead to both engaged classroom experiences and to substantial increases in historical knowledge for students who play them.[1]

Despite these well-researched pedagogical benefits, for me, however, the desire to incorporate games into upper-level courses grew primarily out of an aspiration to create courses that support diversity and inclusion and that are designed to promote equity among students from different backgrounds. Cate J. Denial notes the pressures for rigor and assessment that often shape our classroom practices, practices that routinely leave students grappling with a lack of support and resources even further behind. In advocating for a pedagogy of kindness, Denial shows

[1]See, for example, Ronan Lynch, Bride Mallon, and Cornelia Connolly, "The Pedagogical Application of Alternate Reality Games: Using Game-Based Learning to Revisit History," *International journal of game-based learning* 5, no. 2 (2015): 18–38; Linda Daniela, *Smart Pedagogy of Game-Based Learning, Advances in Game-Based Learning* (Cham: Springer International Publishing AG, 2021); "Patricia Seed: Looking Back: A Decade of Using Games to Teach History, 1996-2006," *HASTAC*, accessed September 7, 2022, https://www.hastac.org/electronic-techtonics-breakout-sessions/patricia-seed-looking-back-decade-using-games-teach-history; Andrew B. R. Elliott and Matthew Kapell, eds., *Playing with the Past: Digital Games and the Simulation of History* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013); Tobias Winnerling and Florian Kerschbaumer, eds., *Early Modernity and Video Games* (Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014).

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that reframing the classroom to believe students and believe in students makes the classroom accessible to everyone. As she states, "by designing my class to accommodate all types of learning I'm demonstrating something important about the ways in which we should be creating a more just world."[2] Furthermore, as Maha Bali notes, "marginality can be visible and invisible. Class background. Sexuality. Chronic or temporary disability . . . those at the centers can never see what it looks like to be on the margins, because the world looks different from the margins."[3] Truly inclusive pedagogy, pedagogy that works to reflect the Christian work for justice and for those on the margins, has to be radically different in its design, both to create a space in which all are welcome and to treat students as fellow image-bearers.

These understandings of pedagogy and inclusion resonated particularly strongly with me after my first few years of teaching, when it had become apparent that students were entering the classroom with wildly different levels of academic preparation. Some of my brightest and most enthusiastic students excelled in class discussions but struggled with traditional academic writing, and thus, in heavily-writing based courses, their grades were not reflecting their effort or understanding of material. The lack of support they had (both prior to and during college) meant that my classes were, unintentionally, continuing to support a hierarchy of privilege rather than one of justice. This led me to consider how to design courses that taught the same content and skills without relying so heavily on writing—an important skill that needs to be taught, but perhaps one that rewards students from more privileged backgrounds while disadvantaging their peers. A switch from written final exams (either timed and in-class or take-home essays) to cumulative final projects that include both written and creative components seemed a clear first step in building more equitable courses, but to end with a nontraditional final after a traditional course might feel disjointed or disingenuous. I started to think about how to better incorporate summative final projects in nontraditional forms (like films, games, or performance-based unessays) throughout the semester. Having had great success with a final film project and with a pop culture analysis project, I started to consider how games, a popular means of consuming history for the broader public, might also function as a means of historical research and assessment for my students. What would it look like to build a whole course around the idea of games and play as a means of teaching history? I started my reworking of our university's "Age of Reformations" course, an upper-level study of early modern European history, with this question in mind.

A few notes for context before moving into what exactly that looked like: first, I teach at a small liberal arts college. I have around 110 students a semester and a 4/4 load without TA support, so crucial in any course design decision is manageability. Will I be able to sustain pedagogical quality across all my classes if I put a certain project or grade conferences or the like into one class? Our upper-level history classes cap at twenty students, and because of growth within the major, usually run completely full. Of those twenty students, about half are history

[2]Cate J. Denial, "A Pedagogy of Kindness," *Hybrid Pedagogy*, last modified August 15, 2019, accessed September 5, 2022, https://hybridpedagogy.org/pedagogy-of-kindness/.
[3]Maha Bali, "Foreword" (March 16, 2021), accessed September 7, 2022, https://voicesofpractice.pressbooks.com/front-matter/foreword/.

majors, and about half are social studies education majors or history minors. Most of our students are pursuing careers teaching in secondary schools, terminal master's degrees in public history or library sciences, or law school. From my conversations with students, I know that about a quarter of them are first generation college students; a significantly smaller number are students of color. Finally, our students usually double major or carry multiple minors, along with working anywhere from one to three jobs to help fund their college education. In short, they're writing a lot of papers, taking a lot of exams, and have very full schedules that make group work difficult—another consideration when building class assignments and working towards classroom inclusivity and equity.

So, back to the Reformations in Early Modern Europe class—in putting together the course and its assignments, I knew where I wanted to land. I wanted students to work in groups to design a board game based on content from the course, one that would demonstrate understanding of broad historical concepts like causation, contingency, and change over time. I also wanted students to reflect on historical interpretation: In designing their game, what did they choose to include, and what did they leave out? How did these choices affect the narrative they presented to their audiences? And what did their game "argue"? Clearly a game doesn't have a thesis in the same way that a research paper does, but it does advance a set vision of the past and how the past played out: What historical claim did their game rules, objectives, and players advance? This class seemed the ideal course to launch such a project in. Not only do several board games centered on early modern topics exist, but board games and similar types of play also developed and spread during the early modern era after the advent of the printing press.[4] As Ömer Fatih Parlak notes, "thanks to the late 15th century improvements in printing technology, even more games began to be published in the cultural hubs of Europe, like Nuremberg, Augsburg, Vienna, as well as in Venice and Bologna . . . printed cards and board games were easily affordable in comparison with the more expensive hand-crafted game boards and cards" and thus were in high demand.[5] Games like the "Game of the Goose" or "Gioco della Fortuna e di Disgratia" (The Game of Fortune and Misfortune) reflect both an increasing early modern emphasis on print culture and leisure and the development of new forms of play.[6] Thus, a game project for this course would provide a chance for conversation about the culture and society of

[4]For a few examples of modern games that explore this period, see Dominion: Renaissance, Here I Stand, Fief, Puerto Rico, and Guillotine.

[5]Ömer Fatih Parlak, "Playing 'the Turk': Early Modern Board Games and Playing Cards in Europe as a Counter-Argument to History," in *Games of Empires. Kulturhistorische Konnotationen von Brettspielen in Transnationalen Und Imperialen Kontexten*, ed. Karen Aydin et al. (Lit Verlag, 2018), 189–204, accessed September 8, 2022, https://www.degruyter.com/database/IBR/entry/ibr.ID_REZ-495218_ISBN9783643138804/html?lang=en.

[6]Parlak, "Playing 'the Turk'.; Adrian Seville, *The Cultural Legacy of the Royal Game of the Goose: 400 Years of Printed Board Games* (Amsterdam: University Press, 2019); Albrecht Classen, *Pleasure and Leisure in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: Cultural-Historical Perspectives on Toys, Games, and Entertainment*, 2019, accessed July 12, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110623079; Alex Andriesse, "Progress in Play: Board Games and the Meaning of History," *The Public Domain Review*, accessed September 20, 2022, https://publicdomainreview.org/essay/progress-in-play-board-games-and-the-meaning-of-history/.

early modern Europe, while also creating a way to assess some of the primary skills that we work to build in our majors. The project served both my course content and my broader pedagogical goal of equity well.

Making this project work with my broader pedagogical goals and ensuring that it did not seem to students to be a random "build a board game" assignment disconnected from course content, I wanted to make sure that the theme of history and games threaded through the entirety of the course. Thus, I decided to work in mini games throughout the semester, playable during part of a single class period with time for discussion and analysis after the game, to demonstrate the ways that games act as historical interpretation and help understand historical principles. To give just a few examples from different points in the course: the first game students played was a "Reacting to the Past" mini game, in which students played through the Conclave of 1492 and the election of Rodrigo Borgia as Pope Alexander VI. Using William Keene Thompson's "Reacting to the Past" mini game, students were each given a brief introduction to the context of the conclave and assigned a role, a cardinal in attendance at the conclave. Students made the interests and goals of the cardinal their own in the class conclave reenactment, arguing, bribing, and allying accordingly.[7] At the end of a raucous series of debates and scrutinies, a new pope had been elected (in both instances, the person representing Rodrigo de Borgia was elected pope, as the conclave mirrored historical events). A postmortem discussion provided space to discuss what actually happened at the 1492 gathering and led into a discussion of issues concerning the late medieval church, in which students paired their experiences during the conclave with their reading of "Julius Excluded." Playing this game during our first week of class set the stage for games as a means of doing history throughout (and had the added bonus of creating lots of space for students to talk to each other and interact, which helped the class bond quickly). Furthermore, the visceral experience of papal corruption—being shouted down by classmates, bribed, or having one's family members betray you—stayed with students throughout the class, leading to a far deeper understanding of the frustrations with early modern religion that drove many of the reformers and their followers.

In a second example of a single class game scenario, during our discussion of early modern economics, we played a game I developed to demonstrate the relationship between colonizing country and colony (and then between competing nation-states) in a mercantile economic system. In both iterations (a pre-COVID version involving balloons and a post-COVID version involving paper airplanes), this mini game very clearly exhibited how the set-up of a mercantile economic system both led to exploitation of colonies and to extreme competition between nation-states.[8] In these and similar mini games, students got to experience some of the contingencies and causalities of the history we were studying. And to be honest,

[7]William Keene Thompson, "The Reacting Consortium – Conclave 1492," accessed September 20, 2022, https://reactingconsortium.org/games/conclave1492.

[8]For discussion of some of these dynamics, see Philip J. Stern and Carl Wennerlind, *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and Its Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Sophus A. Reinert and Pernille Røge, *The Political Economy of Empire in the Early Modern World*, Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies series (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

student responses on exams showed that teaching economics in particular through game play meant the concepts have stuck far better than in past classes, where I delivered the content through more traditional methods like reading or lectures. Incorporating these mini games throughout the course meant that by the time we started work on the big project, students had a clear idea of some of the ways history as game could work; they also had some perspective on what historical subjects can more easily translate into games, and on how games can make historical contingencies and complexities more comprehensible and accessible.

Turning from these mini games to the larger game project, I made sure to pay attention to the issues students faced in coordinating group work time outside of class in order to make it serve my goals of pedagogical inclusion. Simply assuming all students could find time outside of our class period to meet and work as groups ran counter to the very pedagogical inclusion this project hoped to create. So, when putting together the syllabus, I blocked off a week of class time around the midterm and another week at the end of the course for students to work (during class time) on these group projects. During the first dedicated week, we spent a day on the five Cs of history (change over time, context, causality, contingency, and complexity), historical interpretation, and bias. Students read Thomas Andrews's and Flannery Burke's discussion of the five Cs and discussed how each of these could function as a game mechanism.[9] Doing so pushed students to consider how traditional historical writing taught and included these concepts along with how each could be adapted for a game without warping the historical content of a chosen topic; gamifying things like "causality" made clear to students that bias had to be clearly acknowledged or directly countered in order to develop games that worked well, for biased assumptions about causality or contingency led to faulty games that were less enjoyable to play (and taught poorer history).

Using this foundation, during the second class that week we then analyzed several board games that represented early modern history. These varied in complexity and intensity, from Here I Stand with its one thousand game pieces and eight- to twelve-hour play time, to the comparatively user-friendly Dominion: Renaissance. Students then worked to pick the themes or topics for their group's game, with choices for the 2020 class including early modern witch hunts, court culture and politics in the court of Louis XIV, peasants' revolts, and debates between reformers. The 2022 group developed slightly different topics, reflecting the different experiences and interests of each group of students. In 2020, student groups were going to use the second week of designated class time to playtest their games and work out any final issues with the projects before presenting them to the class. However, again, this plan was disrupted and ended up not taking place, with students completing the projects over Google Drive and Zoom, playtesting with their families, and then submitting video presentations.[10] In teaching the course in the fall of

[9]Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke, "What Does It Mean to Think Historically?" *Perspectives on History*, AHA, accessed September 20, 2022, https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/january-2007/what-does-it-mean-to-think-historically.

[10]For reflections on this, see Lynneth Miller Renberg, "Project-Based Pedagogy in a Pandemic," accessed September 21, 2022, https://www.escj.org/blog/project-based-pedagogy-pan-

2022, we were able to realize the original plan and debut the games in person.

A final part of this project design involved considering the future of our majors after graduation. Those of us who teach in colleges and universities are used to constantly telling our students that history degrees are versatile and can help them in many different fields and career paths. However, many of our classes focus primarily on reading, writing, and oral argumentation—vital skills, to be sure, but not the only skills majors may need in entering the workforce. Thus, I also wanted to use this project to help majors build soft skills in group project coordinating and design along with working with the equipment in our campus's MakerSpace (laser cutters, 3D printers, and assorted software programs for design) that might help them on the job market. In the 2020 version of the class, the sudden dismissal of students back to their homes disrupted this last goal and required a pivot to online group coordination and more basic game designs, but the 2022 used the reopened campus resources to develop these soft skills, learning to use GlowForges, 3D printers, and Photoshop. Students toured the campus MakerSpace during the first designated workshop week, and we then mixed presentations and game play for our final week of the course, with students inviting friends to join in the game play day. In a future iteration of the course, I plan to coordinate with our graphic design department to give students experience in collaborating across disciplines.

To wrap up with a bit of analysis and reflection: what worked well and what did not? One of the first major merits to this approach was a very engaged classroom. Incorporating play throughout the course built camaraderie and class trust very quickly, allowing us to have better discussions of primary source readings and class content even on days that there were no game elements involved. The in-class mini games and discussions afterwards provided a lower stakes way for students to demonstrate historical analysis skills and show understanding of class content, building students' confidence in their abilities and translating into less anxiety about the other assessments in the course. A second benefit is that this approach, with more nontraditional methods of delivery of material and student response, did indeed help contribute to equity in the classroom; students who had struggled with the extensive weight given to research papers in past classes showed through some of the less traditional assignments that they understood the material well and demonstrated the historical skills I was hoping to see. This also helped the class dynamic—it challenged the traditional academic hierarchy that usually forms in classes where students know each other from past classes and have preconceived notions about who is smart, which also allowed for better conversations and a stronger learning environment. Students who had previously struggled with writing felt that they also had important things to contribute and spoke up more willingly and more frequently, because of their success in some of these nontraditional assignments that were challenging for some of the more type A students in the course. This contributed to the moral formation of students in the class, pushing my students towards humility and greater respect for their peers. Finally, students who hope to end up in classrooms of their own someday commented that the course made them rethink how to best teach history and how to engage students. Particularly for some of the

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social studies education majors in the class, having a project centered on teaching increased their interest and buy-in into the course and its goals. In thinking about the long-term growth of our profession, creating secondary education teachers who get high schoolers excited about history seems like nothing but a good thing.

While I am convinced that the benefits to this approach outweigh the negatives, there were a few downsides that those weighing a similar framework should consider. The first obvious disadvantage to this approach comes in the loss of class time used for content delivery, something that is no small loss in a class covering several hundred years of history in a semester. My commitment to making sure students could work well together on these group projects meant that workshop days were a must, but that also meant not delving as deeply in class lectures and discussions into some of the history from the era. The second major disadvantage is that more so than traditional assessments, the success of this pedagogical format depends to some degree on the willingness of the students to buy in and engage well. I have had two positive experiences with this, but can imagine that if I tried this same approach in a class of students who simply wanted a grade to go towards their degree, the extra commitment needed to develop a group game project might not be received as well. Finally, the highly interactive nature of the classroom for this course perhaps meant that quieter students got lost at times. I did work to make sure that each game had a role that a quieter student could do well in, without pressure to be as vocal as some of their classmates, but on some class days, this was not as successful as I would have hoped. Most of these disadvantages can be met with careful and intentional classroom management, but the fact that this pedagogical approach is highly dependent on student buy-in remains.

Creating a games-themed course that centered historical analysis through play did not lessen the pedagogical rigor of the course, but rather built historical skills and thinking in different ways, as became clear when assessing the game play manuals, historical context blurbs, and mechanisms of play for the student games. Students also articulated tremendous amounts of learning about the historical content and historical analysis in their group presentations, displaying how they revised their games as they gained more knowledge about their subject and greater understanding of the contingencies and complexities of their chosen events or themes. From this experience, I believe there is value in thinking about games in the classroom not just as a means of attracting majors but also as a means of building equity through highlighting and prioritizing different student skills. For those of us seeking to create classrooms where inclusivity and justice are not just taught but also experienced, perhaps we should be willing to hold traditional models of assessment very loosely. Other means of teaching, applying, and evaluating historical skills may help minimize the difference between dissimilar student backgrounds and build student confidence in their own unique insights as historians in training. These alternative methods of teaching and assessment can help us as teachers model the Christlike justice and compassion that we are hoping to form in our students. From my experience, a games-themed upper-level course may lead to some chaotic moments as students get into their roles as cardinals or merchants or pirates, complete with occasional yelling and jumping. At the end of the day, however, this approach seems to me to create space for students to thrive, no matter their back-

grounds or strengths. The pay-off in student engagement, confidence, and growth feels worth it.

## FINDING THE WITCH: IMAGINATIVE ROLE-PLAY IN THE CLASSROOM

JENNIFER BINCZEWSKI

Insight into the fears, motivations, and emotions of people of the past is often lost on historians, to our chagrin. Even within the most intimate correspondence found in the archives, context can be elusive and our own temporal distance from the past tarnishes true understanding of authorial intent and sentiment. Perhaps this is why some historians relish a good work of historical fiction, while others approach the genre with great trepidation.[1] How can we, from our twenty-first century context, understand the struggles, decisions, and motivations encountered by those we study, let alone communicate such concepts in the classroom? Should we even try? If history were just a recitation of dates and events, then perhaps we should not tread into the muddy waters of emotions and motivations. But, as we all know, understanding history is so much more important than rote memorization. The complex nature of decision-making, together with motivations of fear, jealousy, and uncertainty are all part of human experience, so why not dabble with understanding the humanity of the past? Such an exercise, while perhaps not academically rigorous, creates space for empathy and engagement with history and encourages students to be ethical consumers and creators of information in today's world.

Many of us are familiar with the five Cs of history: context, causality, contingency, change and continuity, and complexity. This easily digestible helpmate for historical thinking is something that I introduce in the classroom on the first day of class and integrate for the duration of the semester.[2] The purpose of introducing the five Cs early in the semester is to encourage students to not just accept the "facts" at face value, but to consider context, causality, contingencies, changes and constancies over time, and the complexity inherent in the past. Through this practice, we can attempt to view the past on its own terms. However, I argue that these tools for historical thinking not only work for events of the past but also help us approach others with more empathy and understanding despite our differences

[1]The inclusion of historical fiction book reviews in *The American Historical Review* signals a potential shift in the reception of the genre within academia.

[2]My favorite go-to piece to assign in the classroom is Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke, "What does it mean to think historically?" *Perspectives on History* (Jan. 2007), AHA, https://www.historians.org/research-and-publications/perspectives-on-history/january-2007/what-does-it-mean-to-think-historically

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today. This broader objective in the classroom—one that pushes for empathy and critical thinking of both past and present events—pairs nicely with imaginative role-play. Role-play in the classroom can become a tool to help students encounter the lived experience of people who seem so distant from themselves, while coming to a greater understanding of how similar, in fact, they might be. It bridges our perception of what *actually* happened with what *might have* happened.

Games are becoming a popular avenue through which to investigate these complexities and contingencies of past events from a classroom setting. These can be multi-week undertakings through official games, such as those from *Reacting to the Past*, or smaller single-day exercises, such as the one I designed and wrote about the witch hunts of seventeenth-century Europe.[3] For me, the inclusion of role-play in the classroom goes beyond learning facts and dates. While it can certainly help students remember details of an event, the benefit of gameplay goes beyond historical knowledge. Instead, it humanizes the historical actors, places students in the position to make decisions, and illustrates how historical thinking provides a framework for ethical discernment of both past and contemporary issues.

I ran my imaginative role-play game at a private, Jesuit institution in an upper division course titled Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe. My class consisted of fifteen students who were a mix of seniors and juniors, with a few sophomores and one freshman. Most, but not all, were history majors or minors. A few were there because they received a much-needed writing enriched designation, which my course fulfilled. During the thematically designed segment of my course titled Sexuality and Deviance, I ran a mock witch hunt set in seventeenth-century England to engage students in considering potential motivations for rooting out and executing suspected witches. This game required one class session of preparation and one day of game play. The first session was dedicated to a lecture that discussed the rise of witchcraft accusations, factors that contributed towards accusations (popular beliefs along with political, economic, and social factors, etc.), and the prominence of women in accusations due to ideas of gender in early modern society. Before the game, students read sections of *Malleus Malificarum*, a fifteenth-century treatise on witchcraft, and *A Trial of Witches*, a seventeenth-century account of a witchcraft trial in France that perpetuated the traditional stereotype of witchcraft persecutions.[4] From these primary sources, we set the baseline for the stereotypical "witch"—female, old, peculiar looking, licentious, superstitious, and on the outskirts of the community. Of course, we read all of these with the mindset that these contemporary male authors were more so *creating* a culture of fear rather than reporting on *reality*. Students also read Merry Wiesner-Hanks's chapter on witchcraft in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*.[5] Wiesner-Hanks's argu-

[3]See *Reacting to the Past*, https://reacting.barnard.edu/, for various role-playing games designed for the classroom.

[4]Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *The Malleus Maleficarum*, trans. Rev. Montague Summers (New York: Dover Publications, 1971) and Gilbert Geis and Ivan Bunn, "Appendix" in *A Trial of Witches: A Seventeenth Century Witchcraft Prosecution, 212–228* (London: Routledge, 1997).

[5]Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 4th Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

ment in her chapter became the foundation for our understanding of witch hunts: "No one factor alone can explain the witch hunts but, taken together, intellectual, religious, political, legal, social, and economic factors all created a framework that proved deadly to thousands of European women."[6] This scholarly analysis complicated the history of witchcraft. There were regional differences, men were accused of witchcraft alongside women, and there were women who participated in trials against other women. As Wiesner-Hanks suggests, "witch hunts were not marginal events involving ill-educated villagers and fanatical clergy but rather a central part of the early modern era."[7] We cannot be naive enough to think that the demonization and grouping of people into monstrous identities of deviancy, which fuels decisions and actions based on fear and perpetuates narratives of hatred, cannot happen again today. So, why not complicate the situation further by pressing students to examine potential emotion-based motivations for witchcraft accusations themselves?

Before the day of the game, I developed fifteen unique characters, one for each of my students. These characters were all based on people one might have found in a small seventeenth-century English village—farmers, clergy, townspeople, a healer, visiting family, domestic servants, a judge, etc. Each character came with a name, personal details, and the role they were meant to play in the game. Students were given information that they were allowed to share with others in the class, such as details regarding their family, occupation, and daily life. I gave characters specific goals in the game, including but not limited to who they had to talk to, what kind of information they had to obtain, and who they should avoid. At the very bottom of their character sheet was a statement that indicated whether they were, in fact, a witch.

On the day of the game, I set the scene by reading a brief narrative to provide context to the troubles that would ensue. Their English village had recently been struck with unusually wet seasons that led to poor crop yields. In addition, a cow mysteriously died, which was a poor farmer's main source of revenue for his expanding family. This same farmer's wife had unfortunately suffered a miscarriage the previous year. In sum, the village had seen a myriad of causalities that only seemed to arise after the execution of ten witches in Pendle Hill, a neighboring area in Lancashire.[8] This narrative incorporated potential problems of early modern life that were also outlined in both *Malleus Malificarum* and *The Trial of Witches*: disrupted crops, superstition, conflict in communities, and difficulties of childbirth. These troubles typically accompanied witchcraft accusations as well. This intentionally placed students within the context of their primary sources.

Once the scene was set, students drew their roles blindly from a hat, and were instructed not to share their character descriptions with others in the classroom. I gave students time to look over their character, make notes, and plan their interactions. Part of this process included time to brainstorm the motivations,

[6]Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender*, 286.

[7]Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender*, 280.

[8]One of the most infamous cases of witchcraft in England took place in the county of Lancashire. Local authorities executed ten women in 1612 on charges of witchcraft in connection to ten murders in the community. See Thomas Potts and Sir Edward Bromley, *Potts's Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster* (London: Chetham Society, 1745).

fears, actions, and possible outcomes for their character based on the information provided. Much like a good work of historical fiction, students were encouraged to think about the "might have beens." As Hayden White argues, "A simply true account of the world based on what the documentary record permits one to talk about what happened in it at particular times and places can provide knowledge of only a very small portion of what 'reality' consists of."[9] This brainstorming session was students' first foray into considering what is oftentimes absent from sources and textbooks. They were told to consider what could potentially make them suspect someone of witchcraft and plan how they could potentially shift blame to someone else if they became a target. Had they seen anyone talking with others in the town? Purchase things from the local healer? Retreat into the woods at night? They were asked to consider potential clues of maleficium, based on their primary source readings.

After they were given ten minutes to plan their movements and interactions, each student put on a nametag to help classmates remember their character. Then they all set off with one goal—to find the witch. I put a picture of the English countryside on the projector screen, told my students to mingle, and began the game. I encouraged each of them to do what they could to remain in character. The students performed their roles beautifully. At one point, a student left the classroom to go to the bathroom. Upon his return, one of his classmates accused him of going off into the woods for some nefarious reason, signifying potential guilt. While this elicited laughter from the class, it also brought into sharper relief the reality that in such a hostile situation, everyone's movements could be noted. It was surprisingly easy to spin a web of guilt around a momentary absence from the class.

At first, most characters were met with suspicion, but as time went on, four individuals became the focus of accusations. One was the village healer—an obvious choice, I admit. In fact, when that particular student drew the healer character, she immediately pronounced aloud, "Well, I'm dead!" I encouraged her to wait and see, although from the laughter in the room, it was obvious she would be a popular suspect. The second was the widow of the now deceased master of the local weavers guild. She was wealthy, boisterous, and in direct conflict with the current master of the guild. The third was the grumpy neighbor of the farmer who had lost his cow. His own crops had been ruined, but no one seemed to care and instead focused their attentions on the farmer's cow. The fourth was the female servant of the woman who had suffered a miscarriage. Women constituted three of the four suspects—one a healer, one a widow, and one a servant. Gender seemed to be a prominent factor, as was social status and the individual's role in the community. The one male suspect was an unruly member of his community. Some whispered that he potentially had killed his neighbor's cow because of a land dispute.[10]

For twenty minutes, the students moved around the room engaging in conversations, laying down accusations, and defending themselves and others. Due

[9]Hayden White, "Introduction: Historical Fiction, Fictional History, and Historical Reality," *Rethinking History* 9, 2/3 (2005): 147.

[10]Robin Briggs' study of witchcraft argued that witches were more frequently individuals who alienated close-knit neighbors. See Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 356.

to the rapport students already had with one another, I did not have to facilitate the conversations. I did wander around, listen, and answer questions when prompted. Otherwise, I remained a mostly silent observer. The students moved through the process with very little intervention. Once the victims of accusation narrowed, I encouraged the judge of the town to decide whether they would officially accuse anyone of witchcraft. The judge had to work with the clergyman and the new master of the weaver's guild, before making the decision. The judge felt pressure to follow the desires of the community. The clergyman felt pressure to save the community from "obvious" evidence of *malificarum*. The farmers wanted justice. The women of the community were divided—either they wanted recompense for their losses, or they were fearful of being named a witch themselves and so they shifted blame.

A decision came down from the judge to execute the lone healer of the village. After all, she had attended the farmer's wife during her tragic pregnancy. Not to mention, she was a single woman who was often in the woods collecting herbs. Students followed the stereotypes proposed and argued by male writers as seen in *Malleus Malificarum,* whether they thought it was right or not. I was surprised that they did not stop there. There was not consensus behind the decision, so the judge, goaded on by a few other classmates amidst tensions rising over the communal nuisances, decided to also execute the wealthy widow, mostly because she had become troublesome to the new master of the weaver's guild.[11] By the end of the game, two characters were executed and no one felt particularly satisfied with the end result.

As my students packed their bags at the end of class, they were eager to hear if, in fact, they had won the game. Had they executed the correct people? Did they go through the proper process of rooting out the witch by isolating the individuals who seemed to pose the greatest threat, based on the knowledge that they had acquired from course readings? Of course, I had to tell them that they had, in fact, lost the game. No one was a witch. Everyone's character card had stated, "You are not the witch." A few exclaimed "I knew it!", although no one claimed this possibility during the game. Others smiled and nodded their heads. They had all plunged into the task at hand, ready to search for clues of who to blame for a dead cow, withered crops, and a tragic miscarriage. For my students, this was a low-stakes

[11] The connection between widowhood and witchcraft used to be a popular topic of study. Keith Thomas discussed the vulnerability of widows in the decline of the manorial system—a system that catered to widows and granted a portion of their late husbands' holdings to them—and argued that the deterioration of this system for the "dependent" and elderly "helps to explain why witches were primarily women, and probably old ones, many of them widowed." See Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth- Century England* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 562. However, more recently, Malcolm Gaskill and James Sharpe have furthered the study of witchcraft by suggesting more multifaceted social, political, and cultural contexts of witchcraft trials. See Gaskill, "Witchcraft and evidence in early modern England," *Past and Present* 198/1 (2008): 33–70 and Sharpe, *Witchcraft in Early Modern England*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 2020). Alison Rowlands has argued that widows are overrepresented in studies of witchcraft. External religious, social, and economic factors contributed more towards witchcraft accusations than gender, old age, and marital status. Rowlands maintains that less than half of the accused women were widows. See Rowlands, "Witchcraft and Old Women in Early Modern Germany," *Past & Present* 173 (2001): 62–63.

game. There was no graded component, apart from participation. It was easy for them to make decisions that they perhaps did not agree with because they thought they were doing what was expected of them for the assignment. Most were detached enough from the problem at hand because they were not being accused, so they were willing to vote with the crowd. I encouraged them to apply such apathetic logic to modern day issues. This, for them, heightened the dangers of unfounded fear in society, the power of mob mentality, and how assumptions, laziness, and lack of critical thinking can fuel stereotypes and create tragic results. While witchcraft accusations may have seemed removed from my students' modern concerns, certainly fear, stereotypes, and notions of the "other" are not so distant. Admittedly, the game was set up around stereotypes that I purposely perpetuated in the development of their characters. I encouraged them to consider the stereotypical witch as described in *Malleus Malificarum,* which led to the quick execution of the village healer. It was almost as if the healer was destined to be executed from the beginning. This realization led to my central aim in the game, which was to encourage students to think critically and consider context when consuming information.

Upon reflection of this single game, I argue that imaginative role-play enhanced my pedagogy in two ways. First, it informed students of the complicated context of witch hunts that one cannot get from a textbook or other readings. Even if it was in a fictional setting, role-play allowed students to tap into the humanity of history. They could consider the multiple contingencies that led to accusations and various causalities of guilt. Thus, our study of witch hunts went beyond facts and figures and included considerations of motivations behind the historical data. The complexity of the decisions, motivations, fears, and ramifications that went into calling a neighbor a witch was not lost on my students. It brought emotion and empathy into a field of study that is generally dominated by the numbers and factors associated with the dead and accused, propagated by male-dominated narratives. My intention was not to demean the intellectual integrity of understanding the past from the sources, but instead to provide a new and interactive way to engage with historical thinking. Students were forced to consider the gendered, social, political, and cultural context of witch hunts, while also personalizing the experience. They could grapple with emotions and fears that *could* have been present without demeaning what scholars have argued *did* happen.

Second, students were encouraged to apply this way of thinking to their own lives. As an instructor, I try to be conscious of the fact that students thrive most when they can apply what they have learned regardless of their intended major or future career aspirations. In this way, I encouraged students to be ethical and empathetic consumers of information in our modern world. A careful consideration of context, causality, contingencies, change or continuity over time, and the complications inherent in contemporary issues makes us better consumers of information in this heightened age of media inundation. Just as we should approach the past with critical thinking and caution, we must do the same with issues and information today.

# VIDEO GAMES AS HISTORICAL PEDAGOGY: THEIR CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS

TIMOTHY J. ORR

It often feels like there is a lot of incongruity discussing video games in an academic context. However, that is precisely what I would like to do. As way of explanation, the impulse for this paper came from several places. First, the desire to creatively explore the pedagogical options available to us as professors in the twenty-first century in the midst of a global pandemic. Second, my students' constant reference to video games in the classroom wherever and however they might overlap with the course material (and oftentimes even when they do not). A third, my own enjoyment and appreciation of video games as a narrative and strategic medium.

Over the course of this paper, I would like to do several things. I want to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of assigning video games from perspectives of both accessibility and pedagogy. To this end, I will also spend some time explaining particular video games that I have utilized and assignments I have paired with them. But I also want to use video games as a lens through which to view the practice of history. The truth is, far more of our students will encounter history, or at least historical material, through video games compared to any sort of academic, or even popular, literature.[1] This is, I believe, something that must be addressed, and it prompts difficult question, like what does this say about how our discipline, or more particularly our practice of it, might be failing to either address a popular audience or present material in a compelling fashion in our technologically innovative world? Ultimately, I believe video games represent a problematic but engaging tool by which students can be drawn into the arena of history in such a way that it allows them to grapple with the complexity and morality of historical agency as it exists both in our practice as historians but also in our lives.

First, there are obvious issues of technological accessibility in regard to the assigning of video games in a classroom setting. This is often one of the largest

[1]This trend is especially true for younger portions of the population and for men. It is believed that young men spend over 200 percent more time with video games than they do with books and this trend is increasing. For more data, see: Curcic, Dimitrije. "Reading vs. Gaming (Time Use Stats)." WordsRated, December 22, 2021. https://wordsrated.com/reading-vs-gaming/.

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points of concern for people when I bring up the idea of using video games in a classroom. It can be incredibly expensive to be on the cutting edge of the video game industry. A PlayStation 5 costs over a thousand dollars, the newest Xbox is over $700, and even older models of both gaming systems are still quite pricy. The graphic power of computers has improved over the last few years, and even basic laptops are able to run rudimentary games, but the assumption that all of our students have access to their own computer is problematic in its own ways.[2] However, it is increasingly possible to reliably depend on my students having access to a smartphone, which increasingly have the capacity and ability to download and play an ever-larger library of games.

There are a variety of games that are available as apps on both the iPhone and Android systems. These games range in price, but for the most part they are far cheaper than the average book that might be assigned for a course, with the most expensive coming in at $20. I will briefly highlight several that stand out as particularly interesting to historians. *This War of Mine* is a game in which you play as a group of citizens in a besieged city sometime in the modern era. You make difficult choices about the material necessities of survival and the potential use of violence. It is a fictional world, but one which obviously parallels the besieged cities of World War II Europe. This game deals seriously with the consequences of violence and the attempted use of lethal force, even with the purpose of survival, can lead to player characters (PCs) either leaving the group or suffering psychological trauma with a variety of outcomes.[3] *This War of Mine* situates students in a difficult position as they have to make these difficult decisions and wrestle with the consequences while often becoming emotionally attached to the PCs. Another element in this game is the fact that players have no idea why this war is taking place or who they are fighting but, when asked, all of them assumed their nation was in the right.

*Civilization VI* is a strategy game in which you develop an historical culture in order to win. However, unlike many strategy games, there are multiple paths to victory—science, culture, war, religion, or diplomacy. Each civilization is headed by a famous historical figure and possesses certain traits that affect their playstyles. *Civilization VI* is a complex game and it takes more time for students to begin to grasp the full weight of its complexity. However, this is a valuable tool in discussing civilizations and their complexity. What is more, the multiple paths to victory in the game allow students to engage with questions related to the purpose of civilizations throughout history and what constitutes success. Finally, the chosen leaders and their unique traits encourages students to reflect on why those individuals were chosen and how history has helped shape, at times inaccurately, popular perceptions of famous figures and cultures. Once students are familiar with the game, I often have them create a new civilization and they choose who should lead it and what their unique attribute should be based on an historical overview of the culture they choose.

In *My Memory of Us* you play as two children using their abilities to defeat

[2] "The Effects of Games and Simulations on Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review," *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* 14: 22 (2017): 15-27, DOI 10.1186/s41239-017-0062-1.

[3] As way of a content warning, some of these outcomes include suicide.

the evil robot army that has invaded their homeland by completing puzzles. The robots are a stand-in for Nazi Germany and it tackles the darkness of WWII in a way that is less direct and different from most games set in the time period. When World War II appears in video games it is often in first-person shooters or other militaristic games that center the experiences of soldiers and the enacting of violence by the players. *My Memory of Us*, by looking at two children, centers noncombatants instead and also avoids the issue of focusing primarily on the use of violence as a tool for completing the game. The pedagogical use of *My Memory of Us* is a bit less direct than some other games, but it is the unconventional PCs in the game that often draw the students' attention and encourages them explore in their own historical projects figures who are not centered in most popular histories.

Finally, *1979: Revolution* is a game in which you play as a photojournalist in the Iranian Revolution trying to document the events taking place around you. This is the most historically accurate of the games that have been listed. It is a relatively straightforward game insofar as mechanics are concerned and even students with no video game background can play through it without any issues. *1979: Revolution* introduces students in a new and engaging way to the complex history of Iran and does a very good job at providing students both with new historical information but also opportunities to utilize their tools as historians to dissect the perspectives and motivations of both the characters in the game and the game's designers. Students are required to explore these perspectives but are also encouraged to offer up some ideas about what historical even they would adapt into a game similar to *1979* and why it would make such a compelling narrative.

The above games are all available for purchase on smartphones, which greatly reduces the problem of accessibility to video games in the classroom. However, there is another hurdle to students enjoying games in the form of skill. Video games are a unique medium in that they can deny you access to further parts of their narrative if you lack the skill to reach it. Part of me enjoys using this as a metaphor with my students. History can be the same. If you lack the tools to properly make use of the materials available to you, and if you do not know the mechanics of what you are engaging with, you are only going to get part of the story.[4] It is also in this context that students are encouraged to understand that some individuals will have an easier time completing a game because their upbringing provided them with the proper skillset to do so. This is not to say that students without that skillset are less intelligent or talented, but they are just less experienced. It is then easy to make the connection to writing, reading, study habits, and many other practices that students often see as natural talents rather than developed skillsets. That being said, I have tailored most of the assignments I have that allow the use of video games to also include at least one game that is narrative and requires only choice, such as *1979: Revolution.* The broader discussion of the proper skillset and accessibility to "protected" narratives though has always proven to be an engaging one and allows many students to finally have a lived experience to which they can relate their academic development.

[4]Ronan Lynch, Bride Mallon, and Cornelia Connolly, "The Pedagogical Application of Alternate Reality Games: Using Game-Based Learning to Revisit History," *International Journal of Game-Based Learning* 5, no. 2 (2015): 18–38.

The final obstacle to the use of video games in the classroom is the issue of the content of the games themselves. Video games overwhelming represent the militaristic and violent aspects of history.[5] It can be difficult to track down games in which the main purpose is not to kill the enemy, but it is possible as I have highlighted in my aforementioned list of games. Pointing this fact out to students though can be very useful in generating a discussion surrounding why violence is a hallmark of so many historical artifacts, not just video games. This bias exists also in literature, film, and, for many years, the historical discipline itself.[6] What is more, even in games where the violence is not necessarily interpersonal, it is still represented in the overemphasis on conquest as a way to "win"; and I've found this word crucial in my discussion with students on video games. As one student said, "If you don't win, what's the point." Another echoed, "By design, you're supposed to either win or not be the loser." This has opened the door to the discussion of what is "winning" in history? Many of the games I have mentioned have victory scenarios, but they are not always conquering your enemy. Sometimes it is creating world peace through diplomacy, sometimes ousting an occupying force, and sometimes it is just surviving. Ultimately, I think the best games are the ones in which there is no winning or losing, but just a story that is being told, which occurs in some of these games, but which is also best realized perhaps in more open-ended sandbox style games. Unfortunately, most of these are only available on expensive consoles and often take dozens of hours to have any sort of unifying experience that might be useful in a classroom setting.

I have spent quite a bit of time highlighting some of the difficulties and complications involved in utilizing video games in a pedagogical setting, but, as I think I have demonstrated, I do think they have value in the classroom. There are enough accessible games of value with worthwhile pedagogical outcomes. The games and assignments surveyed above have proven incredibly valuable in my classroom settings, beyond even the direct pedagogical outcomes. I believe this is because video games offer some things that traditional pedagogical methods do not—namely, they are engaging, immersive, and they highlight historical agency.

To the first, video games are fun. Many people, especially students, enjoy playing them more than they enjoy reading history books. This is an opportunity to get students, or even the general public, engaged and interested in history. As I said before, people are playing video games—not nearly as many are reading history books. This is probably not a fair comparison and, perhaps we cannot compete with the flashing lights of every popular medium. What is more, historians probably should not be required to be at the cutting edge of technological implementation. But the increasing division between academic historians, popular historians, and the

[5]For information on the psychological effects of violent video games beyond the moral panic of the past few decades, see: E. A Konijn, M. Nije Bijvank, & B. J. Bushman, "I wish I were a warrior: The role of wishful identification in the effects of violent video games on aggression in adolescent boys." *Developmental Psychology* 43, no. 4 (2007):1038–1044. https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.43.4.1038.

[6]For more on the prevalence of militaristic and violent themes in American cultural artifacts, see: Carl Boggs and Tom Pollard, *The Hollywood War Machine: U.S. Militarism and Popular Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315086279.

public is exceedingly troubling. The gulf between what we do and what is received and understood in even educated portions of the public is wide.[7] Video games are a ready-made medium that often dive into historical subjects that then become of great interest to portions of the public. Many of these games highlight common historical events connected with already-popular historical topics. However, some touch on surprising subjects. *Kingdom Come: Deliverance* is set in Bohemia in 1403 and deals with the intricacies of political tension between Bohemian nobles and the Holy Roman Emperor. *Ghosts of Tsushima* is set during the first Mongol invasion of Japan and depicts both real historical figures alongside an embellished narrative. Both of these games have reached massive audiences. *Kingdom Come Deliverance* has sold over five-million copies since it released and *Ghosts of Tsushima* sold almost three-million copies in its first week alone.[8] With their broad engagement, maybe it is time to use video games as a means to highlight historical events, people, and processes.[9]

Because this is what video games do. They immerse the player in a lived world and they bring to life a story in a way that is not just hearing about it, but actually experiencing it. One of the most famous games in this regard is the *Assassin's Creed* series. While this game is very problematic because of its emphasis on brutal assassinations and its mixture of the supernatural occult with history, it is still an astounding game from a historical perspective. Walking, running, and climbing through twelfth century Jerusalem in the game is absolutely incredible. The game's designers paid attention to historical cartography and architecture if nothing else. It brings the setting to life, but it also brings the people to life. Investment and immersion into a game lead to players becoming attached to the stories, places, and people that these games depict. What is more, the player is a part of this world. As one student told me, "In video games you *are* someone. You have connections with the other characters. You make those [relational] connections." Players are a part of the world and just as they are affected by it, they also affect the world.[10]

This is perhaps the most valuable aspect of games—they force the player

[7]For examples of this playing out in the arena of public education, see: Strauss, Valerie. "Perspective: Why History Is Hard – and Dangerous – to Teach and How to Get Kids to Stop Thinking It Is 'Boring and Useless'." *The Washington Post*. WP Company, April 27, 2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/04/27/why-history-is-hard-dangerous-teach-how-get-kids-stop-thinking-it-is-boring-useless/.

[8]For sales on *Kingdom Come: Deliverance*, see: Sinha, Ravi. "*Kingdom Come: Deliverance* Has Sold over 5 Million Copies," GamingBolt.com, June 28, 2022. https://gamingbolt.com/kingdom-come-deliverance-has-sold-over-5-million-copies. And for *Ghosts of Tsushima*: https://www.statista.com/statistics/1136758/ghost-of-tsushima-units-sold/.

[9]For more historical video games, see: Tobias Winnerling and Florian Kerschbaumer, eds., *Early Modernity and Video Games* (Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014) and Yannick Rochat, "A Quantitative Study of Historical Video Games (1981–2015)." *Historia Ludens: The Playing Historian* (Saint Louis: Routledge, 2021).

[10]For a good overview of the pedagogical uses of video games in an historical context, see: Adam Chapman, *Digital Games as History: How Videogames Represent the Past and Offer Access to Historical Practice* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018) and A. Martin Wainwright, "Teaching Historical Theory Through Video Games," *The History Teacher* 47, no. 4 (2014): 579–612.

to make decisions that affect the outcome of the game and many students confessed that they are often emotionally invested in choices that they make. Multiple students admitted that they cannot bring themselves to complete "evil" playthroughs, where you get an alternate ending to a story by choosing a more self-serving path, because they care about the characters in the game. Almost all of the students who play video games in my classes have admitted to crying in response to a video game while very few said the same about history books. There is the risk of dehumanized violence in these games, but there is also the potential for the opposite. Historical figures can become real people in the player's emotional landscape.[11]

This leads into my final point regarding historical agency. Not only are the figures in the games real people, but the player is a real person in the game. They make choices that change the outcomes. Sometimes this can lead to some counter-factualism in historical games that is always complex and often problematic, but even that highlights what I think is the greatest value of video games in a historical setting—agency.[12] At the start of every introductory history class I teach I ask students why we study history, and four out of five times the first answer is the same—"If we do not study history we're doomed to repeat it." My response recently has become, "I am not so worried as much about the past as I am the present repeating itself." Counterfactuals in historical video games, brought about by the decisions made by a player, tells us that things could have been different. And if they could have been different in the past, then they can be different in the future.

This raises my final point of reflection in this paper—what is the purpose of history and how do video games help us better understand an answer to that question? I am obviously not the first historian to wrestle with this question and I agree with the conclusions that have been reached by other historians.[13] But I also think history allows us to undertake an aspect of the Gospel in a whole new way. In the person of Christ, we find the uniquely human act of empathy in community. When those we love suffer, oftentimes the only response is to sit with them in their suffering. This is the task of the historian. By digging deep into the pages of history, we are forced to confront the very real pain of those who have gone before us. There is a temptation to intellectualize their pain or to find trite clichés to gloss over their experiences, but the example of Christ is to sit with them in their pain. We are called to suffer with them, even if by just humanizing them in our minds and hearts for the length of a class or a game. It may sound foolish to see spiritual practice in video games, but I do. And in a world that is so different than what it was two, or six, or one hundred years ago, I find an odd degree of hope in that.

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[11] Adam Chapman, "Privileging Form Over Content: Analysing Historical Video Games," *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, No. 2 (2012): 42–46.

[12] Hayden White, "Introduction: Historical Fiction, Fictional History, and Historical Reality," *Rethinking History* 9, 2/3 (2005): 147.

[13] For two excellent examples in the vein of Christian historical thought, see: John Fea, *Why Study History? Reflecting on the Importance of the Past* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013) and Susan M. Felch, *Teaching and Christian Imagination* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016).

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**REVIEW ESSAY**

# PREMODERN CHRISTIANITY BEYOND "GREEK EAST" AND "LATIN WEST"

**MICHAEL J. PETRIN**

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***Invitation to Syriac Christianity: An Anthology*.** Edited by Michael Philip Penn, Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, Christine Shepardson, and Charles M. Stang. Oakland: University of California Press, 2022. Pp. xxviii + 434. $150.00 hardcover. $39.95 paperback.

Interest in "global Christianity" (or "world Christianity") continues to grow with each passing year. This is a welcome phenomenon, given that 67 percent of the world's Christians now live in the Global South.[1] Indeed, a polycentric approach is indispensable for understanding the complex nature of Christianity in the contemporary world—yet many scholars have also come to recognize that such an approach can greatly enhance the study of Christian history, including the history of the ancient and medieval periods.[2]

To be sure, the shift to viewing premodern Christianity as a global religion has been slow. In 1979, for example, the Catholic theologian Karl Rahner argued that "the Church's first official self-actualization *as* a world Church" did not occur until the twentieth century (with the Second Vatican Council), and that the origins of this actualization can only be traced back to "the beginning of European colonialism and the modern world-mission of the Church in the sixteenth centu

[1]Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 4.
[2]Cf. Justo L. González, *The Changing Shape of Church History* (St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 2002), 7–18.

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ry."[3] This model of Christian history treats the first-century transition from Jewish Christianity to Gentile Christianity as the beginning of an essentially Hellenic and European ecclesiastical epoch, an epoch which has only recently begun to give way to the "world Church."[4]

Although Rahner's particular terminology is somewhat idiosyncratic (and influenced by Catholic ecclesiology), his basic understanding of premodern Christianity is representative of the view that prevailed in Western scholarship for much of the twentieth century. Let us take the case of early Christianity, the study of which has traditionally been known as patristics. Until the last couple decades, patristics was dominated by a fundamental distinction between the Greek East and the Latin West — or what Columba Stewart has called "a binary *Patrologia Graeca* / *Patrologia Latina* view of the Church Fathers."[5] This view was grounded in the political divisions of the later Roman Empire, the corresponding ecclesiastical competition between Rome and Constantinople, and the formal schism that eventually emerged between the Western Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. The view was also conditioned by scholars' physical and linguistic limitations, that is, by the inability of many historians and theologians to access or read early Christian sources written in languages other than Greek or Latin.

Of course, Western scholars have never been entirely unaware of the existence of premodern Christians who spoke and prayed in other languages. Such forms of Christianity, however, not fitting neatly into the categories of Greek East and Latin West, were long treated as marginal to the history of Christianity—especially when, as was often the case, they could be dismissed as "heretical." Even in erudite introductions such as Henry Chadwick's *The Early Church*, the existence of non-Greek and non-Latin forms of Christianity is hard to discern for any but the most attentive readers.[6] Syriac Christianity, for example, is barely mentioned, and the great poet-theologian Ephrem receives only a single sentence.

Current scholarship on premodern Christianity, on the other hand, has come to embrace a more global, less binary perspective. This shift is especially clear in publications such as Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist's *History of the World Christian Movement*[7] and Robert Louis Wilken's *The First Thousand Years: A Global History of Christianity*,[8] to name just two of many possible examples. Those of us who teach courses on the history of Christianity now have at our disposal a wide variety of resources for introducing students to premodern Christian traditions that

[3]Karl Rahner, "Towards a Fundamental Theological Interpretation of Vatican II," *Theological Studies* 40 (1979): 716–727, at 717.

[4]Rahner, "Theological Interpretation of Vatican II,", 720–724.

[5]Columba Stewart, "Patristics beyond 'East' and 'West,' " in *Patristic Studies in the Twenty-First Century: Proceedings of an International Conference to Mark the 50th Anniversary of the International Association of Patristic Studies*, eds. Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony, Theodore de Bruyn, and Carol Harrison (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 317–341, at 322.

[6]Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*, rev. ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1993; 1st ed., 1967).

[7]Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement*, vol. 1, *Earliest Christianity to 1453* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2001); vol. 2, *Modern Christianity from 1454 to 1800* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2012); vol. 3 (forthcoming).

[8]Robert Louis Wilken, *The First Thousand Years: A Global History of Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

do not fit into the categories of Greek East and Latin West. The options are more limited, however, when it comes to anthologies of primary sources. The old standbys (such as Bettenson) do not venture much beyond Greek and Latin literature, so they must be heavily supplemented if one wants to offer students any real sense of the diversity of premodern Christianity. One major exception, of course, is John W. Coakley and Andrea Sterk's volume of *Readings in World Christian History*, which for many years has been the most inclusive anthology available.[9] Recently, however, two remarkable new anthologies have been published, both of which have the potential to dramatically enrich the historical knowledge of students and teachers alike.

The first of these new publications is *Eastern Christianity: A Reader*, edited by J. Edward Walters. This is a magnificent anthology composed of six lengthy chapters, each of which includes a number of translations from one of the following languages: Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Arabic, Coptic, and Ethiopic. Although the title uses the term "Eastern Christianity," the volume intentionally sidelines the Eastern Orthodox Churches associated with the Byzantine tradition, choosing instead to highlight a group of other, independent Churches of the East (formerly called Oriental Orthodox) with primary sources in these languages. The stated goal of the anthology is not to present a comprehensive survey of the selected traditions of Eastern Christianity, but merely to offer "a series of windows into these traditions, through which readers can learn more about the distinctives of each language tradition and the people who wrote, read, and preserved these texts."[10] In spite of this delimitation, however, the volume is still the fruit of a massive undertaking, and the general editor was wise to have relied on the assistance of capable section editors.[11]

*Eastern Christianity: A Reader* offers readable English translations of approximately forty substantial texts. The greatest strength of the anthology is the diversity of the traditions and sources that it covers. One can only marvel that a single volume could be used to acquaint students with so many traditions of Eastern Christianity. In addition, each of these traditions is represented not only by its most famous authors, but also by various sources that will be unfamiliar to anyone who is not a specialist in the tradition. In the Syriac chapter, for example, readers will certainly find works by Ephrem and Jacob of Serugh, but they will also encounter an unpublished *mēmrā* by Narsai and a letter by Simeon of Beth Arsham, as well as an assortment of additional sources. The other chapters of the book take a similar approach. Teachers looking to assign Grigor of Narek, Shenoute of Atripe, or the *Kəbrä Nägäśt* will not be disappointed; however, most will also be pleasantly surprised at the number of sources in the volume that were previously unknown to them.

The main drawback of a broad anthology is, of course, that depth must be sacrificed. For example, although this volume's chapter on Syriac is around twice

[9]John W. Coakley and Andrea Sterk, eds., *Readings in World Christian History*: *Earliest Christianity to 1453*, vol. 1, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2004).

[10]Walters, *Eastern Christianity*, xv.

[11]John C. Lamoreaux (Arabic), Jesse S. Arlen (Armenian), Mary K. Farag (Coptic), Aaron M. Butts (Ethiopic), Jeff W. Childers (Georgian), and J. Edward Walters (Syriac).

the length of any other chapter, it is still limited in its scope, and the latest source that it includes is from the eighth century. Someone who truly wants to investigate the medieval Syriac tradition will therefore have to look elsewhere.

Perhaps such a reader will find what is sought in the recently published *Invitation to Syriac Christianity: An Anthology*, which was edited by Michael Philip Penn, Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, Christine Shepardson, and Charles M. Stang. The expertise of these editors is unimpeachable, and they have produced an extraordinary volume that is sure to become a standard introduction to Syriac Christianity. The anthology includes over a hundred well-chosen excerpts, ranging from sources of the second and third century (such as the *Odes of Solomon* and the *Acts of Thomas*) all the way to sources of the thirteenth and fourteenth (such as Solomon of Baṣra and ʿAbdishoʿ bar Brika). As the aforementioned examples may suggest, the editors have not limited the anthology to sources originally written in Syriac, nor have they excluded sources only extant in translation. The vast majority of the included excerpts, however, are indeed translated from Syriac texts. Some of these translations are new, while others are quoted from previous publications—but in the latter case, the editors have done an admirable job of revising the material for readability.

*Invitation to Syriac Christianity: An Anthology* is organized thematically so that readers can "integrate Syriac sources into their existing frameworks of knowledge."[12] The book consists of four main parts, each of which contains three chapters. Part I is entitled "Foundations" and includes chapters on origin stories, poetry, and doctrine/disputation. Part II turns to "Practices," with chapters on liturgy, asceticism, and mysticism/prayer. Part III explores "Texts and Textual Transmission," offering one chapter on biblical interpretation, another on hagiography, and a third on books, knowledge, and translation. Finally, Part IV addresses "Interreligious Encounters," not just with Judaism and Islam, but also with the religions of the Silk Road. As this summary demonstrates, the anthology covers an astonishing range of topics, each of which is illustrated by many useful excerpts. The book also includes a variety of helpful aids, from an instructive note on the tricky nomenclature of Syriac Christianity to an appendix containing brief biographies of all the authors named in the volume. The editors have sought to produce an "invitation" that is both accessible and substantive—and their effort will surely be deemed a success by generations of readers who are seriously interested in learning more about Syriac Christianity.

It is, of course, unlikely that a knowledgeable reader will ever use an anthology without wishing that at least one additional source had been included, but both of the anthologies discussed above deserve enthusiastic praise for offering excellent collections of a remarkably diverse range of material. Every university and seminary should have a copy of these books in the library, and it is difficult to imagine any course on Eastern Christianity (at either the graduate or the undergraduate level) that would not be significantly improved by using one of these anthologies as a textbook. Teachers of survey courses on the history of Christianity should also strongly consider adopting one of these volumes—though it will undoubtedly require extra work for them to integrate the book with their existing approach to

[12]Penn et al., *Invitation to Syriac Christianity*, 3.

the Greek East and Latin West. Finally, scholars who are interested in ecumenical and/or interreligious dialogue will find a wealth of material here that can deepen their knowledge and broaden their perspective. In sum, anyone who wants to take a global approach to premodern Christianity owes the editors of these two anthologies a profound debt of gratitude.

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## FEATURED REVIEWS

***Winds of Santa Ana: Pilgrim Stories of the California Bight***. By Rick Kennedy. Eugene, Oreg.: Wipf and Stock, 2022. Pp. 206. $22.00 paperback.

*Winds of Santa Ana* is a hard-to-categorize work, but the back-of-the-book description—"spiritual history, environmental study, and sailing memoir"—comes close. The sailing memoir gives the book its structure, with each chapter chronicling a single voyage (more or less), in Kennedy's twenty-four-foot Yankee Dolphin *Boethius*, to various points of interest along the inward-curving coastline between Santa Barbara and San Diego known as the Southern California Bight. The book recounts the circumstances of each of these voyages, along with descriptions of sailor work: sails reefed, jib halyards cleated, tillers pulled to starboard, booms swung, centerboards dropped. It is an environmental study, especially of the wind and water and atmospheric conditions that shape what Kennedy aptly describes as the "simple yet intricate craft that entangles persons, boat, wind, water, and sky" (8). And *Winds of Santa Ana* also incorporates Kennedy's own deep knowledge of California history, won from years of teaching it at Point Loma Nazarene University, as well his conversations with the "book-angel" and "pondering partner" *Philosophia*, depicted as a tall, thin, Ethiopian wearing skinny blue jeans, a red fleece pullover, and no shoes (13). With *Philosophia* Kennedy discusses the ambivalent role of missions in the Spanish colonization of California (98–110), the animacy of creation (53–55), and the receptivity of fiberglass to divine blessings (72), among many other topics.

As those conversations suggest, "spiritual history" is the heartbeat of the book, and for the non-sailing, non-Californian readers of this journal, this material is likely to spark the most interest. The book is not a church history, nor a religious history, nor a social or cultural history of religion, though it includes many thumbnail sketches of Spanish and Native Catholicism, Pentecostalism, and evangelical movements such as Vineyard and Calvary Chapel. Instead, the book is infused with mystical and ecumenical spirituality. It is an exercise, Kennedy maintains, in the ancient Christian tradition of "*physiologia*, a thought-craft of seeking, seeing, and hearing nature speak great Biblical truths" (27). Mild winds are Presbyterian and wild ones are Pentecostal. The sacred toponyms of the California coast—Santa Barbara, Santa Catalina, Santa Ana, San Pedro, Santa Cruz, Los Angeles, San Diego—represent not just historical accidents but present-day patronage by the remembered saints, and Kennedy studies the stories of those saints and petitions their blessings as he sails. Following Boethius, a Christian scholar in the late Roman Empire and the namesake of his sailboat, Kennedy presents the California Bight, and reality itself, as a mixture of history and allegory, of observable facts and discernible meanings (138–40). Louis Kahn's famous Salk Institute building and an oil derrick named

Eva both remind him that "nothing is actually inanimate" and that machines might have souls (35–37, 72–73). The singer-songwriter Randy Stonehill, advising the college-aged Kennedy that "the world needs more history teachers than folk singers," is "an angel" (85). A harbor patrolman who calls him to safe anchor is "a real guy" and also a "patron saint" (143). The sexual iconography of mission churches is not a Freudian corruption but "the ancient and medieval Christian vocabulary of the Creator's plan for creation to participate in creation" (124–25). Santa Cruz Island tells stories of redemption—when a ragged band of Mexican prisoners were given safe harbor by a powerful local magnate—and of violence, death, and suffering as well, when ecologists decided to eradicate golden eagles and wild boar from the island in order to save a rare island fox (160–62).

*Winds of Santa Ana* is not an academic study. Kennedy describes it as a flower arrangement, a honeybee's collection of pollen, an anthology of ponderings. "I am nearing retirement," he explains, "and need to assess what this place has made of me and gather together what I think this place says about itself" (2). Still, his first-person approach is not as sui generis as it might at first appear, even among historians. Place-based histories seem to be especially susceptible to authorial intrusion, as Karen Halttunen once observed ("Self, Subject, and the 'Barefoot Historian,' " *Journal of American History* [June 2002]: 20–24). The landscape historian John Stilgoe has interwoven his personal insights into several books, notably the "barefoot historian" narrator of *Alongshore* (Yale University Press, 1994); Richard White explored his mother's stories and his Irish heritage in *Remembering Ahanagran* (Hill and Wang, 1998); and Kate Brown employed "embodied prose" in *Dispatches from Dystopia* (University of Chicago Press, 2015) among other works.

Kennedy cheerfully ignores these precedents, as well as histories of "the age of sail" such as Jeffrey Bolster's *The Immortal Sea* (Harvard University Press, 2012), and while I commend these works to readers, I also confess to some gratitude for Kennedy's merry refusal to engage in historiographical discussion. He charts his way with careful attention to what serendipitously comes before him, and without worry for what he ought to know about what is happening elsewhere. The result is a rich (if inadvertent) answer to the philosopher Jane Bennett's call to reimagine the world as something more than a "disenchanted set of defeated and exhausted objects" (*The Enchantment of Modern Life* [Princeton University Press, 2001], p. 91). Kennedy's book is a product of cultivated attachments and studied enchantment. "Knowledge without affection leads us astray every time," Wendell Berry wrote in his 2012 Jefferson lecture. "Affection leads, by way of good work, to authentic hope" ("It All Turns on Affection," *Irish Pages* [Dec. 2013]: 139). *Winds of Santa Ana* is led by affection—for sailing, for the California coast, for books and ideas, for the cloud of witnesses of the Christian faith. And it is ultimately hope, like a strong homeward wind, that fills the book's sails.

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***Black Fundamentalists: Conservative Christianity and Racial Identity in the Segregation Era***. By Daniel R. Bare. New York: NYU Press, 2021. Pp. 272. $30.00 paperback.

In *Black Fundamentalists: Conservative Christianity and Racial Identity in the Segregation Era*, Daniel Bare offers a paradigm for thinking through how one should consider the role of race in the fundamentalist movement. Arguing that histories of fundamentalism have marginalized Black fundamentalist figures, Bare attempts to integrate them back into a broad fundamentalist umbrella. In order to do this, however, the first necessary step is that of definition. By beginning with what fundamentalism is, Bare constructs the context from which the argument of the book proceeds.

After beginning with a primarily theological definition of fundamentalism, focusing on the central doctrines of fundamentalism and de-emphasizing institutional elements, Bare sets the stage for Black inclusion in the fundamentalist story. This is a perfect example of the tension that Bare attempts to work with throughout the book: for many, it is difficult to "take theology seriously" alongside social and political concerns. Bare's decision is to lean heavily toward the theological and the doctrinal, defining fundamentalism in terms of theology and rhetorical positioning. With this definition, the fundamentalist umbrella widens to accommodate all who wish to enter by believing its tenets and fighting its enemies. The question then remains: are there Black Christians who fit within this category?

Bare's answer is an enthusiastic yes. Throughout his book, he notes numerous examples of Black men (almost exclusively) who described themselves as fundamentalist, engaged in anti-modernist debates, and in the case of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, invested in institutions that attempted to garner sympathy with fundamentalists. These examples are eye-opening and draw attention to these actors in new ways, opening up sources that historians will continue to engage in the future. For Bare, because these Black Christians make use of fundamentalist theology, tropes, and anti-modernist preaching; link Christianity to Americanism; and appropriate the name of "fundamentalist" to themselves, it is reasonable to call them fundamentalists.

There is a scholarly specter that looms in the background (and often foreground) of Bare's work: the recent work of Mary Beth Mathews, his most significant interlocutor. Mathews, in her book *Doctrine and Race,* frames fundamentalism as a fundamentally racialized project, outlining the ways in which African American Protestants adapted elements of fundamentalism while still maintaining that white fundamentalists hesitated to view them as their own. Herein lies the question at hand then: Whose story is being told? Bare's book, rather intentionally, is telling a fundamentalist story of which Black Protestants are a part. The question remains, however: Even if Black Protestants appropriated the name, did they see themselves as telling the same story? The fact that Black Christians mobilized fundamentalist theology, much of which is not idiosyncratic to fundamentalism, in ways distinct from and contrary to how it was mobilized by their white "brothers and sisters" gives us a hint: the answer is no.

Perhaps an anecdote will clarify. Bare's project is meant to "disentangle the

historical-theological roots of fundamentalism from its specific social and institutional manifestations in the white community," which include its racism. I would argue that such a work is impossible. Theology and sociality are not strands to be disentangled, but colors in a paint mixture. One can no more extricate the two than one can remove the blue from a can of green paint. This in itself is a theological stance that the writer of the book of James would affirm: that faith without works is dead. Said another way, extricating theology from sociality does not take theology seriously enough. To the contrary, such disentangling is actually a disembodying. Mathews insists that Black Christians were not fundamentalists not because they disagreed theologically but precisely because the matrix that connected theology and practice was markedly different for them.

This amounts to more than a pedantic distinction between "lumping" and "splitting." Bare's *Black Fundamentalists* pushes the conversation on African American Christianity and fundamentalism forward, but it does so with a particular fear in the background. Bare expresses on a few occasions in the book that if one views theology and sociality in the way that I described above, social definitions will take precedence and exclude some who self-identify as members of a theological movement. I completely agree. But excluding Black Christians from the fundamentalist story is not, simply because of their exclusion, an injustice. It is the privileging of a different fear: the fear of integrating Black Christians into the burning house of fundamentalism.

In summary, my qualms with Bare's book are methodological in nature. He unearths and amplifies voices that needed to be unearthed and amplified. The issue, however, is that the amplification takes places with a bit of transposition, such that they are made to harmonize with white fundamentalism in ways that they may not have. Elements of his arguments stand up under scrutiny precisely because he has defined fundamentalism in such a way that Black Christians fit, similar to current attempts to draw evangelicalism with a broad theological brush. Yet such definitions ought not stray far from the ways in which movements shaped the lives of those who participated in them. Bare and Mathews take two distinct approaches to the study of Black theological conservatism: is it part of a broader story under the shadow of white dominance or is it best understood as its own, distinct story? Bare takes the former position, assuming a narrower, theological definition of fundamentalism that allows it to be a broader, more inclusive movement than it actually was and, unfortunately, disembodying it. It would seem that in this case, it is more just to judge, interpret and analyze these theologically conservative Black Protestants not as fundamentalists, but rather as theologically conservative Black Protestants, leaving the inextricable connection between theology and sociality intact.

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**BOOK REVIEWS**

***Chasing Paper: Critical Reflections on Christian Books and Publishing.*** Edited by Stephanie L. Derrick. Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2021. Pp. 153. $23 paperback.

"You cannot serve God and Mammon," Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:24. This is time-honored wisdom. Pity, then, Christian publishers, who have to get out of bed each day and do their best to ignore it. After all, religious publishers cannot serve God in their chosen field without a healthy bottom line. They simply must figure out a way to serve two masters, or they will need to find a different job.

This is just one of the tensions that make life in religious publishing so interesting—and that make it such a fascinating and worthy area of study for scholars who want to better understand both American and world Christianity. Many religious publishers are still family-owned businesses; others serve denominations or parachurch organizations; still others are now owned by multinational conglomerates. Some will refuse to publish anything not conforming to particular doctrinal standards; some will take all comers, or at least those with sufficient platforms. And all of them rely on a certain amount of alchemy to decide what to publish—there are no focus groups, no field-testing mechanisms, no sure things. Even social media metrics can be unreliable as sales determinants. And publishers still publish largely by feel, with the wildly imprecise citation of "comparable titles" as the guiding light, accompanied by a general sense that some way of thinking about this or that topic is in the air and should be pursued. They do this in a world that is constantly changing, and is a very different place from that which shaped the pieties of their forebears. Add in, for religious publishers, sincere and deeply held beliefs rooted in faith, and a profound commitment to doing the right thing, and researchers are left with quite the gumbo to figure out. And the gumbo is popular: religious publishing remains a potent force for bottom lines in the wider industry, especially in times of cultural and economic stress, which always seem to return.

Two of the best recent books on the subject highlight the range of potential topics in the study of Christian publishing: Daniel Vaca's *Evangelicals Incorporated: Books and the Business of Religion in America* (Harvard University Press, 2019), and Daniel Silliman's *Reading Evangelicals: How Christian Fiction Shaped a Culture and a Faith* (Eerdmans, 2021). One focuses on business, and the other on religious imagination. Yet each of these very different storylines needs the other. Religious publishing is an imagination business, a doctrine business, an inspiration business, an education business—and yes, that word *business* deserves repeating.

Interested yet, Gentle Reader? Then your next step is to turn to Stephanie L. Derrick's *Chasing Paper: Critical Reflections on Christian Books and Publishing*. She has provided an invaluable service by assembling first-person reflections from a wide range of industry professionals about the way things are in the industry, and the way they used to be, and what has changed, and what has not. This volume is all the more useful and admirable for the way it foregrounds voices from the majority world—even if, in the end, white males bring the bulk of the insights from

the American context (one that has, from the beginning, disproportionately been their domain). Here readers will find insights into not only American evangelical publishing, but also publishing in the majority world, Catholic publishing, African American publishing, and even Canadian publishing. And there are not one but two forewords by authors who have served and been served by Christian publishing: Mark Noll and Philip Yancey. They bring a valuable perspective from the author's side of the business.

Readers will be struck again and again by the sincere beliefs and deep passions of the contributors. These passions are a sustaining and driving force for the industry—after all, in the words Derrick quotes from longtime Random House editor Jason Epstein, "If money were their primary goal, these people probably would have chosen other careers." Readers may need to fight to overcome natural cynicism and skepticism, but in my experience (twenty-one years as an editor at Eerdmans, now a literary agent and publicist), the passions are sincere—if constantly subject to challenges and tensions.

This volume is somewhat limited in predictable and probably necessary ways. Most of the contributors are either retired or in senior, established positions. Junior editors simply do not have the range of experience yet—and their telling the whole truth could get them in trouble. That is unfortunate, because they could bring valuable perspectives on the state of the industry, especially because more of them would be women or persons of color. But that is not a criticism of Derrick's work; it is simply a limitation that would be almost impossible to overcome, at least without anonymous (and potentially risky) contributions. Trade secrets are still jealously guarded, even for those who toil in the vineyard of this mission together. Because yes, for all the market pressures and number-crunching editors now face, Christian publishing is still fundamentally a mission for just about everyone in it. Technologies evolve, pieties evolve, but the mission remains.

If you are a student of American religion, you should be really interested in this volume, and this field of study, by now. Studying Christian publishing is an ideal way to shed light on lived Christian theology and practice, especially in the United States. After all, it is a mission that has to make money. What could be more American than that?

David Bratt
BBH Literary

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***The Forgotten Reign of The Emperor Jovian (363–364): History and Fiction.*** By Jan Willem Drijvers. Oxford Studies in Late Antiquity. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. Pp. xii + 232, 7 illustrations + 2 maps. $99.00 hardcover.

The reign of the Roman emperor Jovian was extraordinarily brief: 236 days. This is the reason why Jovian is often treated by modern scholars as little more than a makeshift candidate bridging the short period between the infamous Julian the Apostate, the last emperor of the Constantinian dynasty, and Valentinian and Valens, the founders of the new, Valentinian dynasty. In this monograph—the first

solely dedicated to emperor Jovian in more than fifty years—Jan Willem Drijvers attempts to overcome this common prejudice. His main argument is that "Jovian's reign was not a short and insignificant interregnum […] but was vital for the maintenance of imperial leadership after Julian's disastrous reign" (11).

Following a short introduction to the available sources for and the (sparse) previous scholarship on Jovian (1–12), Drijvers divides his monograph into two parts, as reflected in its title. Part I concerns the reconstruction of the "historical" course of Jovian's reign. It covers Jovian's election to the throne after Julian's death during the ill-fated military campaign against Persia (15–32), his subsequent peace negotiations and controversial treaty (33–63), Jovian's initial consolidation of his rule (64–89), his religious policy towards 'paganism' and different Christian sects (90–108), and his premature death while still on his way to take up office in the imperial capital of Constantinople (109–111). From Drijvers's reconstruction emerges a nuanced picture of Jovian as a pragmatic ruler who recognized the precarious military and religious position of the Roman Empire after the turbulent reign of Julian and took the right measures to re-establish its safety and stability. The concessions made to Persia in the peace treaty, the adoption of the greatest part of Julian's decisively pagan administrative staff, and the demonstrated tolerance and impartiality in the field of religion despite his own Christian belief contribute to this convincing reading of Jovian's political profile.

Despite Drijvers's impressive mastery over the written accounts on Jovian's reign, some of his readings of the literary sources remain unconvincing. The orator Themistius is treated both as a somewhat reliable historical source (23) and a mere mouthpiece of the imperial court without an agenda of his own (102–107). The supposedly overwhelming acceptance of Jovian's reign, which Drijvers partially derives from Themistius, is later repeatedly questioned both by his own contrasting interpretation of the same passage (e.g. 103) and the wider course of events (e.g. 48 and 88–89). Similarly, the individual literary motivations of the fifth-century church historians who constructed divergent visions of Jovian as an ideal emperor could have been nuanced (as showcased by Hartmut Leppin's book from 1996, *Von Constantin dem Großen zu Theodosius II*, 86–90) rather than reducing the church historians to their shared Nicene-Christian identity. One of the most valuable contributions of this first part of the monograph, on the other hand, is the inclusion of different types of source material that, so far, have received only little attention in discussions of Jovian's reign. Drijvers draws on coins, inscriptions, and law texts to establish how Jovian tried to communicate his political profile across the empire and to establish himself as a "New Constantine" (65–81). Drijvers's initial survey of these source types will prove immensely useful for future studies on Jovian's reign that this monograph is certain to inspire. In this regard, the (near) complete quotation of the so-called *Petitones Arianorum* in translation and in the original Greek deserves credit for drawing attention to a crucial source for the political lobbying in context of the Trinitarian Controversy which only recently has received the attention it deserves (96–101).

The concern for hitherto understudied source material also dominates Part II of this monograph, which is solely dedicated to the *Julian Romance*. Written in Syriac, most probably in fifth- or early-sixth century Edessa—Drijvers is oddly

inconsistent in his dating—the *Julian Romance* presents a "fictional" account of the reigns of emperor Julian and Jovian. Drijvers naturally focuses primarily on those episodes of the *Julian Romance* that either see Jovian featuring prominently while still in service of emperor Julian or take place under Jovian himself. Following a short overview of the main narrative of the *Julian Romance* and its treatment in modern scholarship (115–141), Drijvers picks up on several themes within the text (142–182). Some of them, like Jovian's election or the peace treaty with Persia, build on the "historical" discussion of Part I, while others, like the text's underlying anti-Judaism or the self-styling of Edessa as model city of Christian piety, are entirely new. It is a missed opportunity that Drijvers has not used his intimate knowledge of the *Julian Romance* to locate the text more thoroughly within the cultural, social, and religious milieu of its origin than he does in his brief "Considerations" at the end of this section (183–188).

The monograph is completed by a summary of its main results and several appendices, of which the itinerary of Jovian's retreat from Persia and travel to Constantinople is certainly the most useful. With his enriching monograph, Drijvers has filled a gap in our knowledge of the imperial history of the fourth century while at the same time offering the basis for future, even deeper studies into the less-explored aspects of Jovian's reign via "new"—or rather rediscovered—sources.

Karl Heiner Dahm
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***The Acts of the Early Church Councils: Production and Character***. By Thomas Graumann. Oxford Early Christian Studies. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp. xii + 333. $100.00 hardcover.

Many view the records of early church councils as repositories for historians, theologians, and canon lawyers (4). Thomas Graumann, however, maintains that "councils can be portrayed as exercises in textual practices: in note-taking, reading, copying, transcribing, arranging, editing, handling, collecting, and distributing significant quantities of texts, and in different formats and material manifestations" (1). Such lines of research have "attracted little scholarly attention" (1). Behind and beside bishops and theologians labored secretaries and scribes. The meticulous labors of these "unseen" players are worthy of examination "in their own right" (5). Graumann, a reader in ancient church history at Cambridge University, peels back the curtains and helps readers engage with this previously unobserved world.

Graumann portrays the *Collatio Carthaginiensis* as "the most useful starting point for our investigation," in which "the processes of note-taking and the creation of acts are displayed in unusual clarity" (32). Graumann's following chapter examines the case of Eutyches' trial in 449. The legitimacy of documents summoned as evidence could be challenged or confirmed through the critical inspection of style, handwriting, and other textual features (51–54). The fifth chapter elucidates the objects utilized at and arising from Chalcedon, including the *schedarion*, a record of proceedings "categorically not in the form of a *codex*" but most likely in

the form of a roll (64–65). The fifth-century use of a roll rather than a codex may seem "outdated," but evidence reveals the continued use of rolls in formal administrative contexts (73). The physical form of the roll harkened to "a revered past of ancient councils" (77), and reading from the form physically reflected how speeches and events had "unrolled" (303). Physicality and authority thus intertwined in mutual support (78).

The sixth chapter further discusses the physical characteristics and public presentation of documents. In a context of "visual inspection" (83), the handwriting, textual markers, and archival provenance served as expert witnesses. An investigation of later councils (chapter 7) reveals that charges of misrepresentation, manipulation, distortion, and outright falsification not only continued but intensified (92). The public inspection of documents became performative and theatrical, requiring "elaborate justification and sometimes tortuous reasoning" (93). One may not necessarily agree with all the tactics and conclusions of ancient councils, but one cannot portray them as assemblages of gullible simpletons. In their rigorous proceedings, philology was interlaced with orthodoxy (103).

Chapter 8 introduces a regiment of administrative aides: tachygraphs, transcribers, secretaries, notaries, editors, and compilers. The stenographical and editorial protocols (chapters 9 and 10) retained high standards of professionalism. Nevertheless, note-takers could not capture interpretive gesticulations, expressions, or modulations in their written summaries (145). Moreover, one cannot anachronistically read *Robert's Rules of Order* onto ancient councils, where stenographers sometimes struggled to ascertain where a shout from a boisterous crowd originated (170). As a further complication, council members could request that some of their particular statements be excluded from the minutes if they did not want them included as official contributions (144). In the transition from shorthand notes to an official longhand report, the records could be amended or confirmed (167). Finally, the appending of formal signatures (243) and inclusion of dates (257) were deemed indispensable to the protocols of validation (244).

A formalization of documentation accompanied a formalization of hierarchy in the construction of authority in late antiquity. In the process, the language of *fides*/*pistis* (traditionally applied to subjective trust or to the objective body of doctrine to be believed) was increasingly applied to the reliability of documentation or *pistis hypomnēmatōn* (192–195, 199). Graumann notes that even the editorial arrangement of documents in a collection was not neutral but "deliberate and significant" (233), as it invariably reflected "socio-political hierarchy and authority" (222). The "persuasive order" of dossierization "foregrounds those elements and voices that were deemed most influential, and accentuates those aspects of the disputes that later audiences considered most relevant" (226, 234). Along the way, Graumann underscores an oft-forgotten but valuable insight into late antique communication—orality and writing were not alternatives or antitheses, because documentation and speech-acts interconnected in symbiotic relationalities (201). The oral proceedings of councils were recorded in tachigraphical form, recited for amendment or authorization, re-written in longhand form, and later read again in subsequent public settings.

One might initially assume that the *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*

could only serve as artifacts for the mining of historical and theological details. Graumann, however, persuasively argues that the *acta* are "rhetorical, argumentative, persuasive, polemical from the outset" (7). The documenters were not mere stenographers, and the *acta* were not sheer recordings but crafted representations composed to "present themselves" in particular ways (24, 31). Editorial decisions (selecting, excising, and amending) were not neutral choices but reflected an axiology of values. Furthermore, the wording and tenor of style placed new *acta* in a grid of intertextuality. "Canons and anathemas often respond obliquely (and sometimes overtly) to other texts of a similar nature and decreed by a different group on another occasion" (26). Through an interlocking authority, "evidentiary" documentation from previous decisions could be summoned for public reading in subsequent conciliar discussions (27).

Graumann's volume is a highly technical monograph targeting a limited audience of academic researchers and scholars. It serves its purpose with expertise and precision. A singular critique concerns the indices, which seem inferior to the scholarly task. A few examples will suffice to prove the point. The Council of Serdica (20, 25) is overlooked in the index of councils and synods (331). Leo (292), Palladius (116–117, 122–123), Pelagius (195), Theodotus (272), and many other key figures that are discussed in the text do not appear in the general index (332–333). And the general index contains very few terms, so that, for instance, researchers on Montanism (14), Donatism (123) and other movements would be at a loss in tracing the pertinent discussions.

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***The Luminous Way to the East: Texts and History of the First Encounter of Christianity with China***. By Matteo Nicolini-Zani and translated by William Skudlarek. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. Pp. 424. $99 hardcover.

This book is a revised and expanded version of another important work by Matteo Nicolini-Zani, entitled *La via radiosa per l'Oriente : i testi e la storia del primo incontro del cristianesimo con il mondo culturale e religioso cinese (secoli VII–IX)*, published in 2006. It is the latest major and most comprehensive English work on Christianity in China in the Tang dynasty (618–907), following works by P. Yoshiro Saeki (1937), Li Tang (2001) and Martin Palmer (2001). Unlike those earlier publications, the chapter in this volume on the text of *Book of the Luminous Teaching of Da Qin on Revealing the Origin and Reaching the Foundation (Da Qin Jingjiao xuanyuan zhiben jing)* is reconstructed and the original controversial book with the same title is discarded, based on the text inscribed in the Luoyang Pillar of AD 815, a pillar which was found in May 2006. Another text, *Praise the Great Holy One for Our Understanding the Truth and Returning to the Law (Dasheng tongzhen guifa zan)*, is not included in this book because its authenticity is contested.

The book is composed in two parts. The first part presents "A History of Encounters," for which the author has laboriously and extensively consulted all the

materials available to him, primary or secondary, ancient or modern. This section includes abundant information on Christian encounters in central Asia along the Silk Road and in China. The Christian community in Luoyang is also included.

The second part of the book offers "The Texts in Translation," in which the author has done more than his predecessors by persistently digging into the Persian, Sanskrit, Sogdian, and Syriac languages to find the correct meanings of the Chinese transliterations. His footnotes, with etymological notions, are carefully inserted.

With regards to the Chinese word *Jing* of *Jingjiao* (*Jing* Teaching), among the possible translations, the author, like many other scholars, chooses "luminous." But a closer examination of the term "*jingming*," found on the Stele of the Diffusion of the *Jing* Teaching of Da Qin in China (*Da Qin Jingjiao liuxing zhongguo bei*) of AD 781 and in the *Book of Odes* (*Shijing*), will indicate that *Jing* means "Great": as one of the verses of later states "Long live the king, may the *jingming* (Great Mandate) follow you." Another case in point is the memorial of Wei Zheng (580–643) to Emperor Taizong (598–649) reminding the emperor of the *jingming* given to the heads of all states. Li Zhizao (1571–1630), a Christian convert in the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), noted that *Jing* meant "great, shining, luminous" in which "great" takes precedence. The term *Jing* Teaching, according to the stele, is a name reluctantly given to the true and permanent Way (*Dao*, i.e., Christianity). In light of the *Book of the Way and of Virtue* (*Daodejing*), the word "Great" *(da*) is a name reluctantly given to the Way. Therefore, *Jing* would be much better translated as "Great."

This book would be more insightful if the author more thoroughly explained the intellectual milieu of the Tang dynasty. Such explanations could help readers understand why Daoist terms are used in the stele, and Buddhist terms and logic of refutation of negation are found in the *Jing* Teaching texts. First, Daoism in the Tang dynasty was strongly influenced by the more complicated Buddhism from India. Both Buddhist and Daoist terminologies are used interchangeably in Daoism. Some Daoist scriptures look more Buddhist than Daoist.

Second, Daoism flourished in the Tang dynasty because of imperial sponsorship and promotion. Laozi was highly honored by the Tang emperors and his *Book of the Way and of Virtue* was included in the imperial examination curriculum. Emperor Xuanzong (685–762) not only annotated the *Book of the Way and of Virtue* himself, but also established the Academy for Deep and More Profound Study (*Chong xuan guan*) in the capital cities of Chang'an and Luoyang. Daoist schools were also established in the prefectures. The *Jing* Teaching texts, following the Buddho-Daoist genre or terminologies, were written to reach out to the contemporary Chinese.

In addition, despite the immense impact of Buddhism on Chinese culture in general and on Daoism in particular, the term *si* for the Da Qin Si (Monastery of Da Qin) does not necessarily have a Buddhist connotation, as the author claims. The word *si* originally means court or office. The Honglu si, for example, was in charge of foreign affairs. The Baima Si (White Horse Temple) in Luoyang, built in AD 61, as the first of its kind, was given the word *si* for temple. This word is also applied to Muslim mosques, the first of which, Huaisheng Si (The Sage Memorial Mosque), was built in Guangzhou in AD 627.

A similar interpretative issue concerns lotus flower on which the cross on the stele sits. This symbol is not necessarily related to Buddhist iconography in China. On the Mar Thoma Cross in India, a cross is shown to sit atop a stylized lotus flower. Álvaro Semedo (1586–1658), a Jesuit in China, noted in his *Relação da grande monarquia da China* that the cross on the stele looked like the Mar Thoma Cross in Mylapore, India.

Last but not least, the author is right in saying that the year of the discovery of the stele is likely AD 1623. His argument is supported by the writings of both Chinese Christians and Jesuits in China in the Ming dynasty. Yang Tingyun (1562–1627) completed his *More on Doubts* (*Daiyi xupian*) in AD 1623, in which he quoted material about the coming of the *Jing* Teaching missionaries to China in AD 635 found on the stele. Li Zhizao mentioned in his *Reading the Jing Stele* (*Du Jingjiao beishu hou*) that the discovery took place in the Third Year of Tianqi (AD 1623), as did Xu Guangqi (1562–1633) in his *On the Stele of the Church of* Jing *Teaching* (*Jingjiao tang beiji*). As for the Jesuits in China, Guilio Aleni (1582–1649) mentioned the Third Year of Tianqi in Fujian on 10 June 1637, as recorded in the *Sayings of the Priests* (*Kouduo richao*); Manuel Dias Jr. (1574–1659) also noted it in his *Explanation of the Doctrine on the Tang Stele of the* Jing *Teaching* (*Tang Jingjiao beisong zhengquan*).

Given the limited sources on Tang Christianity in China, research in this area is like solving a very challenging jigsaw puzzle. Matteo Nicolini-Zani has not only patiently done his very best, but also paved a wider way for scholars to investigate the complexities of Tang Christianity.

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***Albertus Magnus and the World of Nature.*** By Irven M. Resnick and Kenneth F. Kitchell Jr. Medieval Lives. London: Reaktion Books, 2022. Pp. 272. $22.50 Hardback.

The present volume is a fresh study of Albert the Great (d. 15 November 1280). It breaks with the long scholarly habit of restricting the meaning of his life's work to the thirteenth-century florescence of the Scholastic tradition in medieval Europe's nascent universities. This habitual story underlines Albert's role in Scholasticism's appropriation of Aristotelian thought (including the commentary traditions that rose up around his oeuvre) on physics, metaphysics and ethics, and in Scholasticism's consequent need to harmonize the Aristotelian tradition's many theoretical fruits with the Latin theological tradition's deep biblical and Augustinian language and conceptual patterns. Albert is assigned a high place in this story, not only for his prolific work as commentator, but also because he was the teacher of the thinker who would eventually be held as the Scholastic tradition's greatest light, Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274).

The authors of this volume by contrast present Albert as driven by a lifelong curiosity about natural phenomena and their causes. They present him of

course as deeply erudite, a master of the scholarly authorities he had appropriated as a university student and later as *magister*. But here he is also presented as often critical of scientific claims and stories preserved within his scholarly authorities. Moreover, the authors underline that in acting out of his critical posture, he evinces an empirical impulse by which he gave equal, if not greater, authority to observation, his own but also the observations of those whom he termed *experti*. It becomes clear that he sought out people whose occupation required them to observe the phenomena Albert was interested in: fowlers (especially falconers) when dealing with birds and their habits, miners when dealing with geological phenomena such as ores and gems and their useful properties, midwives when dealing with childbirth, and so on. The overall effect of this shift in focus is to present Albert as a man of science already gifted with the intellectual virtues that would later be prized during the early modern Scientific Revolution: a passionate curiosity and an empirical bent.

This presentation of Albert should not be taken as a replacement for the traditional association of Albert's career with "the triumph of Scholasticism," but rather as an important supplement, one that helps to correct overemphasis upon certain features of his scholarly life at the expense of others. In the process, it also allows the authors to address current historical interest in past constructions of sex, gender, and race, as well as theories of monstrosity and the other in the world. It is particularly Albert's appeals to the observations of men and women of experience that provide a way in to such themes.

The book begins with a general account of Albert's life and times. It is careful to stay close to scholarly consensus as to the facts of his life and work, while signaling the vulnerability of much that has since proven doubtful. The book then treats the major divisions of his life in greater detail, one chapter for each major division. Thereupon, it moves to document his reliance on both personal and expert experience in investigating the natural world before turning to what Albert had to say about sex, reproduction, gender, and race, as well as his theory of monsters and monstrosity, before concluding with a brief account of his historical legacy.

Throughout the writing is crisp and its claims emerge from minute attention to detail, a deep historical knowledge of the textuality that Albert left us, the sources on which he depended, and a thorough familiarity with the historical contexts within which he lived and wrote. A fine example of the last point is provided by the authors' discussion of the state and history of Jews in cities in which Albert spent his life, as context for his own statements about Jews and his actions, as well, above all during his time in Paris, in Cologne, and then again in Regensburg where he served as bishop (Cologne 31–37, Paris 50–61, Regensburg 81–87).

There is one side of Albert that gets short shrift here (64–65). One can hardly tell the story of Albert's interest in the natural world without dealing with his interaction with the Aristotelian tradition. As a result, even in a book given over to changing scholarly conversation around Albert and his legacy, the older theme of Albert's role in the thirteenth-century "triumph of scholasticism" gets plenty of air time. What remains in the dark, however, is his promotion of the Dionysian tradition in Latin theology in the course of his teaching career at the Dominican *studium generale* at Cologne. It is from that educational context that the great Dominican representatives of "Rhineland Mysticism" would emerge in time. This

is a dimension of Albert's career that would have very significant effects in the later Middle Ages and indeed beyond. One only need remind oneself of Martin Luther's relationship to what he called the *Theologia Deutsch*. Of course, mysticism is on the surface, a theme far removed from interest in the natural world, at least as it has come to be for us moderns. But Denys Turner has taught us to see that mystical discourse was a mode of theoretical investigation of the cosmos in relation to its transcendent ground, an investigation by which twelfth-century practitioners aimed at *scientia experimentalis*. So maybe the shape of Albert's mystical writings and teaching is more apropos a volume on his interest in the natural world than this volume's near silence makes it appear. Be that as it may, this book remains a useful introduction to a major medieval thinker, particularly in his interest in the natural world. Clear enough for undergraduate readers, it also contains many things that can benefit scholars who embrace Albert as a subject of research and thought.

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***Mother of the Lamb: The Story of a Global Icon.*** By Matthew J. Milliner. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2022. Pp. viii + 298. $28.00 hardcover.

I can remember vividly the first time I walked into an Orthodox Church. It was in Toronto, Canada, and I was there with my dissertation director, a Roman Catholic priest who specialized in Russian monasticism. This visit, on a cold winter Friday night during Lent for a Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, was the result of a conversation about how I had never visited an Orthodox Church but also a consequence of reading Pavel Florensky's *Iconostasis*. What I remember most vividly is the host of saints on the dozens of icons all around me. I do not think I had ever been in such a visually rich worship environment, even though I had studied at a Roman Catholic graduate school. Fast forward a few years and I was back in an Orthodox Church, this time in Los Angeles. Again, the icons are what I remember most vividly.

Though ancient, icons still remain a mystery for many Christians, especially those reared outside the Orthodox Church. Not only are they often misunderstood theologically, they are reduced to the equivalent of a fresco, mosaic, or painting; that is, they are thought to be mere decorations, like a Noah's ark scene on the wall of the church nursey. This, of course, is wildly incorrect. Matthew Milliner's *Mother of the Lamb* will not necessarily correct all those false understandings fully and it might, in fact, create further misunderstandings. If one does not understand even the most basic things about icons then one will likely not understand the role that icons have played in the life of the Orthodox Church over the centuries, much less the power of a particular image made famous by an icon. But this is exactly what the *Mother of the Lamb* explains, providing an origin story for a particular iconographical depiction of Mary (and Jesus) and then laying out how it came to represent not just the cultural realities in which it was created, but also how it made its way around the world and how it continues to function in today's cultural context.

The Virgin of the Passion icon (known in the west as Our Lady of Perpetual Help) is the result of the Byzantine Empire's twilight. Under attack from both the Latin Crusaders and Islam, the empire began to crumble, sending the painter Theodore Apsevdis from Constantinople to Cyprus in the twelfth century, where he painted the first image of the Virgin of the Passion on the walls of the Virgin of the Vetches church in Lagoudera. In its heyday, the Byzantine Empire, and the city of Constantinople especially, saw itself as the center of power in the world, watched over by God and protected by the Virgin Mary, especially by way of the Virgin of Victory icons. But this all changed on May 29, 1453 when Ottoman warriors breached the walls of Constantinople and hacked the famous Hodegetria ("she who points the way") icon to pieces. The icon was lost, and so was the city and the empire. But as Milliner notes, a new icon (painted by iconographer Andreas Ritzos), modeled on Theodore's Virgin of the Passion fresco, was being produced in Crete. It is this icon that has become the "global icon" of the book's subtitle.

The first part of *Mother of the Lamb* lays out the relevant history of the Byzantine Empire and its theology regarding sanctity and icons so that even the not-well-versed-in-things-Byzantine reader can profitably read the book. Milliner has a knack for including just enough detail to move things forward without overwhelming the reader in historical or theological minutiae. Further, Milliner is expert at not just painting the relevant image, but also doing so in such a way that the reader is drawn into the story. For this Baptist-turned-Anglican, I could not help but understand that this story was, somehow, part of my own Christian heritage. Further, as one of Milliner's endorsers noted, he writes with "deep humanity," and that translates into great accessibility for all, especially the non-specialist. The specialist, however, will appreciate the copious endnotes (nearly 100 pages worth!). Every reader will enjoy the abundance of well-reproduced images that make the story more navigable and visual.

Yet this book is more than just a story about an icon. It contains a wealth of information on Byzantine theologies of the Virgin Mary and even serves as an instruction manual of sorts of how to read and theologically interpret a church's painted interior. If one is unfamiliar with the discipline of art history and how it can serve as a handmaiden to theology, this book is an excellent example of what can be done. But Milliner is also a good guide on how to see the place of art in cultural context; or, to say it a bit differently, on how it can form and direct culture, showing the ongoing relevance of not only icons but also, to some degree, the Byzantine Empire itself. The Virgin Mary, Mother of the Lamb, has always been part of the main story of salvation history, and Milliner shows us how she continues to be a part of that story, not because of what she did in the past but because of what she continues to do today on behalf of her Son and the Church.

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***Refusing to Kiss the Slipper: Opposition to Calvinism in the Francophone Reformation.*** *By* Michael W. Breuning. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. 361 pp. $99.00 hardcover.

John Calvin has been an enormously controversial figure for almost five hundred years, and it is not surprising that he encountered opposition within his lifetime. One would think his opponents would come solely from the Lutheran or Roman Catholic persuasions. However, many are unaware that even among his French Reformed colleagues, he aroused anger, frustration, and opposition. In this brilliant study, Breuning argues that there were other contenders for preeminence among the francophone Protestants. Although Calvin's positions ultimately triumphed, that success was not inevitable or easy.

The most well-known opponents included Sebastien Castellio, who published *Concerning Heretics: Whether they are to be Persecuted* (1554) in the wake of the execution of Michael Servetus and Jerome Bolsec, who opposed Calvin on the doctrine of double predestination, and wrote a nasty biography of the Geneva reformer. The author brings to light some of the lesser-known foes and points out the networks of antagonists who sometimes collaborated and commiserated with each other.

The three doctrines that were crucial in either supporting or opposing Calvin were excommunication, predestination, and the Eucharist. Calvin advocated that the consistory, a sort of religious morals court, maintain the right of church discipline rather than the state. He insisted on double predestination and the spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Disagreement with any one of these could be the cause of separation. This put him at odds with his Zwinglian colleagues, who held to a memorial view of the sacrament and allowed for a more significant role for the city council in church discipline.

One little studied critical opponent was André Zébédée, who while a professor at Lausanne argued for Zwinglian reforms over against those Calvin was implementing. Many of these early opponents found a home in the town of Veigy, only twelve kilometers from Geneva on the south side of Lake Geneva. Jacques de Bourgogne, the seigneur of Veigy, hired Bolsec as his personal physician. Zébédée soon joined their circle and they corresponded with Castellio. Among other things, they criticized Calvin's rigidness and unwillingness to countenance even minor disagreements. Calvin, for example, wanted Bolsec to be arrested at a minimum for his opposition to double predestination.

After the execution of Servetus, this group argued that execution had been too great a punishment, even though they agreed that Servetus's views on the Trinity were heretical. Castellio argued that scripture was not sufficiently clear on many points to prosecute those who held opposing views. He also rejected the concept that scripture interprets scripture, arguing that one could use a flawed interpretation of one passage to support a poor explanation of another. This included beliefs about the Trinity. Although there is no evidence of Castellio being anti-Trinitarian, he was supported by many of them. Calvin saw this position as leading to theological and religious chaos. Although Castellio experienced much hardship after he left Geneva for Basel, the author documents his extensive correspondence, showing his common

cause with many like-minded individuals, primarily in the Suisse Romande and Montbéliard. He also garnered support from Dutch and Italian religious refugees and among some Protestants in the Lyon area, where he had relatives.

The author includes discussions of other significant opponents of Calvin in France, sometimes referred to as *moyenneurs.* They wanted ecclesiastical reform, were sympathetic to Reformed doctrine, were well connected to the Huguenot nobility, and wanted some compromise between Catholic and Protestant in the interest of a genuinely Gallican religion. One of the most prominent was François Bauduin, who attempted to forge a religious compromise with Antoine de Navarre, much to Calvin's dismay. The relationship between Bauduin and Calvin soon soured, and the animosity became public. Bauduin accused Calvin of slandering him and inventing a new form of Christianity that, because of its restrictions on access to the Lord's Supper, more resembled Donatism than the true spirit of the early church.

A second central figure from within France was Jean de Morély, best known for opposing Calvin's presbyterian-synodical form of church structure and for favoring giving more power to the laity. The author challenges Robert Kingdon's characterization of Morély as a congregationalist. Morély, Breuning argues, resented the influence of Geneva on the internal ecclesiastical affairs of Reformed churches in France. He advocated for more local control, with the members of the churches voting only on significant issues. The problem was that the Huguenots had their own *Discipline*. In this system, the pastor would be chosen by the local ministers and members of the consistory or by the provincial synod and then accepted by the local congregation. Any complaints about the choice had to be presented to the consistory for adjudication. On disputed matters of doctrine, the selection of ministers, and church discipline, Morély preferred that the churches decide as a whole. However, he did not necessarily mean a local congregation, but all of the churches in a particular geographical area. Bruening is correct that Morély's approach was not strictly speaking congregationalist, but this may be a distinction without a difference. Morély's views had little chance of progressing, but the opposition's vociferousness was striking. Copies of his *Treatise on Christian Discipline and Piety* were ordered to be burned in Geneva, and the consistory excommunicated him. In any case, his opposition to Genevan influence gained him some followers in France.

Breuning includes a helpful glossary of individuals mentioned in the book to assist the reader in navigating such a diverse group. The index and bibliography also help point one to additional research on the topic. The author is commended for bringing to light this critical chapter in the francophone Reformation.

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***A Widower's Lament: The Pious Meditations of Johann Christoph Oelhafen.*** Translated with an Introduction, Notes, and Epilogue by Ron Rittgers. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2021. Pp. xiii + 318. $22.99 hardcover.

A significant obstacle for those interested in the history of faith is to understand and analyze the lived religion of a historical period. Sacred texts, rites, the works of religious authorities and the like offer one view of religion during the period, but how did lay members live out their religion? One should not simply assume that they did, believed, and felt just as the religious authorities told them they should. The biggest challenge to researching historical lived religion is finding sources. A scholar cannot survey the dead to ask them directly. Sermons, prayers books, and other artifacts aimed at the laity may be put to good use. But these sources always come with the nagging question of how they were heard or how they were read (or not heard or read, as the case may be). The ideal source is a first-hand account expressing how lay people thought, behaved, and lived.

Ron Rittgers provides that kind of source in *A Widower's Lament*. The volume is an annotated translation of a journal kept by a seventeenth-century jurist and legal advisor following the death of his wife. Johann Christoph Oelhafen lived in Nuremberg with his wife Anna Maria and their children. Eight of their thirteen children were alive when, on February 13, 1619, Johann's wife Anna Maria died in his arms. That same day Johann began his *Pious Meditations* and made entries through January 1, 1620 (adding one further hymn in 1628). The *Pious Meditations* are a kind of private journal, kept in addition to his *Diarium* and focused on his spiritual life and health. The entries are a mixture of prayers, hymns, songs, and reflections. Common themes in the entries include Oelhafen's candid expressions of grief, his trust in God, his concern that he be a good father, and his future hope of the resurrection.

Johann Christoph Oelhafen's *Pious Meditations* thus provide a rare glimpse into the inner religious life of a seventeenth-century German Lutheran layperson. To be clear, this is only one glimpse, and Rittgers makes clear that Oelhafen was a successful, wealthy, and theologically-interested layperson. The book cannot be taken to speak for all German Lutherans of the seventeenth century. But as one lens into lived religion of the time, the volume gives readers an instance of lay theology and a look into the Lutheran *Hauskirche* as Oelhafen understood and lived it. Beyond its use as a source into religious life, Rittgers situates the volume as useful for researching emotions, death and dying, family, and self-narratives in the early modern world. As a work aimed at the consolation of the author, the book provides insights into these scholarly questions and more.

The spiritual life expressed in *A Widower's Lament* is shaped by several elements of Lutheran theology coming out of the Reformation. It is, on the one hand, a churchly piety. Oelhafen dates entries following the church year calendar. He notes days on which he and members of his household received communion. He records a confession, and reports going to private confession and absolution on that day. Such elements point to a man whose faith was shaped by participation in a liturgical, sacramental church life. On the other hand, there is a deep interiority to Oelhafen's piety. Rittgers rightly labels the work a "lament," as Oelhafen expresses his pain, grief, and sorrow to the Lord. In his lament Oelhafen demonstrates a deep interiorization of scripture as he writes in scriptural patterns such as Psalms of lament or Paul's approach to sin and grace. Besides scripture, Oelhafen's deep knowledge of hymnody is evident in the paraphrases and adaptations of existing

hymns found frequently in the book. The volume offers a window into how the theology and church life of early modern Lutheranism shaped the author.

Rittgers brings this journal to an English-speaking audience through his translation. The translation is clear and easy to read. Lost in the translation (as Rittgers notes) is the artistry of the original. That loss is inevitable when aiming for clarity in translating hymns and poems. Rittgers also supplies an abundance of notes that guide the English reader to allusions, other prayers and hymns that Oelhafen quotes or adapts into his own version, and features of the German lost in translation. One recurring feature Rittgers highlights in the notes is Oelhafen working out some varying form of acrostic on "AMICO," an abbreviation of his wife's name "Anna Maria Johann Christof Ölhafin."

Like the annotations, the introduction is thorough and useful. Rittgers brings the reader into the broader political and religious world of early modern Nürnberg at the cusp of the Thirty Years' War. He introduces the reader to the family of Johann Christoph and uses Oelhafen's *Diarium* to flesh out the circumstances surrounding many of the journal entries in *Pious Meditations*. Rittgers demonstrates a deep knowledge of early modern devotional literature and hymnody as he identifies dozens of references to other prayers, hymns, and theological works. He also points out the numerous scriptural allusions that Oelhafen makes. The resulting volume is a well-researched and translated English edition of an early modern primary source. That source brings the reader into the world of one particular religious life during Oelhafen's year of lamentation and sorrow in 1619. Those interested in such a window into the emotional, religious, political and social life of early modern Nürnberg will profit from this book.

Aaron Moldenhauer
Concordia University Wisconsin

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***The Jesuits: A History.*** By Markus Friedrich. Trans. John Noël Dillon. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022. Pp. 872. $39.95 hardcover. $27.95 softcover.

Already in the 1950s Pope Pius XII urged institutes of consecrated life, often founded centuries earlier, to renew themselves in accord with the historical development of the Church and the world it serves. Vatican Council II's decree *Perfectae caritatis* on the renewal of religious life mandated that religious institutes rediscover their biblical roots and original charisms and to renew their institutes accordingly. This mandate unleashed historical scholars to ply their trade. Among an astonishing flood of published results is Markus Friedrich's volume under review here, regarding the Society of Jesus, its birth, and historical development.

Friedrich's volume is a superb contribution to the stream of works published in the post-Vatican II era on the Society of Jesus and its founders. The narrative's uniqueness stems from its vantage point of institutional history, an exceptionally rich entry into the subject of the founding and development of this new religious order, which introduced reforms and innovations to the forms of religious life. Particularly during the nineteenth century, following the Jesuits' suppression

and restoration (which Friedrich follows closely with all appropriate drama), many new religious orders arose that drew inspiration from the Jesuits' innovations, at least in spirit if not practice.

As to the latter, few if any new religious orders were in a position to imitate the Society of Jesus in its global scope and reach. This sometimes led to resentment of the Jesuits. In the mission territories around the globe, Jesuits were often the first Europeans to arrive—and Jesuits, if they expected to win converts, had to learn other languages and ways of life. Sometimes Jesuits got into trouble not only with the people they were trying to teach but also with Church authorities, as missionaries attempted creatively to adapt Christian doctrine and practices to the local languages and customs without distorting Christian truths—"Ay, there's the rub" (*Hamlet* 3.1.64).

One of Friedrich's key points is that in whatever mission Jesuits were engaged, their principle of adaptation was rooted in Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*. On the one hand, this lent coherence to the Society of Jesus and its approach to apostolic labors. On the other hand, it made the Society susceptible to papal suppression, as the entire institution is rooted in Ignatius's *Exercises*—so, for that matter, is the Jesuit approach to education, which is additionally rooted in ancient humanist rhetoric (see pp. 557–58 and n. 435). The Jesuits' "superior knowledge of indigenous cultures," Friedrich argues, "was one of the Jesuits' most important weapons." Their "ability and willingness to [distinguish] between religious and social, spiritual and cultural spheres, and to divide indigenous customs into those that were prohibited and the many others that were allowed, were among the key intellectual foundations of their way of proceeding worldwide" (558).

Friedrich's last chapter, "A World without the Society of Jesus," highlights much of the book's significance relative to what the Society contributed to world history, including what ex-Jesuits contributed by the force of their perdurable Ignatian formation. The whole of the preceding four chapters sets up the significance of the last chapter and epilogue. The suppression of the Society of Jesus had enduring negative effects on the Church. This lesson Friedrich passes on to his readers.

An interesting approach to the book might be to read the prologue, last chapter, and epilogue first, as they would set up for the reader very important questions such as, "Why did Friedrich write this book—and make it such a big book?" Then begin at the beginning and follow the account as he wrote it, beginning with the founding of the Society of Jesus and its development in time and space that makes its final chapter and epilogue so compelling. Either way, the entire volume reads like a riveting novel—a historical novel, to be sure—written by one of our elite historians. Of course, given facility in German, it would be better to read the original version, but English-only readers should be assured that the superior quality of the English rendition means losing precious little in translation—kudos to translator Joel Noël Dillon!—and opens the non-German-reading world to a historical worldwide narrative that no one should miss, even if some readers are not particularly interested in the Jesuits' institutional history.

Friedrich seldom refers to archival sources, except in this way: alongside his astonishing number of secondary sources, he makes judicious use of manuscript sources through the relevant volumes of the *Monumenta Historica Societatis*

*Iesu* (currently numbering 157 volumes plus eleven in the Nova Series). These are edited and published manuscript sources originating from Jesuits on missionary assignment around the world; the missionaries sent to the Roman Curia manuscript accounts of their experiences and observations (often scientific) of the indigenous peoples, their cultures, languages, lands and all that inhabits them—peoples, animals, and plants—as well as, of course, accounts of how the Jesuits were faring with the primary objective of their mission: in Ignatian terms, "to help souls" by drawing them to Christ. These accounts were then edited, organized, typeset (today "imageset"), and published. This process makes the published volumes one step distant from the original manuscripts, but the published volumes are often as close as archivists allow researchers/writers to get to the manuscripts—usually a happy accommodation, as the published versions are far more user friendly. Such writers gather and organize the fruits harvested by the authors of the manuscripts. In other words, authors like Friedrich produce secondary sources based either on primary (manuscript) sources or on edited, organized, and published primary sources.

In Friedrich's case, the end result is simply masterful, as is the translation by John Noël Dillon, who previously translated Friedrich's *The Birth of the Archive: A History of Knowledge*. Why should no one miss this book? Because Friedrich's stunningly rich narrative has critically important lessons for the human species regarding inter- and intracultural relationships and their developments through time and space.

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***The Global Mission of the Jim Crow South: Southern Baptist Missionaries and the Shaping of Latin American Evangelicalism.*** By João B. Chaves. Perspectives on Baptist Identities series. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2022. Pp. xii + 228. $35.00 paperback.

In this fascinating history extending from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1980s, João Chaves argues for the pervasive influence of U.S. Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) missionaries on Brazilian Baptists and around the world through Brazilian Baptist missions. Chaves traces this influence through various phases. First came a period of overt missionary control, followed by the missionaries' obliged acquiescence to the nationalist Radical Movement in the 1930s, followed by a return to missionary control of many leadership positions. Finally, the Brazilian Baptist Convention (BBC) became more administratively and financially independent, but with significant continued ideological influence from the SBC.

Chaves's book makes several significant contributions to the literature on Latin American evangelicalism. Scholarship in mission history or world Christianity often focuses on the agency of the local people of a given place rather than on missionaries coming from outside. In contrast, this book represents a return to focus on missionaries, with a new emphasis on the indirect and ideological ways they exercised control. Chaves's work reminds historians that the pressure and control that

missionaries have varies depending on the world region. Although throughout Latin America the influence of the United States is strong, in Brazil, "where the broad social context encouraged strong forms of White supremacy and where appreciation for U.S. culture became a post-WWII widespread reality, the connection between the U.S. south and local dispositions were—and continue to be—stronger than in several other places" (6). The book is also an important contribution to studies of the intersections of evangelicalism and race. Chaves demonstrates how missionaries brought their ideas of white racial superiority into Brazil and how southern cultural assumptions imported from the southern United States impacted Brazilian Baptists throughout their history. Finally, as a work on one of the denominations arriving in Brazil in the nineteenth century, the book is also a helpful contribution to scholarship on Brazilian Christianity, which often focuses on Catholics or pentecostals.

The bulk of Chaves's book details the progress of SBC missionaries and the development of the BBC. He describes the mindset of the early missionaries, including how they applied their existing cultural and racial views to nineteenth-century Brazil. Some stark examples include a missionary report depicting Brazil, a slave-holding country, as an ideal place for southern missionaries because they would not have to preach abolition, and an article in a Baptist mission periodical in which a missionary spoke so disparagingly of racial mixture among Brazilians that he had to be relocated. Chaves then moves to the Radical Movement of the 1920s and 1930s, when some Brazilian Baptists, insisting on greater administrative control and a greater focus on evangelism over education, split to form the Brazilian Baptist Association in 1925. In 1936, hampered by the Great Depression, SBC missionaries were willing to make concessions. After the reunion, Chaves outlines how missionaries regained some leadership control, particularly in the Baptist seminaries in Rio de Janeiro and Recife, and shaped Brazilian leadership in ways that selected for those committed to SBC ideals. Chaves also describes the BBC's mission work, noting how the *Jornal Batista* envisioned their efforts as harkening back to missionaries from the United States and other English-speaking countries. The final chapter recounts Brazilian Baptists' conflict over the use of charismatic gifts during the 1950s and 1960s, including the revivalism promoted by missionary Rosalee Mills Appleby and her mentees José Rego do Nascimento and Enéas Tognini, concluding with the separation of the charismatic National Baptist Convention in 1965.

One of the book's strengths is the transparency of the archival work. Chaves's thorough study of SBC missionary correspondence and the *Jornal Batista* comes through clearly, clinching many of his points with clear evidence. The use of sources was particularly well-done in illustrating the early missionaries' adherence to white racial superiority and the cause of the Confederacy and in elaborating missionary attempts to undermine the 1936 "New Bases of Cooperation." On this second point, Chaves uses correspondence to show that, although in public some missionary leaders celebrated the denomination's reunion with the Brazilians who had left during the Radical Movement, in private many did not enjoy attempting to share or hand over power to Brazilians and even worked to retain high positions for missionaries only.

For historians of all sorts, the book raises interesting questions about assessing the goals and intentions of historical actors. Chaves describes how Brazilian

Baptists slowly achieved administrative independence over against persistent missionary attempts to retain leadership for themselves. However, Chaves observes that the BBC never achieved ideological or theological independence. Even when the Brazilian Baptists split in the 1960s into two separate bodies over doctrinal questions, both sides of the controversy were bolstered by missionaries from the United States and theologies grounded in English-language debates and writings. While noting that Brazilian Baptists have not seemed to desire theological or ideological independence, he occasionally faults them with a lack of creativity for not doing so. The ways Chaves analyzes different sorts of autonomy, and how he evaluates historical actors' relative achievement of them, provides a point of comparison for other historians dealing with similar questions.

Chaves's book is well-researched and pleasant to read, and it consistently drives a clear thesis. The many subheadings in the chapters guide the reader, and the conclusion is excellent—both for its concise encapsulation of the history and for its pithy reflections on the implications of the narrative, such as "the souls of Southern Baptist missionaries were sold out to Christ and the South" and "mixed legacies need mixed stories" (207). The book is an important contribution to histories of Brazilian Protestantism and global twentieth-century evangelicalism.

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***British Christians and the Third Reich: Church, State, and the Judgement of Nations.*** By Andrew Chandler. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Pp. x + 422. $120.00 hardcover.

Religious history is often granted a marginal place in considerations of the precipitous events of the era of the World Wars. Study of religious leaders and their interventions in the geopolitical developments of the twentieth century runs the risk of circling "a remote ecclesiastical cul-de-sac" (6). Yet, separating religious history from geopolitical history becomes arbitrary and forced when key actors and influencers operated from decidedly religious motivations. Andrew Chandler shows the confluence of church, state, liberal internationalism, and international Christian ecumenism in influential British Christians of the 1930s and 1940s. Chandler's masterful study of British Christian engagement with National Socialist Germany demonstrates the import and impact of Christian internationalism in the years surrounding the Second World War.

Chandler's *British Christians and the Third Reich* is an impressive and much-needed work three decades in the making. Chandler has long been a respected interpreter of the Church of England in the twentieth century. He is the foremost expert on the life and work of George Bell, bishop of Chichester, of whom he published a biography in 2016 (*George Bell, Bishop of Chichester: Church, State, and Resistance in the Age of Dictatorship*, Eerdmans), and he has encouraged further study of the Church of England's relation to the Third Reich with works such as *Brethren in Adversity: Bishop George Bell, the Church of England and the Crisis of*

*German Protestantism* (Cambridge, 1997). It is in no way hyperbolic to say that this book is the new standard in the history of British Christian international engagement around the Second World War. At times individuals in Chandler's analysis presage much of the postwar historiography relating to religion and the Third Reich. One can see shadows of the *Historikerstreit* and the *Sonderweg* controversy in the wartime debates between Bishop George Bell and the former diplomat Lord Robert Vansittart.

While much of the scholarship of church and state interactions in the twentieth century follow thematic formats, Chandler's intentional chronological structure highlights change over time and shows the great difficulties of interpretation that faced British Christians concerned about German domestic affairs. He divides his work into five time periods: 1933–1934, "The German National Revolution"; 1935–1937, "Resisting a Rapprochement"; 1938–1939, "Crisis"; 1939–1943, "The Onslaught," and 1944–1949, "A Gathering Judgement." His cogent treatment of British Christian interaction with the German *Kirchenkampf* (Church Struggle) is impressive in its balance of clarity and brevity. He tells a coherent story of British Christian engagement without merely trotting out a dry chronicle of events and arguments.

Chandler centers his writing on several key British Christian leaders. Part of the great strength of this book is its breadth of subjects. This is not a history of the Church of England's engagement with Nazi Germany alone. Rather, Chandler examines the actions of Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregationalist, and Quaker leaders in Britain and on the Continent. Through extensive archival work in England and Germany, he demonstrates the give and take between British Christians, German church leaders, and German diplomats and government officials. His lucid and engaging account of the thought and actions of many British Christians argues forcefully for his assertion that "National Socialism drew British Christians into the forefront of a vigorous national discussion about political justice, persecution and war and saw them shaping its terms and trajectories" (390). Time and again through public appeals, publications, speeches in the House of Lords, public prayers, and personal interactions, British Christians helped to shape the public conversation on issues of the German church struggle, Nazi antisemitism, and important wartime moral issues.

Periodization goes hand-in-hand with argumentation. Most works relating to Christian engagement with Nazi Germany simply accept the 1933–1945 periodization concurrent with Hitler's chancellorship. Some works of this era focus only on the prewar years of 1933–1939. Chandler's analysis ranges from 1933–1949 (with forays into later postwar decades). In so doing, he traces the postwar impact of National Socialism on British Christian consciences. The World War II refugee crisis did not end with the death of Adolf Hitler, and neither does Chandler's analysis of British Christian engagement. He takes his readers on a nearly two-decade long journey alongside British bishops, humanitarians, theologians, pastors, and activists. His even-handed scrutinization of British Christians that held disparate opinions about the nature of German domestic developments and the proper course of action in wartime and in postwar efforts for justice is worthy of commendation. Chandler exhibits a deep knowledge of the archival record and an impressive famil-

iarity with the historical subjects whom he presents in this splendid work.

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***Reformed and Evangelical across Four Centuries: The Presbyterian Story in America.*** By Nathan P. Feldmeth, S. Donald Fortson III, Garth Rosell, and Kenneth J. Stewart. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2022. 384 pp. $29.99 paperback.

Evangelical Presbyterianism has not received the historical attention it deserves. However, this situation has now been improved by four Presbyterian historians, Nathan Feldmeth, Don Forstson, Garth Rosell, and Kenneth Stewart. The authors, representing different strands of Presbyterianism (ECO, EPC, PCUSA, and PCA, respectively) have provided a sweeping history of Presbyterianism that highlights the evangelical Presbyterian tradition and phenomenon. While more liberal and some confessionally conservative Presbyterian historians have qualms with "evangelical" Presbyterianism, the writers of this book do not reject the evangelical category, and in fact put it into the very title of their book. This book is justified given the fact that so many Presbyterians have labeled themselves as evangelical Presbyterians and self-described evangelical Presbyterian denominations and parties exist. Another issue is how exactly do you disentangle the evangelical from the Presbyterian? In *Reformed and Evangelical* the authors do not deny, ignore, or minimize the *evangelical* Presbyterian story. In nineteen chapters and a conclusion the book weaves together Presbyterian history and provides an important account of the Reformed evangelical movement.

The book begins by highlighting the divergence between Lutheran and Reformed groups and the Church of Scotland's interaction with various monarchs. It gives significant attention to the traumatic events of the British Civil Wars and how they shaped Scottish and English church life. The book analyzes the Westminster Confession, which provided a robust Reformed theological statement that would be adopted in Scotland and was influential in England. Chapter 4 introduces the return of the monarchy, and it is noted that in Scotland Presbyterian government prevailed. Nonetheless, tensions persisted in the 1660s, as is evident in the persecution and killing of the Covenanters—those Presbyterians who had ongoing allegiance to the earlier Covenants of 1638 and 1643.

In chapter 5 the book moves away from the overview method used in the first four chapters and instead begins to analyze the early evangelical character of Presbyterianism, showing that it corresponds to the well-known Bebbington Quadrilateral. While Bebbington sees evangelicalism largely as a post-1730 movement, this book argues for a Reformed evangelicalism that was earlier. *Biblicism* is detected in the Puritan-Noncomformist groups in Scotland and England and in key works on the Bible (66–67). *Conversionism* can be seen in preaching, key events, and evangelistic literature (67–70). *Crucicentrism* is displayed by showing the emphasis on observing the Lord's Supper, thus a reminder of Christ's work in the cross (70–72). *Activism*, the fourth aspect of the quadrilateral, is revealed in various

missionary efforts to reach non-Christians (72–74).

Chapter 6 charts the migration of Presbyterians across the Atlantic to North America. Presbytery practices and early American debate over creedal subscription are analyzed. The Great Awakening takes up chapter 7 and the Revolutionary War is examined in chapter 8.

Significant attention is given to various missionary organizations, efforts to reach those on the frontier, and the doctrinal challenges that arose therefrom. Chapter 10 offers an analysis of the New England theology's influence and the divisions among Presbyterians on the issues of revivalism and confessional subscription. The rise of various Presbyterian seminaries is also detailed. The problem of slavery and the Civil War are covered in chapters 11 and 12. The book then devotes an entire chapter (13) to "The Darwinian Challenge." Evolution and the emerging scientific culture created tensions for Presbyterians. The chapter focuses on Darwin and how Asa Gray, James Woodrow, Charles Hodge, and B. B. Warfield interacted in varying ways with his thought. This chapter could have been strengthened had the authors included John William Dawson and his important role in these various scientific and theological debates. Dawson, the geologist principal of McGill University, was an evangelical Presbyterian and the only person to serve as president of both the American and British associations for the advancement of science. Chapter 14 highlights immigration and the resultant urbanization and how this led to the rise of the social gospel and socialism.

Chapter 15 deals with German scholarship and how it challenged Christian orthodoxy. Higher criticism of the Bible is noted along with liberal theologians and the efforts of Old Testament critics. Countering these progressive trends in America were scholars associated with Princeton Seminary who combatted liberal German scholarship. The chapter could be improved by discussing a few conservative American Presbyterian scholars outside of Princeton, thus showing the wider Presbyterian concern over German liberal theology and biblical criticism.

The intellectual and social challenges that Presbyterians faced resulted in an early twentieth century conflict between modernists and fundamentalists (chapter 16). Some Presbyterians tried to accommodate the new intellectual agenda and others were militantly opposed. While there is good coverage of the theological and ecclesiastical conflict, J. Gresham Machen's landmark book *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923) should have been included and discussed. Also, there should have been some mention of the Scottish United Free church apologist James Orr and his influence on conservative American Presbyterians in these debates. More attention to *The Fundamentals* would have also been helpful. Chapters 17, 18, and 19 focus on the important themes of missions, neo-evangelicalism, women, and the ability of evangelical Presbyterians to overcome marginalization in the mainline PCUSA. The renewal of evangelical Presbyterianism is seen in the various new ministries and denominations that continue the spiritual legacy of the movement.

While various criticisms can be made, this book accomplishes something that has eluded previous multi-century histories of Presbyterianism. What this book provides is a study of Presbyterian history that takes seriously the evangelical strands, impulse, and orientation of Presbyterianism. The authors should be commended for providing us with such a well-researched synthesis of evangelical

Presbyterian history.

Jeffrey McDonald
Presbyterian Scholars Conference

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***Benjamin Colman's Epistolary World, 1688–1755: Networking in the Dissenting Atlantic.*** By William R. Smith. Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022. Pp. xvi + 284. $119.99 hardcover.

We needed a book on Benjamin Colman. Scholars who have written about colonial American religion, including John Corrigan, Mark Noll, and Mark Valeri, all point to Colman as one of the most influential and significant ministers in New England. But no monograph until now has solely focused on him. With *Benjamin Colman's Epistolary World*, historians finally have a detailed account of Colman, including his contributions to colonial American Protestantism, and especially his role within British Dissent.

Smith's book contains seven chapters, chronicling Colman's life from the early stages of his career in England to his death as a revered evangelical Congregational minister in the wake of the Great Awakening. A final chapter on the Presbyterian minister Samuel Davies serves as a kind of epilogue on the health of British Dissent in the 1750s. Smith's extensive research on Colman's vast transatlantic epistolary network shows the breakdown of Britain's Protestant Dissenting community that culminated at the time of the Great Awakening. The result is a book that will be required reading for specialists in the eighteenth century wanting to understand the complex nature of Protestantism within British imperial culture.

Collectively, the seven chapters analyze three stages of development within British Dissent, which Smith identifies as creation, extension, and detachment. In the creation and extension stages, Smith highlights the epistolary networks that Protestants established on both sides of the Atlantic in the seventeenth century and into the early eighteenth century. Centering on Colman's life, Smith highlights the deep attachment that Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and other Dissenters had to Britain's expanding empire, which can be seen in their correspondences. Examining the corpus of Colman's extant manuscripts, Smith argues that the primary goal of his letters "was to create, build, and secure coalitions between Protestant Dissenters and to mobilize them for establishing British Imperial Christendom" (14).

Although born in Boston, Colman traveled to England at the end of the seventeenth century, serving as a Presbyterian minister in Cambridge, Ipswich, and Bath. While in England he became acquainted with leading Dissenters such as the minister John Howe (1630–1705) and the printer Thomas Parkhurst (c.1632–1711). His time in England also happened to coincide with the reign of the newly crowned William and Mary, who replaced the Catholic James II as British (Protestant) monarchs. This was a period of expansion for British Dissent, which flourished at the turn of the eighteenth century.

Even though the Glorious Revolution and the passing of the Act of Toleration in 1689 provided greater freedom for Nonconformists, Smith argues that

the shared identity and common purpose of British Dissenters ultimately fissured in the decades that followed. According to Smith, in the first half of the eighteenth century, Anglo-Protestant networks extended their influence into North America through missionaries, the expansion of the book trade, and financial donations. But within this period of expansion, Anglicans and Dissenters had competing notions of Anglicanization. Smith uses an example involving contested Native American property in Rhode Island to highlight the conflict between Anglicans and Dissenters at this time, with both groups claiming that their specific polity represented the best form of Protestantism.

The Atlantic Dissenting communities of the early eighteenth century bolstered the broader evangelical networks that emerged during the 1740s. The connections Colman made while serving as a minister in England, for instance, facilitated the spread of information about the revivals that erupted in the American colonies during the Great Awakening. For his part, Colman worked with the English Dissenters John Guyse and Isaac Watts to edit and publish Jonathan Edwards's *Faithful Narrative*, the account of a remarkable revival in Edwards's parish in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1734–35. In the years following the revival at Northampton, letters by Colman and others helped propagate the revivals and defend them from criticism stemming from competing Dissenting interests. According to Smith, "letters became tools for mediating the events, for controlling the spread of news, and for helping readers see conversion in new ways" (207).

Smith contends that ultimately the Great Awakening created a "tectonic cultural shift" that led to the fracturing of British Dissent (206). Whitefield's itinerant ministry in particular had a divisive effect on Dissenting clergyman in America and Britain. Throughout Whitefield's time in the colonies, and in the days after his American preaching tour, letters became the conduit for communicating news of the revivals. But as the revivals became more disorderly, earlier support among the English Dissenters faded. The radical New Light antics of James Davenport were especially disturbing to the Dissenting communities across the Atlantic, and eventually sullied Whitefield's reputation as well.

Not long after Colman's death in August 1747, transatlantic Dissent was in disrepair. The evidence of the poor state of Dissent appears in the last chapter of the book, in which Smith briefly chronicles Samuel Davies's journey to Britain to raise money for the fledgling Presbyterian College of New Jersey. Smith shows the detached interest of English Dissenters during Davies's tour, which produced mixed results. While Davies was able to collect some £3000 for the college, he nonetheless returned to America without making the kind of personal connections and long-lasting partnerships that Colman had made during his time in Britain.

The major strength of Smith's book is how he navigates the complex nature of transatlantic Dissent through Colman's life. Like many Dissenters in that period, Colman was complicated. He supported the evangelical revivals of the 1740s while also trying to bolster Dissent during a time of expansion of British Imperial Protestantism. Ultimately, British Dissent was not strong enough to survive the divisions caused during the Great Awakening, which is perhaps why Colman is usually identified with the burgeoning evangelical movement.

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***America's Book: The Rise and Decline of a Bible Civilization, 1794–1911.*** By Mark A. Noll. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. xii + 846. $39.95 hardcover.

In this magisterial tome, Mark Noll completes his extraordinary project of offering what the book jacket rightly names "the first comprehensive history of the Bible in America." Precisely, this is the history of a Bible civilization, "the Protestant dream of a free country voluntarily choosing to organize its public life by the Scriptures" (6–7). The story picks up where *The Bible in American Life* left off in 2016, with the post-Revolutionary concern with personal and civic virtue; it ends with the tercentenary of the King James Bible in 1911. In the first two sections, Noll explains the early national project to build a Bible civilization; in the third and fourth, how the Bible civilization splintered in the tumultuous years before the Civil War; and in the final two, how scripture remained a cultural and spiritual force even after the Bible civilization had been replaced by "religious pluralism and intra-Protestant strife" (10). Throughout, Noll maps the many legacies—praiseworthy, ironic, and lamentable—of the Bible's influence on the nation.

As any reader of Noll would expect, the book is as fascinating as it is definitive. Noll gives us in-depth case studies, deals comprehensively and generously with the scholarly literature, and offers insightful interpretations, both historical and theological. His cast of characters is truly representative, featuring diverse Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Black, male, female, and agnostic readers of scripture; likewise, his sources range from sermons to scholarly treatises, publishing sales to hymns and poems, and private journals to presidential addresses. It is impossible to list here all that the book accomplishes—especially since it approaches 700 pages before notes. Instead, this review will summarize the book's guiding questions and several of its central arguments.

Noll keeps two questions in view: How could a country founded on the principle of personal liberty maintain freedom, virtue, and public order? The first half of the book shows how the majority of Americans believed that the Protestant Bible was the answer to this question. By the end of the century, a significant and growing population no longer agreed. Secondarily, how could the Bible contribute to the public life of a particular nation "without being reduced to a utilitarian tool of this-worldly interests and so lose its potential as a spiritual guide for all times and all places?" (665). These two questions interweave as Noll shows how the Bible shaped American life and what this process did to the Bible.

Two arguments are particularly worth highlighting. First, Noll provides a finely-grained account of the process of Christianization that began in the 1790s and continued through the middle of the nineteenth century. He argues this process was not due to "an undifferentiated 'Second Great Awakening'" but rather the result of collaboration and conflict between three kinds of evangelical Protestants: custodial, or proprietary, Protestants (primarily Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Epis-

copalians) who sought to Christianize every sphere of society; localists (especially Baptists) who believed that *sola scriptura* preserved the independence of individual congregations; and the most influential group, the apolitical Methodists (8–9). Noll uses this distinction between custodial and sectarian Protestants to clarify why and how evangelicals with similar understandings of the Bible's supreme authority disagreed so much about the collaborative project of building a Christian society.

Second, Noll wraps up a case begun in *America's God* (2002) and developed in *The Civil War as Theological Crisis* (2006)—namely, that the question of the Bible and race and slavery fundamentally changed the place of scripture in national life. As he puts it, "the generation *before* the Civil War witnessed the crucial turning point for the Bible in American history" (366). Of course, the end of the century saw scientific and intellectual challenges to scripture, as well as increasing religious pluralism, but the Bible civilization fractured when antebellum evangelicals failed to agree on scripture's meaning. Afterward, the Bible remained culturally resonant, vital for religious life, and a perennial best-seller, but was almost entirely absent from the most important Reconstruction-era political and social squabbles. While this transformation has been analyzed before by Noll and others, here it is drawn in greater detail and illuminated against a broader backdrop.

In these and many other arguments, *America's Book* adds significant texture to our understanding of the Bible in America. To name only several others: Noll shows the overwhelming and persistent domination of the King James Version among all translations; he attends to the clear "parallel between debates over Scripture and women, and over Scripture and slavery" in the nineteenth century (390); he introduces us to the several traditional Protestants who joined Catholics and Jews in opposing Bible reading in public schools—and did so on the grounds that this made sacred scripture an instrument of civil education; he notes how the scripturally-inflected civil rights movement of the 1950s echoed the antebellum project to build a Bible civilization. Many more examples could be given.

It should go without saying that immediately upon publication *America's Book* became indispensable reading for any historian interested in the United States or the Bible. Noll surveys the topic with typical dexterity, summarizing the historiography in ways accessible to the ordinary reader, while at the same time provided nuanced analyses that will interest specialists. Readers of this journal will especially appreciate Noll's unwillingness to shy away from the disturbing and tragic elements of this story, alongside his open appreciation of the Bible and its readers. The book merits a wide readership among scholars and thoughtful lay people alike.

One certainly hopes this is not the last word we hear from Noll on the subject, but the closing lines feel definitive: "[This] mixed record must temper anything triumphalist Bible believers might say in its favor. Yet an honest assessment of the nation's history, and at no time more than the present, should also recognize that a democratic republic needs something like the Bible more than Bible believers need a democratic republic."

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***American Crusade: Christianity, Warfare, and National Identity, 1860–1920.*** By Benjamin Wetzel. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2022. Pp. 215. $47.95 hardcover.

The United States' national identity has been foundationally shaped by warfare. It has also, of course, been so shaped by Christian religion. And yet relatively few historians have systematically examined American Christian leaders' interpretations of national identity through the lens of major American wars. That historiographical gap may have something to do with the utter predictability of such interpretations. Harry Stout once memorably claimed that, during the Civil War, clergy North and South became "cheerleaders all," and, historical particularity notwithstanding, Stout's judgment seems to hold up pretty well for most American clergy in many American wars. This pattern of patriotic piety is historically and religiously significant, to be sure. But, for the historian, the totalizing conformity can make it hard to see the trees for the forest.

Benjamin Wetzel's challenge, then, in his new survey of American Christian responses to the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and World War I, is to find some texture amidst the smooth monotony of wartime moralizing. In *American Crusade: Christianity, Warfare, and National Identity, 1860–1920*, Wetzel approaches the problem by juxtaposing a more-or-less uniform center with a diverse periphery. For each of these three wars, he identifies a majority interpretation of wartime national identity, represented by self-consciously (and self-confidently) mainstream Christian leaders, then sets it against the interpretation of a "counterpoint" group: African Methodist Episcopals, Roman Catholics, and Missouri Synod Lutherans.

The mainstream arguments are familiar enough, but Wetzel organizes their features under several helpful headings: American Providentialism, which regards the United States as the special subject and object of God's action in history; Democratic Christian Republicanism, which treats Christianity and democracy as inseparably linked and mutually reinforcing; demonization of the enemy, which finds the other side to be inherently opposed to God's providential will, democracy, and true Christianity; and the social gospel, which envisions war aims as an expression of the church's social responsibility at home and abroad. Preachers and publishers emphasized these themes differently from the 1860s through the 1910s, but changes in emphasis belie a basic consistency in mainstream interpretation.

Attitudes toward war among Wetzel's "counterpoint" groups show more definition, as one might expect for religious groups who, for various reasons, could not identify with an old-stock Protestant, white American mainstream. Obviously, AME writers could not easily imagine themselves the primary custodians of the American project, and were therefore better positioned to offer a nuanced account of the nation's moral character and God's providential purposes. Though Roman Catholics in the 1890s may have engaged in as much American Providentialism as their Protestant counterparts, they were less inclined to make Spain's Catholic identity central to the narrative. Ethnically German Missouri Synod Lutherans similarly avoided demonizing the German "Hun" during the First World War; they

also drew on Lutheran two-kingdoms theology to resist facile conflation of religious and political priorities.

In every case, these outsiders could hardly avoid offering moral interpretations of American warfare that proceeded from their group's standing vis-à-vis the dominant American culture. And, again in every case, they were torn between the distinct commitments of their own group and a desire more fully to participate in, or be accepted into, American society. Wetzel nicely observes this classically American tension; one of the most intriguing aspects of the book is its account of the centripetal energy of a religio-cultural mainstream, which pulled some outsiders toward assimilation and provoked others to dig in their heels and hold alternative identities more tightly.

All of this suggests the value of further close study in the racial-ethnic fissures of this apparently featureless wartime interpretive landscape. That American Christians relied for wartime meaning-making on a durable religiopolitical orthodoxy has been well established, and Wetzel's book duly contributes to that history. But the fractured, incomplete resistance to this orthodoxy by Black Methodists, Catholics, and Midwestern Lutherans might produce more and better insights, since it promises to illumine the mechanisms by which consensus forms, changes, and comes apart. Each of these groups, and many more, deserve in-depth examination within larger contexts than this slim and fast-moving volume can provide.

In his conclusion, Wetzel also offers an intriguing reframing of the slate-gray Christian nationalism of the Protestant elite, which he finds to be anomalously consistent between 1860 and 1920. Neither before nor since did American war aims—and perhaps the American nation more generally—command such uniform allegiance from a Christian mainstream. This fact might say something important about that mainstream, which was less powerful and more diffuse before the Civil War and after World War I. The tedious sameness of wartime piety, then, might in fact help to fill in historians' understanding of significant long-term trends in American cultural authority. The relevant studies remain to be written, but *American Crusade* points in promising directions.

Aaron Sizer
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***Gin, Jesus, and Jim Crow: Prohibition and the Transformation of Racial and Religious Politics in the South.*** By Brendan J. J. Payne. Making the Modern South series. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2022. Pp. xiii + 273. $45.00 hardcover.

This book, the author's first, offers an account of the relationship between race, religion, and prohibition in the U.S. South. Dense with deep research that ranges across the South, but particularly from Texas and Arkansas, Payne argues that prohibition's rise and fall offers a precise panorama of Jim Crow's racial and religious politics. Tracking religious engagement on both sides of the prohibition issue, Payne's text, structured chronologically from early prohibition elections in the 1880s to

repeal in the early 1930s, engages usefully with the history and historiography of race and reform, highlighting an engaging cast of characters ranging from "bone dry" prohibitionists to their "soaking wet" adversaries, and many "moist" moderates in between.

Payne coins the term "Gin Crow" to encapsulate four specific intersections between prohibition and Jim Crow. The first is their overlapping chronologies (with the exception of Mississippi, which maintained statewide prohibition until the 1960s, statewide prohibition existed in the South "only during Jim Crow" (3)). The second connection lies in the drys' changing tactics. While in the 1880s drys actively sought interracial coalitions, by the 1910s and 1920s they lent their full force to voter suppression and sought to convert the white supremacist vote for their cause. As Payne argues in the book's later chapters, not only was the effort to marry prohibition with white supremacy successful, but southern repealist organizations also successfully leveraged white supremacist narratives to achieve their ends in the 1920s and 1930s. This was possible, Payne argues, because poll taxes and other violent means of controlling access to the ballot box had defanged the interracial coalitions in question.

Payne finds the third Gin Crow connection in Black resistance to the emerging alliance between prohibition and Jim Crow. Payne argues that Black votes were more determinative in the defeat of early prohibition contests than historians have acknowledged, and that African-Americans' decisive participation proved an effective way of resisting Jim Crow. The alliances they built were pragmatic—some Black leaders gravitated toward the drys as a way of claiming respectability; but many found the alcohol lobby's willingness to remove the mounting blocks to the ballot box much more appealing. The irony here is not lost on Payne: white supremacist wets, who also helped defeat early prohibition measures, were unwittingly helping prop up a powerful interracial political coalition.

Finally, Payne argues that Jim Crow and prohibition aligned in their racial enforcement. Antebellum efforts at prohibition succeeded only when "aimed explicitly and exclusively at the enslaved" (40). The resulting racial connotations of alcohol control in the South, he argues, rendered it unsurprising that white southerners initially resisted prohibition. Yet by the 1930s, statewide prohibition had "accomplished what Jim Crow laws on their own failed to do: end meaningful mass voting for Black southerners" (6). If the alcohol lobby represented a key ally to the Black vote in the 1910s, by the time the lobby's interests were revived in the 1930s Jim Crow retrenchment had obviated the need for such alliances. The effort to repeal prohibition thus proceeded not only without significant Black voting constituencies, but also with specific appeal to white southerners who were eager to exercise "local self-rule" against government "overreach" (181, 183).

Payne makes good on his book's placement in LSU Press's "Making the Modern South" series by articulating what was modern about Christian prohibitionism. According to Payne, prohibitionists "transgressed the theological orthodoxies of the South" in their advocacy for Federal intervention on the alcohol issue. They broke with Christian tradition by advocating not only abstinence, but legal prohibition. They pushed against a republican impulse for privileging liberty over law among nineteenth-century American Christians. Prohibition caused internal

divisions that even biblical "exegetical gymnastics" could not neatly resolve (25, 27). Finally, prohibition created a "distinctive" form of "religious politics," apart from debates over slavery and the Confederacy, that "itself fueled religious and political transformation of the South into the Bible Belt" (30–1).

Women were key in this transformation, and Payne integrates into his narrative the campaigns of organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Repeal. While the Women's Christian Temperance Union and others were initially staffed by white women as well as Black men and women, its white leaders increasingly siloed off its Black members to appeal to the South, embracing white supremacist rhetoric fully by the 1920s. By the 1930s, Payne writes, it was the repealists who sought to position themselves as both bearers of "moral sense and common conscience" and "true inheritors of the Confederate legacy" (185).

Payne argues carefully and demonstrates his claims thoroughly. But one might come away from the text less than convinced that white southern drys played a substantial role in suppressing Black votes *so that* they could specifically pursue prohibition, rather than seeing their relationship as one of convenience, with prohibition remaining a subsidiary engagement. Additionally, although Payne acknowledges that white southerners leveraged racial fears to advance prohibition, he maintains as a fundamental assumption that prohibition was a response to "real social concerns." Yet to succeed, the movement had to leverage invented racial menaces. This seems a tension worth noting for future research on this topic.

Payne's articulation of the links between religion and race in prohibition elections is compelling, and the nuances of women's and Black southerners' engagements in the wet and dry camps will serve as compelling material for teaching and for further research. Additionally, Payne's broader conclusion—that religion may be found on "both sides" of the prohibition issue and, consequently, of culture war debates more broadly—will, one hopes, push historians to more nuanced understandings of religion, race, and reform. Historians with more of a stake in religious studies conversations may feel less provoked to revise their understanding of how religion impacts American cultural debates. But *Gin, Jesus, and Jim Crow* is nonetheless a valuable addition to the common conversation between southern history and religious history.

Isaiah Ellis
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***Sincerely Held: American Secularism and its Believers***. By Charles McCrary. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2022. Pp. 300. $30.00 paperback.

Over the past decade, the notion of a "sincerely held religious belief" has taken on a prominent role—and some would say a controversial role—in First Amendment jurisprudence. Although sincerity of belief has been a prerequisite for asserting a religious free exercise claim for close to eighty years, the legal inquiry has drawn more attention recently as proprietors of for-profit businesses have raised religious

defenses to avoid complying with nondiscrimination laws and neutral requirements to provide health care coverage to employees (*Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Commission*; *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby, Inc.*). What does it mean to have a sincerely held religious belief (each word necessitating a separate inquiry) such that it privileges the holder to a special accommodation under the law?

Charles McCrary tackles this difficult question (or questions) in his thought-provoking new book, *Sincerely Held: American Secularism and its Believers*. He unpacks how the sincerely held belief requirement has been used by secular society to impose limits on what it is willing to accept as authentic religion, even though the whole purpose of the requirement is to avoid civil officials judging the inherent truth or falsity of any religion.

It is difficult to characterize *Sincerely Held*. The middle part of the book, chapters 4–7, could be considered a legal history, tracing the legal development of this concept/requirement through a case study of the Supreme Court's decisions expanding the religious conscientious objector provisions of the Selective Service Act (the draft law) and then of the influential Frank Africa case in the Third Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, in which the court held that Africa's MOVE movement was *not* religious. (The Introduction also begins with a descriptive analysis of the 1944 *United States v. Ballard* case where the justices adopted the "sincerely held religious belief" inquiry as way of avoiding judging whether the Ballards' outlandish religious claims of having met Jesus were in fact "true.") That legal history, however—at times venturing into an intellectual history about terminology and concepts—is sandwiched between two other studies or critiques, making the book as a whole somewhat disharmonious. And overlaying all of the chapters is the true theme of the book: a critique of secularism (or post-secularism) and of how that has determined what society and the law are willing to accept as "religious."

The first part of the book, chapters 1–3, considers how society and the law have historically viewed, and dealt with, charlatans, frauds and hucksters. Using Herman Melville's *The Confidence Man* as a literary point of reference, the book discusses Anthony Comstock's nineteenth-century crusade against swindlers and frauds who misled, endangered, and corrupted innocent youth. It then segues to efforts during the same century to police spiritualists and fortune-tellers. In both instances, "respectable society" (i.e., the Protestant evangelical majority) used its own notions of acceptable religion and morality to question not only the sincerity of the actors but also the *bona fides* of their religion. In essence, the powers-at-be used sincerity to define what was validly religious (and vice versa), which then determined who was entitled to religious freedom protections.

Readers may have expected the book to continue with this theme of how society and the law have distinguished between the sincere and fraudulent expositors of religious claims, but that examination is dropped after chapter 3. (As a result, considerations of other familiar claims of religious insincerity and fraudulence—such as those levied against Joseph Smith and then, more recently, against televangelist Jim Bakker of the PTL Club, who served time in prison for a Ponzi scheme—are not examined). Rather, the book shifts to consider how those demonstrations of sincerity that officials and courts have been willing to recognize have expanded upon, and then constricted, what society is willing to consider to be

bona fide religious. In essence, even though judges and legal scholars have decried the ability to define what is truly "religious," sincerity of belief, if articulated in the "right" way, becomes a proxy for that definitional problem. Here is where McCreary's critique of secularity comes into play. Only those who can articulate their religious claims within the boundaries of the Protestant-centric idea of secularity that recognizes only conforming expressions of religion will receive protection. Thus, in the draft cases, even though the claimants stated that their objections to war were not necessarily religiously based, their ability to articulate their claims in ways that conformed to the dominant model of the secular and religious allowed the Court to expand the statutory coverage of who was entitled to conscious objector status. In contrast, members of religious communities who do not or will not articulate their claims in the same way—often members of minority communities such as Native Americans—are unsuccessful. Thus, even though Frank Africa sincerely believed that his Black liberation MOVE movement was religious, he would not/could not articulate for authorities what aspects of MOVE were identifiably religious and what aspects were not. As McCreary writes, "secular governance enforces secular ideology, and the Protestant secular is enmeshed in whiteness" (234). McCreary's critique of the "regulatory aspect of secularism" for religious freedom (256) builds upon the important scholarship of Winifred Sullivan and Tisa Wenger.

The book then shifts again in the final chapter to discuss the ongoing "cultural wars" where claims of religious liberty have been weaponized by conservative Christians to obtain exemptions from nondiscrimination laws. Here, McCrary critiques both sides of the debate for using the alleged insincerity of their opponents to challenge the *bona fides* of their claims. In the end, McCreary describes the problems with the sincerity test as representing the "rotten core at the heart of religious freedom" in that it regulates who is ultimately entitled to its protection. (275). He clearly sees the cant of modern secularism as the problem, but then recommends "more critique of secularism" as the solution (272). If by that he means the need to recognize the inherent biases in our traditional understandings of religious freedom, influenced as they are by dominant notions of secularity, then he is on the right track.

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***Before the Religious Right: Liberal Protestants, Human Rights, and the Polarization of the United States***. By Gene Zubovich. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022. Pp. viii + 391. $45.00 hardcover.

In the early 1940s, Methodist activist Thelma Stevens worked tirelessly to mobilize American Methodist women in support of a new theopolitical agenda. Stevens organized a suite of conferences and study courses that advanced midcentury liberal political priorities, including support of New Deal economic democracy, racial justice at home and abroad, and a new world government. Under the emerging Protestant rubric of "human rights," her advocacy synthesized the global and the local

into a seamless political vision, calling for religiously inspired political reform both at home and abroad. Far from an isolated figure, Stevens stood as a central player within American Methodism's "World Order" campaign, which sought to inspire lay Methodists to support this emerging midcentury political liberalism. Moreover, she helped catalyze the midcentury rise of "Protestant globalism," an applied theology that propelled American liberalism forward into the postwar world (5, 99–104).

In *Before the Religious Right*, Gene Zubovich recovers the story of Protestant ecumenists like Stevens, along with other leading lights such as G. Bromley Oxnam, Charles Clayton Morris, and Reinhold Niebuhr, artfully and convincingly to make the case that ecumenical Protestantism catalyzed "the rise and fall of mid-century" American political "liberalism" (309). Zubovich takes readers back to a midcentury era where liberal, modernist clergy served as crucial actors within the New Deal political coalition. In this regard, *Before the Religious Right* powerfully corrects the historiography of American religion and politics, which has fixated on the late-twentieth century link between political conservatism and evangelicalism in the United States and thereby undervalued this earlier religious-political partnership. Zubovich illustrates how a host of liberal theologians, missionaries, and ecumenically minded pastors proved early articulators of political commitments that came to define midcentury liberalism, including New Deal reforms of the industrial economy, a postwar civil rights agenda, and multilateral international institutions such as the United Nations. For these ecumenical figures, politics stood out as the best pathway to live out their theology. Drawing from their modernist faith, they offered to political liberalism a careful articulation of "human rights," an overarching framework that envisioned what economic, racial, and diplomatic relations should look like when reformed in light of the Gospel. The "Protestant globalism" they espoused eschewed the normal Christian nationalism and American exceptionalism of the era through linking international developments such as decolonization to domestic movements such as anti-racist sit-ins and bus boycotts.

Zubovich's work is as much about the flourishing of this cosmopolitan Protestantism as it is about its fracturing. The book indicates that the political mobilization of ecumenical Protestants triggered counterreaction from conservative Protestants. It also concedes that a significant "clergy-laity gap" existed: what was preached from the pulpit was not always absorbed by those sitting in the pews (11). Some mainline Protestants fought back fiercely from the start, opposing the New Deal, questioning the dilution of American sovereignty in new multilateral institutions, and suggesting segregation and racism were a problem of the individual human heart and not the unjust structures of an ailing society. Such viewpoints made them more likely to align with the emerging "neo-evangelicalism" of Billy Graham and the National Association of Evangelicals. By the 1960s and 1970s, mass national mobilization against segregation, along with peace protests over the Vietnam War, led these mainline Protestants to defect, adding further impetus to the rise of a new religious-political partnership in the form of the Religious Right.

Zubovich shows the potential for such fracturing was present from the start. Prominent ecumenical Protestants like Reinhold Niebuhr, with the articulation of his steely and sober Christian realism, offered a foil to Protestant globalists' emphasis on peace-focused foreign policy. Moreover, John Foster Dulles reflected

those globalists who saw a new internationalism as the best channel for traditional American nationalism. Dulles, and supporters such as Henry Luce and J. Howard Pew, certainly wanted to create a new international order, but one that was tailored to favor the United States and its interests. Protestant globalism thus suffered from internal dissent and contestation. On this point, the book perhaps could have more fully explored the ways nationalism and globalism often seamlessly overlapped in midcentury ecumenical foreign and domestic policy. To this day, the contributions of ecumenical Protestants to the American Christian nationalism of that era arguably remain overlooked.

All told, *Before the Religious Right* constitutes a bold and pathbreaking piece of scholarship. It offers a needed corrective to the historiography of American religion, and it furthers the insights of Zubovich's dissertation advisor, David Hollinger, on the wide-reaching and lasting contributions liberal Protestants made to America's twentieth-century intellectual, political, and diplomatic culture. In a moment when American Protestantism's political witness arguably remains as contested and fractured as ever, this book deserves to be widely read and discussed, not only by faith-based historians in the academy, but also by everyday congregants looking for historical wisdom for faithful living in the present.

James Strasburg
Hillsdale College

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***Evangelical News*: *Politics, Gender, and Bioethics in Conservative Christian Magazines of the 1970s and 1980s.*** By Anja-Maria Bassimir. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2022. Pp. xiii + 367. $59.95 hardcover.

Histories of American evangelicalism often portray the 1970s and 1980s as a time when the movement turned sharply to the right and allied with the Republican Party. Anja-Maria Bassimir's *Evangelical News* nuances this conventional narrative by demonstrating that evangelicals' responses to new political and cultural developments in this era were more complex and less partisan or conservative than historians have often assumed.

*Evangelical News* is a study of how the leading evangelical magazines of the 1970s and 1980s—*Christianity Today*, *Eternity*, *Moody Monthly*, *Sojourners*, and a handful of smaller publications (mostly on the evangelical left)—responded to the major political and cultural issues of the time, such as Jimmy Carter's and Ronald Reagan's presidential campaigns, changes in women's roles, debates about abortion, and the notion of a "Christian America." On each of these subjects, Bassimir argues, evangelicals expressed a range of views, but ultimately, after a period of debate in print, evangelical magazines collectively arrived at a general consensus that became the standard evangelical position. In this way, she claims, evangelical print culture was instrumental in defining the cultural and political boundaries of the evangelical movement.

Both right-leaning and left-leaning evangelical periodicals believed there was something fundamentally wrong with American society in the 1970s, and both

groups proclaimed the need for "revolutionary" change—not a conservatism that would preserve the status quo. Nevertheless, most evangelicals believed that this revolution would come through personal conversion, not through social upheaval or political lobbying. Watergate shocked them—especially since the vast majority of white evangelicals had voted for Richard Nixon—yet the solution to Watergate was not to abandon politics entirely but rather to change the system by electing candidates who had been born again.

Yet the conversion experience was obviously not enough to guarantee a particular position on hot-button cultural issues, as evangelical magazine editors found when they engaged in debate among themselves about feminism, abortion, and other matters. On most issues, the mainstream evangelical publications (especially *Christianity Today* and *Eternity*) were open to cultural change, but cautious about going too far. These magazines published articles by evangelical feminists such as Nancy Hardesty that argued for women's liberation in the church and home, but at the same time, they sought to guard against more radical forms of feminism that they believed would erase divinely ordained gender distinctions altogether. While a small group of evangelicals on the left pushed for a more sweeping egalitarianism, mainstream evangelical publications forged a new evangelical theological consensus that emphasized both women's equal value as human beings and the need to maintain some form of gender distinctions in men's and women's roles, however these might be defined.

On abortion, evangelicals gravitated over the course of the 1970s and 1980s from a moderately permissive position to a strongly restrictive one, but for most evangelical magazines that embraced pro-life advocacy, the abortion issue was never far removed from other issues of human life. Even moderately conservative evangelical magazines such as *Christianity Today* did not think that evangelicals should fight abortion merely by protecting fetal rights through law. Instead, they viewed abortion as inseparable from family and social relationships, so they thought antiabortion activism needed to include discussions of how American society treated children, families, and the disabled. Evangelical magazines on both the right and the left stressed the "interconnectedness of all human life" (223).

Evangelicals' conservatism on abortion may have strengthened their commitment to the Republican Party, but most evangelical magazines were troubled by the New Christian Right. Although they believed in supporting moral causes through politics, they were skeptical about the idea of recovering a "Christian nation," and they believed that the primary agent of cultural renewal should be the church, not the state. The most important thing the state could do in this project was to protect religious freedom, not mandate Christian morality through law. Nevertheless, evangelicals were not pure libertarians; on abortion, at least, most wanted the state to engage in some degree of moral regulation, even if they remained critical of Jerry Falwell's more sweeping political agenda.

The political and cultural vision that evangelical magazines promoted during the 1970s and 1980s was thus distinct from that of both the secular left and the secular right. Evangelicals emphasized social relationships more than individual rights, Bassimir argues. Because of their different presuppositions, their rhetoric was often incomprehensible to those outside their community. When this rhetoric

became politicized during the culture wars of the 1990s and beyond, it became distorted, and something valuable was lost.

Today most of the evangelical magazines that Bassimir studied have ceased publication, and the two that do remain (*Christianity Today* and *Sojourners*) are not aligned with the prevailing Christian nationalist political trends in contemporary white American evangelicalism. Bassimir does not explain why this evangelical political shift happened. Perhaps evangelical magazines had less influence on evangelical culture than Bassimir suggests. The magazines that Bassimir studied had their headquarters in the North, and many were the products of northern evangelicalism. Yet as the center of influence in American evangelicalism shifted to the Sunbelt, perhaps magazines such as *Christianity Today* or *Eternity* had less influence than Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, or James Dobson in shaping evangelical political convictions. Mainstream evangelical magazine editors, like many pro-life Catholics, may have wanted to see a holistic response to abortion that emphasized social relationships, but if we do not see this holistic response reflected in contemporary restrictive abortion laws, perhaps it is partly because the evangelical magazine editors that Bassimir studied were not the architects of modern evangelical politics.

Yet regardless of the evangelical magazine editors' influence (or lack thereof), Bassimir's study of their ideas is highly recommended for anyone who wants a deeper insight into the historical possibilities for evangelical political theology. As Bassimir shows, evangelical magazine editors were serious political thinkers in the 1970s and 1980s, and the political theology and philosophy of ethics they forged offered a compelling alternative to both the right and the left.

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***Reading Evangelicals: How Christian Fiction Shaped a Culture and a Faith.*** By Daniel Silliman. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2021. Pp. 286. $27.99 hardcover.

Since the election of Donald Trump in 2016, there has been a renewed urgency among historians to answer the question: What is an evangelical? Responses to this question typically fall into two groups, political or theological. In his book *Reading Evangelicals: How Christian Fiction Shaped a Culture and a Faith,* Daniel Silliman argues that neither type of response adequately provides an answer to this question. Instead, Silliman contends that maybe the answer to what defines a late twentieth-century evangelical lies in the Christian bookstore: in the people who shop there and in the conversations represented there. The evangelical mind can be understood within this web of ideas shaped by massively successful Christian fiction novels.

Silliman's study traces five Christian fiction novels through four decades. The book is divided into five chapters, each introducing a different novel, providing the historical context, offering a book summary, and identifying the book's influence and impact. Chapter one addresses the rise of the Christian fiction market-

place through Jannette Oke's *Love Comes Softly* and offers a brief history of the rise of Christian Bookstores and evangelical publishing. Oke, sick of the open sexuality within mainstream romance novels at the time, brought her Christian romance novels into this marketplace. She presented stories that demonstrated love and Christian faith and showed readers how to overcome suffering and hardship.

The second novel Silliman addresses is Frank Peretti's *This Present Darkness*. Chapter two addresses how this evangelical horror novel demonstrated and reaffirmed conservative evangelicals' steady belief in social conflict and fear. These ideas led evangelicals to wage the culture wars, pursuing an attitude of engagement with rather than separation from the world around them. Silliman ties these attitudes into the work of Francis Schaeffer, whose ideas about the fight against "humanist confusion" can be uncovered in Peretti's novels themselves and also were often cited by Peretti as influential for his work (77).

Chapter three shifts from culture wars to apocalyptic dilemmas as Silliman addresses Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkin's *Left Behind*. Silliman demonstrates how LaHaye saw the doctrine of the rapture as a means both of motivating evangelicals to evangelize and of encouraging their political involvement, positioning *Left Behind* within LaHaye's involvement with the Christian Right. Silliman addresses how the books exemplified a popular idea of "demanding a verdict" or taking a clear stand religiously, politically, and socially. He also tracks the rise of crossover successes within the secular and sacred book marketplace (115–123).

Chapter four stays within the idea of crossover success novels and addresses Amish fiction by looking at Beverly Lewis's *The Shunning*. Through this Amish romance, Silliman addresses the evangelical emphasis on authenticity, particularly in the face of church scandals within mega-ministries.

Finally, in chapter five Silliman looks at William Paul Young's *The Shack*. While this book may seem to step outside mainstream conservative evangelical acceptability, Silliman expertly argues that this evangelical ambiguity represents a broader move within evangelicalism towards postmodern ministry, highlighting the rise of "the emergent church" and "deconstruction" in the late 90s and early 2000s (213–217).

Silliman concludes his book by showing how viewing evangelical identity through these novels can help make sense of the 2016 election. The emphasis on individualism and pluralism within the novels begins to offer an explanation as to why a majority of the evangelical voting bloc supported Donald Trump. Daniel Silliman concludes that evangelicals are an imagined community created by the Christian bookstore.

Daniel Silliman's book is a timely addition to the recent historiography on who is an evangelical, particularly the historiography that departs from older political or theological framings. Like Kate Bowler (*The Preacher's Wife,* 2019) and Kristen Kobes DuMez (*Jesus and John Wayne*, 2019), Silliman locates evangelicalism in the consumer marketplace. Using the work of historians such as Matthew Avery Sutton (*American Apocalypse*, 2017), Silliman highlights evangelicals' apocalyptic fears. A focus on evangelical books and reading puts him in conversation with Daniel Vaca (*Evangelicals Incorporated*, 2019) and an emphasis on romance with Lynn Neal (*Romancing God,* 2006) and Valerie Weaver-Zercher (*Thrill of the Chaste*,

2013).

However, Silliman's work is just the beginning of what this framework of evangelical, as defined by the Christian bookstore, could mean. Left to be addressed are issues of race, class, and gender that are demonstrated within the novels. While Silliman does an excellent job incorporating books written by and for both women and men, his book does not investigate the culturally constructed acceptance of these books. Adding additional books to his list could complicate what he identifies as the beginning and end of this Christian bookstore phenomenon. Was Janette Oke really the start of this Christian fiction marketplace? Does the closing of the physical storefronts of Christian bookstores signify the end of this unifying identity? Or is it just the beginning of a more significant online presence and identity? These questions are not meant to call into question the success of this book. Instead, it is because of Silliman's excellent research on the significance of Christian bookstores and the evangelical fiction marketplace that these questions can be asked moving forward. *Reading Evangelicals* stands out for its new way of defining what makes an evangelical and is a significant new addition to the field.

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