

## The Americas: Central and South America

**MEXICAN AMERICAN RELIGIONS: SPIRITUALITY, ACTIVISM, AND CULTURE.** Edited by Gastón Espinosa and Mario T. García. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008. Pp. ix + 443. Cloth, \$94.95; paper, \$25.95.

This edited volume utilizes multidisciplinary approaches to explore the infusion of Mexican American religions in political activism, literature, healing practices, and popular culture. Specifically, this work's application of poly-methodic approaches emphasizes social scientific orientations without marginalizing traditional methodologies such as liberation theology and church studies. As a result of taking a "nonnormative" hermeneutical stance, each of the fifteen chapters illustrates the ways in which religion operates in the everyday activities and practices of Mexican Americans. While K. Turner argues that home altars serve as vehicles of personal/familial agency for Mexican American *Altaristas*, L. Pérez establishes a correlation between "hybrid spiritualities" of Chicana altar-based art and political protest against acts of dehumanization against Mexican Americans. In addition, intersections between religious commitments, capitalism, and healing as displayed *curanderismo*; mysticism and politics as seen in the activities of César Chávez; and redemption, resistance, and pop culture as expressed in the symbolic positioning of Selena are also contained within this volume. While this text highlights diversity among Mexican American religious experiences, this diversity falls within the categories of class, gender, and race. Hence, sexual orientation, both as a subject of dehumanization and as a methodology (queer theory), is not taken into consideration. Despite this concern, this text affords an expansion of interpretative lenses in which to examine the diverse religious experiences of Mexican Americans.

*Margarita Simon Guillory*  
Rice University

**BLACK ATLANTIC RELIGION: TRADITION, TRANSNATIONALISM, AND MATRIARCHY IN THE AFRO-BRAZILIAN CANDOMBLÉ.** By J. Lorand Matory. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005. Pp. 376. Cloth \$28.95.

With this book Matory challenges much of our common knowledge about the tradition of Candomblé as well as its sister traditions of Santería and Vodou. At the same time he also confronts our understanding of transnationalism as a new and uniquely modern phenomenon. In a carefully crafted and documented argument, he shows how Candomblé developed through the focused work of Africans and Afro-Brazilians over several centuries and how identities on both sides of the Atlantic were shaped by actors from both the Americas and Africa. He convincingly argues that Candomblé and the other African-based traditions are not

African "survivals" as Herskovits and his students have suggested but purposeful developments on the part of Africans, Afro-Brazilians and others. Intertwined with this argument is the supporting argument that transnationalism, rather than being a recent phenomenon dependent on and challenging to modern national structures, has been characteristic of all but the most isolated societies. Because of his work in both Brazil and Nigeria Matory is uniquely placed to see and analyze the historical connections between these societies. This text is a challenging read, not for the style but for the content. Few of us will come away with our fundamental understandings of the interactions of Africans in the Americas unscathed. Thus this book is highly recommended not only to libraries, scholars, and graduate students of African-based traditions but others interested in how transnational migration and trade can affect communities in both the "homeland" and its diasporas.

*Mary Ann Clark*  
Yavapai College

## The Americas: USA

**JOSEPH PRIESTLEY AND ENGLISH UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA.** By J. D. Bowers. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2007. Pp. xii + 282. \$50.00.

This book is about the contested nature of Unitarianism in America, but a contest that comes from within, and from two directions. J. D. Bowers has written a sparkling narrative of the important role that Joseph Priestley and English Unitarianism played in the development of a self-consciously "American" form of anti-Trinitarian Christianity. He explores the reasons for the vigorous rejection of Priestley's Socinian theology and his religious movement on the part of the New England Arian liberalism culminating in W. E. Channing, and offers an important revisionist reading of the historiography of American Unitarianism, which has been inclined to accept its rejection of any connections to Priestleyism as historical fact rather than ideological polemic. Bowers argues that American Unitarianism, emerging as it did from Congregationalism, sought to maintain its standing within the broader American church culture by emphasizing the biblical origins of its doctrine of God and its doctrinal continuity with Christianity on the role of Jesus, while denying its similarity to the radical thought of Priestley. Bowers, to the contrary, demonstrates the importance of Priestley's activism and writings to the general growth of Unitarianism in America in both its denominational (AUA) and intellectual forms, a contribution eventually recognized by Unitarians themselves. This work fills an important lacuna in studies of Priestley and in the historiography of Unitarianism, complementing and extending works such as Robert Schofield's *The Enlightened Joseph Priestley*.

*Robert E. Brown*  
James Madison University

**WOMEN IN THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST: MAKING A SANCTIFIED LIFE.** By Anthea Butler. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. Pp. xii + 224. \$18.95.

In this book, Butler takes on the daunting task of providing an historically grounded assessment of how the Church of God in Christ (COGIC), a black Pentecostal denomination, fits into the larger stories of African American Christianity, Pentecostalism, and American religion. The denomination maintains no archives, so Butler painstakingly collected widely scattered primary sources to piece together the stories of the first leaders of the denomination's "women's work." She uses them as a lens through which to examine a larger narrative, and along the way presents helpful insights into some of the group's male leaders. She illuminates aspects of the denomination's history, but she never forgets her larger purpose of explaining how certain beliefs empowered women to act in particular ways. Butler's book is a history neither of women in the COGIC nor of the denomination. Rather, she focuses on the activities and choices of a handful of women who put the huge denominational "women's work" in place. The biographies of these women constitute one of the book's significant contributions. Their experiences highlight in powerful ways conceptions of holiness and worldliness, personal relationships, and religious community. Concentrating on the first half of the twentieth century, Butler finds in COGIC's emphasis on the "sanctified life" a potent source of meaning and identity for Southern black women. Her stress on the importance of personal networking beyond COGIC helps explain why COGIC women embraced larger cultural goals before most other American Pentecostals.

*Edith L. Blumhofer*  
*Wheaton College*

**AMERICAN CATHOLICS IN THE PROTESTANT IMAGINATION: RETHINKING THE ACADEMIC STUDY OF RELIGION.** By Michael P. Carroll. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007. Pp. xviii + 219. \$49.95.

Deconstruction is a current academic vogue, and in this critical work, Carroll deconstructs the ill-founded and indeed mythical interpretations of North American Roman Catholicism that have dominated primarily Protestant studies on the subject. This is done through presenting five chapters dealing with some variant of American Roman Catholicism, noting specifically the contradictions and historiographical puzzles raised. Chapters deal in turn with the Irish Americans, Italian Americans, the Acadians or Cajuns, and Hispanic Catholics. The final chapter draws from the others in addressing the title of this book, as it outlines the continuing existence of an "American Protestant imagination" in the study of American religion. This Protestant imagination has led to inaccuracies and stereotypical presentations of ethnic American Catholics, representations that are only overcome through careful contextual study that

reveals the actual practice of actual Catholics in specific locations. Required reading not only for those working in the field of American Roman Catholic studies, but all in the origins, sources and practice of religious studies.

*Iain S. Maclean*  
*James Madison University*

**BORDERS AND BRIDGES: MENNONITE WITNESS IN A RELIGIOUSLY DIVERSE WORLD.** Edited by Peter Dula and Alain Epp Weaver. Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House; Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2007. Pp. 185. \$19.95.

For more than a half century the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has placed workers in relief, development and peacebuilding settings around the world. This book contains ten different accounts of the challenging situations, cooperative communities and interfaith dialogues in which MCC workers have found themselves. Blending anecdotal experiences with personal reflection, writers with considerable experience in places such as the Gaza Strip and Palestine, Nepal, Indonesia, Nigeria, Somalia, Iran, India, Egypt, southeast Europe, and Latin America tell stories of religious conflict transformed into interfaith dialogue and civil war become community. Most reflect upon the histories of the conflicts but spotlight contemporary signs of hope. Among these are an academic exchange between students in Iran and Canada, Muslim-Christian dialogue in Indonesia or Nigeria, the "dizzying religious" pluralism of India, and the reframing of the Israel-Palestine conflict as "a settler-colonial movement . . . that seeks to extend control over particular territory" and "the indigenous population resisting such control." Some writers engage theological reflection on interfaith dialogue and one essay by P. Dula is dedicated to the issue. The writing is somewhat uneven, but the insights for concrete interfaith dialogue are challenging and valuable. For those tired of the "clash of civilizations" and interested in "a dialogue of civilizations" (a concept championed by M. Khatami, former president of Iran) this collection provides rich case studies.

*William J. Hawk*  
*James Madison University*

**THE POLITICAL ORIGINS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.** By Anthony Gill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. xv + 263. Cloth, \$75.00; paper, \$23.99.

Most histories claim ideas or social structures cause the advance of religious liberty. In stark and striking contrast to ideational or structural accounts, this book employs a rational choice theory. In his analytical narrative Gill explores a history in which religious goods are exchanged in a religious marketplace with rulers, clergy, and citizen/subjects as the traders. Based on the history of religious liberty in Colonial America, Europe, Mexico and Latin America, Russia, and the Baltic, the narrative shows rulers, "primarily interested in their own political survival," advancing or restricting religious liberty depending on whether or not religious liberty

advances their interest to “maximize government revenue, promote economic growth and minimize civil unrest.” For example, religious dissenter separatists persecuted and expelled from England became religious persecutors themselves when ruling the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Agnostic as to the actual causal power of ideas and ideologies, the author takes a skeptical view to their potency, suggesting that just below the surface of ideological debates lay determinative economic and political interests. Filled with an avalanche of historical examples, the book makes a compelling case for the political and economic origin of religious freedom. This book is well written, with a clear and exact method, its thesis illustrated by historical references and allusions. If there are better accounts of the development of religious liberty this reviewer has not seen them.

*William J. Hawk*

*James Madison University*

**MEMORIES OF THE BRANCH DAVIDIANS: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DAVID KORESH'S MOTHER.**

By Bonnie Haldeman. Edited by Catherine Wessinger. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007. Pp. xiii + 199; 68 plates. \$24.95.

Wessinger presents this memoir of Bonnie Haldeman, mother of David Koresh. Haldeman's oddly interesting reminiscences, along with poems by Koresh and numerous photos, add a rare oral and material history to the dramatic events in Waco, Texas on April 19, 1993, that killed seventy-six Branch Davidians, including twenty-three children. In discussing her family's life from Koresh's conception to the present, Haldeman describes their poverty (with Koresh at times living in his car) and the family's dysfunctional relationships. Her narrative is disturbing in its brutal honesty, often without reflection. Though she is the center of these recollections, the memoir does shed much light on the personality and lifestyle of Koresh and the Branch Davidians, including the children. One result is to humanize the church members at “Mount Carmel,” a conclusion reached by most scholars who have investigated this group, since Koresh was no Jim Jones. What comes across most potently is the insider's perspective that “We were all like one big happy family.” Wessinger's excellent endnotes provide material for those unfamiliar with the Waco tragedy. Overall, this highly readable book would be a narrowly focused but helpful aid to researchers on contemporary apocalyptic movements, including undergraduate and graduate students. *Editor's note:* Subsequent to the reception of this book review, Bonnie Haldeman was murdered at her sister's home on January 23, 2009.

*Frances Flannery*

*James Madison University*

**CONCEIVING PARENTHOOD: AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM AND THE SPIRIT OF REPRODUCTION.**

By Amy Laura Hall. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008. Pp. 452. \$32.00.

This book effectively combines an historical analysis of American Protestant attitudes toward reproduction and parenting with a timely argument for a theological reappraisal of those attitudes in light of recent developments in genetics. Hall contextualizes current bioethical debates by citing examples from popular secular and religious magazines and advertising to support her claims about mainline American Protestantism's complicity in such campaigns as the drive for “fitter families” and even in the darkest chapters of the history of American eugenics. Recurring themes in her story are the need for an “other” against which mainline families could define themselves, the role of corporate and scientific “experts” in American parenting and family life, and the desire of many mainline leaders to remain “relevant.” The historical account lays the basis for her ethical argument, which calls on mainline Protestants to think critically about the purported “genomic revolution” and issues such as prenatal genetic testing and “designer babies.” By providing both historical background and nuanced ethical analysis, written from the perspective of an academic, church leader, and mother, and in a lively, engaging style, Hall offers a book of interest to a wide audience, including historians, bioethicists, theologians, and lay Christians (especially parents), and readers can expect to be surprised, provoked, and challenged.

*Miranda Bennett*

*University of Houston*

**AMERICAN EVANGELICALS: A CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF A MAINSTREAM RELIGIOUS MOMENT.**

By Barry Hankins. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008. Pp. xi + 205. \$34.95.

Hankins surveys the developments of evangelical perspectives on several fronts. He shows how the evangelical struggle with modernity (or theological liberalism) in the nineteenth century over romanticism, evolutionary science, and literary criticism progresses into the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the twentieth century, thereby giving rise to neo-evangelicalism and the many debates on evangelical responses to social issues. It is against this backdrop that the book examines the shaping of evangelical perceptions on 1) Darwin's evolution theory, before and after the Scopes Trial, and in the wake of “Creation Science” and “Intelligent Design” proposals; 2) end-time prophecy, eschatology, and theories of millennialism evident in folk evangelical religiosity exemplified in the *Left Behind* Series; 3) gender, racial, and heterosexual relations in the family, church and society; 4) Christian engagement in politics; and 5) the evangelical awakening in the academy as represented by M. Noll and G. Marsden. The introduction of pertinent resources for understanding American evangelical perceptions on the above-mentioned issues is noteworthy even though it fails to address evangelical engagement with critical authors on feminism, race, and heterosexuality (e.g., E. Johnson, J. Cone, K. Philpott). After seven chapters, Hankins concludes that American evangelicals parallel the main-

stream of American culture. Yet, he first argued that American evangelicals have historically battled against culture, either accommodating or transforming it. Perhaps, the historian anticipates a forthcoming sequel.

*Timothy Lim T. N.*

*Regent University School of Divinity*

**THE COLUMBIA DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF RELIGION IN AMERICA SINCE 1945.** Edited by Paul Harvey and Philip Goff. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. Pp. xxi + 554. Cloth, \$78.00; paper, \$27.50.

This excellent teaching resource offers ninety-eight primary sources on U.S. religions from World War II to the new millennium. An opening section includes chapters on “mainline religion and the Cold War” and the counterculture; the middle section covers race, gender, and “politics and religion;” the final section treats popular culture, new immigrants, a grab-bag of “revitalization movements” (Billy Graham, Pentecostals, left- and right-wing evangelicals, Native American Christians, and conservative Catholics), and “the New Age and the Millennium” (a de-centered chapter which in some ways doubles as an effort to draw the book together and hint at emerging trends). The editors work chronologically, but a thematic organization predominates: for example, the Cold War section extends to the 1980s while the “new millennium” section reaches back to the 1960s. The collection resembles a network of interlocking conversations rather than a linear argument. Thus, when using this text, I often assigned selections from different sections at the same time. I found more than I could use on evangelicals, but less than I wanted on Catholics. There is a wealth of resources on left-of-center religion, especially in the race and gender sections, but I would have welcomed more selections on lived forms of liberal religion. This collection offers rich resources.

*Mark Hulsether*

*University of Tennessee*

**FORTRESS INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE UNITED STATES.** By Nancy Koester. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007. Pp. xvi + 240; illustrations, maps. \$18.00.

What more can a scholar in the field of American religion do differently in writing a textbook? Ahlstrom’s impressive tome remains the most exhaustive study available. Other authors such as Albanese have opted for thematic organization and inclusion of non-institutional forms of religion. Koester’s textbook is neither exhaustive nor innovative in scope. Instead, Koester has written an accessible text for students and lifelong learners. This text is concise at 270 pages. Yet this conciseness is its achievement. The book follows the standard narrative of colonial beginnings to the reassessment of Christianity in the latter twentieth century. It includes various expressions of Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, LDS, and Native American and African American traditions. Pluralism is a theme in this book, but that

term is limited to diversity of Christianity. Koester acknowledges that her text should be supplemented with other texts in a course on religions in America. On the author’s own admission, this book is best suited in the libraries of seminaries and religiously-affiliated colleges and universities. Well researched, this work offers suggestions for further reading and a helpful bibliography for readers wanting to continue studying.

*Barton E. Price*

*Florida State University*

**RELIGION IN AMERICAN POLITICS: A SHORT HISTORY.** By Frank Lambert. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008. Pp. x + 294. \$24.95.

This work is a popularized treatment of a subject that continues to generate reams of books. This is not to say that it is lacking in erudition. Lambert takes the reader on a tour of some of the “public moments” in American history in which the defining elements for the role of religion in political life took shape. These include the establishment of the secular principle, the search for a shared sense of civil religion, and religious involvement in critical cultural debates, including the distribution of wealth, education, social welfare, and race. Lambert’s analysis is thickly contextualized, on the premise that secular institutions are inherently at odds with the faith commitments of religious communities. One of the welcome features of the book is his balanced attention to the political participation of both progressive and conservative religious movements throughout American history. What emerges is a sense that, if there is a consensus in the American view of the proper role of religion in politics, it is neither “left” nor “right,” but rather one that is fundamentally “liberal”: religious activism is tolerated, even encouraged in politics, so long as it does not seek to monopolize or de-secularize political institutions. The one defect of the book is Lambert’s definition of religion itself, which is decidedly theistic, even Protestant—a fact that perhaps helps to explain the absence of issues and movements outside of the Protestant/Catholic/Jewish mainstream. Appropriate for scholars and others seeking a thoughtful primer on the subject for undergraduate classroom use.

*Robert E. Brown*

*James Madison University*

**WHAT THE WORLD SHOULD BE: WOODROW WILSON AND THE CRAFTING OF A FAITH-BASED FOREIGN POLICY.** By Malcom D. Magee. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008. Pp. ix + 189. \$39.95.

Magee endeavors to uncover the role that Wilson’s faith played in the crafting of Wilson’s political thought and actions. Magee argues that Wilson’s Calvinist beliefs were fundamental factors in the establishment of his foreign policy, and contends that Wilson believed himself commissioned by God to bring freedom to all points of the globe. But more interestingly, Wilson’s definition of freedom and his method of establishing covenantal relationships between

states are shown to be informed by a firmly religious understanding of each. Magee suggests that Wilson's seemingly contradictory actions can be understood through the concept of antinomy—the simultaneous belief in two divergent truths. This theme of antinomy is woven throughout the book and sets the volume apart from others. While other accounts tend to focus on the apparent hypocrisy of Wilson's rhetoric in contrast to his actions, Magee unites thought with action using the glue of Wilson's faith. Magee states early in the book that his desire is to "let Wilson be Wilson" and his sensitive exploration of Wilson's faith achieves this objective. Readers will not finish the book liking Wilson more than when they started, but they will certainly have a better appreciation for the concurrent simplicity and complexity of the emotions, philosophy, and faith that drove his vision for peace.

*Jennifer Jefferis*  
Regent University

**RETHINKING ZION: HOW THE PRINT MEDIA PLACED FUNDAMENTALISM IN THE SOUTH.** By Mary Beth Swetnam Mathews. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2006. Pp. xxv + 177. \$36.00.

This brief volume argues that the Northern print media unfairly maligned the South as "backward" from the turn of the century to 1928. From a sampling of Northern print media and religious periodicals, Mathews suggests that, while the South earned its labels regarding racial violence, lack of educational funding, and temperance, Northern intellectual writers went too far with fundamentalism. She argues that they stereotyped white Southerners as fundamentalist, thereby maligning an entire region with a caricature that survives to this day. Mathews does the former well, providing detailed histories of Southern violence, underfunding of education, and the temperance crusade. Unfortunately, her thesis that Northerners did so outrageously is unsupported. For example, after detailing the history of Southern lynchings, she describes the Northern media depictions of the violence as sensational. Yet the accounts she employs to demonstrate this theory read as accurate portrayals. To prove her point, she needed evidence that these hate crimes were isolated and/or atypical, but no such documentation appears. The notion of a Northerner bias and an unfair characterization of the South proves intriguing. Mathews explains that the Northern media used Southern violence, education, and temperance to link fundamentalism to the South. But the reader is left to wonder if the media did so stereotypically or accurately.

*David E. Settje*  
Concordia University, Chicago

**PRODIGAL NATION: MORAL DECLINE AND DIVINE PUNISHMENT FROM NEW ENGLAND TO 9/11.** By Andrew R. Murphy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. ix + 232. \$29.95.

Murphy, a political scientist at Rutgers University, advances the discussion about American jeremiads by identifying two types: traditionalist jeremiads that pronounce judgment on contemporary culture as falling short of past ideals; and progressivist jeremiads that call a nation or people to repentance by insisting on a fulfillment of the promises for a more inclusive society enshrined in its founding documents and principles. Both types, however, combine despair (at present circumstances) and yet hope (for redemption), and are presented in part I as they appeared in Puritan New England, the antebellum and Civil War period, and during the last generation of the civil rights movements and the response of the Christian right. Murphy's analysis (in part II of the book) illuminates how both sides are inevitably involved in the construction and propagation of historical narratives for present political purposes (including his own, which is to recommend progressivist jeremiads and undermine traditionalist ones). Yet it is also undeniable that what gives jeremiads their evocative and mobilizing power is the religious imagery, theological symbolism, and textual authorities that are appealed to. In other words, jeremiads are potent because a people believes its national fate is bound up with that of a primordial religious story which provides transcendental explanations for cultural decay or for natural disasters. *Prodigal Nation* is a careful account of how theologies function politically and deserves attention from political scientists, political theologians, American historians, and others interested in the interface of religion and culture.

*Amos Yong*  
Regent University School of Divinity

**UNCOMPROMISING POSITIONS: GOD, SEX, AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.** By Elizabeth Anne Oldmixon. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005. Pp. xvi + 244. \$19.95.

This work explores American legislative decision-making on moral issues using a combination of statistical analysis, legal history, and personal interviews. In order to understand representatives' polarized views on issues such as abortion, school prayer, and gay rights, the author pits the categories "religious traditionalism" and "progressive sexuality" against one another. By arguing that each of these categories constitutes a culture, Oldmixon uses political difference on these moral issues as an example of what she terms "cultural conflict" in the United States government. Its citations and methodology situate *Uncompromising Positions* in current political science conversations, but the volume engages less religious studies scholarship. Perhaps as a result, although Oldmixon's numerical data count different religions and Christian denominations, her analysis often paints religious adherents to be a monolithic group. Several recent books, such as Martha Nussbaum's *Liberty of Conscience* (2008), explore the legal history of many of the same moral issues with more nuanced views of religious adherents. While scholars of American religion may find Old-

mixon's broad characterizations of religious citizens and representatives problematic, as an analysis of the House's recent partisan considerations of abortion, gay rights, and other moral policy issues, Oldmixon's text is valuable and engaging.

*Sarah Imhoff*  
*University of Chicago*

**ELVIS RELIGION: THE CULT OF THE KING.** By Gregory L. Reece. London: I. B. Tauris, 2006. Pp. viii + 200. Cloth, \$65.00, paper, \$15.95.

Religious appropriations of Elvis Presley are unlikely to spawn religious movements, argues G. Reece in this breezy guidebook to Elvis culture. Even without ecclesiastical organization or universal creed, fans of the life, music, and movies of Elvis Presley have created a sprawling set of collectibles, performances, and pilgrimages that inspire comparison to religious activity. Reece is less interested in plumbing any cultural patterns than he is in classifying the different genres (theatrical, tabloid, filmic, fictional, visual, and musical) of Elvis littering the consumer marketplace. Reece travels as an exuberant wide-eyed journalist, watching believers at the Tribute Artist World Championship in Las Vegas, witnessing congregants at the Church of Elvis, the Graceland Wedding Chapel, and the First Presbyterian Church of Elvis the Divine, and mapping Elvis character types reified in films made subsequent to his death. No social worship can be discerned from this cacophonous abundance, yet through individuals channeling Elvis, claiming apparitional appearances of Elvis, and portraying Elvis in religious iconography (e.g., bearing a heavy cross or wearing the crown of thorns), adherents invent an Elvis as the occasional messiah and instant balm to life lived, according to Reece, on the margins of American society. This efficient volume is less effective as a critical observation than it is as an outline of materials profitable to any young student interested in the study of devotional belief beyond church borders.

*Kathryn Lofton*  
*Yale University*

**THE SURPRISING WORK OF GOD: HAROLD JOHN OCKENGA, BILLY GRAHAM, AND THE REBIRTH OF EVANGELICALISM.** By Garth M. Rosell. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008. Pp. 268; plates. \$19.99.

To understand a past still so near that some of those involved are still alive, the best we may hope for is an "insider historian" who lived through the events, knew the players personally, and breathed in the *mentalité*, but also has the technical mastery and interpretive prudence to tell the story in a thorough, evenhanded way. In Rosell, twentieth-century evangelicalism has just such a historian. His book narrates reliably and compellingly the emergence during the 1940s and 1950s of fundamentalism's more irenic and culturally-informed child. Though this period has been discussed before in the context of Graham's life and

ministry, this account draws also from John Ockenga material. From it, Rosell draws many insights on the meanings of the evangelical movement in America. This is an insider account. It is marked by its author's certainty that the evangelicalism that it describes was a good thing, that it was indeed "the surprising work of God." It is also a model of critical history: meticulously researched, judiciously told, and fully footnoted. The generous bibliography only adds to its value for scholars and students of evangelicalism. An appropriate text for any course that deals with twentieth-century evangelicalism.

*Chris R. Armstrong*  
*Bethel Seminary*

**THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF ADVERTISING.** By Tricia Sheffield. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. Pp. xvi + 190. \$65.00.

Identity in capitalism is made more by what we consume than by what we produce. In a long interpretive essay, Sheffield pursues the potential religiosity of this consumption. By its manifold modes of conveyance, advertising permeates the culture, replying to and filling vacuums of a largely unregulated space with objects that hawk not only material value, but also spiritual content. Writing in the vein of critical theological studies, Sheffield's argument relies upon writings by S. Jhally, Durkheim, M. Taylor, and Tillich, as well as historical chronologies established by W. Leach and J. Lears in order to name the strategies by which advertising functions as, in Sheffield's language, a divine mediator and consumer sacrament. Rather than Jhally's description of fetish religion, however, totemism is used to describe the ways that advertising takes an ordinary object and makes of it an image. Alienated from the making of the object, the image becomes the commodity-totem to which new cultures of devotion arise. These cultures do lack any formalized ideologies, and the shifting obsolescence of objects rotates products too frequently to construct lasting traditions of iconography. Sheffield is clear: new industrial capitalism did not make a new religion; rather, it evokes religious dimensions in reply to a rapidly changing society. The closing chapter includes Sheffield's response, to argue for disruptive performative identities to destabilize the gender dualities reified in advertising.

*Kathryn Lofton*  
*Yale University*

**NATIVE AMERICANS AND THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT: THE GENDERED POLITICS OF UNLIKELY ALLIANCES.** By Andrea Smith. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008. Pp. xxxix + 356. \$23.95.

In this book, scholar-activist Andrea Smith explores the myriad complications of social and political organizing, using five case studies "as a way of talking about the larger project of rethinking the nature of political strategy and alliance building for progressive purposes." Smith's work is groundbreaking in that she aims to use Native American

studies as “a set of methodological and theoretical approaches that contest academic disciplinary formations with its own frameworks.” By doing so, she deeply complicates scholarly understandings of political/social activism among Native peoples and members of the Christian right, including those who are both Christian and Native. In refusing to accept the typical explanations for the motivations of both groups, Smith enriches and challenges the reader to probe deeper into these “unlikely alliances” and offers up ideas for political activism, as well as new ways to understand the deeper issues of race and gender within social and political activism. Her work challenges scholars to re-think how they construct identity, Native peoples, gender, social activism, Native Christianity, and sovereignty. This book is clearly aimed at future scholar-activists who want to envision a new form of progressive organizing that goes beyond the current model, but it is also immensely useful to scholars of Native, religious, and gender studies who are thinking about different theoretical models for how to address complicated alliances and identities within their own work.

Angela Tarango  
Oberlin College

**PROPHET, PASTOR, AND PATRIARCH: THE RHETORICAL LEADERSHIP OF ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.** By Peter A. Verkruyse. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2005. Pp. xviii + 225. \$39.75.

This clearly-written book offers a rare rhetorical reading of the key discursive works of Alexander Campbell, the most important early leader of the Restoration movement. Verkruyse is mainly interested in Campbell’s use of rhetoric in institutional leadership. Campbell’s authority among the “campbellites” was not based on position or pedigree. Rather, he “gained and then maintained his remarkable influence . . . exclusively through discursive means—sermons, debates, lectures, books, and journals.” Verkruyse tracks the evolution of Campbell’s leadership, contending that “one significant reason why [he] was able to successfully lead his movement from birth to maturity was because his rhetoric generated for him a leadership *ethos* that was progressively adapted to the shifting needs of the movement—first as prophet, then as pastor, and finally as patriarch.” After a chapter sketching Campbell’s early history and the emergence of the Restoration movement, Verkruyse devotes the bulk of his book to rhetorical analysis of Campbell’s best-known texts, including his “Sermon on the Law” (1816), the *Christian Baptist* and *Millennial Harbinger* (both periodicals), and “The Missionary Cause” (1860). He concludes that in “his movement through periods of emergence, growth, and maturity, [Campbell] possessed, above all else, what every rhetor needs in some measure: a keen sense of what the ancients called *kairos*, the ‘timeliness’ of having the word appropriate for the moment.” Offers much insightful commentary on Campbell’s rhetorical skills.

Douglas A. Sweeney  
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

**HOLLYWOOD BE THY NAME: AFRICAN AMERICAN RELIGION IN AMERICAN FILM, 1929-1949.** By Judith Weisenfeld. The George Gund Foundation Imprint in African American Studies. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. Pp. xiii + 341. \$24.95.

Weisenfeld argues that from 1929 to 1949, films depicting African Americans made their religion—usually perceived by whites as unchanging and childlike—central to the project of racializing them. This work contributes to literature on how the classic age of Hollywood policed and enforced American racial identities by showing how important representations of religion were to that process. A chapter on *Hallelujah* (1929), which linked black religion to hypersexuality, precedes a chapter on the wildly popular *The Green Pastures* (1936), which claimed African Americans saw God as black (a claim many black viewers disputed). Both these films were by white directors and later chapters deal with films made by African Americans, many of which delved into themes of rural versus urban and church versus secular entertainment in the context of the Great Migration. A final chapter departs from representations of black religion to discuss *Lost Boundaries* (1949), which invoked white liberal religious thought to promote equality for blacks even while condemning “passing” and reinforcing the naturalness of American racial constructs. Weisenfeld also relates black intellectuals’ heated contestations in the media of film representations of African Americans’ religion, since these representations could change attitudes. Those in film studies and American religion will benefit from this book, as could undergraduate classes.

Brooke Sherrard  
Florida State University

**EVANGELICAL VS. LIBERAL: THE CLASH OF CHRISTIAN CULTURES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST.** By James K. Wellman, Jr. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. xv + 306. \$99.00.

An extended report of “The Churching of the Pacific Northwest: The Rise of Sectarian Entrepreneurs,” in *Religion and Public Life in the Pacific Northwest*, edited by P. O’Connell Killen and M. Silk (Altamira, 2004). This publication presents Wellman’s findings on two subcultures of Protestantism in Washington and Oregon—the conservatives (as opposed to the fundamentalists) and the liberals—from a sampling of the twenty-four fastest growing evangelical and ten liberal Protestant churches. Noting the historical development of Protestant evangelicalism and surveying the demographics, culture and religion of the Pacific Northwest, Wellman modifies existing socio-scientific religious models. Central to his thesis is the interface of religion and culture, and how religious worldviews and ideologies shape social and political boundaries. Rich denominational-ethnographical examples show how worldviews impact believers’ beliefs, identities, morality and rituals, shape church organization, outreach, mission, and adherents’ participation in politics. Wellman’s research methodology could

have been clarified by utilizing more recent religious classification schemes and his report enhanced through critical comparison. Otherwise, *Evangelical vs Liberal* offers a non-conventional analysis of the “open religious market” where Evangelicals and Liberals “compete with each other.”

*Timothy Lim T. N.*

*Regent University School of Divinity*

## South Asia

**JAINISM: THE CREED FOR ALL TIMES.** Dalpat Singh Baya. Jaipur: Prakrit Bharati Academy, 2006. xxv, 376, xiv pp. N.p.

This summary handbook of Jaina tradition provides a glimpse into the new self-conceptualization that has arisen in contemporary Jainism. Relying on primary sources and selective secondary materials published in India, Baya attempts an overall approach to Jainism, favoring neither Śvetāmabara or Digambara sectarian perspectives. The author presents a lightly referenced summary of *Tattvārtha Sūtra* teachings; a list of vows for monks, nuns, and laypersons; synopses of four well-known Jaina legends; and speculations about how Jaina teachings can be applied in the fields of “personal happiness, social harmony, international relations, world peace, leadership and management, personality development and environment.” Though little attention is paid to the history and development of Jainism and virtually no references are included to the significant scholarship on Jainism published outside India in the past thirty years, this book presents an accurate though essentialized view of the tradition.

*Christopher Key Chapple*

*Loyola Marymount University*

**DHARMA, DISORDER AND THE POLITICAL IN ANCIENT INDIA: THE ĀPADDHARMAPARVAN OF THE MAHĀBHĀRATA.** By Adam Bowles. Leiden: Brill, 2007. Pp. xvi + 430. HB. \$156.00.

This volume presents a thorough analysis of the section from the Śāntiparvan of the Mahābhārata on behavior in times of crisis (*āpad-dharma*, MBh 12.129-167 [crit. ed.]). It is presented in a mixture of fable and didactic verse, and is directly germane to the action of kings; indeed, it can be viewed as an appendix to the preceding section on the dharma of kings (*rājadharmaparvan*). The volume is very well written and organized, and Bowles has done a very good job of summarizing and bringing out the import of the various episodes. He states that the texts that compose this section address “political conduct, different conceptions of dharma, social disorder and social cohesion, the status of brāhmins, the participation of the socially marginalized in civil life, the responsibilities of the king and the king’s right attitude to scriptural codes and the oral order they entail.” In a series of long introductory chapters, Bowles discusses the place of didactic passages such as these in their narrative

frame, concluding with J. Fitzgerald and a few others that these are integral parts of an early text of the MBh. In these chapters, he discusses the nature of dharma, of “distress” (*āpat*), how it plays out in roughly the contemporary Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya, and the necessity of *āpaddharma* in the troubled life of Yudhiṣṭhira (with lessons, of course, for the rest of us). This very good book is for research scholars and libraries (note the unfortunate cost). We look forward to hearing more from Bowles in the future.

*Frederick M. Smith*

*University of Iowa*

**YOGA AND THE LUMINOUS: PATANJALI’S SPIRITUAL PATH TO FREEDOM.** By Christopher Key Chapple. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008. Pp. xv + 301. Cloth: \$74.50 Paper: \$21.95

A valuable group of Chapple’s essays (old and new) about Yoga, with a translation (based on one first published in 1990) and grammatical explication of Patañjali’s *Yogasūtras* (*YS*). Chapple is both a scholar and practitioner of Yoga, and one can see elements of both trainings in this book. His goal is both to demonstrate scholarly soundness and attract a broader sympathetic audience. While largely focused on Yoga practices, and their relation to Samkhya thought, the author situates this tradition within, and compares it to, other Indian traditions (particularly Jain and Buddhist), and ends by describing some contemporary expressions of Yoga. Chapters consider a variety of aspects of Yoga including liberation while living (*jīvanmukti*), luminosity, non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), and feminine-gendered terms. Chapple also well illustrates that there are a diversity of practices in the *YS*. The translation is clear and dependable, though a number of terms without real English equivalents remain untranslated (*puruṣa*, *prakṛti*, *samādhi*) and some translations might be deemed idiosyncratic (*pratyaya* as intention or *viśaya* as condition). Many, especially scholars, will find the grammatical analysis helpful. One should note that Chapple plays the roles of reporter and interpreter to differing degrees at different points (indicated for example by the extent to which Patañjali himself is quoted). He emphasizes meditation and ethical practices in Yoga, while at times downplaying (or underplaying) its (often implicit) philosophical underpinnings and historical context, to highlight his view that “essentially, Yoga is technique,” and Yoga has “universal applicability.” Could be used in upper-level undergraduate or graduate seminars and should be part of all library collections.

*Andrew O. Fort*

*Texas Christian University*

**PLANT LIVES: BORDERLINE BEINGS IN INDIAN TRADITIONS.** By Ellison Banks Findly. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2008. Pp. xxxii + 617. Rs. 1095.

In this massive, meticulous study, Findly painstakingly scours Sanskrit literature of the Brahmanical, Jaina, and

American Origins. -the first americans -migration from asia -hunters and gatherers (foragers) -agriculture. Did not develop wheeled vehicles (why). -no mammals to pull carts -last ice age large mammals died or were hunted to extinction. Central and South America. Important crops. Maize and pumpkins, squash, chilies, potatoes, and beans. Strictly speaking, the Americas consists of two continents, North America and South America. Central America, the Caribbean and Greenland are considered part of North America. The double continent is situated entirely in the Western Hemisphere bounded by the Pacific Ocean in the west, the Atlantic Ocean in the east, the Arctic Ocean in the north, and the Southern Ocean in the south. Measured from the northernmost point of Greenland to the southernmost point of South America, it is 15,600 km as the crow flies, making America the most elongated landmass in the world. Area With an area of 42.55 m North America, Central America and South America = The Americas = One single America! Related Questions. More Answers Below. Why is it that in the USA, North and South America are divided whereas in Latin America, it is taught that America is a whole continent? Does this stem from a political and/or a scientific disagreement? When did the people of the New World (North and South America) come to the realization that the Earth is round? Was there any contact between the Native American tribes of North and South America? How did the British settler colonies in North America differ from the colo... Yes, the term "the Americas" is used to encompass everything in the hemisphere regardless of which continent model is used. Central America can also sometimes include the area of Mexico east of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, such as the Yucatan Peninsula. Central America is an isthmus, a narrow strip of land that connects North and South America. At its narrowest point in Dari n, Panama, it is only 30 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. At no point is the isthmus more than 125 miles wide. What Is Middle America? Middle America is another term used to refer to Central America and Mexico. At times, it includes the islands of the Caribbean as well. When looking at the United States alone, 'Middle America' The Central and South American regions are the combined region of Central America super-region and South America super-region. Besides the unique native mechanics here (which are also present in North America super-region) these parts also contain unique religious mechanics for Inti, Mayan and Nahuatl. Nations with these religions need to fully reform their religion before being able to embrace institutions at which point they will be able to keep all the benefits gained from the reforms in addition

The Americas (also collectively called America) is a landmass comprising the totality of North and South America. The Americas make up most of the land in Earth's Western Hemisphere and comprise the New World. Along with their associated islands, the Americas cover 8% of Earth's total surface area and 28.4% of its land area. The topography is dominated by the American Cordillera, a long chain of mountains that runs the length of the west coast. The flatter eastern side of the Americas is dominated by... Trying to decide between Central America or South America tours? Read our comprehensive travel comparison guide for Latin America tours here! Choosing between Latin America tours or, more specifically, ascertaining which of the two Latin American regions are "best to visit" is a very common conundrum for potential visitors, especially first-time ones. The South America vs. Central America: Where Should You Go? is certainly a question we're asked often enough. Yet notwithstanding all our combined personal experiences and wealth of information (which trust us, is impressive) even WE find it difficult to succinctly reply to this question. The answer, intrepid adventurer, isn't nearly as clear-cut as you might imagine: the variables are simply too many. Central America can also sometimes include the area of Mexico east of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, such as the Yucatan Peninsula. Central America is an isthmus, a narrow strip of land that connects North and South America. At its narrowest point in Dari n, Panama, it is only 30 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. At no point is the isthmus more than 125 miles wide. What Is Middle America? Middle America is another term used to refer to Central America and Mexico. At times, it includes the islands of the Caribbean as well. When looking at the United States alone, 'Middle America' refers to the central part of the country. Economically speaking, 'Middle America' may also refer to the middle class of the United States. What Is Spanish America? The Americas, or America, also known as the Western Hemisphere and the New World, comprise the totality of territories in North America and South America. Along with their associated islands, they cover 8% of the Earth's total surface area and 28.4% of its land area. Central America—the narrow southern portion of mainland North America connecting with South America, extending from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to the Isthmus of Panama; alternatively, the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt may delimit the region on the north. Caribbean—the region between southeastern North America and northern South America consisting of the Caribbean Sea, its islands (most of which enclose the sea), and the surrounding coasts. Central and South America. Foraging Societies: 12,000 to 3,000 BC. ca. 14,500 BC: Asian migrants cross Bering Land bridge and enter North America. ca.12,000 BC: Migrants have made their way all the way to Chile. 12,000 to 8,000 BC: Ice Age Foraging Peoples. 8,000 to 6,000 BC: Early Archaic Period.