

food, forgiveness, peacemaking, reading the Bible, envy, gratitude, and failure. Like a meandering stream, the book flows from one topic to the next in a unified whole and accomplishes its stated purpose of stimulating “readers to inspire and cultivate good passions, and to help them discover ways to turn their transitory desires into lifelong loves.” Devotional in nature, the content does not bypass personal application but presents key reflection questions that challenge readers to locate themselves within the various themes. As master storyteller, Wells closes by sharing the personal words of his bishop following a season of deep discouragement in ministry: “You’re going to need time—but you need to learn to dream again.” This is a timely (and necessary) read!

Diane J. Chandler

Regent University School of Divinity

THE PROPHETIC VOICE IN PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY. By Ralph G. Wilburn. Bethany History Series. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012. Pp. 298. Cloth, \$43.37; paper, \$30.56.

This volume is an expansion of Wilburn’s original 1953 lectures on the ecumenical movement delivered at Northwest Christian College. The author asserts that Protestant Christianity has not properly comprehended revelation, and that this miscomprehension has resulted in disunity. He analyzes the major principles of Protestantism historically and theologically in order to demonstrate that at its center is the prophetic, dynamic revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The nine chapters of the book follow three parts: Part 1 is an overview of the development of the Protestant doctrine of revelation, critiquing liberal Protestantism in contrast with Roman Catholic teaching. In Part 2, after arguing against defining revelation as the institutional church or a set of ethical principles or a set of doctrines, Wilburn defines revelation as a dynamic interaction between the word of God and the action of God that empowers a person to experience some eternal truth or meaning about life. Part 4 urges Protestantism toward establishing what is called an undenominational loyalty to the church universal. The focus on the role of Jesus is clear throughout, yet Wilburn is vague about the role of the Spirit. Instead, the prophetic work of the Spirit is substituted with the church and the Scriptures. While recognizing the need for continual renewal by the “Spirit of the Eternal,” the book does not explore recent charismatic developments. This book makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of revelation but needs to be supplemented with other sources.

Barbara Elkjer

Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia

GOD’S GOOD WORLD: RECLAIMING THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION. By Jonathan R. Wilson. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013. Pp. 304. Paper, \$24.99.

In *God’s Good World*, Wilson avers the doctrine of creation has been neglected in the church and the academy and attempts to reclaim the doctrine, carefully resuscitating it by infusing it with the doctrine of redemption. In three parts, revising, developing, and illustrating the doctrine, Wilson’s reclamation serves as a positive impediment to a still rather active Gnostic impulse in contemporary Christianity, which embraces the notion that the material world is fading away and redemption is merely a matter of spiritual rescue from this evaporating planet. Wilson corrects this dangerous impulse with his dialectic of creation and redemption. The result is a worldly doctrine of creation—worldly in the good sense of appreciating the material world precisely in and because of its tangibility. Though God is Spirit, the world he made displays divine genius, wisdom, and beauty in and as substantial stuff like rocks and trees, rivers, animals, and humans. Wilson underscores this beautifully without neglecting the finer points of the already established traditional approaches to the doctrine of creation. His non-Hegelian dialectic enables one to recognize that creation is on its way to being redeemed without also suggesting that it is somehow inherently deformed, less than splendid because corporeal. The book’s strengths include its establishing connections between creation and redemption and the anchoring in the doctrine in the Trinity. The relative neglect of anthropology is a weakness of the book, although it does not overcome the overall usefulness and insight provided.

Chris Emerick

Strayer University

Ethics

JUSTICE NOT GREED. Edited by Pamela Brubaker and Rogate Mishana. Geneva: WCC Publications, 2010. Pp. 224. Paper, \$12.60.

Justice Not Greed is a collection of papers written by members of the World Council of Church’s (WCC) Advisory Group on Economic Matters. This working group—composed of theologians, ethicists, sociologists, and economists—was convened in 2009 to advise the WCC and its members about ways it could help resolve the global financial crisis that was the source of many other economic and ecological crises. The major premise of the book is that the world has embarked on a global economy that has failed to support and achieve God’s mission, which is “to bring good news to the poor and fullness of life to all people and creation.” In light of this economic failure, religious institutions as well as the entire human community must deliberately confront and resolve the moral and ethical dilemmas that cause economic, political, and ecological devastation. The book presents a coordinated effort and compelling call to activism on the part of churches, faith communities, and civil society groups. Activism is imperative since the global financial crisis has led to turmoil and suffering in the forms

of inequality, poverty, and ecological destruction. Above all, *Justice Not Greed* presents thoughtful challenges and proposals for consideration by churches, the larger ecumenical family, and educational institutions, which the WCC believes should assume responsibility for promoting justice and ending greed.

Kevin M. Godfrey
Alvernia University

TOO EXPENSIVE TO TREAT? FINITUDE, TRAGEDY, AND THE NEONATAL ICU. By Charles C. Camosy. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmann, 2010. Pp. v + 221. Paper, \$18.00.

In the challenging realm of neonatal care, Camosy presents a well thought out argument that seeks to articulate a balance between important moral ideals with contemporary realities that often constrain them. He argues that primary importance—i.e., full moral weight—should neither be placed on social factors nor concepts such as “intrinsic dignity.” Rather, multiple factors must be taken into account in order to define precisely when ordinary care becomes extraordinary means of care and, consequently, when moral requirements must be revised. Camosy unmasks broader issues of injustice within the United States health-care system by considering its most vulnerable members. While not all readers will agree with his conclusions, Camosy’s arguments provide an excellent resource for those who wish to understand the social and moral complexities of neonatal care.

Scott M. Davidson
Alvernia University

TRENDS OF SECULARISM IN A PLURALISTIC WORLD. Edited by Jaime Contretras and Rosa Maria Martinez de Codes. Madrid: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2013. Pp. 314. Paper, \$35.33.

This book is a part of a research project sponsored by the Ministry of Sciences and Innovation of Spain. The project was coordinated by the volume’s editors. The foundational principle of this text on secularism is that secularism is not a one-size-fits-all concept. Just as there is a plurality of religions in the world, so, too, is there a plurality of secularisms that must be understood and taken into account when assessing areas of human development and the effects of globalization. Insofar as the world’s religions and secularisms are bound to interface with one another in myriad ways, the relationship between them is necessarily fraught with complexity and tension. The book does a good job of distinguishing the natures and foci of historical and contemporary secularisms. Likewise, it also helps to unpack the effects, positive and negative, that secularisms within a religiously pluralistic world have generated. Among other things, secularism, which means more than the “absence of God,” has implications for areas of human interaction, such as politics, law, science, education, eco-

nomics, globalization, and ethics. The book is divided into two parts. The first draws attention to principles that determine or are determined by the relationship between religions and secularity. The second highlights concrete developments and effects of secularism as it relates historically to specific communities, cultures, and religious confessions. The text will be of particular value to readers interested in political science, international relations, social justice, and interreligious dialogue.

Kevin M. Godfrey
Alvernia University

WALKING THROUGH FIRE: IRAQIS’ STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION. By Peggy Faw Gish. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013. Pp. xvi + 238; plates, maps. Paper, \$28.00.

Gish’s compelling book is a valuable resource for the study of violence, nonviolence, and interfaith peacemaking. Gish served nine years with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), which sends trained international observers into areas of global conflict to work in partnership with local people to transform violence and oppression through non-violent direct action. Her first book, *Iraq: A Journey of Hope and Peace*, 2004, covers the early years of CPT presence in Iraq (October 2002–Spring 2004). *Walking through Fire* consists of two parts: Summer 2004–Spring 2006 in Baghdad and southern Iraq, and Summer 2006, when the team relocates to Iraqi Kurdistan, through the fall of 2011. Gish shares many stories of Iraqi friends and partners, including women’s groups. These stories depict the injustices and suffering of Iraqis during the US occupation as well as the formation and work of the Muslim Peacemaking Team, focused on overcoming Shia-Sunni divisions, and the joint work of Arabs and Kurds to reduce ethnic conflict. Weaving together personal reflection and incisive analysis, Gish deepens our understanding of practices of nonviolent peacemaking and makes a persuasive case for such work, while acknowledging its challenges. Her book is an excellent supplemental text for a variety of undergraduate and graduate religious studies and ethics courses.

Pamela K. Brubaker
California Lutheran University

THE CHRISTIAN CONSUMER: LIVING FAITHFULLY IN A FRAGILE WORLD. By Laura M. Hartman. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xiii + 256. Cloth, \$29.95.

Hartman presents a system she has devised to facilitate virtuous human consumption, specifically, the “throughput” of physical goods by North Americans. Hartman’s method is a logical four-step guide for identifying what should be consumed and how it should be consumed so as to promote the well-being of the other. The four dimensions of virtuous consumption involve avoiding sin, loving one’s neighbor, embracing creation, and envisioning the future. Hartman

also develops her framework for consumer choice by contrasting ascetical approaches from St. Francis of Assisi and Dorothy Day with recent so-called prosperity theology. She argues that consumption has an eschatological character and considers the ecological and economic benefits intrinsic to the celebration of the Eucharist and observance of the Sabbath. A particular strength of this book is that Hartman charitably considers the consumerist practices of multiple Christian traditions. She argues that virtuous approaches to consumption can be realized in a variety of morally appropriate choices. In the conclusion of her book, Hartman illustrates open-ended scenarios in consumerist moral decision-making. The scenarios do not yield definitive answers; they are constructed so that the reader may apply Hartman's four-step guide in order to come away with their own moral conclusions. This work is presented simply enough for a novice reader of consumer ethics to understand, but its substance and depth provide ample fodder for scholars to consider the multiple ethical encounters entailed in day-to-day North American consumerism.

Janet S. Crespi
Duquesne University

THE BEST LOVE OF THE CHILD: BEING LOVED AND BEING TAUGHT TO LOVE AS THE FIRST HUMAN RIGHT. Edited by Timothy P. Jackson. Emory University Studies in Law and Religion, 4. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2011. Pp. xxv + 386. Paper, \$28.00.

This collection offers a valuable contribution to growing scholarly interest in childhood studies and children's rights. The chapters are grouped according to social-psychological, historical, philosophical and theological, and legal perspectives. This variety, which encompasses subjects from psychological considerations of "optimal development," to the Catholic Magisterium's use of "Right to Life" discourse, to Jewish legal history, represents the diversity of academic interest in the subject, yet leaves the collection somewhat fragmented. The contributors, including well-known scholars in their fields, marshal significantly different resources and methodologies. In the hands of each author, the primary theme of love displays different descriptive and normative meanings. The volume does not prioritize any single relationship (e.g., child to parent, children to society, children to the law, etc.). Still, the collection is united by a consistent commitment to consider children as active subjects with rights and corresponding, although emerging, duties. This perspective is offered as a balance to contemporary emphases on negative, or protectionist, children's rights. It prioritizes the development of children's capacities to give and receive love. The book is accessible to general or undergraduate readers and, because chapters can stand alone, offers versatility for potential applications.

Jacob Kohlhaas
Duquesne University

WOUNDED VISIONS: UNITY, JUSTICE, AND PEACE IN THE WORLD CHURCH AFTER 1968. By Jonas Jonson. Translated by Norman A. Hjelm. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. x + 192. Paper, \$24.00.

Jonson utilizes his experience as a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) to assess the progress of the world ecumenical movement from 1968 to the present day. He compares the successes and failures of this movement with the spirit of hope for humanity that emerged in the fourth assembly of the WCC in Uppsala, Sweden on July 4, 1968. Jonson's premise for success in ecumenism is rooted in witness and service to others. He contends that ecumenical failure results from the self-serving focus of shepherding other Christian traditions under the same umbrella, a focus he claims is the praxis of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. Jonson concludes his book by declaring that the sacrament of baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit make unity amid the plurality of Christian churches possible. This book is written from a progressive perspective. Readers from conservative mainstream churches may object to the author's argument that the greatest impediment for the progress of the ecumenical movement is found in the unwillingness of the "undemocratic structures" to give up "independence for the sake of greater unity." However, the work is well written and would be advantageous for courses in interreligious dialogue and ecumenical studies.

Janet S. Crespi
Duquesne University

BEFORE FORGIVENESS: THE ORIGINS OF A MORAL IDEA. By David Konstan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. 192. \$29.99.

Konstan's thesis is that the modern idea of forgiveness, defined as "a bilateral process involving a confession of wrongdoing, evidence of sincere repentance, and a change of heart or moral perspective . . . on the part of the offender, together with a comparable alteration in the forgiver," did not exist in the ancient or medieval West, whether in Greek and Roman philosophy or biblical and Christian literature. To demonstrate this, he carefully studies Greek and Latin words used for forgiveness, first carefully examining philosophy, drama, comedy, and other literature, and then reviewing biblical and Christian materials. Konstan locates the source of the modern idea of forgiveness in Kant and thus claims that it is quite recent. This brings him to his broader agenda, which he reveals only in the last two pages and does not detail, namely, that such recent ideas as restorative punishment in criminal justice and forgiveness in truth and reconciliation commissions may serve "a particular ideological function in today's world." This is a very well-done philological study that nonetheless leaves the reader wondering what Konstan's actual target might be.

Gerald S. Vigna
Alvernia University, Reading, PA

PROPHETS OF THE POSTHUMAN: AMERICAN FICTION, BIOTECHNOLOGY, AND THE ETHICS OF PERSONHOOD. By Christina Bieber Lake. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013. Pp. xix + 243. \$38.00.

Lake produces an arresting social commentary on the ascendancy of transhumanism and posthumanism—technoproggressives. Blending fictional works with technoproggressive aspirations, Lake contrasts different notions of the “good life.” Technoproggressives assume a utilitarian ethic coupled with a strong sense of autonomy steeped in a consumerist mentality. The result is a view of human fulfillment that differs radically from traditional notions of what it means to achieve the good life. Lake utilizes fictional works to explore the human condition as it relates to technology because fiction may grant a vision of the future—both desirable and undesirable. Fiction may reveal both the promises and perils of technological advances. The book is not a pure philosophical argument against technoproggressives; nevertheless, an overall argument emerges from the various threads. A concluding chapter weaving these threads together would greatly benefit the text. Her objection to technoproggressives is not so much the specifics of what technology promises, but rather that technoproggressives presuppose a particular view of the good life and human fulfillment. Technoproggressives make autonomous decisions paramount. Lake, however, argues that the good life is relative to personhood and needs to be defined in terms of love and relationship to a community. She thinks that the good life is found in loving others as they are. It is not and cannot be found in loving ourselves as we may be through technological advances. This book will reward anyone interested in a Christian approach to the challenge of technological enhancement.

Richard Wilson
Duquesne University

CLIMATE JUSTICE: ETHICS, ENERGY, AND PUBLIC POLICY. By James B. Martin-Schramm. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010. Pp. vii + 232. Paper, \$20.00.

Climate Justice weaves theological insight from the Christian faith tradition and specific ethical principles with an analysis of climate change concerns. These concepts inform and challenge Christian believers to advocate for more just energy policies. Martin-Schramm confirms the urgency that climate change poses and asserts that long-term interest warrants significant changes to energy consumption and production. Nonetheless, Martin-Schramm deftly identifies the tensions that economic considerations bring to bear on pragmatic and ethical aspects of climate change. Shifts in attitudes and policies around greenhouse emissions, not dissimilar from other justice issues, will require true willingness to bear collective sacrifice. By exploring details regarding consumption, alternative approaches, and policy development, Martin-Schramm presents a

balanced approach between theoretical ideals and practical realities. His book is a must-read for Christian believers, particularly those who must yet be convinced regarding moral imperatives around energy usage.

Scott M. Davidson
Alvernia University

BIOETHICS: A PRIMER FOR CHRISTIANS, THIRD EDITION. By Gilbert Meilaender. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. xiii + 133. Paper, \$16.00.

Although the third edition contains only a relatively small amount of updating and revision, Meilaender’s book remains an excellent introduction to a distinctly Christian view of many issues central to modern bioethics. The only new content introduced in this edition regards the protection of Christian conscience in the practice of medicine. While each chapter and the overall project are short in terms of page length, Meilaender’s treatment of each selected issue is thoughtful and thorough. Even topics that would seem to have an obvious positive ethical evaluation (such as organ donation) are shown to be complex in practice and difficult to declare unquestionably good. Meilaender compels the reader to consider the complex implications of a Christian perspective in a world of rapidly expanding medical possibilities. Although specialists will certainly benefit from considering Meilaender’s views, it is clear that the intended readership is novices to bioethics. This book is an excellent resource for any individual seeking a better understanding of how Christians consider specific bioethical issues. It would also be an excellent addition to any college-level course dealing with Christian bioethics.

Corey R. Harris
Alvernia University

COMMANDING GRACE: STUDIES IN KARL BARTH’S ETHICS. Edited by Daniel L. Migliore. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2010. Pp. x + 255. Paper, \$30.00.

Migliore edits this volume of essays by esteemed authors from the United States and Western Europe, in which each scholar explores the intersection of doctrine and theological ethics in Barth’s writings. Many of these essays were first produced for the “Karl Barth and Theological Ethics” conference held at Princeton Theological Seminary, June 22–25, 2008. The title of the work comes from Barth’s own writings, in which “the commanding God is the gracious God.” And so it follows that this volume explores this “commanding grace” across a variety of areas of interest, including just war, democracy, and crime and punishment. This volume, however, is not only a series of case studies on different ethical issues, but seeks to explore, extrapolate, and challenge some of Barth’s theological underpinnings in his ethics. These topics all circle human/divine freedoms and issues of salvation/atonement/grace. Yet what makes this book enjoyable is the regular back and forth between

authors as one responds to another. These responses are respectful and therefore more of a dance than a wrestling match, but there are moments of legitimate disagreement that help clarify methods of interpretation. The only detraction for this work is the level of Barthian sophistication one needs to bring to it. Migliore's introductory essay strives to instruct more than persuade, but students new to Barth will find themselves drowning and potentially disinterested in these essays.

Jeffrey A. Schooley
Duquesne University

CHRISTIANS AND WAR: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH'S TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES. By A. James Reimer. Facets Series. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010. Pp. xvi + 192. Paper, \$9.99.

As Reimer makes clear in his introduction, he sets out to provide a historical overview of the Christian church's perspectives on war and peace. This short work, however, is never intended to be an exhaustive account, but "rather to make accessible to the lay reader a sense of the central issues and arguments over the past two thousand years." Reimer's own pacifist tendencies—coming from his participation in the Anabaptist–Mennonite tradition—are not ignored, but are tempered in favor of thoughtful recapitulation and exposition on this mammoth topic. He generally succeeds in this objectivity. Reimer's greatest work in this text is to blend historical incidences with theological and philosophical insights. It is not uncommon, therefore, to find one paragraph presenting historical data and the next paragraph presenting a theological response from that day. In moving between text and context, which he does seamlessly, he provides the reader with a compelling argument regarding the ways events shape thoughts and thoughts shape events. This back and forth shift is most interesting as he chronologically brings the reader into the "Postmodern" twenty-first century of war and terrorism. This chapter may feel incomplete, but that is largely because it is still the world in which today's students and scholars alike are living. In conclusion, this text provides a fine introduction to "Christians and War," while using an engaging methodology that keeps the reader quickly moving through its pages.

Jeffrey A. Schooley
Duquesne University

CHRISTIAN ETHICS: A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION, SECOND EDITION. By J. Philip Wogaman. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011. Pp. xv + 376. Paper, 35.00.

Wogaman's first edition of *Christian Ethics: A Historical Introduction* (1993) met with critical praise as well as pleadings. Some of the leading ethicists at that time gave their well-established colleague the honor of their praise, but in nearly every review, there was some mention of who or what was left out of this historical survey of seminal thinkers and

movements. As the preface to the second edition makes clear, Wogaman agrees. Nevertheless, much of the first four sections of this newest volume remain untouched, chiefly because of the limitations of such a work. The most significant changes are the inclusion of a chapter on Orthodox Christian ethics and a necessary recasting of the final section (previously "Christian Ethics toward the Third Millennium") to the more aptly titled "Christian Ethics in the Third Millennium." In addition to these changes, the chapter on twentieth-century Christian ethics finds the inclusion of W. G. Muellder and two "transitional figures" in J. M. Gustafson and S. Hauerwas. The final subsection displays the most significant and helpful changes. Previously, Wogaman noted six tensions in Christian ethics. In today's volume, he has removed this section in favor of topical evaluations, including militant Islam, nuclear proliferation, globalization, the internet, genetic engineering, and more. The result is a more culturally relevant and informed text. This book is best suited for the classroom, although there is little doubt that it can serve as a useful and handy reference guide for the established scholar.

Jeffrey A. Schooley
Duquesne University

Arts, Literature, Culture, and Religion

SCREENING THE AFTERLIFE: THEOLOGY, ESCHATOLOGY AND FILM. By Christopher Deacy. New York: Routledge, 2012. Pp. xii + 188. Cloth, \$125.00; paper, \$34.95.

On the cover a door stands ajar, allowing light from beyond to spill into the otherwise dark room. The image evokes the question of what lies beyond this life. Deacy brings the conversation of theologians about resurrection, heaven and hell, the immortality of the soul and/or body, near-death experiences, and related matters into conversation with the eschatological speculation in films. The author does not limit himself to films that are explicitly about the afterlife such as *What Dreams May Come* (1998). Noting the debate in both modern and ancient theology about whether eschatology is at least partly already realized he engages earthly heavens and hells in films like *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994). Deacy demonstrates that concerns about individual identity beyond death and to how it might be tied to memory and to the body, that seem to have dropped out of theological currency, remain vital in the popular imagination. At his best, Deacy goes beyond using film to illustrate a theological argument to demonstrate that engagement with film can expand the theological imagination. One limitation is that Deacy draws on films almost entirely as the narrative source of ideas or philosophical propositions. He gives little esthetic attention to the films he discusses and one longs for a consideration of how heavens and hells might be as much