

accompanied by an abstract. The volume, which illustrates the international reach of Kierkegaard's influence, is especially appropriate for upper division academic or graduate libraries.

Richard Crouter
Carleton College

THE EXISTENTIALIST LEGACY AND OTHER ESSAYS ON PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION. By James Woelfel. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2006. Pp. vii + 169. \$27.00, ISBN 978-0-7618-3409-0.

Woelfel provides a wonderful set of essays written in a clear and forceful style critiquing the existentialist legacy and the study of philosophy and religion. The book is roughly divided into two parts, with a balanced number of essays on each topic and a transitional essay on the philosophical autobiographies of Rousseau, Mill, and Camus for a total of ten essays. On the existentialist side of the ledger, Woelfel traces existentialism historically, considers existentialism and feminism, and existentialism and freedom by way of V. Frankl. Contained in the philosophy and religion set is a perceptive essay on Pascal's wager, a very timely essay on "Evolution, Theism and Naturalism," and a superb critique of W. Kaufmann. Some of the strongest work comes forth in a fair but withering critique of I. Murdoch. By illuminating some misinterpretations of existentialism that Murdoch perpetuated, Woelfel is able to construct a very lucid picture of existentialism by contrast. The essays are very well written and come from many years of teaching, reading, and writing on the subject at the University of Kansas. This work will be at home in any advanced undergraduate- or graduate-level classroom on either subject, and I applaud his clear and balanced approach offered in each essay.

Eric B. Berg
MacMurray College

JONATHAN EDWARDS: PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGIAN. Edited by Paul Helm and Oliver D. Crisp. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003. Pp. xvi + 165. \$29.95, ISBN 978-0-7546-3163-7.

In this volume suited for scholars, ten essays examine dimensions of Edwards's contributions to philosophical theology. Some explore topics such as the doctrines of hell and creation, free will, true virtue, divine simplicity, and neoplatonism, while others discuss the interplay of Edwards's ideas with those of J. H. Newman, J. Locke, G. Palamas, and non-Christian religions. The articles are well written and well researched by prominent authors but generally do not provide perspectives that differ significantly from previously published materials. The appeal of the book is restricted to those who specialize in erudite Edwardsean studies.

Rachel S. Stahle
First Presbyterian Church

ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY: CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY TEXTS. Edited by Matthew Levering. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2005. Pp. xviii + 125. \$21.95, ISBN 978-0-7425-4249-5.

Marriage and family have become broadly contested topics in theological and cultural debates. This volume situates itself amid these debates by offering a splendid introduction to classic Roman Catholic texts that span nearly two thousand years. Levering's introduction offers an intriguing contrast between the supposedly "Christian" understanding of marriage from M. Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and the enduring witness of Catholic tradition. Among the characteristics that Levering cites from this tradition are indissolubility, hospitality toward children, radical self-giving love, and the equality of men and women. The volume's fifteen selections—all of which may be deemed "classic"—draw amply on early church, patristic, medieval and Reformation periods, with only three texts from the twentieth century. The result is a solid grounding in the formation of Catholic tradition. Each selection concludes with questions for discussion and reflection, providing an aid for classroom use. Although the volume takes pains to perceive continuity among the various periods, readers miss the contentiousness that has always characterized Christian discourse about marriage, from apocalyptic skepticism toward marriage in the early church to contemporary debates over what kinds of marriages (such as same-sex unions) the church should or should not bless. Accessible and concise, the text could be used in college or seminary classrooms.

David H. Jensen
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Theology

LITURGICAL THEOLOGY: THE CHURCH AS WORSHIPING COMMUNITY. By Simon Chan. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006. Pp. 207. \$22.00, ISBN 978-0-8308-2763-3.

Chan, an evangelical professor of systematic theology at Trinity Theological College in Singapore, offers a critique of evangelical ecclesiology—a tradition he feels is worth correcting—and calls on all Evangelical churches to adopt a more liturgical approach to worship. Labeling the ecclesiology of most Evangelical churches as "free" (and as such, possessing an aversion to external or rigid control), Chan suggests that the notion of "free worship" in Evangelical churches across North America hinders, if not stunts, its spiritual growth. For Chan, the absence of a liturgical structure within the Sunday church worship schedule distances the average Evangelical Christian from historic Christianity and from what it means to be part of the Body of Christ. Liturgical worship must be understood as "embodied worship . . . worship expressed through a certain visible order or structure." As such, the liturgy must be shaped by what constitutes the church *as the church* and by what it means to be a member of the historic and global body of Christ. This requires

holding the Word and Eucharist in equal tension and possessing a structure of worship that not only challenges but also elicits a response from its members as to who they are called to be in Christ. A service order determined by fads and a desire to be relevant to contemporary society shapes the church and its members in the image of the world and not of Christ—a trend that “spells doom for [the church] and for the world.”

Richard A. Pruitt

Regent University School of Divinity

THE PASSIONATE INTELLECT: INCARNATIONAL HUMANISM AND THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION. By Norman Klassen and Jens Zimmermann. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006. Pp. 208. \$16.99, ISBN 0-8010-2734-9.

Given the movement in higher education toward the “trade school mentality,” which transforms students into clients and consumers of education, this work makes a case to Christian students of the rightful place in the university for intellectual preparation and character formation. The authors contend that the (post)modern university has lost its purpose as defined by “a humanistic outlook on life.” Intended as a primer for Christian freshmen, this text has study questions concluding each chapter and a bibliography for further reading. It nicely summarizes the philosophical and historical developments that have transformed academia from its “holistic medieval beginnings” to its “post-modern fragmentation” while erroneously constructing Christian faith as “anti-intellectual.” The interest is in reclaiming holistic, intellectual inquiry based on “the rudiments of Christian theology.” Christian thought is “not anti-intellectual”; it is the true patron of holistic intellectualism—i.e., “incarnational humanism.” The authors are to be applauded for attempting to resurrect a term such as “humanism,” even an “incarnational” one, especially in Evangelical contexts. They argue for a transformed humanistic purpose for the (Christian) university that produces critical thinking, offers an “ethical dimension that transcends culture,” and defends a “universal idea of what it means to be human.” Even the noncollege freshman will find this a helpful treatise on “thinking” as an essential part of Christian identity.

Randall J. Pannell

Regent University

CHRISTIAN ZIONISM: ROAD-MAP TO ARMAGEDDON? By Stephen Sizer. Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004. Pp. 298; charts, glossary. \$32.00, ISBN 978-0-8308-5368-7.

Christian Zionism is an illuminating expose of the historical roots, theological doctrines, and political activities of the movement that views the modern state of Israel as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy and the harbinger of the second coming of Christ. This book is well suited for courses in religious studies. Sizer locates the historical roots of Chris-

tian Zionism in the cadres of British and American millenarianism that acquired the political muscle to exert pressure on behalf of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the UN partition of Palestine in 1947. Key doctrines of Christian Zionism, popularized by the writings of H. Lindsey (*Late Great Planet Earth*), T. LaHaye, and J. Jenkins (*Left Behind* series), are analyzed and held responsible for intentionally undermining the peace process in Israel/Palestine. Sizer provides a detailed account of the political activities of pro-Israel organizations, arguing that while Christian Zionists have acted compassionately toward Jewish immigrants, they have compounded the injustices of military occupation in the Palestinian territories. Sizer himself was a Christian Zionist until his eyes were opened to the Palestinian situation during a tour of Israel in 1990. Since then, he has become a strong advocate of the Palestinian cause, particularly among evangelicals. He criticizes Christian Zionists for parting ways with the historic Christian view that the church has superseded the Jews as God’s chosen people. It is at this point that one might take issue with Sizer for overlooking the historic association of supersessionism with Christian anti-Semitism.

Eric Newberg

Regent University School of Divinity

CREATION REGAINED: BIBLICAL BASICS FOR A REFORMATIONAL WORLDVIEW, 2nd EDITION.

By Albert M. Wolters, with a postscript coauthored by Michael W. Goheen. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005. Pp. xi + 143. \$12.00, ISBN 978-0-8028-2969-6.

Creation Regained is an introduction to neo-Calvinist theology developing a scriptural worldview that is holistic in orientation (including *all* of creation) and comprehensive in scope (providing the basis for reflection on all aspects of thought and life). Wolters rejects the sacred and secular fissure, arguing effectively that the biblical doctrines of creation, fall, and redemption have significant implications for the totality of human activities and institutions, many of which he addresses. The postscript extends this discussion to include the narrative character of scripture and the importance of mission. Surprisingly, despite frequently claiming that fall and redemption encompass the entirety of God’s creative work, Wolters ignores the implications of the fall and redemptive work of Christ for nonhuman aspects of creation. Certainly the foundations for a robust environmental ethic are present, and this is significant considering that Reformed theology has, with some legitimacy, been accused of Gnostic tendencies. Nevertheless, even with the colossal damage that fallen humans have inflicted upon creation, Wolter would have done well to elaborate on the implications of his theology for creation’s entirety. Moreover, considering Wolter’s comprehensive aims, the worldview he develops would also be strengthened were he at least to address, rather than offhandedly disregard, the resources provided by biblical criticism. *Creation Regained* is approachable enough for an adult Sunday school class yet sophisticated enough

(despite the dearth of footnotes and lack of a bibliography) for an introductory seminary theology course and is a must read for anyone wanting to understand the basics of neo-Calvinist theology.

Mark H. Mann
Colgate University

JESUS, REVOLUTIONARY OF PEACE: A NONVIOLENT CHRISTOLOGY IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION. By Mark Bredin. Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2003. Pp. 262. \$27.99, ISBN 978-1-84227-153-7.

Bredin attempts a nonviolent Christology from the Book of Revelation. He examines OT and later Jewish sources to see Jesus in Revelation as the Lamb-warrior who wins victory over oppressive and violent forces through the nonviolent witness of suffering love. He also brings this Lamb imagery into interesting comparison with M. Gandhi's notion of "satyagraha" or an uncompromising, suffering witness as the only way to transformation and victory. Bredin is aware of those texts that seem to seek vengeance against ruling powers, but he insists that the overriding goal remains conversion and transformation through suffering witness. Meanwhile, the judgment suffered among those who perpetrate violence in resistance to the suffering witness of the Lamb is viewed as self-inflicted. The plagues become symbolic of self-destruction caused by human forces bent on greed and violence. The reader must decide whether or not this figurative reading of divinely inflicted plagues is justified and supportive of a nonviolent Christology or an unjustified means of bringing the larger theological claims of Revelation into conformity to a Christology read with Gandhi as the lens. Even granting Bredin's proposal, there is still the problem unexplored by Bredin of Revelation's exclusivist Christology set within a stark choice of Jesus or damnation. Is this choice consistent with a nonviolent Christology? Although questions still remain unanswered, Bredin does offer us an enormously valuable proposal for how Jesus can speak to us from the pages of Revelation with a voice that is liberating and challenging for today.

Frank D. Macchia
Vanguard University

A WORK IN PROGRESS: METHODISTS DOING THEOLOGY. By Angela Shier-Jones. Suffolk, UK: Epworth, 2005. Pp. 287. \$19.99, ISBN 978-0-7162-0591-3.

This book examines the theological work of the British Methodist Church from its inception through the union of its predecessor connections in 1932 to the present. Because Methodist theology is quite different today from that of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it raises the question of Methodist identity. Methodism, Shier-Jones argues, is a "way of life," not a "set of beliefs"; the identity is found in its unique blend of beliefs and practices. This leads her to examine not only Wesley's theology but also the documents produced since 1932, and not just theological statements but

also hymns, liturgies, catechisms, polity, and practices. Methodist theology is not, therefore, limited to a past standard; it is a "work in progress." The book is organized much like a traditional systematic theology, with chapters on major doctrinal loci. The final chapter is not on eschatology (which is discussed earlier), but on the ongoing mission of God in which the church continues to participate. Each chapter first presents Wesley's theology and then discussions in British Methodism, in dialogue with modern theologies. While occasionally taking issue with some of her descriptions of Wesley's thought, I also found some of her comments on Wesley very insightful. The strength of the book is its clear and comprehensive discussion of the issues faced and conclusions reached by British Methodism since 1932.

Henry H. Knight III
Saint Paul School of Theology

FAITH SCHOOLS: CONSENSUS OR CONFLICT? Edited by Roy Gardner, Jo Cairns, and Denis Lawton. New York: Routledge Falmer, 2005. Pp. xiii + 267; tables, figures. \$43.95, ISBN 0-415-33526-4.

This comprehensive college-level book articulates various pro and con perspectives regarding the United Kingdom's (UK) governmental initiative to expand the role of faith schools in its educational system. In five major sections, the book broadly and deeply examines issues of faith schooling such as history, rights of parents and children, religious education, societal contribution, national citizenship, discrimination and inclusion, society's secularization, potential for rational inquiry, selective admissions, and academic attainments. All of the twenty-five contributors have highly relevant credentials, and all but one have a direct affiliation with the UK education system. For all its positive contributions, some baseline even prerequisite issues remain either unaddressed or unresolved. First, the failure to define the terms "religion" and "faith schools" leaves much of the dialogue rather hypothetical. In fact, "nonfaith" schools may be considered faith based as they address in one way or another religious issues such as purpose of life, the nature of the good life, acceptable methods of epistemology, morality, the material of conscience, etc. Indeed, Humanist Manifestos I and II claim that humanism, the essence of much public school content, is as religious as Christianity. Second, clarification as to whether the nation exists to serve the rights of its citizens (cf. the US Declaration of Independence) or vice versa would resolve, at the outset, a number of this book's issues. Third, the book would have a more realistic perspective if the various arguments were grounded in data regarding the actual, not just philosophized, impact of faith schools on the UK.

William F. Cox, Jr.
Regent University

HE CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN: THE PREEXISTENCE OF CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. By Douglas McCready. Downers

Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. Pp. 348. \$26.00, ISBN 978-0-8308-2774-9.

In this important work, McCready surveys the doctrine of Christ's preexistence and asserts that it affects all doctrines of the Christian faith. McCready, therefore, works from the presupposition that Jesus Christ was the incarnation of the preexistent divine Son of God. The survey progresses by: 1) presenting the different views of preexistence; 2) allowing the reader to hear each distinct NT voice in its own context; 3) examining the role of myth, Jewish and Hellenistic backgrounds, and other non-Jewish influences on the doctrine; 4) delineating the historical development of the doctrine; and 5) engaging the contemporary objections to the doctrine of Christ's preexistence that he determines to be fallacious. Arguably, these contemporary challenges crystallize in McCready's critique of Spirit Christology. Because McCready limits his research to scholars who posit various paradigms of Spirit Christology that deny Christ's personal preexistence—e.g., G. Lampe, R. Haight, and P. Newman—he concludes that all forms of Spirit Christology are at best heterodox and potentially detrimental to the Christian faith. But what about the work of those who support the doctrine of preexistence within a framework of Spirit Christology—i.e., R. Del Colle, D. Coffey, J. Moltmann, and C. Pinnoch? In dialogue with these scholars, *He Came Down from Heaven* would have been a more comprehensive and fair analysis.

Odell Bryant

Regent University School of Divinity

RENEWED BY THE WORD: THE BIBLE AND CHRISTIAN REVIVAL SINCE THE REFORMATION. By J. N. Morris. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005. Pp. 160; photos, drawings, index. \$16.95, ISBN 978-1-56563-533-3.

Morris, dean and Lord Robert Runcie Fellow in Ecclesiastical History at Trinity Hall, Cambridge and associate lecturer at the Faculty of Divinity, Cambridge has written a helpful survey of Christian revival since the sixteenth century. His particular focus is the Evangelical movement in Great Britain and the United States, but he also covers important revivalist movements on the European continent, including those within Roman Catholicism. Along the way, Morris touches upon church architecture, feminism, liturgy, and world missions. His final chapter summarizes the important place that worldwide Pentecostalism has achieved at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The subtitle may be a bit misleading. On the one hand, Morris highlights the central role that the doctrine and function of the Bible has had for Evangelicalism. On the other hand, Morris seems more interested in wider dimensions of this revivalistic rich movement. But the book should be considered successful to its purpose when graded by the author's own acknowledgment that it is an introduction and not a comprehensive study of the topics covered. Morris has given us a very readable introduction to where Christianity has progressed in the last five hundred years. It will be helpful for under-

graduate students in church history, interested lay readers, as well as a useful review for ministers.

Malcolm R. Brubaker

Valley Forge Christian College

THE CIVIL WAR AS THEOLOGICAL CRISIS. By Mark A. Noll. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. Pp. 216. \$29.95, ISBN 978-0-8078-3012-3.

Noll provides an insightful examination of the theological significance of the Civil War. Central to Noll's analysis is his chronicle of the conundrum that the war became as resolution could not be reached. The public debate over the Civil War occurs as both sides appeal to scripture and their understanding of God's providence to justify their cause. Even though the Civil War is rarely viewed as a theological event, Noll helps the reader to gain the necessary understanding of the context of American religious and intellectual life that created the ground for the impending crisis. Paramount to the crisis was the debate concerning the Bible and slavery. Interestingly, Noll argues that the debate over scripture pointed to a twofold theological crisis: the difficulty in interpreting the Bible and the "Negro" question. Combined, these issues point to what may be the real issue, which is Africanized slavery and not slavery per se. Views of providence and how they related to the outcome of the war further clarify the complexities of the crisis. Both views from abroad and Catholic viewpoints were particularly instrumental in pointing out the shortsightedness of American theologies. This book will be of interest to both students and teachers of Christian history and theology.

Lewis Brogdon

Louisville Seminary

PERSONAL IDENTITY IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE. Edited by Richard Lints, Michael S. Horton, and Mark R. Talbot. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006. Pp. vi + 226. \$20.00, ISBN 978-0-8028-2893-4.

Lints, Horton, and Talbot bring together a collection of essays originally presented at a theological colloquium in Colorado Springs in 2002. The purpose of the colloquium was to bring together confessionally oriented theologians from a variety of theological traditions who share an interest in better understanding the nature of persons. The essays in this volume operate on the assumption that the naturalism of the twentieth century has had disastrous consequences for our understanding of human persons, and this awareness presents a unique opportunity to retrieve the ancient biblical account of human identity as beings created in the image of God. The essays fall into three divisions: retrieving historical discussions of human identity, presenting contemporary challenges to a distinctively Christian anthropology, and offering constructive proposals toward a richer understanding of persons. The list of contributors is impressive, including S. Grenz, M. Horton, N. Murphy, and M. Talbot. While generally Reformed in tone and content, this volume is not a polemic for a particular theological position. Rather, the

contributors generally seek to build bridges across traditional denominational, theological, and philosophical boundaries. Particularly interesting is Horton's essay, in which he encourages "a biblical-theological effort to resuscitate selfhood in the 'lived experience' of the covenant and eschatology." This impressive volume represents a very welcome and, for those with some theological background, eminently readable discussion of this crucially important theological topic.

James Beilby
Bethel University

GLOBALIZING THEOLOGY: BELIEF AND PRACTICE IN AN ERA OF WORLD CHRISTIANITY.

Edited by Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006. Pp. vii + 382. \$27.99, ISBN 978-0-8010-3112-0.

Globalizing Theology moves beyond a mere evaluation and observation of globalization to provide constructive trajectories for theological discourse in the contemporary global context. The contributors to this volume embrace globalization by explicating the value of diversity in the midst of unity through the influence of local theologies on the larger theological world and vice versa. One fear of globalization is the loss of identity through the dominating force of imperial systems (whether social, cultural, economic, theological, etc.), but this book encourages the church to lead the way by opposing monopolization and allowing contextual theologies to shape world Christian thinking. Promoting non-Western insights equally at the theological table, this text reminds the reader that Christianity has historically existed as a multidimensional religion, incorporating perspectives informed by experiences across a wide spectrum of socioeconomic and philosophical backgrounds. Invaluable insights can and should be gleaned from interactions made possible through globalization without deafening Western contributions. In keeping with characteristics of globalization, the contributors interact with a diverse range of academic disciplines including anthropology, economics, politics, history, missiology, sociology, and epistemology, displaying the course of theological reflection as a mediatory task between various fields of study. *Globalizing Theology* explores the implications of globalization while also modeling the theological approaches expressed in the text. Theology can no longer be a solitary discipline but must engage the world on multiple planes; therefore, this book is recommended to anyone engaged in the theological process.

David Bradnick
Regent University School of Divinity

FAITH LOST, FAITH REGAINED: REDISCOVERING A TRANSFORMING CHRISTIAN BELIEF.

By James Atkinson. Theological Seminar Series, 3. Scholeksterstraat, the Netherlands: Deo Publishing, 2005. Pp. viii + 314. \$34.95, ISBN 978-90-5834-027-0.

Atkinson, professor emeritus at the University of Sheffield, presents a reconceptualization of religious belief that offers a holistic answer to modernist and postmodernist challenges to Christian faith. He provides an analysis of the erosion of Christian belief in the West since the sixteenth century and a discussion of the failed attempt by liberal theologies to diagnose and respond to the causes of the erosion of Christian belief. Atkinson's proffered solution is to deconstruct attempts to present Christian theology in the form of a universally valid scientific discourse and instead to embrace an "aesthetic epistemology"—a larger awareness of life than that afforded by secular philosophies—and a "deeper ontology" on which to ground such an epistemology. Only when such a move has been made, argues Atkinson, can we return to an assured biblical faith that avoids the road to nowhere of liberalism and the intellectual cul-de-sac of fundamentalism. Atkinson's vision is commendable and his passion for his new vision of Christian belief is apparent. Deep issues remain unanswered. Notable among these is the question of whether or not Atkinson's aesthetic epistemology (and the rejection of the applicability of a universal scientific discourse to Christian belief that it entails) has the resources to meet atheistic thinking "on its own high intellectual level." Decidedly Lutheran in its tone and content and best suited for those with substantial theological training, this book is an interesting even if ultimately unsatisfying reconceptualization of Christian belief. Nonetheless, for those interested in religious epistemology, it is a worthwhile read.

James Beilby
Bethel University

BEYOND CHEAP GRACE: A CALL TO RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP, INCARNATION, AND JUSTICE.

By Eldin Villafane. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006. Pp. vii + 98. \$14.00, ISBN 978-0-8028-6323-2.

Eerdmans has produced an important resource for ministerial leadership and theological educators. Villafane, a leading scholar-practitioner with more than thirty years in urban ministry and theological education, is well qualified to write this book. In the first of three sermonical essays, Villafane addresses the challenge of postmodernity and the need for proper Christian *phronesis* (thinking). Radical discipleship is defined and associated with the mind-set of "costly grace" against a cross-less discipleship of "cheap grace." Referencing Phil 2:5-8, Villafane explains that Christian *phronesis* must include both a theology of the incarnation and the cross to successfully communicate the Gospel in a postmodern world. The second essay explains six Christological perspectives of the incarnation as models to reveal faulty thinking relative to the mission of theological education and its relationship with the church, the academy, and society. Creative insights on theological education abound in this essay. The final essay, drawing lessons from the life of the prophet Amos, is a call for Christian leaders to arise and confront injustice and oppression. Radical discipleship is

identified with commitment to justice for the oppressed. Studies in World Christianity relate to global and contextual realities of God's love in essay two, and postcolonial theologies and pneumatology are connected with the call to social justice in essay three. Helpful insights are added via three respondent essays by R. Peace, J. F. Martinez, and V. Kärkkäinen. Villafane's prophetic book will speak to those committed to discipleship and theological education.

David Tremontozzi
Regent University

SPEAKING OF GOD: RELATIONAL THEOLOGY.

By Paul R. Sponheim. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006. Pp. xii + 187. \$24.99, ISBN 978-0-827234-66-6.

Sponheim begins with a dilemma: the God Christians worship is a mystery beyond comprehension, and yet this God also wishes to be known. Christians must find a way to speak about God without adding false limitations, and Sponheim argues that relationship is the paradigm that accomplishes this feat. This emphasis on relationship means certain long-held doctrines (such as omniscience) come into question, and yet he still ends with a call to evangelism on behalf of the God who is recklessly committed to being in loving relationship with humans. Because Sponheim's modest book is intended mainly for lay Christians and interested outsiders, it forgoes daunting, multisyllabic terms in favor of an elegant, readable prose about "the basics" of Christian theology; it is restrained in detail and name-dropping yet bears the unmistakable marks of sophisticated theological understanding. Consisting of two parts, first about God (the "what" of Christian speech) and second about the consequences of faith (the "so what"), this work is ideal for an introductory course in theology among undergraduates, seminary students, or congregations. It may also edify professional theologians in need of a reminder as to why they do what they do.

Kathryn D. Blanchard
Alma College

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL ECONOMY: TIME AND THE HOSPITALITY OF GOD. By Douglas H. Knight. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006. Pp. 308. \$ 29.00, ISBN 978-0-8028-6315-9.

The Eschatological Economy is a book about Christian theology proper, that is, about the economy of God. In six chapters, Knight discusses the realms of being and becoming from the perspective of the scriptures, historical theology, systematic theology, and philosophy, and suggests a direction in which the Trinitarian doctrine of God defines the world and human existence. Fundamental to this task is a theory of persons in relationship that unfolds to a series of new analogies for God's work in creation, the human being, the church, and the modern world. Knight argues that the modern world is based on a truncated economy of nature that is unable to establish its identity. Thus, he offers a manifesto for theological discussion and religious language

that places the economy of the one God at the center of the modern understanding of life. As a result, Knight defines the responsibilities of contemporary theology as restating and reformulating the public and political purpose of the doctrine of God. This challenging book is an ambitious project that engages the powers of the theological discipline by changing the terminology of the discussion and bringing into conversation an almost unmanageable variety of voices and aspects. The persistent reader is rewarded with a plethora of new ideas that will challenge the modern debate on questions of the continuing significance of theological inquiry, the responsibility of the church, and the understanding of God's work driven by an eschatological vision of the end, the hope that God has for humanity.

Wolfgang Vondey
Regent University

THE DIVINE LAWMAKER: LECTURES ON INDUCTION, LAWS OF NATURE, AND THE EXISTENCE OF GOD. By John Foster. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004. Pp. ix + 191. \$59.95, ISBN 978-0-8308-5368-7.

One response to the perennial (at least since Hume) problem of induction, Foster suggests, is the "nomological-explanatory solution" (NES), which affirms that the regularities that call for explanation are best understood as involving the postulation of some law or set of laws of nature, with law being defined as the necessity that such regularities obtain. But if this necessity is weaker than logical necessity—because the world could have been otherwise—then what accounts for NES? Foster's response is a variation of the cosmological and teleological argument, viz., that the intelligibility of the laws of nature are secured only by postulation of their being created by a supernatural personal agent or God, at least as conceived in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Further, however, the God of NES does not appear to have created the world and its details either all at once or from moment-to-moment, but rather seems to have done so by endowing the world's initial state with a full set of laws prescribing its subsequent unfolding even while preserving the right to intervene in the world's history according to orthodox theistic sensibilities. Along the way, Foster presents and responds to objections to NES—the most important being that apart from NES or something like it, the world's regularities may still be inexplicable apart from considering God as causal agent—as well as the rival nontheistic nomological theory of induction argued by D. Armstrong. *The Divine Lawmaker* is a solid theistic argument within the analytic tradition of philosophy.

Amos Yong
Regent University School of Divinity

THE SUFFERING BODY: RESPONDING TO THE PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS. Edited by Harold D. Hunter and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. Milton Keynes, Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 2006. Pp. xxii + 228. \$32.99, ISBN 978-1-84227-378-7.

The thirteen chapters (besides the editors' introduction) of this volume derive from "The Suffering Church" academic symposium that ran alongside the triennial meeting of the International Charismatic Consultation in Salina, Malta on January 2004. Hence, there is a discernible "charismatic" thread in the book: 1) both editors belong to classical Pentecostal communions; 2) a number of others write out of Pentecostal and charismatic backgrounds; and 3) essayists are sensitive to the fact of the persecution of Pentecostal and charismatic Christians in Romania, Myanmar, China, and around the world. Yet the focus of the book is not limited to Pentecostal-charismatic concerns. There are also Orthodox and Evangelical perspectives on persecution in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union, and a global survey of Christian suffering in the Muslim world. The first two parts of the book also include essays on early Christian martyrdom, as well as theological reflections on suffering from Pentecostal, Anabaptist, and Roman Catholic perspectives (this last essay, while placed in "section II: Africa," is more a theology of suffering that belonged in section I). A concluding chapter addresses the importance of interreligious dialogue, which the editors argue "can be a useful tool in lowering the hostilities between people of different faith groups." Discussion throughout of the complex socioeconomic, historical, religiopolitical forces that are often behind the persecution of Christians makes this an important contribution to the scholarly literature on the topic.

Amos Yong

Regent University School of Divinity

THE BLACKWELL GUIDE TO THEOLOGY AND POPULAR CULTURE. By Kelton Cobb. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005. Pp. ix + 354. \$27.95, ISBN 978-1-4051-0702-2.

In what is sure to become the definitive study of theology and popular culture, Cobb's book is a must read for those who wish to ponder the boundary between theology and culture as well as those who long to go further and venture across boundaries in search of a theology of culture. The book is divided into two parts: 1) Theories of Popular Culture and 2) A Theology of Popular Culture. After exploring several theories of popular culture with sustained attention given to the theology of culture of Tillich, Cobb moves deftly through a systematic explication of notions of God, human nature, sin, salvation, and eschatology and discusses how these categories can be found in popular culture. Perhaps the only people who will not be pleased with Cobb's project are those who advocate a firm boundary between the sacred and the secular. Cobb makes a convincing argument that popular culture derives its meaning "from a subterranean religious substance."

Don E. Peavy, Sr.

Victor Valley College and Cal-State Long Beach

THE TREASURE OF GUADALUPE. Edited by Virgilio Elizondo, Allan Figueroa Deck, and Timothy Matovina. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006. Pp. xvi + 134. Cloth, \$50.00, ISBN 978-0-7425-4856-5; paper, \$14.95, ISBN 978-0-7425-4857-2.

This small book about the Virgin of Guadalupe is a collection of fifteen items—ranging from homilies and meditations to theological discussions and even a letter addressed to Juan Diego—all written by different authors. The homilies and meditations, which interpret the apparitions in light of biblical texts, are a pastorally helpful resource for anyone who is going to preach on the feast of Guadalupe (December 12). The most interesting theological essay is M. Johnson's "theological meditation"—"Why Would Lutherans Celebrate the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe?"—which discusses Guadalupe in terms of the proclamation of the Gospel, unmerited grace, and model of the church. The final chapter contains the homily delivered by Pope John Paul II on January 23, 1999 at the Shrine of Guadalupe in Mexico City. An appendix provides an English translation of the *Nican Mopohua*, the Náhuatl account of the apparitions that was first published in 1649. Each chapter is preceded by a black-and-white depiction of Mary, but without identification beyond "illustration credits." In sum, as its title suggests, this collection is a small "treasury" of Guadalupean devotions.

John T. Ford

Catholic University of America

THE IMMANENT DIVINE: GOD, CREATION, AND THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT. By John J. Thatamanil. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006. Pp. xxi + 231. \$25.00, ISBN 978-0-8006-3793-4.

This fascinating book is a full-scale exercise in comparative theology. The comparison focuses on the eighth-century Hindu teacher, Sankara, and on the twentieth-century Protestant thinker, Tillich. Thatamanil, a Christian theologian with a thorough knowledge of Hinduism, finds striking similarities between them despite the twelve-century gap: Sankara and Tillich, he argues, are both seeking a nondualist understanding of how divinity (God/Brahman) is immanent in nature and history without simply being identical with the things of the world. Nondualism has implications for an understanding of divine creativity, the human predicament, and liberation from the predicament. Central chapters trace these themes through both figures, and the strengths of one are used to redress the weaknesses of the other. In the concluding chapter, Thatamanil sketches a Christian nondualism, working with difficult issues in philosophical theology (dynamism and immutability, immanence and transcendence, apophasis and kataphasis), using the work of J. Bracken and especially that of R. Neville to resolve problems in Sankara and Tillich. While I find myself a bit nervous about Thatamanil's determination to eliminate the ontological difference between being and beings, infinite and finite, I am greatly impressed by his facility with these

two difficult thinkers and with the East–West conversation he initiates.

Peter C. Hodgson
Vanderbilt University

JESUS, THE BIBLE, AND HOMOSEXUALITY: EXPLODE THE MYTHS, HEAL THE CHURCH. By Jack Rogers. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. Pp. xi + 169. \$17.95, ISBN 978-0-664-22939-9.

Rogers is well known as a minister and scholar of evangelical persuasion, as well as a former moderator of the Presbyterian Church (United States) who has alienated fellow evangelicals by going on record as having undergone a “conversion” with respect to the burning controversy over the Christian moral assessment of homosexuality. This book narrates his change of heart and mind away from the traditional Christian condemnation of homosexuality as sinful to a conviction that homosexuality is a normal and morally acceptable variant of human sexuality that should no longer be condemned by the Church. The book is thus an impassioned plea for dispelling the myths about gay and lesbian people that have done incredible damage to such persons and their families as well as a sustained scholarly argument about what it means to interpret the Bible responsibly. Among the most interesting and intellectually engaging sections of the book is Rogers’ polemic with fellow evangelical scholar R. Gagnon, who is widely esteemed by those on the right for his “defense” of the biblical view of homosexuality. This fine book would serve as a very good introduction to the issue in adult education course in churches and also as a text in college and seminary classrooms.

Paul E. Capetz
United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities

WILLING THE GOOD: JESUS, DISSENT, AND DESIRE. By Paula M. Cooley. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006. Pp. xi + 220. \$20.00, ISBN 978-0-8006-3664-7.

Cooley’s book affords a valuable introduction to how one connects theology and social involvement. Drawing on biblical material to show the deep roots of principled dissent in Christian tradition, Cooley constructs an account of how Christianity has thrived off of dissent and divergence. Starting from antiquity, Cooley develops church history through the voices of its reformers and internal critics. The Church, living in response to a Christ who is both like and unlike us, takes this dissenting impulse into the world, to recognize the “other” in the most unlikely places. Christian tradition, Cooley argues, must therefore necessarily think critically about its involvement in the public realm, as dissenters for the sake of the common good. Cooley’s work covers a great deal of terrain in her narrative, moving from antiquity to the present day, from ancient liturgy to contemporary immigration policy. Thus, while providing a well-argued thesis for understanding the analogical relationship between the church and society, many vistas of history and biblical scholarship are left unexplored. Conservative reforming move-

ments, for example, within church history are largely left out of Cooley’s narrative of dissenters. Nonetheless, Cooley’s work provides a fine and particularly timely introduction to thinking about the connection between Christian history and public faith in challenging and compelling ways.

Myles P. Wertz
Baylor University

THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCHES. By Karl Barth. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005. Pp. xi + 59. \$12.00, ISBN 978-0-8028-2970-2.

Originally composed for the 1937 Edinburgh World Conference on Faith and Order, this essay, according to the foreword by W. Rusch, is one of the few classic ecumenical texts of the twentieth century. Living up to this lofty claim, Barth’s trim volume speaks to a new century and to churches that remain in disunity. The essay begins by claiming that church unity, in itself, will not suffice: “The quest for unity must in fact be identical with the quest for Jesus Christ as the concrete Head and Lord of the Church.” Any other foundation for ecumenism, accordingly, is built on sand. The multiplicity of the churches, moreover, cannot be explained away by appealing to an invisible church that transcends division; indeed, for Barth, there is no basis for explaining the multiplicity of churches at all. Only *within* the church can multiplicity be claimed: of local communities, gifts of the Spirit, of believers of each sex, language, and race. One of the obstacles to unity, Barth claims, is a benign spirit of toleration that inhibits churches from hearing the claim of the Gospel and prevents them from engaging their respective confessions. Barth’s call for unity, moreover, shuns idealism, as it recognizes that “only in our own church can we listen to Christ, not . . . on any neutral ground above or outside the severed churches.” Although the essay falls short in its appraisal of cultural diversity, it remains a clarion call for confessing one Lord, one faith, and one baptism.

David H. Jensen
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

FRIEDRICH SCHLEIERMACHER: BETWEEN ENLIGHTENMENT AND ROMANTICISM. By Richard Crouter. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xi + 277. \$80.00, ISBN 978-0-521-80590-2.

This book contains several previously published articles and two new essays that represent over two decades (the earliest essays are from 1980) of the author’s engagement with Schleiermacher. There is a feeling of unity across these essays, despite the fact that they are topical and not meant to provide a complete intellectual biography. This unity emerges by following Dilthey’s assertion that Schleiermacher’s theology is best understood historically and biographically—a claim that Crouter agrees with and investigates in the first chapter. From this beginning, the essays in each of the three divisions of the book present facets of Schleiermacher’s work in intellectual and

historical context. The first section places Schleiermacher in relation to near-contemporaries: after his chapter on Dilthey's view of Schleiermacher, Crouter has essays on Schleiermacher's relationship with Mendelssohn, Hegel, and Kierkegaard. The second section is devoted to Schleiermacher's more public activities, including chapters on the founding of the university in Berlin, Schleiermacher's role in an episode in the political life of Berlin's Jewish community, and the reaction to Schleiermacher's political thought. The third section analyzes some of Schleiermacher's main theological works (the *Speeches*, *The Christian Faith*, and the *Brief Outline*), with attention to the language, structure, and reception. Crouter's treatment of these major works is engaging, and his deft handling of many of Schleiermacher's less-known writings further illuminates the subject of these essays.

Forrest Clingerman
Ohio Northern University

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTOLOGY. By Roger Haight, S.J. New York: Continuum, 2005. Pp. 7-224. \$27.50, ISBN 978-0-8264-1764-0.

Haight is a consummate teacher. Moreover, *The Future of Christology* reflects his pedagogical prowess: he presents his arguments clearly, defines his terms succinctly, addresses criticisms generously, and provides clarifying conclusions to most chapters. Further, he is unapologetically pastoral in his purpose: to address respectfully the genuine questions raised by educated Catholics/Christians living in a postmodern world concerning faith in Jesus Christ and its implications for the Christian life. According to Haight, such women and men of faith tend to embrace a historically conscious worldview, support religious pluralism, are deeply conscious of massive global suffering, and have a cosmic consciousness. Hence, some of the themes he explores include the relationship between Jesus Research and Christology, what a constructive theology of the cross might look like today, salvation and human liberation, Catholic and religious pluralism, and the credibility of a pluralist orthodox Christology. There is a superb chapter on Jesus and the mission of the church. It may have been better placed as the first in the book because here, Haight discusses the larger historical developments that have midwifed our current global and ecclesial contexts. Nevertheless, this is not an easily accessible text. I only recommend it to those with substantive theological and philosophical backgrounds. Haight is a brilliant, humble, faith-filled theologian. *The Future of Christology* clearly underscores this.

Mary Hembrow Snyder
Mercyhurst College

ASIAN AND PENTECOSTAL: THE CHARISMATIC FACE OF CHRISTIANITY IN ASIA. Edited by Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang. Regnum Studies in Mission/Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies Series, 13. Oxford: Reg-

num Books International, 2005. Pp. xiv + 595. £29.99, ISBN 1-870345-43-6.

This volume derives from a 2001 Birmingham conference on Asian Pentecostalism. Most of the twenty-five essays were originally presentations at the conference; the editors recruited a few more papers afterwards. This is the first time that a major academic conference and volume have been devoted to Pentecostalism in Asia. The result is quite satisfactory, and we are indebted to the two editors for their perseverance in getting such a large and diverse group of papers through the publication process. This is an extremely useful volume and should be in both the personal and institutional library of anyone doing work on Christianity in Asia or Pentecostalism worldwide. Of the seven conference plenary session papers that appear here as essays, I found useful Hwa Yung's "Pentecostalism and the Asian Church" and Allan Anderson's "Revising Pentecostal History in Global Perspective," which strongly indicts historians for "historiographical imperialism" in overvaluing the role of Western missionaries in spreading Pentecostalism and slighting indigenous leaders and movements. Of the several regions of Asia covered by case studies (South Asia two, Southeast Asia seven, East Asia seven), I know best East Asia, especially China, and was gratified to find that knowledgeable scholars such as E. Tang, Deng Zhaoming, and G. Oblau have put their hand to the task of understanding the phenomena that appear at first glance to be characteristics of a robust popular Chinese "Pentecostalism." S. Chan concludes the volume with a short but insightful set of reflections. All in all, a very worthwhile read.

Daniel H. Bays
Calvin College

THE INCARNATE GOD. By John V. Taylor. Harrisburg, PA: Continuum, 2004. Pp. v + 157. \$12.95, ISBN 978-0-8264-7127-7.

From an Anglican perspective, undoubtedly influenced by years of missionary service with the Church Missionary Society in Uganda, this former bishop of Winchester writes about the life of Christ. Taylor, author of *The Go-Between God* (1972) and *The Christ-Like God* (1992), has appeared posthumously in print through the efforts of his longtime editor M. Lydamore. Like *The Easter God* (Continuum 2003), *The Incarnate God* is a compilation of Christological reflections drawn from an even wider selection of Taylor's materials, especially sermons and Rosewindow articles for a diocesan journal called the *Winchester Churchman*. Taylor retells the Gospel's story of Jesus—his life, ministry, trial, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and Great Commission—with a rhetoric distinctly laced with poetry, music, literature, and liturgical reflections. His Christology calls upon and engages the "nitty gritty" of this world, reserving a special place for the poor and disenfranchised of our societies. This refreshing collection of devotional homilies about the significance of Christ is valuable for ministers and others who actively seek

practical ways of communicating the essence of the traditionally held Anglican faith.

Carolyn D. Baker

Mayville State University and Global University

SEEDS OF THE WORD: ORTHODOX THINKING ON OTHER RELIGIONS. By John Garvey. Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005. Pp. 130. \$14.95, ISBN 978-0-88141-300-7.

Apparently written first and foremost for Orthodox seminarians, Fr. Garvey's book nevertheless presents one of the first book-length efforts in theology of religions from an Eastern Christian perspective. Building on Justin the Martyr's conviction that "seeds of the Logos" could be found in the ancient (philosophic) traditions, Garvey contends that Orthodox Christians today can also expect to find truth in other religions. At the same time, the differences between religions should not be overlooked, nor should Orthodox Christian faith be undermined. The longest two chapters of the book attempt to learn from the other world religious traditions in a respectful manner even while identifying where there may be (irreconcilable) differences between them and Orthodoxy. There are also shorter chapters surveying (very briefly) the history of Orthodox interactions with other faiths, presenting a typology of Christian theologies of religions (which the author acknowledges drawing from P. Knitter's recent book) and highlighting the importance of Orthodox dialogue with the religions today. Although readers will not find much herein that is constructively new in Christian theology of religions, believing Christians are encouraged to embrace the difficult task of approaching the interfaith dialogue with both commitment and openness. It is precisely this combination of theological orthodoxy and a dialogical posture that is needed in a post-9/11 world of many faiths.

Amos Yong

Regent University School of Divinity

TRINITY AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM: THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF RELIGIONS. By Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004. Pp. vi + 197. Cloth, \$99.95, ISBN 978-0-7546-3645-8; paper, \$29.95, ISBN 978-0-7546-3645-5.

Kärkkäinen's book concisely fills a sharply defined vacancy in contemporary commentary: the absence of an account of the diverse scholarship growing up at the intersection of the long-standing modern resurgence of Trinitarian theology and the continually expanding work in the theology of religious pluralism. This lucid monograph expounds the thought of those major figures who have seen the convergence of these two trends as almost literally a match made in heaven. From the earlier and very different approaches of K. Rahner and R. Panikkar, Kärkkäinen traces this story through Catholic (J. Dupuis, G. D'Costa) and Protestant (W. Pannenberg, C. Pinnock, J. Hick, S. Heim) think-

ers. The book is outstanding for its clarity of exposition, and the light touch of the author's critical engagement with each perspective makes the text very useful as an introduction or reference for graduate theological students.

S. Mark Heim

Andover Newton Theological School

THE WOUNDING AND HEALING OF DESIRE: WEAVING HEAVEN AND EARTH. By Wendy Farley. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005. Pp. xix + 187. \$19.95, ISBN 978-0-664-22976-4.

This is an engaging book on Christian theology that draws from the author's own life experience and contemplative practice. It draws as well from testimonies of folk music and literary and artistic expressions from various cultures. It is a retelling of the Christian narrative, following the traditional themes of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Eschatology as expressions of the "deep structures" of Christian faith, but in refreshing and creative ways. The author brings a sensitivity to the pains and sufferings of so many of those whose wounds have been further deepened rather than healed by the institutional settings and stereotyped expressions of Christ's teachings. She offers a rich, imaginative, and inspiring account of Christian existence, one that is grounded on our having been "knit and oned to God" (Julian of Norwich) even before the beginning of time. Sadly, "caught between the fangs of the afflictions" (Shantideva), we have fallen into a mode of being characterized by terror, rage, and addiction. The Divine Eros draws us out of this sorry state, in and through Christ's ecstatic power, and takes us beyond the fangs of affliction, back to our true home in the arms of Divine Love. This is an original and very moving work in Christian systematic theology, recommended for every seminary student. It is also a must read for all those of us who are pained by the wounds of the world, sensitive to the signs of our times, and are also open to hearing the liberating and healing message of the Crucified One.

Ruben Habito

Southern Methodist University

EXPLORATIONS IN RECONCILIATION: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THEOLOGY. Edited by David Tombs and Joseph Liechty. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006. Pp. xvi + 161. \$89.95, ISBN 978-0-7546-5184-0.

In this anthology, nine scholars of religion from various areas of the world draw on their rich religious heritages (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Mennonite, Jewish, and Islamic) and experiences to address one of the most pressing issues of our time: violence and reconciliation. There are three parts to the book. In the first part, the authors explore some of the rich resources of their religious traditions to address the topics of conflict, exclusion, and reconciliation. The second part focuses on the dynamics of reconciliation in Christian theology. Finally, the last section offers some helpful insights in bridging theory and practice. Here, the

authors reflect on the difficult and painful process of reconciliation that took place in South Africa and Northern Ireland. All the authors point to the complex, tedious, and demanding work at both the theoretical and practical level. Striving for a precise understanding of various concepts (e.g., justice, forgiveness, repentance, truth telling, and restitution) and the dynamics in the reconciliation process, some authors argue, is critical for a sound and effective practice. Moreover, the risk cannot be taken lightly in the work of social reconciliation, especially in places where the perpetrators of violence are still in control (e.g., Guatemala). This anthology offers both a rich and diverse perspective in addressing the issue of reconciliation at the societal level, and it offers some concrete cases in which the work of reconciliation has been tested in a real situation of conflict and violence. The task is not easy, but some of the essays point to hopeful practices. In short, this anthology is a great resource for the much needed and urgent work of reconciliation.

Eleazar S. Fernandez

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities

THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN GLOBAL DIALOGUE.

Edited by Werner G. Jeanrond and Aasulv Lande. Faith Meets Faith Series. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005. Pp. xii + 180. \$18.00, ISBN 978-1-57075-586-6.

A collection of essays arising from a multidisciplinary project at Lund University in Sweden focusing on three areas: 1) current models and paradigms of interreligious dialogue; 2) contemporary shifts in the Christian concept of God; and 3) the impact of the divine in Japanese Buddhism. Five of the essays in the volume (by C. Cornille, R. Schreiter, Lande, N. Thelle, K. Kuschel) discuss the first topic, four discuss (by W. Jeanrond, D. Tracy, O. Sigurdson, J. Svartvik) the second topic, and three (by E. Nishimura, E. Hanaoka, J. Heisig) discuss the third. Here, both unfamiliar and familiar voices are brought to the North American conversation on these topics. Kuschel makes some very striking proposals on openness among and between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; but his argument is predicated on the assumption of the "chosenness" of the Abrahamic peoples. Jeanrond introduces his essay with the remark that Christians do not worship or confess a *Christian* God, but rather are guided by a set of distinctive experiences of God's creative and redemptive presence in the world. Tracy offers a convenient summary of his forthcoming books on the role of "fragment"—both apocalyptic and apophatic—in any theology of the incomprehensible God. In this collection, readers will find many helpful fragments.

Peter Hodgson

Vanderbilt Divinity School

INVITATION TO DOGMATIC THEOLOGY: A CANONICAL APPROACH. By Paul C. McGlasson. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006. Pp. 284. \$24.99, ISBN 978-1-58743-174-6.

In this invitation, pastor and former seminary professor McGlasson presents a case for how and why theology must consciously serve the church's ministry, and particularly its preaching. Well aware of the issues that continue to plague not only the discipline of doing theology, but also those of the wider church, McGlasson, leaning on Barth, boldly reminds us that theology's task has long been, and must continue to be, the proclamation of God's action in Christ in the power of the Spirit. The five parts of the book are The Authority of Scripture, The New World of God, Proclamation, The Trinity, and The Divine Imperative. Building on B. Childs's insights on the primacy of canon, McGlasson seeks to show why and how biblical studies and dogmatic theology need to inform one another as they share the task of "expounding scripture for the church, though in different but complementary ways." McGlasson argues that dogmatists need to begin where biblical scholars end, trusting that the latter have done their homework in providing a basic orientation to the true nature of the scriptures. McGlasson makes assumptions and draws conclusions that not all would agree with, and possibly some of his claims are overstated. However, McGlasson is seeking to raise many of the right questions, and he does so in a manner that is always respectful, fair, and generous to those with whom he is in disagreement. The book would have been considerably enhanced by the inclusion of an index.

Jason A. Goroncy

University of St Andrews

A GATHERING OF MEMORIES: FAMILY, NATION, AND CHURCH IN A FORGETFUL WORLD. By Charles R. Pinches. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006. Pp. 172. \$16.99, ISBN 978-1-58743-104-3.

Theologians typically are not the best storytellers, as they are more versed in argumentation than crafting narratives. Pinches, however, proves the exception to this rule. In a wide-ranging and beautifully stitched text, he mourns the postmodern loss of memory while seeking to recover it in everyday practices of family, nation, and church. The book begins with a series of Pinches's own family memories: a trip with his son to the family vacation cottage of his childhood and a meditation on his father's last visit to the same place. His father, who is struggling with a memory-wasting disease, dies during the trip home. This poignant story illustrates that memory does not belong to oneself because in memory, "individual human lives are gathered up into a company whose life is ongoing." Artful storytelling continues throughout the book, drawing on sources as diverse as Homer, the Bible, O. Romero, and the Book of Common Prayer. Although many would quibble with his narration of national memories (Pinches calls himself a patriot.), national stories are more about people and place than ideology. These narratives, moreover, do not rest in themselves, but are redeemed in the rituals of the church, which are not idealized stories but contain sin and failure at their root. The church, then, re-members as it remembers,

gathering all families into a new family of God. Accessibly written, Pinches's work is substantial theology for a wide audience.

David H. Jensen

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

THE SKEPTICAL, PASSIONATE CHRISTIAN: TOOLS FOR LIVING FAITHFULLY IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD. By Michael F. Duffy. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. Pp. xi + 179. \$17.95, ISBN 978-0-664-23008-1.

This trim volume offers a fresh take on an age-old quest: how to think through and live out Christian faith. By beginning with autobiography, Duffy allows readers to explore their own life stories and how faith has—or has not—sustained them. Because he claims that all of us are persons of faith, the question becomes what we have faith *in*. Christian faith is “reliance upon a set of articulable but frequently unarticulated and unconscious” convictions that point to the centrality of Jesus in one’s relationship with God and allow one to live well in a world of uncertainty. The author’s embrace of postmodern epistemology makes him conscious of idolatry in the life of faith and the constructed nature of all theological endeavors. His conviction that God is calling and we can follow God’s leading means that we are not alone in God’s world, but we can discern our vocations in the company of others. Throughout the book, Duffy invites readers to participate in theological inquiry: discussion questions at the end of each chapter encourage such participation. One of Duffy’s most helpful insights is his claim that the tenets of our faith should enable us “to live the best possible lives together with the rest of creation.” If they fail that test, they should be rejected. In its accessibility, the book accomplishes much: an introduction to theology, an exploration of vocation, and an invitation to live well in a pluralistic world.

David H. Jensen

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

THE BROKEN WHOLE: PHILOSOPHICAL STEPS TOWARD A THEOLOGY OF GLOBAL SOLIDARITY.

By Thomas E. Reynolds. SUNY Series in Theology and Continental Thought. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006. Pp. vii + 250. \$70.00, ISBN 978-0-7914-6611-7.

Originally a PhD dissertation written under P. C. Hodgson and E. Farley at Vanderbilt University, *The Broken Whole* exhibits the kind of erudition, maturity, and elegance rarely seen in academic first books. Reynolds’s problematic is, in brief, that of finding a way between—and even beyond—(epistemic) absolutism and relativism on the one hand, and between (political) anarchism and sectarianism on the other. A multileveled response—epistemological, ontological, and ethical—is carefully argued in dialogue with Rorty, Foucault, Gadamer, Levinas, Derrida, Habermas, and Marcel. Reynolds proposes a “dialectical pluralism” wherein religious and communal identities are dynamically constituted and enriched by differences. At the same time, difference is

embraced not for diversity’s sake but for the purposes of achieving a praxis of peace, justice, and solidarity—signifiers of the possibility of transcendence being realized in our midst. In this way, the “broken whole” of postmodernity holds forth the promise of an “open whole” on the horizon. The vision Reynolds portrays is beautiful, even captivating, but only time will tell whether it is utopian or prescient with regard to the cross-cultural and interreligious encounter. In the meanwhile, *The Broken Whole* belongs in every philosophical and theological library, even as it signals the appearance of what may prove to be one of the more creative, engaging, and profound theologians of our time.

Amos Yong

Regent University School of Divinity

HOPE FOR THE WORLD: A CHRISTIAN VISION OF THE LAST THINGS.

By Roland Chia. Edited by David Smith and John Stott. Christian Doctrine in Global Perspective. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. Pp. 164. \$14.00, ISBN 978-0-8308-3305-4.

The goal of the Christian Doctrine in Global Perspective series is to produce theological texts by non-Western writers that are biblically faithful and reflective of their respective cultures. Chia explores Christian eschatology from the Asian context. After evaluating religious hope in post-9/11 Asia, Chia outlines a biblically based but rather truncated eschatology. Although helpful as an introduction, the work fails to achieve its goal of contextualizing Asian eschatology. The author simply states particular Asian religious views but neither inculcates Christian eschatology nor shows how various doctrines are enculturated. For instance, Chia highlights the Chinese belief in ancestral worship as the continuation of the life process in contradistinction to the Protestant Christian belief that death is the end of life. Overlooked is the Christian belief in the communion of saints, in which the church exists in continuity with all saints throughout time. Likewise, Chia states (without support) that the Buddhist belief in Nirvana is not annihilation of existence, but a state of absolute peace. However, parallels can be drawn between existential nihilism (which has its share of Christian counterparts) and nihilism in Buddhism (cf. Kenji Nishitani, *Religion and Nothingness*, 1982), but Chia leaves this relationship unexplored. Overall, this book is a helpful teaching tool for pastors and new students of theology but fails to assess adequately the diversity of Christian eschatology, or even its diversity within Evangelicalism, and has little constructive value for inculcating Christianity within the Asian context.

Peter Althouse

Tyndale University College and Seminary

THE THEOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IN J. I. PACKER’S THOUGHT: THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, THEOLOGICAL METHOD, AND THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION.

By Don J. Payne. Studies in Evangelical History and Thought, 29. Waynesboro,

GA: Paternoster, 2006. Pp. ix + 321. \$37.00, ISBN 978-1-84227-397-5.

Payne's work provides a critical look at the life of evangelical theologian J. I. Packer. Payne begins with a brief overview of the enormous influence Packer has exerted on the evangelical world of the twentieth century, and then examines the formative influences of his upbringing, academic training, and various people who helped form his thinking (e.g., the Puritans). With this brief biographical profile, Payne calls attention to Packer's enormous literary output. The major themes of Packer's Reformed theology are picked up, with an explanation of how each of these has contributed to Packer's understanding of personal piety. On several occasions, the author draws attention to the conflict that Packer has had with the Keswick movement over the subject of the sanctification. In certain respects, Packer's understanding of piety is formed in reaction against his understanding of Keswick teaching, and not simply as a recapitulation of the Puritan understanding (although it certainly reflects the thinking of the Puritans). Payne also looks at Packer's understanding of the *Imago Dei* and how this anthropology permeated his entire corpus. Additionally, Payne examines how Packer's methodology led him to prioritize and write on the particular subjects he did. Payne's work will necessarily appeal to a narrow audience. Although readable, it is not simply a biography, but is a revision of his PhD thesis. He succeeds in his attempt to accurately present Packer and his work, but also the ability to stand back and critically engage both.

Jeffrey Anderson

Northwest University and Puget Sound Christian College

EVANGELICALS IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE: FOUR FORMATIVE VOICES ON POLITICAL THOUGHT AND ACTION. By J. Budziszewski. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006. Pp. 224. \$19.99, ISBN 978-8010-3156-4.

Budziszewski commends C. Henry, A. Kuyper, F. Schaeffer, and J. H. Yoder for promoting political involvement but concludes that these evangelical scholars "never developed a clear, cohesive, and Christian view of what politics is all about." Henry is praised even though he "never reveals how evangelism and social activism can work together." Budziszewski admires Kuyper (the Dutch theologian-statesman) for his theory of "principled pluralism" and "sphere of sovereignty" but maintains that Kuyper never balanced the interrelationship of the state and society. Schaeffer is credited for warning against humanism but is criticized for not providing "apologetics for the public square." Finally, Budziszewski is critical of Yoder's view of the Bible and, consequently, view of government. Yoder writes extensively about the "politics of Jesus," but not about Christian politics. R. De Visme Williamson should have been included as a formative thinker. His *Independence & Involvement* (1964) provides a systematic Christian theory of government and politics. The four respondents—D. L. Weeks, J. Bolt, W. Edgar, and A. Woodiwiss—indirectly acknowledge

that the formative thinkers fail to develop a Christian political theory, but fault Budziszewski for choosing selected writings. The dialogue is enhanced considerably as the respondents discuss the total contributions of each scholar. Budziszewski and his interlocutors are to be commended for reawakening an interest in these formative scholars. I highly recommend this book—along with Williamson—as a preparation for effective participation and decision making in the public square.

Philip C. Bom

Robertson School of Government, Regent University

THE CREATIONIST DEBATE: THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN THE BIBLE AND THE HISTORICAL MIND. By Arthur McCalla. New York: T & T Clark, 2006. Pp. xiv + 228. \$34.95, ISBN 978-0-8264-8002-6.

The Creationist Debate traces the history of the shift from biblical literalism to modern-day efforts to reconcile the Bible with the discoveries of modern science. The author argues that the idea of "deep time" (the understanding that the earth is millions of years old) renders a literal interpretation of scripture untenable and requires an abandonment of traditional creationist explanations for the origin of the world and of life. Developments in science during the seventeenth century and following caused a seismic shift in how scripture was viewed and seriously challenged its authority. The history of these challenges is documented in detail. Unfortunately, this is not a dispassionate analysis of a controversy. The data of the story are carefully selected to persuade readers that the author's position is the correct one. In doing this, some significant errors are offered. For example, in the section on Intelligent Design (ID), we see *ad hominem* attacks, misrepresentations of positions, and errors of fact (ID differs greatly from traditional Christian creationism but is lumped together with that position, ignoring the fact that some ID advocates are not even Christians). Arguments presented by detractors of ID theory are abundant, but there is no effort made to spell out the ID case fairly. It is also very disturbing that the book concludes with the observation that modern-day creationists seem bent on establishing the same type of repressive society that radical Muslims desire. One would expect better from a philosopher, trained in the methodologies of reason.

Donald F. Calbreath

Whitworth College

DARWIN AND INTELLIGENT DESIGN. By Francisco J. Ayala. Minneapolis, MI: Fortress Press, 2006. Pp. iv + 106. \$7.00, ISBN 978-0-8006-3802-3.

In a book that is part of a Fortress Press series intended for lay audiences, Ayala asserts that science and religion need not be in contradiction with one another when properly analyzed. University Professor and Donald Bren Professor of Biological Sciences, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at the University of California, Ayala avers that the two disciplines are essentially independent, distinct, and disparate sources

of truth (science regarding the physical world and religion regarding metaphysical realities). Beyond saying that Darwinian evolution in no manner denies the existence of God, he goes on to insist that it is more compatible with Christian theism than Intelligent Design (ID). A sustained argument against ID is provided first by reviewing the life of eighteenth-century clergyman W. Paley and then equating the ID movement with Paley's "god of the gaps" argument. Then, after briefly reviewing Darwin's life, macroevolution is presented as proof of common descent. But if Ayala detests nontestable hypotheses such as (so he claims) ID, does this not also apply to (the theory of) macroevolution? Other questions concern whether or not the theory of "gill slits in humans" is still viable when recent embryological studies seem to have shown that such are not gill slits at all. All in all, the data presented seem selective and one-sided. Still, whether or not readers agree with Ayala's deductions, they will nonetheless find value in the review of historical information regarding evolution in general and macroevolutionary theory in particular.

Bradford McCall
Regent University

ECSTASY AND INTIMACY: WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT MEETS THE HUMAN SPIRIT. By Edith M. Humphrey. Grand Rapid, MI: Eerdmans, 2006. Pp. 295. \$21.00, ISBN 978-0-8028-3147-7.

Humphrey presents a treatise on authentic Christian spirituality in a highly readable volume integrating biblical and historical theology. The appeal of this work converges in the skillful interweaving of perspectives from Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant traditions around the central theme of ecstasy and intimacy, as exemplified in the Trinity. The book is framed into three triads including the love, light, and life of God, each representing one person of the Trinity, the starting place for understanding the spiritual life. Within the Trinity, the "ecstasy" of God (the standing outside of oneself) is conjoined with the "intimacy" of God (the unifying fellowship), which is likewise reflected in the community of God's people. In brief, Christian spirituality is what happens when the human spirit and the Holy Spirit meet. Readers will note the creative integration of knowledge of the biblical text with the spiritual journeys of historical and contemporary pilgrims such as Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, John Chrysostom, Julian of Norwich, Thomas à Kempis, Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross, and T. Merton. Additionally, the author's personal reflection and experience punctuate relevant topics such as communion in friendship, family, marriage, and the church, along with the transformative power of suffering and the realities of dysfunctional spirituality. This recommended book will appeal to a wide audience, from those seeking a deeper perspective on Christian spirituality, including those in pastoral ministry, to serious undergraduate and graduate students of the scriptures.

Diane J. Chandler
Regent University School of Divinity

LIVING IN PRAISE: WORSHIPPING AND KNOWING GOD. By David F. Ford and Daniel W. Hardy. Revised Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005. Pp. ix + 214. \$21.99, ISBN 978-0-8010-3121-2.

This book is the revised and updated edition of the influential book *Jubilate: Theology in Praise*, which was first published in 1984. At the time of its first publication, the book was a herald of a renaissance in Trinitarian theology in Anglo-American systematic theology. The question of what it means to praise the Triune God remains of central importance. However, the subsidiary focus of the book, the question of what it means to praise God *in the midst of the world*, perhaps has greater immediacy today when the possibilities of faithful praise seem so under threat. The book begins with a systematic theology of praise, drawing this out in relation to both scripture and the Christian tradition. The lynchpin of the account of praise within the tradition is a reading of Dante's *Divine Comedy* that, the authors argue, locates praise as related to God as Trinity. The book goes on to develop a theological anthropology centered on praise, situating its theology of praise in chapter six within an account of evil and suffering. The last few chapters set out what could be called a doxological epistemology, that is, how praise enables us to know God, ourselves, and creation truly. The final chapter of the book is a call to let praise shape all the church's witness and mission. In an age of hype and hate speech, it is a clarion call that needs to be heard.

Luke Bretherton
King's College London

THE MYTH OF RELIGIOUS NEUTRALITY: AN ESSAY ON THE HIDDEN ROLE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS IN THEORIES, REVISED EDITION. By Roy A. Clouser. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005. Pp. xii + 397. \$25.00, ISBN 978-0-268-02366-9.

Clouser's book is an accessible introduction to and defense of the idea, pioneered by H. Dooyeweerd, that scientific theories depend for their possibility on religious commitments or, as Clouser calls them, "divinity beliefs." In order to be able to form a coherent theory, the argument goes, the theorist must assume something to be self-subsistent or to be "ultimate reality," and thus to take a "religious" viewpoint whether consciously or not. Therefore, scientific theories cannot be thought to be religiously neutral. Many theories treat some part of the natural world as if it were ultimate reality, resulting in problematic reductionisms of various sorts, which is not only bad science but is also based on bad "religious" choices. After giving a general characterization of religion, theory, and their interrelation, Clouser argues these points by showing the effects of this religious non-neutrality in mathematics, physics, and psychology. Clouser's book is not aimed at specialists in the philosophy of science—although it should be of interest to these—but at a more general audience, which can lead to frustration for more advanced readers who would want

to see more rigorous argumentation or interaction with secondary literature, but overall, the book is a great success. Despite the fact that it changes the arguments from a “continental” to an “Anglo-American” philosophical idiom, it stands as an excellent introduction to Dooyeweerd’s views in English. This revision expands considerably on the first edition, including welcome clarifications regarding the nature of religion and theories as well as replies to objections.

Michael J. DeMoor
Institute for Christian Studies

WHO’S AFRAID OF POSTMODERNISM? TAKING DERRIDA, LYOTARD, AND FOUCAULT TO CHURCH. James K. A. Smith. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006. Pp. 160. \$17.99, ISBN 978-0-8010-2918-9.

Making postmodernism less intimidating and recognizing its potential as an ally to Christian faith is the aim of Smith’s latest book. Well written and brief but also somewhat dense, parts of the book may be too technical for practitioners. The book makes helpful connections with pop culture; each chapter begins with a synopsis of a contemporary film that articulates certain postmodern features launching the discussions that follow. Containing five chapters developed from lectures delivered at L’Abri Fellowship, Smith’s approach to and appropriation of postmodernity reflects a Schaefferian impulse engaging culture critically and appreciatively. After an introductory chapter, Smith summarizes the work of three French poststructuralists beginning with Derrida and his well-known dictum “There is nothing outside the text.” Smith shows that Derrida assists Christianity by exposing the arrogant pretentiousness of modern claims to have obtained a true grasp of reality devoid of subjective bias. Next, Smith dissects Lyotard’s famous definition of postmodernity, “incredulity toward metanarratives,” clarifying the point that Lyotard was not incredulous toward metanarratives as such but only toward those rooted in confident appeal to universal human reason. Finally, Smith considers Foucault’s assertion that “power is knowledge,” demonstrating that society (including the church) is inherently a structure of power relations forming certain kinds of people. Smith rejects Foucault’s implicit negativity toward power as such and redeems his analysis suggesting Christianity as a disciple-forming system operating not from domination but from reverent submission. A final chapter incorporates the critique of Radical Orthodoxy for developing a postmodern church in the twenty-first century.

Chris Emerick
Regent University

PROPERTY FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT: ALTERNATIVES TO THE GLOBAL TYRANNY OF CAPITAL. By Ulrich Duchrow and Franz J. Hinkelammert. London: Zed Books. Pp. xi + 244. \$27.50, ISBN 978-1-84277-479-3.

Following an excellent account of how money and Lockean property rights evolved to form the foundation of global capitalism, Duchrow and Hinkelammert (DH) argue that diverse groupings worldwide, and without coordination, are in opposition to this nexus of financial institutions (primarily the IMF and World Bank), international trade (directed by the WTO), and governance (G8 countries). Their seemingly unfettered dedication to private property, money, and the accumulation of financial capital strangle the commitment to human rights and environmental flourishing by leaving collateral damage ranging from expropriated lands from the poor to ecological degradation. With reference to the OT, DH consider this institutional sin and challenge the Church to oppose this system, just as part of the Church opposed National Socialism (WWII Germany) and South African apartheid. The primacy of the common good must be reasserted institutionally. This reviewer-cum-economist affirms DH’s call for elevating our Christian commitment to “peace, justice and the integrity of creation” evidenced by greater accountability of the World Bank and IMF and by property right systems that are environmentally friendly and inclusive of the poor. Much more debateable, however, is DH’s assertion that “competition means that one wins and the other loses” and the suggestion that land should be “transferred to public, municipal and state ownership.” The strength of this erudite book lies in its linking the institutions of money and private property to the rapacious edges of global capitalism and its call for a church response.

Tim Essenburg
Bethel University

INTRODUCING APOLOGETICS: CULTIVATING CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT. By James E. Taylor. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006. Pp. 368. \$29.99, ISBN 978-0-8010-2786-4.

In this introductory text on Christian apologetics, Taylor steers a middle course between “an overemphasis on reason and an overemphasis on faith.” He denies the sufficiency of any one apologetic method for belief, although he finds them all useful for “cultivating Christian commitment,” as his subtitle suggests. For example, the classical proofs in favor of God’s existence are all here, but they are not presented as necessarily convincing, only that it would be reasonable to believe them. Overall, Taylor shows familiarity with the relevant literature, although because this is an introductory text, much more could be (and has been) said on each topic. While there is nothing here that contradicts Catholic or Orthodox Christianity (and much in support), this text defends Christianity more broadly. On the other hand, fundamentalist Protestants may be displeased with his treatment of evolution and the reliability of the scriptures. While critical of the Darwinian evolution, Taylor argues that it would be useful to defend the possibility that it does not necessarily contradict scripture. Moreover, he defends the scriptures as “true in all they teach” rather than inerrant. The text is readable and ideally suited for introductory

courses on Christian apologetics, especially at the undergraduate level, and at evangelical institutions (the author's intended audience).

Glenn M. Harden
Escuela Caribe

THE COMMUNITY OF THE WORD: TOWARD AN EVANGELICAL ECCLESIOLOGY. Edited by Mark Husbands and Daniel J. Treier. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. Pp. 291. \$23.00, ISBN 978-0-8308-2797-8.

This collection brings together some of the most important evangelical theologians today to rethink the evangelical church in the twenty-first century. Grounding evangelical theology in the Word of God, which is natural given evangelical theology's Christocentric and biblicist character, Barth's ecclesiology becomes the theological foundation of the project, anchored by two lucid chapters by J. Webster. While the sacraments are often neglected in evangelical theology, they are addressed by C. Carter, G. Badcock, and E. Charry. Given our age of empire, one would think that part three of the book "The Church as Moral Community" would be the most relevant discussion of evangelical political engagement; however, W. Abraham's critique of the excesses of inclusivism is more directed to his own United Methodist church, and A. Verhey's discussion of moral discourse never quite reaches social transformation. The editors do attempt to overcome the white, male ethos of evangelical theology by including the important essays of C. and W. J. Jennings. One of the most important lines of thinking that emerges from the book is D. Guder's conception of the church as a missional community. Following Barth, the missions of the persons of the Trinity become the theological basis of the mission of the church. W. Dyrness continues this line of missional ecclesiology in global context by opening up a space to humbly and openly engage the Other in a manner that is respectful and loving. This book should be a mandatory reading in undergraduate, seminary, and graduate courses on evangelical theology.

Peter G. Heltzel
New York Theological Seminary

FREE CHURCH, FREE STATE: THE POSITIVE BAPTIST VISION. By Nigel G. Wright. Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2005. Pp. xxviii + 292. \$19.99, ISBN 978-1-84227-353-1.

Wright, Principal of Spurgeon's College (London), has authored an accessible introduction to Baptist ecclesiology. Written by a Baptist for Baptists, but also for the larger ecumenical church, Wright rightly argues that both Baptist and Catholic Church traditions should seek to enrich and mutually support each other as authentic expressions of the body of Christ. He contends that the church is a relational community called to image the life of the Trinity in the world. In order to embody this ecclesial existence, a church must be free to discern what is pleasing to God under the

rule of Christ and free from external political determination. Thus, a free church requires a free state. Further, the state is to be free of religious control. This understanding of a free church and a free state, claims Wright, is a key Baptist contribution to the Church Catholic. The book sets out to explore the biblical, historical, and theological roots of this ecclesial vision. Reflecting a British Baptist perspective, several important challenges to Baptists and other free churches in the United States are offered, including: 1) a sacramental understanding of baptism, the Lord's Supper, and preaching; 2) a Catholicity that counters the radical autonomy that has informed the ecclesiology of many Baptists in America; and 3) an understanding of freedom that is Christocentric rather than democratic. Written primarily for pastors and ministers, the book would be ideal for a college or seminary course on ecclesiology or the free church movement.

Mark S. Medley
Campbellsville University

RHETORIC OF OPERATION RESCUE: PROJECTING THE CHRISTIAN PRO-LIFE MESSAGE. By Mark Allen Steiner. New York: T&T Clark, 2006. Pp. v-226. \$29.95, ISBN 978-0-567-02572-2.

Steiner's book offers a valuable and remarkably detailed rhetorical analysis of Operation Rescue and, more broadly, evangelical Christian social protest. After describing the background philosophy of F. Schaeffer as it applies to pro-life matters, Steiner uses a rhetorical perspective to analyze how the evangelical faith was represented by Operation Rescue. Schaeffer's anti-intellectualism and impulse to hegemony were absorbed into Operation Rescue's rhetoric, to its detriment. Over time, Operation Rescue became increasingly calcified, hostile to American culture and politics, resistant to self-reflection or critical thinking, and violent. The conclusion offers an important critical analysis of what evangelicals could learn from the failures of Operation Rescue, as evangelicals continue to engage the public and political spheres. Steiner encourages evangelicals to use critical thinking in constructing public dialogue about themselves, the American public, and the political process. *Rhetoric of Operation Rescue* is meticulously detailed and vigorously theoretical, and it will be valuable for historians of the pro-life movement, for historians of evangelicalism, and for those interested in evangelical politics. Important points of application for undergraduates or lay audiences could be derived, especially relating to Christian engagement with culture and politics.

Jenell Williams Paris
Bethel University

THE HIP-HOP CHURCH: CONNECTING WITH THE MOVEMENT SHAPING OUR CULTURE. By Efreem Smith and Phil Jackson. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. Pp. 227. \$14.00, ISBN 978-0-8308-3329-0.

Twenty years after the release of the first commercially distributed Christian rap CD, Intervarsity Press has published a book that explores the contestations that arise at the intersections of church and hip-hop. Smith and Jackson's *The Hip-Hop Church* is an overdue introduction to the topic. Scholars will beg for terminology to be clarified (postmodern, emerging, Afrocentric, etc.), and the rather unpolished prose will frustrate most readers. However, writing for a popular audience, the authors' concerns are elsewhere; namely, preaching the gospel of hip-hop to church folk—lay and clergy, black and white—and spreading the Christian Gospel to hip-hop devotees. To this end, they seek to accomplish three tasks: 1) make the case for hip-hop's importance to churches; 2) articulate hip-hop's fundamentals to those unfamiliar; and 3) provide models for hip-hop ministries. Both Smith and Jackson pastor hip-hop congregations, and they draw on a wealth of experience, along with historical and theological reflections, to shed light on their subject. However, rather than serve as a persuasive apologetic or blueprint for hip-hop ministries, *The Hip-Hop Church* arguably encapsulates the confusion that continues to plague many efforts to bring hip-hop and Christianity into conversation. This, perhaps, attests to the continued usefulness of H. R. Neibhur's age-old *Christ and Culture* typology. Nonetheless, Smith and Jackson provide a valuable starting point for further research on hip-hop's impact on Christian churches around the globe.

Josef Sorett
Harvard University

WHAT HAS INFANT BAPTISM DONE TO BAPTISM? AN ENQUIRY AT THE END OF CHRISTENDOM. By David F. Wright. Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2005. Pp. x + 117. \$19.99, ISBN 978-1-84227-357-9.

Wright helpfully examines effects of “the long reign of infant baptism” on the baptismal theologies and practices, both of churches that practice infant baptism and those that baptize believers. Employing expertise in patristics and Reformed theology, he assembles convincing evidence to support his claim that long use during the Constantinian era of rites formulated for the initiation of adults to baptize infants led to displacement of faith from baptizand to sponsors. This rendered essential elements problematic, resulting in changes in baptism's meaning. His critique notwithstanding, “baptistic” communions cannot become complacent. Their practices are likewise distorted through reaction to infant baptism. His remedy consists of recovery of the catechumenate and a more fully realistic, sacramentalist baptismal theology. Comprised of Wright's 2003 Didsbury Lectures, the brevity of the work limits its adequacy somewhat. One wishes for a fuller discussion at many points. Although Wright declares several times that his audience is Evangelical Protestants, they are not addressed as having a contribution to the conversation. Perhaps for the same reason, Wright does not sufficiently address the effects

of Enlightenment ideas that have contributed to deficiencies in baptismal thought and practice, especially among Evangelicals. Nonetheless, Wright has given us a good beginning to an important conversation in churches and theological schools.

Philip E. Thompson
North American Baptist Seminary

IN DEFENSE OF NATURAL THEOLOGY: A POST-HUMEAN ASSESSMENT. Edited by James F. Sennett and Douglas Groothuis. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. Pp. 352. \$26.00, ISBN 978-0-8308-2767-1.

This collection aims to defend the project of natural theology, understood as “the attempt to provide rational justification for theism using only those sources of information accessible to all inquirers, namely, the data of empirical experience and the dictates of human reason.” Its primary target is not just Hume's critique of natural theology, but “Hume's legacy”—the general Humean stance that characterizes contemporary critiques of natural theology up to Dawkins and his ilk. The editors overreach when they claim that the volume is evidence that “natural theology is alive and well in contemporary philosophy” and that natural theology has experienced a “revival.” This is true only within a narrow orbit of evangelical philosophers still committed to evidentialism and interested in natural theology because of its *political* implications for grounding natural law. The notions of reason and evidence that undergird the project of natural theology have been roundly criticized—in particular by other Christian philosophers such as Plantinga, Wolterstorff, and others who have articulated a nonfoundationalist “Reformed epistemology.” While the editors claim that the book does not target Reformed epistemology, neither does the book take seriously this critique of natural theology internal to the Christian tradition. Nonetheless, the book is an important contribution and one that both friends and critics of natural theology must work through.

James K. A. Smith
Calvin College

RESPONSIVE LABOR: A THEOLOGY OF WORK. By David H. Jensen. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006. Pp. xiii + 141. \$19.95, ISBN 978-0-664-23021-0.

Jensen's book provides a trenchant analysis of the nature of contemporary labor, exploring how American labor practices compare to a Reformed understanding of God's “work” for us, through Trinity and through the Eucharist. Arguing that God's Trinitarian action creates an analogous priority for persons above action, and for diversity of labor over function, Jensen makes the case that contemporary labor practices are often antithetical to Christian notions about the nature of humanity. Through the liturgy and the Eucharist, Jensen argues, we are presented with a transfigured vision of the world as abundant and superfluous, in contrast to utilitarian notions of function and scarcity. Jensen offers a number of observations from this critique

aimed in a variety of venues, from globalization to private property. Jensen's work is a valuable theological critique of labor, pointing toward more humane and disciplined approaches to work, pointing toward the basic character of work as gratitude and gift, a response to the grace of God.

Myles Werntz
Baylor University

REASON FOR HOPE: THE SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OF WOLFHART PANNENBERG, 2ND EDITION. By Stanley J. Grenz. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005. Pp. 318. \$35.00, ISBN 978-0-8028-4909-0.

Grenz's book provides an invaluable introduction to the teaching and theological contributions of Pannenberg. A one-time student of Pannenberg, Grenz synthesizes Pannenberg's work not only from his *Systematics*, but accounts for earlier works of Pannenberg, bringing the corpus into a manageable volume. Lucid and concise, Grenz treats the major divisions of traditional theology—revelation, God, ecclesiology, and so forth—in successive order, showing how each category derives its meaning from Pannenberg's foundational methodology: the provisional nature of our knowledge of God, in light of God's eschatologically unfolding reality. Ordering his account of Pannenberg's teaching according to those elements that are given most stress throughout Pannenberg's career, Grenz does justice to Pannenberg's original intent rather than trying to first give Pannenberg's contemporary significance. The result is—as indicated by Pannenberg's commendation of the work—a synthesis of Pannenberg's work, which contextualizes his work in the wake of K. Barth, and which allows the reader to see the ways in which Pannenberg's work has evolved throughout his career. This stands as an essential resource for anyone—senior scholar or graduate student—needing a running start into the numerous theological contributions of Pannenberg.

Myles Werntz
Baylor University

TESTIMONY AND TRADITION: STUDIES IN REFORMED AND DISSENTING THOUGHT. By Alan P. F. Sell. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005. Pp. viii + 367. \$119.95, ISBN 0-7546-4082-5.

Containing essays written over the course of nine years, this volume presents some of Sell's recent and wide-ranging contributions to Reformed and Dissenting theology. Chapters interpret historical figures, such as P. T. Forsyth, A. Fuller and H. Grove, as well as broader themes such as Baptist identity, Congregationalist worship, and the tasks of Reformed theology. The initial chapter summarizes Sell's understanding of theology as conservation and exploration. Theology is neither antiquarian nor innovative, but is "fired by the Gospel, grounded in the Scriptures," informed by Catholic faith and Reformed emphases, "tempered by Enlightenment critiques," and applicable to the present day. As the task of the whole Church, theology listens before it

speaks. The book's final chapter concludes with a critique of "liberal" views of the atonement. Sell argues for a tempered recovery of Anselm and the satisfaction of God's holy love, claiming that "the first thing done at the Cross is done for God, not for us." Though at times the volume overly disparages theological liberalism, it offers a fine introduction (or reintroduction) to a significant contemporary theologian. The book's prohibitive price, however, seems to have destined this book for university and seminary libraries rather than individual collections.

David H. Jensen
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Ethics

THE BIBLICAL TRUTH ABOUT AMERICA'S DEATH PENALTY. By Dale S. Recinella. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004. Pp. xxviii + 433. Cloth, \$55.00, ISBN 978-1-55553-633-6; paper, \$24.95, ISBN 978-1-55553-632-9.

Recinella, a lay Catholic who is self-taught, writes for an audience who reads the Bible as literal truth. He argues that this hermeneutic authorizes execution of everyone—adulterers to rebellious sons. Arguing that it is hypocritical to select only the penalty for murder as authoritative, he instead proposes a difference between God's "perfect" and "permissive" wills. Recinella concludes that God originally prohibits all human retaliation, but compromises with a vengeful world by the time of Moses. Jesus "fulfills the law" by returning to God's original commandment to banish, not execute, murderers. Theologically, the Mosaic Law is less concerned with retribution than with the perpetrator's atonement. Jesus' death and resurrection end the need for executions to secure that atonement. Although Recinella unpersuasively presents the Talmud as authoritative for Christians, he uses it to provide sharp critiques of procedural, economic, and racial injustices in the American system. His conclusion "that there is no possible way to support the American death penalty based upon biblical truth" lands solidly on arguments about how the Bible's fear of executing the innocent involves more restrictive procedures than in the United States. The book is recommended for bible study, undergraduates, and anyone seeking to understand the divergence of American death penalty from biblical justice.

Judith W. Kay
University of Puget Sound

PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY: ESSAYS ON MORALITY IN POLITICS. By Michael J. Sandel. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005. Pp. 292. \$25.95, ISBN 978-0-874-01928-7.

Harvard political theorist Sandel is among the most respected and nuanced of contemporary commentators on American liberalism. His latest volume collects thirty essays published between 1983 and 2004, organized into sections