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Cover: “Brother Columba Apostolate” booth featured at the National Catholic Education Association convention in 1954. Courtesy of the Midwest Province Archives of the Brothers of Holy Cross.

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Darren Dochuk



David Lantigua

We are delighted to enter into our new role as co-directors of the Cushwa Center during this exciting time in the life of the University of Notre Dame. It is certainly an auspicious moment where Catholic studies at Notre Dame is concerned. Led by Provost John McGreevy, a longtime friend of Cushwa, Notre Dame is actively extending its commitment to the study and understanding of Catholicism across the Americas and on a global scale amid

the social and ecological challenges of the 21st century. Notre Dame's drive to be the preeminent Catholic research university is indeed wrapped up in its ambition to be a force for good in the world, and we at Cushwa could not be more anxious to contribute to this mission.

While it may be a stretch to say that the Cushwa Center inspired McGreevy's vision, there is little doubt that the vision is shared. Cushwa is undoubtedly poised to play a crucial role in its implementation. This has a lot to do with the foundation of engagement that Kathleen Sprows Cummings, our predecessor, established. In the past several years, Cushwa has been the premier center nationally and internationally for the study of American Catholicism; its annual Cushwa and Hibernian lectures, multi-year projects, postdoctoral fellowships, travel grants, and regular conferencing in Rome have allowed the center to extend its reach. This semiannual *American Catholic Studies Newsletter* is yet another mainstay of the Cushwa Center that we are grateful to steward following the splendid, painstaking work put in over the years by Kathy, assistant director Shane Ulbrich, and many others, not least our departing postdoctoral research associate, Philip Byers. (Congratulations, Philip, on the new job!)

As we were preparing to assume this co-directorship, we were poignantly reminded of the legacy that comes with it. On May 7, 2023, Jay P. Dolan, founder of the Cushwa Center, passed away at the age of 87 (read Cushwa's *in memoriam* on page 20). Family, friends, and colleagues gathered from around the country for a funeral Mass, burial, and luncheon at Notre Dame on June 16 to mourn his passing, share memories, and console one another. He left behind a record of remarkable impact on his craft and guild, as well as on his family—the Notre Dame family included. Besides guiding the center, providing leadership

—continued on following page

The University of Notre Dame's Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism seeks to promote and encourage the scholarly study of the American Catholic tradition through instruction, research, publication, and the collection of historical materials. Named for its benefactors, Charles and Margaret Hall Cushwa of Youngstown, Ohio, the center strives to deepen understanding of the historical role and contemporary expressions of the Catholic religious tradition in the United States.

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in the Department of History, and mentoring numerous undergraduate and graduate students, Dolan also published extensively. Among his many books is his magnum opus, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present*, published in 1985. In this “people’s history” of American Catholicism, which built on his previous studies of Catholic immigrants, Dolan refocused Catholic history on the lived religion and realities of the lay American Catholic, signaling (indeed, defining!) a new post-Vatican II era of Catholic historiography. Dolan’s was a magisterial history that remains the standard, and an essential read for anyone trying to grasp the ground-level workings of the Church and its profound influence on modern American culture.

As we embark on our tenure as co-directors, Jay Dolan’s achievements will continue to inspire. His work bringing together scholars of American religious history will be memorialized through the renaming of Cushwa’s marquee semiannual event in his honor: Starting in spring 2024, we will gather twice a year for the “Jay P. Dolan Seminar in American Religion” (see the announcement on page 23). Further on, we look forward to celebrating the 50th anniversary of Cushwa’s founding in 2025.

We will do our best to honor Dolan’s legacy in quieter ways as well, most importantly by approaching our work as historians of Catholicism and scholars of modern religion with a shared passion for better understanding the lives of people of faith in their time and place. As Cushwa’s past directors have all done, we will strive to make sense of the “American Catholic experience” in broader contexts of interdisciplinary, ecumenical, and transnational exchange. Beginning with faculty and students at Notre Dame, Cushwa will serve the common good of the University based on the connections the center fosters: bridging North and South America as well as collaborating across the Atlantic; dialoguing across disciplines for fresh perspective and insight; and engaging ecumenically and with the media on matters ranging from migration and democracy to climate and sustainability.

As Ph.D. graduates of Notre Dame—David in theology, Darren in history—we have a deep appreciation of the outsized role that the Cushwa Center has played in shaping the University’s commitment to the study of Catholicism. Alongside Shane Ulbrich and MaDonna Noak, we are excited to do our part to ensure the continued flourishing of Cushwa in conventional and novel ways, with all the responsibilities and spirit of service that entails.



Darren Dochuk

Co-Director, Cushwa Center
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David Lantigua

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Spring 2023 at the Cushwa Center

BY PHILIP BYERS

Book Launch: John T. McGreevy and Samuel Moyn

On Friday, January 27, the university community gathered in the Downes Ballroom in Corbett Family Hall to celebrate the publication of *Catholicism: A Global History from the French Revolution to Pope Francis* by John T. McGreevy, the Charles and Jill Fischer Provost and Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame. Kathleen Sprows Cummings welcomed attendees before Elisabeth Köll (William Payden Collegiate Chair and history department chair) offered brief opening comments and introduced featured speaker Samuel Moyn, Chancellor Kent Professor of Law and History at Yale University.

Moyn began by describing the sense of “enormous privilege” he felt in being invited to highlight a work of scholarship—and a scholar—he so admires. He commended the “constantly expanding” range of interests that have marked McGreevy’s career, as his books have moved from a focus on individual cities to a national story, followed by focus on an internationally active religious order, and finally culminating in a global story of a global institution. He also lauded McGreevy’s willingness to tell a story that other scholars have eschewed: “In the profusion of global histories . . . the omission of Catholicism is pretty telling. Why wasn’t it the first topic of the new global history?” Moyn asked rhetorically. In the process of filling that void, McGreevy’s book puts on “a kind of clinic in how one person can take on a global institution and tell its story in synthetic ways,” and Moyn devoted the remainder of his remarks to detailing several lessons he gleaned from that clinic.

Some of Moyn’s observations involved the nuts and bolts of McGreevy’s writing, including the “clear and elegant” prose, the well-constructed, self-contained chapters filled with both well-



Samuel Moyn. Photo by Matt Cashore/University of Notre Dame.

known and obscure actors, and the range of sites and locations that underscore Catholicism’s global reach while still acknowledging the influence exerted by a “transatlantic core.” Moyn also highlighted McGreevy’s thematic choices, from his consistent attention to the interplay between innovation and tradition to his recognition that Catholicism’s story was never “insular” but always in conversation with surrounding cultures. He praised as well the moral qualities that McGreevy brought to the book, including his foundational “ethical precept” of generously crediting the specialists who have built the field of modern Catholic history and his commitment to writing “with sympathy” about even those historical actors whose opinions McGreevy does not share. Altogether, these many virtues yielded what Moyn called a “magisterial achievement” and a major contribution to the field of global history.



John McGreevy signs a copy of his book during the reception. Photo by Matt Cashore/University of Notre Dame.

In brief responding remarks, McGreevy opened with expressions of thanks: to his wife, Jean McManus (Catholic Studies Librarian, Hesburgh Libraries); to Moyn for his comments; to Cummings and the Cushwa Center for hosting the gathering; to the librarians who aided his research and the faculty colleagues, including Köll, who critiqued his writing and arguments; and finally to Notre Dame President Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C. He then reflected on the two catalysts behind the book, the first being his conviction about Catholicism's unique status as a global body: "No institution is as multicultural or multilingual; few touch as many people . . . only the Catholic Church includes extensive networks of people and institutions in Warsaw, Nairobi, and Mexico City, as well as the most remote sections of the Amazon." Secondly, he quoted Pope Francis to observe that the present moment is not "an era of change, but a change of era." The 21st century, McGreevy predicted, will witness the "reimagin[ing]" of Catholicism as a global institution, and he hopes that Notre Dame, its people, and even possibly his book might factor into that process of reimagination. The event concluded with a buffet lunch and a book-signing with the author.

Cushwa Center Lecture: Maureen H. O'Connell

On Tuesday afternoon, March 21, La Salle University ethicist Maureen O'Connell delivered the annual Cushwa Center Lecture to a crowd assembled in McKenna Hall. Drawing from her recently published book, *Undoing the Knots: Five Generations of American Catholic Anti-Blackness* (Beacon, 2022), O'Connell told a story about the "interplay between Irish American Catholicism and anti-Blackness" through the lens of her own family's arrival to and gradual immersion in greater Philadelphia.

When O'Connell began her research into the topic, she already knew some basics regarding the history of Irish Catholics and race in the United States. She anticipated that she would find evidence of how her Irish ancestors had assimilated to American culture, "becoming white," she said, and that their assimilation would have occurred "at the expense of others." She assumed, though, that the process would have lacked "intentionality" and mainly been confined to the initial generation of her immigrant forebears. Instead, what she found were multiple generations engaged in "actively and continually rejecting Blackness and Black people." The work of "remaining white," she explained, "is an ongoing project."

To introduce the audience to that project, O'Connell highlighted three parishes in three historical periods: Christ's Church (today St. Agnes) in West Chester during the mid-19th century, St. Stephen's in north Philadelphia during the early 20th century, and St. Francis of Assisi in Norristown during the mid-20th century. Christ's Church existed only 11 miles north of the Mason-Dixon line in what O'Connell called an "emancipation borderland," a vital hub on the Underground Railroad and a site of regular tension "between abolitionists, free black people, and southern slave-owners and slave-catchers." Yet all this local flux does not appear in the Christ's Church historical record, a fact O'Connell attributed in part to resistance by certain contemporary Catholic leaders. The Irish-born



Maureen O'Connell

Bishop of Philadelphia, Francis Patrick Kenrick (c. 1797–1863), viewed chattel slavery not as an institution to overthrow but as a structure to work within, focusing his efforts on strategies for catechizing enslaved populations rather than arguments for emancipation. “In Kenrick,” O’Connell observed, “we learn that proximity to positions of power exercised over others obfuscates the possibilities of building power *with* others.”

From the outlying area of Chester County, O’Connell moved to St. Stephen’s in the heart of north Philadelphia, highlighting how Catholics like Cardinal Dennis Dougherty (1865–1951) sought to use the national sesquicentennial celebration in 1926 to, in O’Connell’s words, “publicly attest to Catholic alignment” with the country. At the time, that meant alignment with white Christianity, a categorization that had often excluded Catholics whom many Americans suspected would “dilute the native Protestant ethos” of the country. If public homilies and other pronouncements during the sesquicentennial took pains to argue that Catholics could act out their fervent patriotism while fully retaining their religious distinctives, Catholic participation in

the festivities also demonstrated what O’Connell deemed “implicit compliance” with white supremacy. When three women from St. Peter Claver, the city’s first Black parish, twice wrote to Cardinal Dougherty regarding participation in an upcoming Catholic sesquicentennial exhibit, they were ignored; at the bottom of their second letter, his secretary wrote, “the Archbishop does not intend to take a hand in this matter.”

O’Connell’s account of St. Francis of Assisi was her most personal, as it dealt with her maternal grandparents and her mother. Archival research had led her to discover a 1950 news clipping from the *Norristown Times Herald* titled “Minstrel Time’ Presented By St. Francis School Pupils,” describing a St. Patrick’s Day event the day prior with her mother and uncle listed as performers. Early American minstrel shows, as performed by Protestants, had often linked Black and Irish Americans as equally worthy of mockery, but over time Irish immigrants themselves appropriated the minstrel show, and their performances conveyed a distinction between Irish traits as “fitting for America” versus the “permanent otherness” of Black Americans. The minstrel show at St. Francis of Assisi was hosted in the parish hall, “the place where social capital was continually generated in the parish,” making clear that Catholic Philadelphia was “white territory” to be entered only on white Catholic terms. All this evidence persuaded O’Connell of the stubbornness of these “Celtic knots” of anti-Blackness and of the urgency to “excavate this history and [to] name it.”

O’Connell then engaged the audience in a discussion about the lecture. Tom Kselman (history emeritus) asked whether Catholic anti-Blackness frequently occurred through “crude public articulation” or more often via subtle language and behavior. While the latter was most common, O’Connell referenced evidence she had uncovered of explicit racism in a Jesuit parish in north Philadelphia attended by her paternal great-grandparents. Peter Cajka (American studies) asked O’Connell to reflect on the methodological challenges she faced trying to write academically about something as personal and sensitive as

family history. O’Connell cited lessons she has gleaned from community organizers in their application of anti-racist praxis. The sharing of “story,” she asserted, is “the most compelling thing that you can do to build power.” Finally, Deacon Mel Tardy (Center for University Advising) thanked O’Connell and tied her findings to current events, including Catholic spaces where Black presence is still unwelcome—O’Connell agreed, noting that as recently as 2020, some participants wore Blackface during Philadelphia’s annual New Year’s Day Mummers Parade. After O’Connell’s closing comment, Cushwa Center director Kathleen Sprows Cummings thanked O’Connell for the lecture and encouraged all those in attendance to continue discussing themes of Catholic identity and anti-racism.

Seminar in American Religion: Kathryn Gin Lum

The Cushwa Center hosted its semiannual gathering of the Seminar in American Religion on Saturday morning, April 15, when attendees convened in McKenna Hall to discuss Kathryn Gin Lum’s *Heathen: Religion and Race in American History* (Harvard, 2022). After greeting the audience, Kathleen Sprows Cummings opened the morning by introducing the seminar’s two commentators, Emily Clark (Gonzaga University) and Korey Garibaldi (Notre Dame).

Clark spoke first and began by describing how the book had forced her to reconsider her own scholarship and the larger field of American religious history. The theme from *Heathen* which most stood out to Clark was the significance of “language and its relationship to materiality.” If scholars in communication studies first showed how language both mediates and creates knowledge of the world, Gin Lum’s book took that insight a step further, proving that “ideas and materiality go hand-in-hand.” While language frequently creates in-groups and out-groups, that dynamic assumes special import when wielded by those with social power. The “cultish” behavior evinced by practitioners of CrossFit, for example, matters

less than the binary between the heathen and the righteous. In Clark’s summary, the book persuaded her that “language plus power can equal social or physical death.” One of Clark’s remaining questions after completing *Heathen*—which largely emphasized white Protestants—was how these dynamics have played out among Catholics.

Next, Garibaldi prefaced his remarks with gratitude for being part of the conversation; before accepting his faculty appointment at Notre Dame, Garibaldi had done little reading in American religion, but books like Gin Lum’s have now transformed his interpretations of U.S. history. He commended the book’s range, both chronologically as its “extraordinary timespan” covered content from ancient Greece to the COVID-19 pandemic and geographically as Gin Lum’s sources enabled her to tell a “truly global history.” Garibaldi especially appreciated the treatment of those figures, such as David Walker and Frantz Fanon, who reappropriated the term and interpreted “heathen” culture as a standing rebuke against the depravities of white Christianity. Like Clark, Garibaldi wondered whether future scholarship might apply the same categories of critique to U.S. Catholics, whose historical exclusion of Black Americans was no less intentional or concerted.

In response, Gin Lum thanked the Cushwa Center and both commentators for the chance to discuss her work. She affirmed Garibaldi’s observation that the book—in the writing as well as in the reading—was a “hard history,” one she was inspired to pursue in part by her own experience as an insider-outsider: “an outsider to whiteness,” but (in her youth) an insider to the type of church communities she describes. She also agreed with Clark regarding the central role of language in the book’s narrative, citing the prior work of scholars such as Charles Long and Sylvester Johnson. She views *Heathen* as a work of synthesis “trying to bring that scholarship together.” To the questions regarding Catholics, Gin Lum described how context often shaped the facts. In some cases, Protestant observers believed Catholics were too quick to accept conversion, a posture that allowed for the continuation of



Kathryn Gin Lum

“heathen” practices; in others, Catholics seemed more inclined than Protestants to believe certain peoples fundamentally incapable of shedding their heathenness. That was not necessarily a point in Protestants’ favor, however, as the notion of “changeability” was often used to “rationalize colonization and all of its attendant brutalities.”

After a coffee break, the seminar resumed for a time of questions and answers. Tom Kselman (Notre Dame) opened proceedings with a tribute to outgoing director Kathleen Sprows Cummings, praising her leadership of the center’s programming, her work in extending the center’s global partnerships, her mentorship of junior scholars, and her scholarship on and elevation of issues related to women, gender, and power.

Several scholars then asked questions regarding Gin Lum’s approach to emphasizing historical continuity rather than change. Darryl Hart (Hillsdale College) wondered whether attention to change over time might have clarified important differences between, for example, missionaries active during the early American republic and

those operating as proxies of the New Imperialism, and Mary Cayton (Miami University, emeritus) praised Gin Lum’s book while also challenging the assertion that continuity rather than change has marked the period following 1960. Gin Lum answered these interlocutors in detail, while in each case acknowledging the rhetorical intentionality behind her narrative decisions. “Focusing primarily on change lets too much off the hook,” she said, explaining that she wished to challenge readers with details of continuity.

Another batch of participants posed questions about terminology: Emily Conroy-Krutz (Michigan State University) asked if it matters that missionaries not only used “heathen” as a catch-all designation but also theorized “hierarchies of heathenism” involving degrees of changeability; Tom Tweed (Notre Dame) addressed the book’s approach to the broad concepts of “race” and “religion”; and David Lantigua (Notre Dame) discussed the “fluid” nature of heathen as a category and especially its “reflexive” embrace by certain characters in the book. Gin Lum affirmed these questions, repeatedly highlighting the subject matter’s complexity. She described how workshopping prior drafts of the book had guided her approach to questions of “lumping or splitting” various heathen subgroups. She also recounted her experiences translating her research about religion to historians who are often skeptical of its significance, and she analyzed the rise of terms such as “ethnic” or “Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC)” as potential new manifestations of a “tradition of . . . reclaiming in this kind of reflexive way the notion of ‘heathen’ as a lumping category that is not something to be ashamed of.” With these and many more questions filling 90 minutes of vibrant discussion, Cummings finally closed the session by thanking Gin Lum and encouraging attendees to return in the fall for the next iteration of the seminar.

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Philip Byers was a postdoctoral research associate at the Cushwa Center from 2020 to 2023.



Brother Columba O'Neill, C.S.C., c. 1915. Courtesy of the Midwest Province Archives of the Brothers of Holy Cross.

'Thanks to the Sacred Heart'

**Notre Dame's
Cobbler
and the
American
Catholics**

Who Asked for His Prayers

BY MICHAEL SKAGGS

Are American Catholics on the verge of getting a new saint of their own? And what can historians learn from the process of an unlikely man going from material rags to spiritual riches?

John O’Neill was born in November 1848 in the coal mining town of Mackeysburg, Pennsylvania. A “congenital foot abnormality” precluded O’Neill from participating in the industry that employed most local men, so he took up work with the town cobbler and learned the shoe trade. Eventually he left Mackeysburg, working his way across the country westward as an itinerant cobbler, spending significant periods of time in Colorado and California. During his travels he learned about the trades education offered by the Brothers of Holy Cross at the University of Notre Dame; acting on a longstanding but as yet unarticulated sense of vocation to religious life, O’Neill wrote to the University. Correspondence turned into meetings with the religious congregation’s novice master and Father Edward Sorin, founder of Notre Dame. O’Neill entered the novitiate for the Brothers of Holy Cross in September 1874, taking the religious name Columba. Thus began O’Neill’s decades-long “dual career”—as cobbler to the Notre Dame community and those the Holy Cross fathers served and as a man renowned for the apparent efficacy of his prayers for those in need.



Several of Brother Columba’s handmade shoemaking tools displayed at the Midwest Province Archives of the Brothers of Holy Cross.

O’Neill longed for a far-off assignment, offering to go to India or to work with now-Saint Damien De Veuster, the Belgian priest who spent the last 15 years of his life among those suffering from Hansen’s disease on Moloka’i. Instead of a posting in the Pacific, O’Neill was placed at St. Joseph’s Orphan Asylum in nearby Lafayette, Indiana. He served the children there for six years, returning to Notre Dame in 1885. As his biographers have written, “not much happened” for this “brother living a simple life, praying in secret, making and repairing shoes. He seldom stepped foot outside of Notre Dame, except for occasional visits to his sister Eliza’s parish, St. Mary’s in Keokuk, [Iowa].”¹

O’Neill’s role as cobbler to Notre Dame occupied much of his time for the next three decades. He also spent two years as caretaker to the aging Father Sorin, until Sorin’s death in 1893.

Even while O’Neill kept the young men of the school and the Holy Cross community well shod, he built a reputation for great holiness elsewhere. He began and maintained an industrious operation of crafting and distributing small devotional badges depicting the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus; he claimed to have made about 10,000 of the former and 30,000 of the latter over the course of his life.² He also kept up a voluminous correspondence connected to this devotional operation. Through this correspondence—which includes over 10,000 letters written to him, archived today by the Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross—O’Neill carried out a ministry of prayer for decades, connecting to men and women across the United States who contacted him in need of prayer for a wide variety of problems and crises.

O’Neill died at Notre Dame in November 1923 of long-term complications from influenza, which he had contracted during the postwar pandemic. At the time of his death, he had already secured a reputation as a man of great simplicity and deep holiness. An oration delivered at his funeral by Holy Cross priest Charles O’Connell made clear the utter plainness of O’Neill:

To the eyes of the world we gather merely about the mortal remains of an old man whose life was of no great moment, no special service to his fellowman. His no distinction of birth, or wealth, or education,

as the world sees it. He wrote nothing, he discovered nothing, he invented nothing, he contributed nothing to the progress of mankind.

Yet of this man who had “contributed nothing,”

His name was known to thousands . . . the notice of his death is carried by the public press throughout the land, and the religious family of which he was a member unites to give him all the honor within our power to bestow. For the past two days the faithful in a constant stream have approached his bier and touched their rosaries and medals to his hands, or stood in rapt devotion, looking at his plain and peaceful face.³

A hundred years later, Brother Columba’s religious congregation would once more attempt “to give him all the honor within our power to bestow.”

The Brothers of Holy Cross are seeking a saint.

Saints for the Church and for Holy Cross

How did utter mundanity come to be paired with great sanctity? And why should historians, especially those not within the Catholic tradition themselves or those working on topics beyond Catholicism, give attention to the internal system of recognizing sanctity that is unique to the Catholic Church? The very existence of such a process has long been a point of significant theological friction between Catholics and non-Catholic Christians. Catholics historically have been (and still are) accused of “worshiping” saints, seen by some as an act of blatant idolatry. But in the internal logic of Catholic theology, Catholics pray *to*—not worship—those they believe to be in the presence of God. They believe these men and women to be advocates, not unlike themselves, who can represent the living in a way otherwise impossible. Furthermore, those who pray to the saints view the process as little different from asking a friend to pray for some need—it just so happens, as Catholics believe, that these “friends” have already left their earthly lives. Historians of religion would do well to attend closely to this nuanced relationship between living human beings and the afterlife, a relationship understood by the largest proportion of the largest religion of the world to be built on a scriptural foundation. But there is a significant difference between persons an individual Catholic might think can intercede for them with God and those the Church has formally named as saints. And gaining recognition as a saint is no easy process.

The road to sainthood is long, complicated, and costly for those who support the prospective saint, and it never has an assured destination. There are multiple criteria that must be met as the individual in question progresses through several stages. Within the Roman Catholic legal structure, once the competent local authority—in most cases, a diocesan bishop—consents to begin the process of researching and investigating the person for canonization, the person is given the title “Servant of God.” From there they may progress through “Venerable” and “Blessed” until—if the cause is successful—they become “Saint.”⁴ Importantly for historians of religion, the Catholic Church does not presume to have done anything by declaring a person a saint. Instead, as Kathleen Sprows Cummings notes in her 2019 book, *A Saint of Our Own*,

In the eyes of Catholic believers, canonization reflects a truth about an individual’s afterlife in its literal sense. In raising a candidate to the “honors of the altar,” the church affirms that the saint, having practiced certain virtues to a heroic degree, passed immediately upon death into the company of God and all the saints, where he or she is an advocate for and inspiration to the faithful on earth.⁵

In other words, canonization is neither more nor less than an acknowledgement of an existing state of affairs. Catholics do not believe canonization somehow “promotes” a person to heavenly bliss;

instead, canonization adds the person to the list—or *canon*—of those the Church has formally acknowledged as being in that state.

Why was O'Neill's name "known to thousands," as O'Connell put it? And what sources remain for historians to learn more about him?

Today, the Brothers of Holy Cross are working hard to gain that recognition for Columba O'Neill. That project must answer a key question: Why was O'Neill's name "known to thousands," as O'Connell put it? And what sources remain for historians to learn more about him? Researching a figure like O'Neill presents certain challenges. While he was of intense interest to those who sought his prayers

and to others in the Catholic world, his fame did not rise to the level of a contemporary religious figure like Billy Sunday. He made several appearances in the *South Bend Tribune*, the newspaper local to Notre Dame. An April 1916 article on a shrine to the Sacred Heart that O'Neill established in Notre Dame's historic Log Chapel mentioned "the many apparently miraculous cures that are continually being wrought through Brother Columba."⁶ Upon his death in November 1923, the same paper called him a "miracle man" and noted that "many of his clients loudly proclaimed that they were cured through his ministrations and assistance."⁷ With significant interest in the Catholic Church's process of canonization, the *Tribune* reported in 1934 that O'Neill could "become Notre Dame's first saint," and that "in all weather pilgrims are seen to be kneeling at his grave."⁸ The paper reported that "many times cures for cancer, tuberculosis of the bone and other maladies were attributed to his intercession." Yet so much interest from a secular newspaper was the exception, and probably due to the University's location. While he appeared more frequently in the Catholic press and was described there in terms familiar to Catholics, Columba O'Neill was not a household name for most Americans.

But to his many correspondents, O'Neill's importance was unquestionable. One cannot pore over the thousands upon thousands of letters written to Brother Columba without suspecting that some petitioners attributed healing to the man directly. Yet he made no such claims himself, and therein lies the core of Brother Columba's potential as a saint. It was his seemingly unceasing prayer, made over the course of an otherwise unremarkable life, that set O'Neill apart. In a formula typical of 19th-century American Catholic devotion, O'Neill attributed whatever good resulted from requests made of him to his prayers "to the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary."⁹ The simple cobbler prayed for whatever need someone may have mentioned, "and he expect[ed] cures because of his 'child-like' faith."¹⁰

I asked the petitioner for Brother Columba's cause, Brother Philip Smith, C.S.C., an archivist in the Midwest Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross, what it was about the man that could advance O'Neill's canonization. "No one was turned away, especially non-Catholics," Brother Philip told me. "He was an ordinary man, with a profoundly simple prayer life, utterly focused, like so many others in the early 20th century . . . intent on using his skills for the better of self and community." O'Neill's lack of erudition and dedication to prayer come out in a typical letter written to a priest in October 1912: "I will pray for the sick girl all so. You give her a badge to ware and tell her to say Sacred Heart of Jesus cure me 5 times a day for a while . . . offer her cure thru the Blessed virgans heart."

A Rich Repository

Fortunately for historians with generous archival colleagues, the process of advancing an individual for canonization involves collecting an enormous amount of source material. The archival materials on Brother Columba are held at the administrative offices of the Brothers of Holy Cross Midwest

Province in Notre Dame, Indiana. These include press coverage of Brother Columba, some private letters to or from him, and a few published works about him. The vast majority of the collection—approximately 10,000 items—consists of letters to Brother Columba, either requesting his prayers or thanking him for some positive outcome attributed to those prayers. The bulk of the letters were sent between 1912 and 1924. O’Neill died in November 1923; letters arriving after are almost certainly from correspondents who had not yet learned of his passing.

Correspondence is always a rich resource to better understand both a subject and those with whom they corresponded, and extant letters to O’Neill are no different. This richness is borne out in three particular ways in the case of Brother Columba. First, many of those who sought O’Neill’s spiritual assistance were not particularly eloquent when they wrote. Take, for example, a heartbreaking request from a mother for prayers that her sons will fail their Army physical exams and thus not be sent to war in 1917:

These letters give vivid color to a fuller picture of contemporary opinion on the war.

I do not know what to do dear Brother my two boys has to go to . . . to be exam for to go to the war Monday they have to put their clame in to be exem and dear Brother if thay have to go to the war I know i never can control my self so dear Brother wood you please say a prayer for them for I know nothing is imposbill with god for I always got help from holey prayers.¹¹

Another correspondent asked for prayers for healing from influenza, as death would leave orphans behind:

Then the 2 of Dec I took influenza and that has left me very week. I am 49 just a bad age to fight disease. I am a widdow and have 2 Daughters at home that need my car, one 14 years 1 23 the one 23 is not very bright. I have a Son in Frace that would feel very bad if he had no Mother when he came home.¹²

Second, a remarkable aspect of letters to O’Neill is the balance they strike between major world events and correspondents’ individual needs—or, rather, a *lack* of balance. For example, a handful of letters like the above touch on the First World War and the 1918 influenza pandemic. But when correspondents do mention epochal current events, their letters almost always focus on what the correspondents need in their own lives. These letters give vivid color to a fuller picture of contemporary opinion on the war. Not uncommon were those requests for men to fail physical examinations or otherwise avoid war: “Pray that peace will be declared so that he will not have to go abroad and if he does have to go that God will watch over him and protect him”; “we hope he can get off but not much chance as he is not married”; “I am about to become a Mother and need my husband, won’t you please pray for me, that I will soon get him back.”¹³ Likewise letters mentioning the 1918 flu typically usually requested prayer for individual healing rather than a divine ending to the pandemic—even when acknowledging the affliction’s widespread nature. One correspondent sent O’Neill a dollar “to have you remember in your prayers, my whole family at home and myself in this Sanatorium that we may escape that horrible flu that is spreading through Chicago.”¹⁴

Third, how correspondents wrote to O’Neill also tells us a great deal about how contemporary Catholics understood theology. Many indicated a strong devotion to Jesus Christ in the form of the Sacred Heart. One woman wrote to O’Neill to ask for prayers for her friend: “She is a devout Catholic woman and I told her to never fear, the [Sacred Heart] had done so much for me, it would not fail her.”¹⁵ Another wrote to tell O’Neill she had been “working now over a year, and am getting along fine, also have been protected from epidemic, Thanks [sic] to the Sacred Heart.”¹⁶ Finally, another correspondent made an offhand comment exhibiting a robust understanding of the relationship

Kalamazoo, Mich.
December 13, 1918

Dear Brother Columba-

Enclosed please find
Post Office Order No. 144790,
same to be used in construct-
ing your Sacred Heart
Shrine, in thanks for
for favors received.
I have seen work
now over a year, a

getting along fine, also have
been protected from the
epidemic, Thanks to The
Sacred Heart.

Please murmur a
prayer for me, that I
may keep well and be able
to do good in this world.

Sincerely,

Anna A. Shields

717 N. Kalamazoo Ave.
Kalamazoo, Mich.

Saturday Jan. 17, 1920

Bro. Columbia:-

Dear Brother I am enclosing one dollar to have you remember in your prayers, my whole family at home and myself in this Sanatorium that we may escape that horrible flu that is spreading through Chicago.

I am feeling and the doctor has minutes exercise in afternoon, which make me feel better. I am still weak but that is due to the involvement of the flu. I am not sure yet when

I am now

Sharon, Pa.

Dec. 14, 1917.

Brother Columbia,

Notre Dame,

Notre Dame, Ind.

Dear Brother Columbia:

I am enclosing fifty cents (\$0.50) I want you to pray for my husband, who has been drafted into Military Service; He has an appeal in for a discharge I am about to become a Mother and need my husband, won't you please pray for me, that I will



Brother Columba O'Neill, C.S.C., stands outside of Community Hall, Notre Dame's residence for Holy Cross brothers, c. 1917. The building would be renamed Columba Hall in 1954. Courtesy of the Midwest Province Archives of the Brothers of Holy Cross.

between a concept like the Sacred Heart and the Catholic understanding of divinity: “of Course [sic] we all know the Sacred Heart is God Himself.”¹⁷

Yet others were not quite so clear—at least, not through their letters—on what the Catholic Church had long taught about intercessory prayer and who exactly the faithful should understand to be doing the healing. One Wisconsin woman reminded O’Neill that several years earlier, “through the Sacred Heart *you cured me*.”¹⁸ A Michigan correspondent reported on a prayer for “*you to cure them* if it was God’s Will [sic].”¹⁹ Finally, another clearly saw O’Neill as having special abilities himself, noting that “we are writing to you having heard of your visit to Kokomo [Indiana] and of *your* wonderful works among the Sick [sic].”²⁰ Importantly, there is no evidence to suggest that Brother Columba ever took credit for anyone’s healing. His own devotion to the Sacred Heart was ironclad, and he never hesitated to attribute any positive outcome to the will of God. His advice was often of a piece with contemporary Catholic devotional culture—advising to say this or that prayer a certain number of times throughout the day, for example—but always indicated that prayer was to be directed to God to ask for God’s assistance.

Whoever O’Neill’s correspondents thought was responsible for healing or other positive outcomes, they believed that Brother Columba’s prayers improved their lives in ways both seemingly mundane and deeply significant—a cure for recurring but minor pain on the one hand, and avoidance of the horrors of frontline fighting in France, on the other. Few of those who sought his help did so with lofty goals in mind, like an end to World War I and a return to world peace. Most who wrote to O’Neill hoped his holiness would bring some relief to difficult situations in which they found themselves as individuals. In that sense, the thousands of letters to Brother Columba attest to the deep piety and personal faith of American Catholics in the early 20th century. Even in the face of global cataclysms like the war and the influenza pandemic that followed it, these men and women did not believe God was too busy to attend to their own problems—no matter how small they may sound to those reading the seemingly endless volumes of letters to O’Neill.

Patient Petition

O’Neill’s intense holiness, cultivated over decades of prayers to God to help those who had written to him, was almost forgotten in the years after his death. But his memory has been revived. Brother Columba O’Neill formally gained the title “Servant of God” when his cause for canonization was opened in 2022 by Kevin Rhoades, bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, at the request of the Brothers of Holy Cross.²¹ O’Neill’s cause underwent investigation by the five Catholic bishops in Indiana and received approval to be submitted to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints at the Vatican.²² The process is no less bureaucratic than it sounds, and it is likely that O’Neill’s cause will remain at the “Servant of God” stage for some time to come—if it changes at all. A protracted period of little movement in O’Neill’s cause would hardly be anomalous in the history of the Church’s saint-recognizing process: while the Vatican began declaring men and women to be saints at breakneck speed starting with Pope John Paul II—including, eventually, that pope himself—prior to the 20th century, canonization was a fairly rare and extraordinarily long process. For someone like O’Neill, who played a powerful role in the lives of many people but remained largely unknown outside that circle of correspondence, a lengthy path to canonization perhaps should be expected. Believers, of course, suspect that O’Neill won’t mind.

Michael Skaggs is a historian of American Catholicism living in South Bend, Indiana. He is a visiting research scholar in the Department of Sociology at Brandeis University and director of programs for the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab.

- 1 Edwin Donnelly and Philip R. Smith, C.S.C., "Servant of God, Brother Columba (John) O'Neill, CSC," 4, <https://brothercolumba.com/wp-content/uploads/Columba-bio-Rome.pdf>, accessed May 15, 2023.
- 2 Donnelly and Smith, "Servant of God," 5.
- 3 Charles L. O'Connell, C.S.C., funeral oration for Brother Columba O'Neill, quoted in "Circular Letter of the Reverend Provincial," November 22, 1923.
- 4 For an overview of this process, see Kenneth Woodward, *Making Saints: How the Catholic Church Determines Who Becomes A Saint, Who Doesn't, and Why* (New York: Touchstone, 1996). The historiography of American saints has grown enormously in recent years, with landmark contributions in Emma Anderson's *The Death and Afterlife of the North American Martyrs* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013); Kathleen Sprows Cummings' *A Saint of Our Own: How the Quest for a Holy Hero Helped Catholics Become American* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019); Celia Cussen's *Black Saint of the Americas: The Life and Afterlife of Martín de Porres* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Allan Greer's *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Catherine O'Donnell's *Elizabeth Ann Seton: A Life* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018).
- 5 Cummings, *A Saint of Our Own*, 5.
- 6 Leo Berner, "Shrine of the Sacred Heart at University of Notre Dame Most Beautiful in the Country," *South Bend Tribune*, April 15, 1916, 7.
- 7 "Brother Columba Dies; Known as Miracle Man," *South Bend Tribune*, November 20, 1923, 1 and 2.
- 8 "'Notre Dame's Miracle Man,' Cobbler, Born 86 Years Ago," *South Bend Tribune*, November 4, 1934, 8.
- 9 Donnelly and Smith, "Servant of God," 4. Kevin McNamara, then archbishop of Dublin, summarized the traditional Catholic devotion to the "hearts" of Jesus of Nazareth and his mother in 1985: "Both the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary are symbols . . . Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is devotion to Our Lord and Saviour who loves us with an infinite love and who showed that love for us above all by dying on the Cross for our salvation. Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is devotion to her on whom God has poured out his love in abundance and who now shares that love with us and never ceases in her efforts to establish it in our souls." Kevin McNamara, "Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary," *The Furrow* 36:10 (1985), 600.
- 10 Donnelly and Smith, "Servant of God," 5.
- 11 Mrs. James Tyson to Columba O'Neill, August 17, 1917, Archives of the Brothers of Holy Cross (ABHC) Midwest Province.
- 12 Louise Haft to Columba O'Neill, January 2, 1919, ABHC Midwest Province.
- 13 Dorothy K. Blackman to Columba O'Neill, August 21, 1917; Mrs. William Cheevers to Columba O'Neill, August 24, 1917; Mrs. Earl Woodford to Columba O'Neill, December 14, 1917, ABHC Midwest Province.
- 14 Mrs. D. Sullivan to Columba O'Neill, January 17, 1920, ABHC Midwest Province.
- 15 Mrs. Jas. L. Murray to Columba O'Neill, June 1, 1919, ABHC Midwest Province.
- 16 Anna A. Shields to Columba O'Neill, December 13, 1918, ABHC Midwest Province.
- 17 Paul J. McCarthy to Columba O'Neill, August 6, 1921, ABHC Midwest Province.
- 18 Marie Sage to Columba O'Neill, October 18, 1919, ABHC Midwest Province. Emphasis added.
- 19 Helen Dittman to Columba O'Neill, October 8, 1920, ABHC Midwest Province. Emphasis added.
- 20 JB Graves to Columba O'Neill, October 11, 1921, ABHC Midwest Province. Emphasis added.
- 21 Michael R. Heinlein, "An American André?" *Our Sunday Visitor*, September 15, 2022, <https://www.oursundayvisitor.com/an-american-andre/>, accessed May 11, 2023.
- 22 Christopher Lushis, "Pursuit of Cause for Beatification for Holy Cross Brother Columba O'Neill Continues," *Today's Catholic*, June 12, 2023, <https://todayscatholic.org/pursuit-of-cause-for-beatification-for-holy-cross-brother-columba-oneill-continues/>, accessed June 14, 2023.

Cushwa Center Senior Fellow Honored for Distinguished Career



Luca Codignola at the Cushwa Center during a May 2023 visit to Notre Dame.

In June 2023, the Canadian Catholic Historical Association (CCHA) presented Luca Codignola, the Cushwa Center's senior fellow in Rome, with the G. E. Clerk Award. Named in honor of George Edward Clerk (1815–1875), a Montreal Catholic and editor of the city's *True Witness and Catholic Chronicle*, the prize honors outstanding historians who have followed Clerk in using the written word to illuminate Canadian Catholic history. The CCHA especially commended Codignola's regular contributions to its annual conferences and his critical role in the opening of the Vatican and Propaganda Fide archives to transnational researchers. Since the award's inception in 1973, the organization has honored fewer than 20 prizewinners for their exceptional achievements in Catholic studies, publishing, teaching, archival work, or administration.

A historian of the early modern era, Codignola is former professor of early North American history at Università di Genova (Italy), where he served on the faculty for 25 years. His career also includes four years as head of the Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea, a unit of Italy's National Research Council, and recent affiliations with the University of Toronto, Université de Montréal, and Saint Mary's University (Halifax), where he currently is adjunct professor. The author of 10 books and editor of more than a dozen other volumes, Codignola most recently published *Little Do We Know: History and Historians of the North Atlantic, 1492–2010* (CNR-ISEM, 2011) and *Blurred Nationalities across the North Atlantic: Traders, Priests, and Their Kin Travelling between North America and the Italian Peninsula, 1763–1846* (University of Toronto Press, 2019).

Since joining the Cushwa Center as a senior fellow in 2016, Codignola has mentored postdoctoral fellows and advised visiting researchers in Rome, chaired the center's Rome Advisory Committee, moderated a variety of events in Rome and online, and provided editorial contributions to the *American Catholic Studies Newsletter*. The Cushwa Center thanks Professor Codignola for his continued service and joins the CCHA in celebrating his storied career.

In Memoriam: Jay Patrick Dolan (1936–2023)



Jay P. Dolan

Jay Patrick Dolan, founder of the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism, died on May 7, 2023, in Salem, Oregon. He was 87 years old.

Dolan was born on March 17, 1936, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, to Joseph T. and Margaret (Reardon) Dolan. He graduated from Fairfield College Preparatory school before being ordained a priest in Rome in 1961 and earning his licentiate in sacred theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in 1962. In 1966, he enrolled as a doctoral student at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where he studied under the renowned religion scholar Martin E. Marty and honed what was then a distinct approach to the history of American Catholicism, emphasizing the men and women who occupied the pews rather than the pulpits. He earned a Ph.D. in history in 1970.

“Jay Dolan’s pathbreaking mix of social and religious history marked a turn of direction for both fields,” said John T. McGreevy, the Charles and Jill Fischer Provost and Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History.

“The same commitment to the lives of ordinary people marked many of his initiatives as the founding director of the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism, long the country’s premier center for such scholarship. He inspired young scholars, mentored colleagues, very much including myself, and educated generations of lucky Notre Dame undergraduates and graduate students. All of us at Notre Dame were lucky to have him in our midst, and we will all mourn his death.”

After a one-year appointment in the department of theology at the University of San Francisco, Dolan accepted a position as assistant professor of history at the University of Notre Dame in 1971; he would subsequently gain promotion to associate professor in 1977 and full professor in 1986. In 1975, he launched the *American Catholic Studies Newsletter* and persuaded the university to create the Center for the Study of American Catholicism. He was named as its inaugural director in 1977.

In 1978, the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America committed perpetual funding for the center’s work, and in 1981, Dolan oversaw the center’s full endowment through the generosity of Charles and Margaret Hall Cushwa of Youngstown, Ohio. In the years to come, he guided research and publication projects, developed a series of travel and research grants and postdoctoral fellowships for scholars of Catholicism, and hosted regular lectures and conferences, most notably the semiannual Seminar in American Religion. Together, these initiatives established the center as the leading institutional home for the historical and interdisciplinary study of Roman Catholicism in the United States. He ultimately served as the center’s director for 16 years, stepping down from that role in 1993.

Dolan authored a number of foundational texts in the field of American Catholic studies, including *The Immigrant Church: New York Irish and German Catholics, 1815–1865* (Johns Hopkins, 1975), winner of the American Catholic Historical Association’s John Gilmary Shea Prize in 1976; *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830–1900* (Notre Dame, 1978); *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Doubleday, 1985); and *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension* (Oxford, 2002). In addition, he edited several projects, including the two-volume *The American Catholic Parish: A History from 1850 to the Present* (Paulist, 1987) and the three-volume Notre Dame History of Hispanic Catholics in the U.S. (Notre Dame, 1994).

“Jay Dolan almost single-handedly shifted the focus of Catholic historiography to the lives of ordinary immigrants in all their ethnic, racial, and social diversity—their families and parishes, ‘neighborhood gods’ and cultural rituals, internal conflicts and eventual assimilation into a mainstream American society which, collectively, they transformed,” said R. Scott Appleby, Dolan’s successor at the Cushwa Center and now the Marilyn Keough Dean of the Keough School of Global Affairs and professor of history. “His magnum opus, *The American Catholic Experience*, is a monumental synthesis of the groundbreaking research of a generation of social historians—many of whom Jay drew into the growing Cushwa Center network. A ‘people’s history,’ it was among the first and by far the most influential reinterpretation of American Catholic history in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. Jay was a mentor, a valued colleague, and a dear friend. With many others whose lives he touched, I will miss him.”

A busy publication schedule did not distract him from the classroom, where he instructed Notre Dame undergraduates in legendary classes such as The Irish-American Experience. He also directed a number of doctoral students and mentored a new generation of scholars through the Cushwa Center’s programs and outreach. Along the way, he held visiting appointments at institutions including Princeton University, University College Cork, Boston College, and the University of Chicago, and he won distinguished prizes and fellowships from the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Catholic Historical Association, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Lilly Endowment. His scholarly achievements positioned him to interpret the American Catholic experience for a mass readership: outlets such as the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Washington Post* sought his analysis for their religion reporting, and his reviews featured regularly in the *New York Times* during the 1990s.

Dolan retired in 2003, after which he remained active as a scholar and author, including the publication of *The Irish Americans: A History* (Bloomsbury, 2008). He continued to be an avid golfer and active member of Knollwood Country Club in Granger, Indiana, and Vero Beach Country Club in Florida, and he was also involved in numerous volunteer ministries, including with the Center for the Homeless in downtown South Bend, the Holy Cross Care and Rehabilitation Center, the Indian River Medical Center in Vero Beach, the VNA Hospice of Indian River County, and the Arc of Indian River County, an organization devoted to serving individuals with special needs.

“Jay showed me how to teach and write history, how to do research, and how to support other scholars through the Cushwa Center. I learned from him that all of this work was critically important, and that it required time and patience to do it well,” said Cushwa Center director Kathleen Sprows Cummings. “Perhaps the most valuable lesson I learned from Jay, though, was that no matter how vital and significant our historical work was, when it came to building a happy and successful life,



Charles B. Cushwa III and Jay P. Dolan on the campus of Notre Dame during a conference sponsored by the Cushwa Center, c. 1990.

professional commitments mattered far less than caring for family, cultivating deep friendships, and giving back to the community. He did all of those things exceptionally well. I couldn't have asked for a better mentor and friend, and his death saddens me beyond measure.”

Dolan is survived by two children, Patrick J. Dolan (Ingrid) of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Mark M. Dolan (Jacque) of Salem, Oregon, along with two grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, Patricia McNeal Dolan, in 2018.

A funeral Mass was held on June 16, 2023, at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at the University of Notre Dame, followed by burial at Cedar Grove Cemetery.

For his immense professional accomplishments, without which the Cushwa Center would not exist, and for his personal influence on so many lives, we remember Jay Dolan and offer our prayers and sympathy to his family and friends.

Seminar in American Religion Named to Honor Cushwa's Founding Director

The Cushwa Center's long-standing marquee event will soon bear the name of the scholar who established it. Beginning in spring 2024, the newly styled Jay P. Dolan Seminar in American Religion (SAR) will commemorate the legacy of the center's founding director, who died in May.

Inaugurated by Dolan in 1980, the SAR convenes each spring and fall at the University of Notre Dame to discuss a notable book recently published in the field. Along with faculty and graduate students from Notre Dame, several dozen scholars from throughout the Midwest regularly travel to campus to attend as invited guests of the Cushwa Center. The featured author joins the group, and the seminar includes two commentaries, one from a Notre Dame faculty member and the other from an outside scholar. The Saturday morning sessions are free and open to all.

Darren Dochuk and David Lantigua, the William W. and Anna Jean Cushwa Co-Directors of the Cushwa Center, decided to honor Dolan's influence on the field by attaching his name to these cherished gatherings. "Jay Dolan was truly a giant in our guild of religious history, a scholar whose unmatched work with the pen redefined the way we study, teach, and understand modern America," Dochuk said. "As a graduate student at Notre Dame who aspired to write like Dolan, I looked forward to attending these seminars to see him apply his knowledge and skills in a forum he created."

Within a few years of its launch, the SAR had become Cushwa's most popular and well-known regular event. Past titles have included numerous acclaimed books in the field, such as Robert Wuthnow's *The Restructuring of American Religion* (1988), Nathan Hatch's *The Democratization of American Christianity* (1989), John McGreevy's *Parish Boundaries* (1997), Leslie Woodcock Tentler's *Catholics and Contraception* (2005), Brad Gregory's *The Unintended Reformation* (2012), Catherine Brekus' *Sarah Osborn's World* (2013), Mark Noll's *In the Beginning Was the Word* (2016), and Kristin Kobes Du Mez's *Jesus and John Wayne* (2021). Joining the list of authors whose work has been chosen for a seminar is recognized as a distinct honor among scholars of American religion.

"SAR participants always felt Dolan's presence and respected his voice, and I quickly came to see why the seminar flourished as a critical epicenter in our scholarly community," Dochuk said. "Re-named in his honor, these meetings will continue to serve as an anchor for the guild and a site of rich and generative interdisciplinary exchange, all in the generous spirit that he instilled at the seminar's founding."



Jay P. Dolan (right) at the Seminar in American Religion on March 18, 1995, with Roger Finke (left) and R. Stephen Warner.

Friends of Cushwa News and Notes

THE ANSARI INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT WITH RELIGION awarded the 2023 Nasr Book Prize to Anthony Annett, a visiting scholar at Columbia University's Center for Sustainable Development, for his book *Cathonomics* (Georgetown, 2022). Formally known as the Randa and Sherif Nasr Book Prize on Religion and the World, the award highlights the work of scholars who reimagine the connection of religion and global affairs. It is funded by Drs. Sherif Nasr and Randa Nasr, co-founders of siParadigm Diagnostic Informatics in Pine Brook, New Jersey. The Ansari Institute conferred the book prize in conjunction with a panel discussion at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago on Thursday, August 17, 2023. The institute will also host a multi-faith symposium on Notre Dame's campus on February 14–15, 2024, with scholars who will discuss the book from the perspective of various faith traditions. Details about the Nasr Book Prize are available at ansari.nd.edu/academics/nasr-book-prize/.

THE ARCHIVES OF THE ASSOCIATED SULPICIAN OF THE UNITED STATES has opened several new collections, including: Very Rev. Edward R. Dyer, P.S.S. (1854–1925); Very Rev. John Fr. Fenlon, P.S.S. (1873–1943); and Very Rev. John J. Lardner, P.S.S. (1893–1948), who served successive terms as U.S. Provincial over the period 1902–1948. The collections will be a particular interest to those studying the development of the Roman Catholic seminary system in this country. The Archives are on deposit at the Associated Archives at St. Mary's Seminary & University. Detailed finding aids for the collections are available at stmarys.edu/archives.

STEVEN M. AVELLA (Marquette University) recently published *Indomitable Sacramentans: A Social History of Catholics in the State Capital* (America Through Time, 2023). The book recovers the role of lay people as central actors in

the growth of Catholicism in Sacramento. This history “from the bottom up” reveals important contributions to the use of urban space, education, social service, and health care.

PAOLO L. BERNARDINI (University of Insubria) has been awarded the “Premio Internazionale Luigi Tartufari per la Storia - 2023” by the Accademia dei Lincei, Rome. This prestigious international prize for historians is awarded to honor lifetime career achievement. The award ceremony will take place in Rome at the Palazzo Corsini on November 10, 2023.

PHILIP BYERS was appointed the Halbrook Chair of Civic Engagement at Taylor University.

HEATH W. CARTER (Princeton Theological Seminary) has taken on a new role as Director of PhD Studies. In the 2023–24 academic year, the seminary will be launching a newly conceived doctoral track in Religion in the Americas. He will continue to serve as associate professor of American Christianity.

VALENTINA CICILIO (Ca' Foscari University of Venice) co-edited a new special issue of the *Journal of Modern and Contemporary Christianity*, on the theme “Breaking Through the Stained-Glass Ceiling? Case Studies on Female Catholicism and Its Transnational Developments Since the 1950s.”

CARL CREASON (Northwestern University) defended his dissertation, “‘For the bodies and souls’: Catholic Women, Works of Mercy, and Institution Building in the Ohio River Valley, 1855–1880.”

JANINE GIORDANO DRAKE (Indiana University) will publish *The Gospel of Church: The Battle between Organized Labor and American Churches in the Early Twentieth Century* with Oxford University Press in autumn 2023. The book explores the possibility that formal, church-

related Christianity would recede from American life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and that a religiously unaffiliated working class would inaugurate a secular cooperative commonwealth. Contrary to popular conceptions of the Social Gospel movement, well-resourced clergy worked to combat the possibility that socialists would inaugurate a secular, modern welfare state that made little room for churches.

BRUNO DUMON (MSH Lyon St-Etienne) published a new edited book, *Les congrégations féminines missionnaires: Éducation, santé et humanitaire: une histoire transnationale (XIXe–XXe siècles)* (Viella, 2022).

PAULA M. KANE (University of Pittsburgh) published “A Tender View of Conservative Evangelicalism in *Higher Ground*,” in the edited volume *Protestants on Screen: Religion, Politics and Aesthetics* (Oxford University Press, 2023).

REV. JOSEPH A. KOMONCHAK (The Catholic University of America) published, with Mary Kate Holman, *A School of Theology—Le Saulchoir* (ATF Press, 2023), a translated and edited version of a book first published in 1937 that describes how theology was being done at Le Saulchoir, the Dominican *studium* where Marie-Dominique Chenu and Yves Congar lived and worked and from which many of the major theological and pastoral initiatives of the 1940s and 1950s originated.

SUZANNE KREBSBACH presented the paper “Enduring Influence of French Colonial Catholicism in Charleston, South Carolina” at the Conference on Theology in the Caribbean Today, held June 27, 2023, in St. George’s, Grenada.

MASSIMO DE LEONARDIS (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore) published the article “La Santa Sede e gli ‘imperi,’” in *Quaderni di Scienze Politiche*.

CARMEN MANGION (Birkbeck, University of London) published “Representing Catholic Medical Missions in the English Press: Education, Professionalism, and Internationality (1950–1970),” in the edited volume *Les congrégations féminines missionnaires: Éducation, santé et humanitaire: une histoire transnationale (XIXe–XXe siècles)* (Viella, 2022).

TONY OLECK (Notre Dame) published “Foreign Relations and Peace: ‘The Hope of a Better World’—Hesburgh and the Catholic University in a Nuclear Age” in the edited volume *Hesburgh of Notre Dame: Assessments of a Legacy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022).

JONATHAN RIDDLE (Pepperdine University) began a tenure-track position as assistant professor of history in autumn 2023. He recently published “Physiology, Vitalism, and the Contest for Body and Soul in the Antebellum United States” in the *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*.

BENJAMIN WETZEL (Taylor University) won the Joe Burnworth Teaching Award, recognizing a faculty member who has exhibited promise and made noteworthy contributions to the institution’s academic and community life within five years of appointment. Before working at Taylor, Wetzel earned his Ph.D. in history at Notre Dame and completed a year as a postdoctoral research associate at the Cushwa Center.

People Get Ready

A BOOK DISCUSSION
with

Susan Bigelow Reynolds

Susan Bigelow Reynolds is assistant professor of Catholic Studies in the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. She is a Catholic theologian and ethnographer whose research examines the intersection of ecclesiology and lived Catholicism in contexts of diversity, marginality, and suffering. Last summer, Catherine Osborne corresponded with Reynolds about her recent book, *People Get Ready: Ritual, Solidarity, and Lived Ecclesiology in Catholic Roxbury* (Fordham, 2023), a study of St. Mary of the Angels, a tiny underground Catholic parish in Boston's Egleston Square.



Susan Bigelow Reynolds

CATHERINE OSBORNE: This is one of the best pieces of contextual theology I've ever read, in part because you so expertly balance a variety of written theological sources with ethnographic work and what I (half-jokingly, but only half) call "real history"—by which I mostly mean, you did archival research! Way too many times, I see theologians making a "historical turn" that skims really lightly over sometimes hundreds of years in a paragraph, without getting engaged in the debates historians are having about the issues they want to consider. As a theologian, what do you think archival work gave you that you wouldn't otherwise have been able to do? What do you value about, say, going to the American Catholic Historical Association (ACHA) or the American Academy of Religion (AAR)?

SUSAN BIGELOW REYNOLDS: First of all, thank you. I'm gratified to hear a historian affirming the historical work that went into the book. The project began as an ethnography, which meant that in the beginning, I primarily relied on interviews and oral histories and all of the participant-observation I had done during and after the year I lived in the St. Mary of the Angels parish house. But there was a crucial part of the story missing.

In order to become good theology, the project first had to become good history. The most striking thing about St. Mary's is its tradition of lay leadership and community activism. But what was the parish like prior to Vatican II? Was this spirit of lay agency a product of the Council, or did it have deeper roots? What did the

chancery think of these headstrong parishioners? How did St. Mary's interact with the civil rights movement? Why was such a small parish established in the first place? Egleston Square was redlined in the 1930s. What did that mean for the church? How did it survive when almost every other Roxbury parish was closed or merged? Before I could venture any theological analysis of local belonging or community or church or place or difference—all concepts that often get gauzy treatment in theological texts—I needed answers to questions like these. How do you talk about the local without talking about redlining and segregation? How do you talk about communion without talking about race and culture? You can't.

Through ACHA, AAR, the Cushwa Center, and even social media, relationships I've formed with colleagues working in Catholic history have helped to make me a better, more careful, more fearless scholar. I hope that for historians and theologians alike, *People Get Ready* suggests the necessity—and the real joy—of interdisciplinary collaboration. Meanwhile, Thomas Lester, the head archivist at the Archdiocese of Boston, and his team of assistants could not have been more helpful. He pointed me in directions I would never have known to look but that became central to the book. The story of the Roxbury Apostolate in chapter three—Cardinal (Richard) Cushing's attempt to channel the spirit of Vatican II into an inner-city solidarity program—is just one example. Later in the same chapter, I trace the radical early years of the St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council, which is another piece of the story that caught me completely by surprise.

I also learned what to do when formal archives can't help you. I was curious about what was going on behind the scenes in 2004 when St.

While St. Mary's priests were often in the local news doing public-facing work . . . the sisters were doing more relational and formational work: running religious education and youth group, working in homeless outreach, connecting people with resources, doing pastoral care, and so on.

Mary's was targeted for closure, along with about 80 other Boston parishes. Those records were still sealed. As luck would have it, a longtime lay leader at St. Mary's, Maria Quiroga, had meticulously kept hundreds of documents from the parish's anti-closure protest—everything from meeting notes to newspaper articles to printed emails to letter drafts. This “grassroots archive” offered an incredibly detailed insider perspective on the parish's fight for survival.

CO: The book really focuses on the parish's laity and on their relationships with the pastors over the years, whether these relations were better or worse. Religious sisters also play a significant role, but they felt a little submerged in the narrative, comparatively. So I wondered if you could expand on that a little here. What's your sense of how the laypeople relate(d) to the sisters, as compared to the priests? Is there any difference between how laywomen and laymen partner(ed) with the sisters? And how did you as a writer struggle to balance all the competing priorities of the narrative?

SBR: For all of the emphasis on lay leadership, people at St. Mary's still define eras in the parish's history by the priests who served there at the time. There were the “Jack Roussin Years,” the

“Jack Fagan Years,” the “Dave Gill Years,” and so on. The religious sisters, on the other hand, seemed to operate on a different timeline. Their presence was more enduring and, narratively, more untethered to these “priest eras.” During the key decades in the book—the 1970s through the early 2000s—the priests and sisters worked in close collaboration and, from what I understand, viewed each other as close friends and partners in the work of solidarity with the city. During the height of Roxbury's gang epidemic in the 1980s and '90s, the woman I call Sister Margaret was a defining figure in the lives of so many teenagers and young people in Egleston Square, especially young men. Even now, if you walk down the street with her, you run into someone she knew as a seventeen-year-old.

Yet there is, of course, a gendered element to all of this work that is exacerbated by the clerical tendency to define a parish by its priest, and this proved complicated for crafting the book's narrative. While St. Mary's priests were often in the local news doing public-facing work—dealing with youth gangs, leading community meetings, fighting parish closure—the sisters were doing more relational and formational work: running religious education and youth group, working in homeless outreach, connecting people with resources, doing pastoral care, and so on. One thing I struggled with in writing the book was that several of the religious sisters who

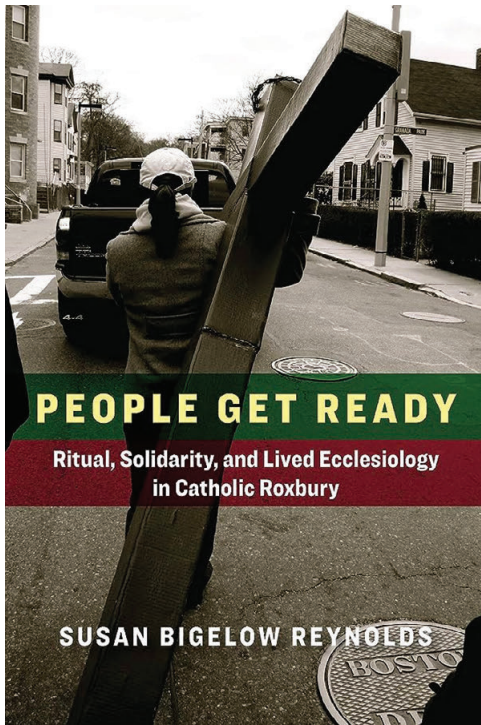
played key roles in the social history of Egleston Square and St. Mary's were also some of my most candid informants, which meant that they are pseudonymized in the book—"Sister Margaret" and "Sister Josephine." On the other hand, a priest like the late Father Jack Roussin functions in the book as a historical figure. But the end result is that priests have names, while the religious sisters have pseudonyms. I don't like that, and in retrospect, I would have done it differently.

CO: The chapter on the Stations is a standout, weaving together historical, liturgical, and spatial analysis. It looks at the origins and present of a Good Friday Way of the Cross that winds around the streets of Roxbury, stopping at significant neighborhood spots. There's some intriguing tension between people who want a "historical re-enactment" (costumes, etc.), a centuries-old tradition in many places, and people who want to do what the parish has done for several decades, which is tie the events of the passion directly to neighborhood happenings and locations. In light of research on your new project, have you rethought anything in the book chapter? Anything you would add or change? Or, conversely, I would be curious to hear how *beginning* your Stations research with this particular congregation has shaped how you approach other instances.

SBR: The chapter on the Neighborhood Way of the Cross is the oldest piece of the book. The entire project started as a history and ethnography of that particular ritual. It seized my imagination, and it was my first window into the history of Egleston Square.

Ever since my first Good Friday at St. Mary of the Angels in 2012, I've been captivated by the question of what it is about the Stations of the Cross—this consummately traditional, medieval ritual—that invites such creative devotion in communities not only on the edges of society, but also on the edges of the Church. And that's exactly the question at the heart of this next project that you mentioned. I'm currently calling it *Ways of the Cross*. In researching it, I spent this past Holy Week in the Rio Grande Valley, accompanying a group of Jesuits who minister to migrants on both sides of the border. I used to live in Brownsville, Texas, so I was thrilled to be back. I participated in the Triduum liturgies in the migrant encampment that had grown along the river in Matamoros, Mexico, opposite Brownsville. Most of the migrants there were from Venezuela, as well as Nicaragua, Honduras, Colombia, southern Mexico, Cuba, and numerous other countries. On Holy Thursday, the Mass concluded with a Eucharistic procession through the camp to the plaza before the Gateway International Bridge. And on Good Friday, the Jesuits and a group of several dozen migrants walked a *Via Crucis* through the muddy center of the camp to the international bridge. The people carried a towering cross made of scrap wood constructed by a man in the camp. When I was first told about the planned rituals, my first thought was, *how prophetic!* I imagined these potent Christian symbols—the thurible and its incense, the monstrance, the cross—visually interrupting the militarized border superstructure in ways that would lay bare the death-dealing reality of the hemispheric migration crisis.

Both processions were, indeed, extraordinarily powerful. But once we made our way out of the camp and onto the streets of Matamoros, neither the Eucharistic procession nor the *Via Crucis*



interrupted much of anything at all. The streets were loud and flooded by a recent downpour and crowded with vendors and traffic and police and border guards. It was chaos entering into chaos.

I was reminded of the *Passionsspiele* in Oberammergau, Germany, which I attended this past September (another stop on the “Stations of the Cross research trail”). Because everyone in the town has the right to participate in the famous, once-a-decade passion play if they so desire, the crowd scenes are enormous. Unlike, say, the passion narrative recited during the Palm Sunday liturgy, the crowd in Oberammergau wasn’t crying “Crucify him!” in dutiful unison. Instead, it was a cacophony. Every interjection by the crowd was mayhem, full of disagreement and confusion. Downstage, kids chased each other and fought over bread and live animals bleated. Jesus’ condemnation felt chaotic, which is probably much closer to the reality of it.

Anyway, what I’m getting at is that I had initially viewed rituals like these as prophetic, interruptive public statements. But that’s not really what I saw, at least not primarily. Their power was in the closed eyes and footsteps of the migrants who participated in them. That’s where the center of gravity was—in the hands embracing the cross, in the knees genuflecting onto muddy ground. I guess this probably seems fairly obvious. But when we talk about the political power of liturgy, our desire to tap into its larger, public-theological significance can sometimes obscure the lived experiences—often quieter and more intimate and varied—of participants themselves.

As I reread *People Get Ready*, I can see that this realization is already evident within the narrative, even if I wasn’t fully conscious of it. When I first

started looking at the Roxbury Way of the Cross, I found myself constantly shaking off the urge to decide what the ritual meant. It's an impossible question to answer. Meant for whom? Meant when? I'm a theologian, and I think that Catholic theology is often burdened by a sense that all questions of meaning have one right answer. To your previous question, I think that's what keeps us from engaging fully with real histories. So instead, the book focuses on the variety of memories and expectations that participants carried with them into the procession, and it mostly does this through stories. It's an approach I'm going to be more conscious of in this new project.

CO: I think everyone would like an update on the congregation. The book leaves us in a lot of suspense: will they come back from COVID? So... how are things going?

SBR: My most recent visit to St. Mary of the Angels was in April of this year. Both the English and Spanish communities had mostly come back. Sadly, several of the community's most legendary figures had died since my last visit, including the parish matriarch I call Florence in the book. In many ways, though, it felt like the same old St. Mary's, full of old faces and new faces gathered together in a basement church.

What stunned me was the level of development that has taken place in and around Egleston Square over the past few years. Everywhere I looked, there was some new condo complex going up in that boxy style that looks so out of place next to Boston's triple-deckers and old brick buildings. The intersection that St. Mary's sits at was recently rebuilt into an experimental "busway," which meant that what little street parking existed near

the church has been completely eliminated and the intersection has become more dangerous for pedestrians. Egleston Square was also one of two neighborhoods in the city recently identified for a new "density zoning" pilot program, which allows developers to build higher as long as they promise to earmark a certain number of the units for affordable housing.

Gentrification is a tricky term, but whatever we want to call this kind of development, it doesn't seem to bode well for the parish's future. Parishioners fear they're getting squeezed out. Ironically, this kind of development probably poses a greater threat to the future of St. Mary's than the neglect of the 1970s or the violence of the 1980s and '90s or the archdiocesan parish shutdowns of 2004 ever did. St. Mary's has spent 117 years adapting to changing times, but fundamentally, it's a poor church for the poor. And when you're suddenly surrounded by brand new condos, it's hard to keep being a little basement church.

But this is St. Mary of the Angels, after all. Defying the odds is what this community does. Hope springs eternal.

Catherine Osborne is the author of *American Catholics and the Church of Tomorrow* (University of Chicago Press, 2018). She holds a Ph.D. in historical theology from Fordham University and was a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Notre Dame's Cushwa Center from 2014–2017.

American Imperialism and the Roman Catholic Church:

A Conversation with

Jethro A. E. A. Calacday

Jethro A. E. A. Calacday is a doctoral candidate in history at the University of Cambridge. In 2021, he won a Peter R. D'Agostino Research Travel Grant from the Cushwa Center for his project, "A Catholic Empire? American Imperialism and the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, 1898–1941." He recently discussed his research with Philip Byers.



Jethro A. E. A. Calacday

PHILIP BYERS: Your proposal described “a crucial collaboration between Rome and Washington” in the early 20th-century Philippines. In what ways have previous scholars misunderstood the Church’s presence in the Philippines, and what role did the Church play in U.S. imperial rule?

JETHRO A. E. A. CALACDAY: Before I begin, allow me to express my deepest gratitude to the Cushwa Center for the generous grant that enabled me to research in Roman archives from September to December 2022. Many thanks as well for providing me now with this opportunity and privilege to share my work to a wider audience.

I deliberately coined that phrase, “crucial collaboration between Rome and Washington,” to raise the eyebrows of Americanists and Philippinists who have long assumed that the advent of American colonial rule in the Philippines in 1898 signaled the reduction of the Roman Catholic Church’s power and influence in Philippine society. Church and state were united under the Spanish empire to which the islands were subjected until 1898, but the accession of the United States disentangled that union (with the institution of the principles of religious freedom and the separation of church and state) and thus presumably diminished the Church’s significance beyond the realm of the religious. This assumption relates as well to the accepted wisdom among American diplomatic historians that after 1867 when the U.S. federal government recalled its legate to the Holy See—compounded of course by the pervasive anti-Catholicism of 19th-century America—no significant diplomatic relation existed between the United States and the Vatican, the latter being *both* a religious body and a political organization with international diplomatic standing, very much unlike Protestant churches.

My dissertation argues against these assumptions because I have been constantly seeing in my research that the Roman Catholic Church played a central and significant role in the transition of the Philippine archipelago from Spain to America. There is strong evidential support for this argument in the archives of the Vatican (the Vatican Apostolic Archives and the Archives of the Secretariat of State), but also in the National Archives of the United States where, if one were to cursorily run through the catalog of RG 350 (Bureau of Insular Affairs), those holdings relating to religion or religious issues pertain mostly to the Roman Catholic Church.

With a lucrative agricultural export economy and a heritage of European intellectual culture, the Philippines was already Catholic for over three centuries at the time of the American invasion. The issues faced by American colonial officials concerning property rights, sovereignty, legal personality, and social pacification were not deliberately “religious” in nature but were often attended to or intertwined with the Roman Catholic Church. Vatican bureaucrats like Cardinal Mariano Rampolla del Tindaro, then secretary of state, and his successor Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val negotiated agreements with Secretary of War Elihu Root and William H. Taft, the first civilian governor of the Philippines.

The Vatican’s explicit policy towards the United States was cooperation; beleaguered in the continent by anti-Catholic intellectual and political currents, the Vatican saw in the up-and-coming imperial power a possible ally in securing Catholic interests not only in the Philippines but also in the international community. Taft and Root in turn saw in the Church a partner in the promotion of social stability and pacification in an archipelago that had constituted itself as a republic in 1898, but was at that point recently subdued by the guns and cannons of America in the gruesome Philippine-American War (1899–1902).

PB: In your proposal, you mentioned the need for scholars to attend not just to “high politics and diplomacy” but to “the lived experience of the Philippine Church.” Elaborate on that for us—how does lived experience shape the story you tell?

JC: Bureaucratic documents, whether they be in the Vatican or any state archive, tend to focus more on the activities of high-ranking officials at the expense of those from below. The rise of social history and subaltern history was a response to this skewed view of the past. In American Catholic studies we have the pathbreaking example of Robert Orsi’s *The Madonna of 115th Street* (1985); in Philippine historiography it was Reynaldo Ileto’s *Pasyon and Revolution* (1979).

My dissertation is not an exclusive history of the subaltern, nor is it solely a history of bureaucratic activity. I want something that is much more holistic so that I could understand how the Church, as a hierarchic institution with international diplomatic standing, created and executed its policies towards the emerging American empire and the Philippine Catholic Church. At the same time, I want to know the effects of these policies: how did people respond to the American colonial state and the intervention of the Vatican? Much of church history written in the old paradigm tends to focus on the Curia, the clergy, and religious congregations at the expense of perhaps 90 percent of what constitutes the Church: the laity. Social histories (and “mainstream” history) for their part have not been patient in appreciating the intricacies of ecclesiastical thinking and procedure, sometimes ignoring altogether the importance of Rome in the life of the laity.

When I say “lived experience of the Philippine Church” I am not referring to popular devotion, which has been studied by anthropologists and sociologists since the 1950s. What I want to offer is the story of lay participation in the life of the Church beyond liturgics. Following historical anthropologist Deirdre de la Cruz, I want to show that popular Filipino Catholicism did not always

yield “folk” varieties and that it even aligned itself with the designs of the hierarchy. The salient example of this in my dissertation would be the forgotten history of the *Centros Católicos* established in the parishes of the Philippines in the 1900s. These centers, avowedly led by laypersons and patterned after the German Centre Party, had the express intention of promoting the interests of the Church under the new dispensation. This organization eventually morphed into Catholic Action in the 1920s and 1930s during the pontificate of Pius XI. Inspired by Christian democracy, the *Centros* participated in public life through their lobbies in municipal councils, the national legislature, and in popular elections. Their most significant work, however, was the promotion of what they termed as *la buena prensa* (“the good press”) which responded to anti-Catholic literature then abroad in the Philippines. The *buena prensa* movement addressed the introduction of American culture in (Hispanicized) Philippine society, the separation of Church and state, and religious freedom.

PB: You dispute a “secularization narrative in Philippine historiography” that ignores the Church’s present political and economic power. Why have other scholars gotten this secularization narrative wrong, and how did the colonial period lay a basis for the Church’s continued societal influence?

JC: Philippine history, according to Filipino and American pundits, is “three hundred years in a Spanish convent and fifty years in Hollywood.” However, this supposedly catchy “summary” of the differences in colonial legacy is but a slogan of the secularization narrative in Philippine historiography. Spain supposedly stood for the Old World with its concern for Catholicism, while America stood for modern governmental procedure without the “unenlightened” interference of religion.

Certainly life wasn’t as it used to be under the Spanish: separation of Church and state was

Much of church history written in the old paradigm tends to focus on the Curia, the clergy, and religious congregations at the expense of perhaps 90 percent of what constitutes the Church: the laity. Social histories (and “mainstream” history) for their part have not been patient in appreciating the intricacies of ecclesiastical thinking and procedure, sometimes ignoring altogether the importance of Rome in the life of the laity.

introduced by the Americans and religious freedom was instituted as a *sine qua non*. But I contend that the Church was not completely “absent” in civil affairs and that it continued to participate in and even shape them. I have previously mentioned the *Centros Católicos*, allow me now to provide further examples here. Seeing the intransigence of Catholic bishops and priests on the issue of (secular) public education, civil governor James F. Smith concocted a project, with the participation of American prelates like Archbishop John Ireland and Cardinal James Gibbons, to recruit Catholic public school teachers from America for service in the Philippines. The colonial government further conceded the teaching of religion (catechesis) in the public schools three times a week at half an hour per session, a privilege that was only rescinded in 1938 not by American officials but by the Filipino president of the Philippine Commonwealth.

Much more illustrative would be the covert and deliberate intervention of American officials into the nomination and appointment of bishops in the Philippines, especially in the first decade of the 1900s. While Church historians have fought for the supposed “independence” of the Curia in making these appointments, sources from the Vatican archives hardly support this assertion. For example, in the nomination of the new archbishop of Manila, the Congregation for the Extraordinary Affairs of the Church (*Sacra Congregazione degli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari* [SCAAEESS]) deliberately opted for an American appointee; more specifically, it chose from a list of candidates

(*terna*), some of whom were handpicked by William H. Taft.

Even after his election as president in 1909, Taft continued his intervention in ecclesiastical appointments, the most important of which was his obstruction of the Vatican’s appointment of Giuseppe Petrelli as apostolic delegate to the Philippines in 1911, on the grounds that Petrelli was *persona non grata* to him. The Philippine Church continued on without a Vatican representative until 1915 when, at the end of Taft’s presidency, Petrelli finally and officially assumed office as apostolic delegate. Writing to a colleague in 1903 while still civil governor in the Philippines, Taft jested with an air of false modesty but a very keen awareness of what he was doing: “It may be that I am a Churchman, for I have had so much to do with Episcopal and Catholic bishops, and bishops of the Independent Filipino Church, that I feel like a bishop myself; but I am afraid that, if the facts were looked into, I could hardly pass the examination necessary for that exalted place.”

As I see it, such incidents were not adventitious and random. Rather than viewing secularism as the separation of the religious from the non-religious, of church and state, it would be beneficial to follow recent scholars of secular studies in thinking of secularism as the state’s mechanism in designating the boundaries of “what constitutes as religion” and therefore meriting the protection of the state. In this way, we consider the presence of religion not necessarily as a lingering cultural artifact but as



"In the Garden of the Pope," a mosaic sent to President Theodore Roosevelt by Pope Leo XIII in 1902, during Civil Governor William Howard Taft's visit to Rome to negotiate the purchase of Church lands in the Philippines. Original now held by Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, New York. Public domain.

a constant concern of governmentality. In other words, the Church is a concern of the state.

Catholicism in the United States especially in the early 20th century had very much to do with the Catholic Philippines, as has been attested by some early works (e.g., by Frank T. Reuter, John T. Farrell, and David J. Álvarez). The full extent of such entanglement, however, is yet to be examined, though recent works in cultural history (e.g., by Katherine D. Moran, Tisa Wenger, and John T. McGreevy) have brought the question of Catholicism and the American empire to light yet again. Consider, for example, that Taft's meteoric rise in American politics began with his stint as governor in the Philippines. In parallel, Dennis Dougherty

started as a neophyte bishop in Nueva Segovia (northern Philippines), then as bishop of Jaro (central Philippines) before he returned to the United States as bishop of Buffalo, eventually becoming Cardinal Archbishop of Philadelphia.

I am convinced that what sustained the relationship between the United States and the Vatican through the first half of the 20th century was colonialism in the Philippines. This, even before the attempt of Franklin Roosevelt at formal diplomatic relations with Pius XII in 1939, and the collaboration of John Paul II and Ronald Reagan during the Cold War, which eventually led to the establishment of the Apostolic Nunciature in Washington in 1984.

PB: Before you began your doctoral work, you completed a master's degree in religion. How has your cross-disciplinary training influenced your approach to this research?

JC: I was trained in the Philippines as a historian under the mentorship of historical sociologist Filomeno Aguilar Jr., one of the leading scholars of Southeast Asian studies. I then proceeded to Yale Divinity School where I studied with Tisa Wenger and Erika Helgen who brought me into conversation with American religious history and Latin American Christianity. My exposure to different disciplines and geographical areas gave me the intellectual tools for more productive ways of studying the past, and convinced me that it is no longer possible to study the past with the delimitations of area and disciplinary boundaries. Historical sociology inculcated in me empirical precision, while the theoretical approach of religious studies liberated me to think beyond the obvious. To provide examples: a certain section of the dissertation will use statistical data derived from sacramental books (both Catholic and non-Catholic), while another section will involve the close reading of a Vatican document (in Latin, of course) with an analysis of its redaction.

PB: The grant you won subsidizes travel to Rome and is named after the late Peter R. D'Agostino, renowned advocate for the importance of transnational research in Catholic studies. What can you tell us about the part Roman archives have played in your scholarship?

JC: I found an ally in Peter R. D'Agostino after reading his *Rome in America* (2004) because I agree with his proposal that Catholic studies is transnational. Researching in the archives of the Vatican gives one a rare and privileged view of things from the perspective of Rome. Perched from the dome of St. Peter's, the Curia saw the

world not merely in terms of individual countries, but it saw the world in its entirety. As I have reiterated in many conversations, Catholicism is always already transnational because the very word itself means universality and connotes capacity and possibility. For example, the SCAAEESS would, in one session, deliberate and decide about issues in the Philippines and Cuba, while at the same time deal with the *Questione romana* in Italy, secular government of France, and *Kulturkampf* in Germany.

While in Rome I saturated myself with sources in the Vatican Apostolic Archives, the Archives of the Secretariat of State, the *Propaganda Fide* Archives, and the Roman Archive of the Society of Jesus. It is true that archival policies in the Vatican tend to be inefficient (e.g., the prohibition in taking photographs of documents or limits in the number of archival units to be taken out per session) but these made me prioritize which documents to spend time on and taught me to be wise in the choice of documents to order each day. The temptation for budding historians like myself, especially in the era of the smartphone, is accumulation. One merely takes pictures of documents with the purpose of processing the materials later. But the slow, excruciating process in the Vatican archives forces new historians to be judicious, intentional, and deliberate: *festina lente*, make haste slowly.

In addition to the fact that sources from the very center of Catholic power are necessary in any study of the Church, the systematic arrangement of documents in the Vatican archives facilitated the rethinking and restructuring of the questions I posed in my dissertation proposal. Much has changed in the way that I have initially thought about the dissertation, mostly for the better. There is indeed no shortcut in historical research: one needs to go to the archives and find out.

An additional note in that regard: much talk and discussion in the academy has been spent on

moving beyond the confines of the nation-state as the unit of analysis to a much more “global” perspective in historical studies. That is laudable, but as I learned from my excursus in Rome, global history necessitates knowledge of multiple languages. In my case, one must have a working knowledge of Latin, Spanish, Italian, and French to do research in the Vatican. My only regret is that I do not have the time yet to study German and Dutch to access the archival materials of the Society of the Divine Word, the Scheut Fathers, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing, and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart—congregations that commenced work in the Philippines in the 1900s. But one must not stop there: to know what was really happening on the ground, researchers must be ready to learn multiple Philippine languages—Tagalog, Ilokano, Bikolano, Hiligaynon, and Cebuano—to access the wealth of materials produced locally such as newspapers, pamphlets, and ephemera which are now difficult to come by. I cannot claim complete mastery of the languages I mentioned above, but I could certainly comprehend them by reading and am ready to learn new languages if the necessity arises. To be able to view the world as the Vatican did, one must have the multilingual skills of a Curial Cardinal.

It has been a longstanding realization that studying the Philippines is a hard sell in the market-oriented context of academia especially in America. Very few care about it despite the fact that the Philippines was America’s largest overseas colony and that its annexation in 1898 was America’s debut as a world power. I guess, following one famous scholar, the United States continues its project of “hiding” an empire even in its practice of scholarship. Expressing his exasperation, Benedict Anderson, the great scholar of nationalism and a Philippinist in his later life, noted in an interview that the cause of scholarly indifference towards the Philippines is the perception that it is not “exotic” enough for many Western scholars to build a career on: too Christian and too Western.

As I have reiterated in many conversations, Catholicism is always already transnational because the very word itself means universality and connotes capacity and possibility.

I am undeterred, however, because I am convinced that studying the Philippines is not only a supplement to a lack of knowledge, but that it provides a needed intervention in the global academic conversation. For Americanists, it is imperative to realize that in order to fully understand the United States, a study of its imperial history is necessary. The example of Alfred McCoy in *Policing America’s Empire* (2009) and Patricio Abinales in *Making Mindanao* (2020, new ed.) are here extremely illustrative. Scholars of American Catholic history meanwhile have yet to appreciate the other side of the Pacific as instructive to the history of the mainland. If D’Agostino managed to turn our heads Romewards, it would not be impossible to start looking to the Pacific again.

PB: Where does your research stand at the moment, and when might we expect to see something in print?

JC: I recently concluded the second third of my year-long archival research trip (four months in different provinces of the Philippines), and I am now moving to the United States for the next five months to continue my data gathering in various archives across the country. I am hoping to produce something within this year and the next as soon as I return to Cambridge to write up.

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Philip Byers was a postdoctoral research associate at the Cushwa Center from 2020 to 2023.

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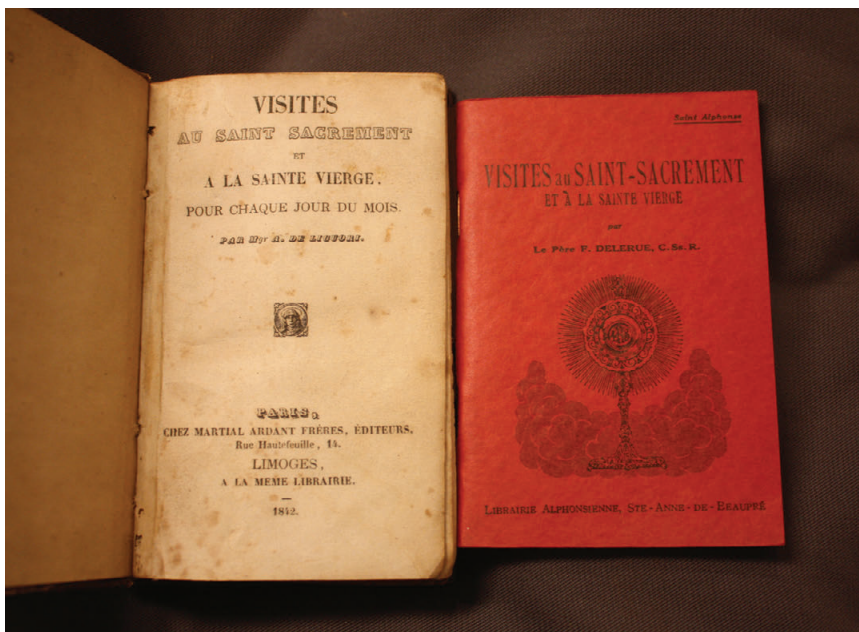
BY JENNIFER VESS

Between 1655 and 1657, Francesco Agostino della Chiesa (at the time the bishop of Saluzzo, Italy) published *Corona reale di Savoia : o sia relatione delle provincie, e titoli ad essa appartenenti. Con due copiose tauole, una dell citt, e luoghi, e l'altra della famiglie, & huomini pi illustri in essa nominati*, a two-volume history on the House of Savoy. A search online shows the first edition of this text in only about a dozen library catalogs spread throughout the world. As of July 2023, it is in one more. A record for this book can now be found in the online catalog of the Redemptorist Archives Library in Philadelphia.

The Redemptorist Archives houses the collections of the Baltimore Province and the Denver Province of the Redemptorists. These came together several years ago at the St. John Neumann Center in Philadelphia. With the archives came books—thousands and thousands of books that had originated in Redemptorist communities and seminaries around the United States. The varied sources also meant varied levels of cataloging, with only about one-sixth of the books in an electronic database that was not online, leaving the approximately 25,000-volume library accessible to only a few. This is all changing. More than 4,000 titles are now discoverable through the Redemptorist Archives Library online portal, and more books are being added every week.

The library has a strong focus on Redemptorist authors, on the works of St. Alphonsus Liguori (the founder of the Redemptorists), and on the study of moral theology. As might be expected of a collection compiled from multiple sources by an order that has been in the United States for nearly 200 years, we have more than one version of important texts. A search of the online database shows 29 versions and editions of *Theologia Moralis* by St. Alphonsus, dated between 1775 and 1885 and printed in at least five different languages—Latin, Italian, German, French, and Armenian. We also have 24 versions of *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary* dating from 1840 to 1972 in German, English, Czech, Italian, and French. And that's just St. Alphonsus. Our library holds many books by prolific Redemptorist author Michael Müller, C.Ss.R., including eight editions of *The Blessed Eucharist: Our Greatest Treasure* spanning more than 100 years—the records of which can be viewed in the online catalog. Or you can browse through the records of 89 titles by Bernhard Häring, C.Ss.R., in English, German, Portuguese, and more. The list could go on. But why then would this library have a book on the House of Savoy?

While 4,000 titles have been cataloged, approximately 21,000 are not yet in our system, and among those are books that are part of a subcollection compiled by several Redemptorists, most notably Edward Wuenschel, C.Ss.R, who were experts on

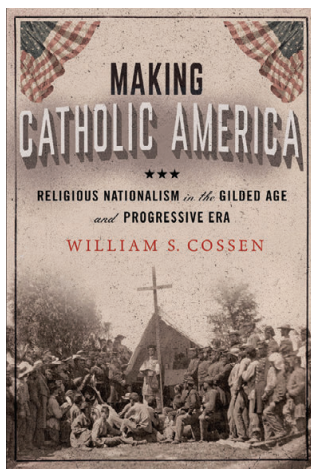


French [1842] and German [1871] translations of Alphonsus De Liguori, *Visits to the Most Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary*. Courtesy of the Redemptorist Archives Library, Philadelphia.

the study of the Shroud of Turin. The Wuenschel Shroud of Turin Collection casts a wide net. It includes books on Italy and Turin, on the history of photography, forensic sciences, medicine, and many books about or dedicated to the House of Savoy, which acquired the Shroud in 1453. To date, about 200 books from this collection have records in our database online, including rare books from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, with more to come.

Thanks to the Botstiber Institute for Austrian-American Studies, we have been able to hire a project cataloger to help us move forward with adding books to the database. As more books enter the system we will expand the already vibrant collection of Redemptorist texts and reveal more of the Wuenschel collection. The project will also open up access to other subcollections: American history, the history of Catholicism in the United States, sacred music, 19th- and 20th-century religious pamphlets, and even more rare books. With more than 20,000 waiting to be cataloged the process will take time, but hundreds of records have already been added since the launch and more appear every week.

Jennifer Vess is the archivist for the Redemptorist Archives of the Denver Province. To explore the new portal, visit 1590.sydneypius.com/genieplus/final/Portal/Default.aspx.



Making Catholic America: Religious Nationalism in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era

William S. Cossen [Cornell University Press, 2023]

REVIEW BY ELLA HADACEK

Who are the religious outsiders in the United States? Scholars of American religious history have tended to tacitly accept the 19th-century Protestant view of themselves as the normative American citizen and have cast Catholics in the role of the outcasts in the religious landscape. However, a close examination of the more liberal, American-born branch of the Church—often termed the Americanist wing of the Church by scholars—reveals how Catholics cultivated their own brand of anti-Protestant nationalism after the Civil War. *Making Catholic America: Religious Nationalism in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* by William S. Cossen looks at the period from the point of view of Catholics, identifying a “Protestant Question” analogous to the more commonly studied “Catholic Question.” He reveals that just

as antebellum Protestants argued for the necessity of a non-sectarian Protestantism to create virtuous citizens, Catholics after the war turned that rhetoric against them to contend that Protestantism had failed the nation and Catholicism was the faith best suited to form American citizens.

Driving against scholarship in the vein of William B. Kurtz’s *Excommunicated from the Union: How the Civil War Created a Separate Catholic America*, Cossen contends that the Americanists “rejected ghettoization in the political and nation-building realms” and “viewed their church as a strongly American institution and conversely saw the United States as an authentically Catholic country” (112). Combining archival research with a close examination of print sources like the widely read Americanist periodical the *Catholic World*, Cossen investigates the racial, religious, and nation-building theories of what he terms the “Heckerite

position” because of its connection to the writings of the Paulist Fathers founder and noted convert Isaac Hecker. By looking at how Hecker and those in his intellectual lineage gave American-born Catholics the tools to argue “Catholicism was the defender, guarantor, and clearest expression of American nationalism,” Cossen frames Catholics as central creators of American nationalism rather than ostracized outsiders (92). As such, Heckerites sometimes “blurred the lines between Catholicism and non-Catholic nativism” and “contributed to Progressive theories of scientific racism” (112). While this rhetorical move allowed American-born Catholics to assume positions of power in a predominantly Protestant society, it also divided them from Catholics who did not fit the Anglo standard of whiteness.

Across five chronological chapters, Cossen expertly demonstrates the significance of his Americanist Catholic subjects and the persistence of their rhetoric. While they numerically made up a much smaller portion of the Church than the Ultramontane immigrant Catholics, Cossen establishes that they had “an outsized effect on shaping public policy” and their positions even found expression within the more conservative branch of the Church (7). While the Ultramontane prelates might have won the theological battle, Cossen argues that they often and unknowingly “replicated liberals’ assumptions about the nature of the American nation,” which suggests the “pervasive power” of Americanist Catholic nationalism even among those who would have opposed its origins (7). Rejecting Thomas T. McAvoy’s widely accepted periodization of Americanism, Cossen also argues for the endurance of these ideals long after Pope Leo XIII denounced in 1899 the cultural liberalism he saw in the Americanist branch. Cossen’s chapters track Americanist Catholic involvement in westward expansion during Reconstruction, the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition, U.S. colonization of the Philippines, immigration regulation, and their response to the resurgence of anti-Catholicism in the 20th century. Taken together, these chapters establish that even as

Americanism as a defined part of the Church faded into the background, their Catholic American nationalist ideas persisted into the Cold War, creating an intellectual precedent for the creation of what historian Kevin Schultz has termed a Tri-Faith America.

The first chapter narrows in on Catholic pro-colonization attitudes within the context of U.S. federal expansion westward during Reconstruction. Facilitated by Ulysses Grant’s decision to allow religious denominations to receive federal funding for Indigenous schools, Catholics used the history of French and Spanish colonial activity in the American West to justify their prior claim on the “welfare of Native Americans’ lives and souls” (22). Despite receiving more funding for reservation schools than any other denomination, Catholics flipped anti-Catholic rhetoric surrounding Catholic power in public schools to accuse Protestants of trying to gain control of the reservations and government offices. The experience of lobbying for federal funds simultaneously allowed them to compete with Protestants for Indigenous souls and solidify their role in the nation. While Cossen neglects to discuss residential schools in light of the mass graves found in Canada and the United States, he does emphasize the racism that tinged evangelistic efforts. He relates how American Catholics kept Indigenous children from their families and gave them a subpar education because these Catholics assumed they could not be full citizens. Cossen also connects the rhetoric used to justify Catholic mistreatment of Indigenous peoples to American Catholic participation in the colonization of the Philippines. By joining in the subjection of a group on their own soil, Cossen contends they took part “in a rehearsal for US extraterritorial expansion and colonization” (48).

Chapter two shifts away from westward expansion to examine Catholics at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Cossen reads the Columbian Exposition, more commonly referred to as the World’s Fair, through the lens of empire, explaining that it presented imperialism,

colonialism, and the advance of capitalism to upwardly mobile white Americans in a palatable way while also providing a venue for “theories and imagery of white racial superiority” (12). The World’s Fair not only offered a public stage for men like Chicagooan and lay Catholic William James Onahan to lay claim to a role in America’s founding by noting the prominent Catholics who were descendants of the Plymouth Pilgrims, but it also provided a venue for Catholic laywomen to conceptualize a public role. Cossen relates how Alice Timmons Toomy, a delegate of the Congress of Catholic Women, viewed the event as proof that “Catholic women had a leading role to play in shaping their religious community’s spiritual, social, and political agendas” and as an opportunity to create a plan for how an “army of lay women” could participate more in the work of the Church (58). While convincing on its own, this chapter, which Cossen calls a “thematic interlude,” contributes the least to his overall argument (12).

In the third chapter, Cossen returns westward to look at U.S. colonization of the Philippines. He argues the colonial effort provided new ground for Catholics and Protestants to battle for power and facilitated the emergence of a cohort of Catholic leaders—most conspicuously those associated with the *Catholic World* and shaped by Hecker’s union of Catholicism and Americanism—who sold imperialism to hesitant American Catholics. Cossen contends that while white Catholics denounced the mistreatment of friars, they also supported colonization to express “solidarity” with white Protestants with whom they shared the goal of “civilizing” an “inferior race” (73). Cossen’s treatment of the Philippines adds significantly to previous scholarship by shifting the focus to prominent Catholic leaders who used Anglo-Americanism to lay claim to leadership roles in the empire. By centering Catholic actors in colonization rather than portraying them as the tools of non-Catholic agents of empire as they appear in Katherine Moran’s *The Imperial Church: Catholic Founding Fathers and United States Empire*, Cossen provides the Catholic side of the story and complements

Moran’s exploration of cooperation between Catholics and Protestants.

This section also convincingly underscores the ways in which supporting colonialism augmented Americanist influence with the federal government. Theodore Roosevelt’s vocal approbation of the Americanist Church provides some of the most compelling examples of this relationship. In 1900, John Ireland, the archbishop of Saint Paul, publicly shared his decision to vote for the McKinley-Roosevelt presidential ticket. After Roosevelt assumed the presidency, Ireland and Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore cultivated a relationship with the new president. Roosevelt returned the favor by praising the Americanists and facilitating American Catholic presence in the Philippines. While president, Roosevelt privately shared that he wanted to see Ireland made a cardinal, and he more publicly shared that opinion during his brief retirement from politics after his second term as president. When he read the list of new cardinals in 1911, he declared, “I think that Ireland or some representative of the Ireland school should have been appointed” (88). Under the Taft administration, Americanist Catholics’ close ties with government figures continued with Taft inviting Ireland to assist in appointing teachers to the Philippines.

Cossen’s final two chapters return to the continental United States to look at immigration regulation and rising anti-Catholicism. Cossen explores how, in the context of waves of immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, American-born Catholics aligned with non-Catholics on racial theories and whiteness to reinforce their own position in society, thereby becoming “gatekeepers both for their country and for their church” (94). By siding with Protestants against their coreligionists, Heckerite Catholics had a dual goal: to ensure they maintained their public position in an “often-hostile” nation and their dominance over the non-Irish and non-German immigrants whose immigration “threatened to remake American Catholicism” (95). Adopting racial essentialism, the *Catholic World* published editorials that described Italian immigrants as

“totally devoid of what may be termed the sense of respectability” and lacking the “manly qualities” necessary to claim whiteness (107). Cossen argues that this kind of rhetoric erected barriers within the Catholic Church and complicated the process of assimilation.

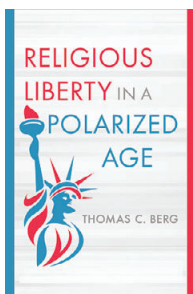
The final chapter explores how despite their best efforts to align with non-Catholic white Americans, Catholics still found themselves on the receiving end of prejudice. They responded to attacks on Catholic schools and attempted to restrict anti-Catholic magazines like *The Menace* by framing themselves as the model Americans and Protestants as the disloyal transgressors. In the context of the Oregon restriction on private schools and the First Red Scare, American bishops used parochial schools to reaffirm Catholic loyalty to the American nation by framing the school as the ideal place to “train citizens in ‘the use of freedom for the advancement of morality and religion’” (119). Likewise, Catholics responded to a report by the U.S. commissioner of education that failed to rank any Catholic colleges by appealing to President Taft and asking him to rectify the situation. Finally, this chapter reevaluates Al Smith’s presidential campaign by revealing how divisions among Catholics—particularly a reluctance to vote for him among Heckerite Catholics who supported Prohibition—contributed to his loss. Each of these varied examples serves to demonstrate that even in the face of rising anti-Catholicism, American Catholics refused to surrender their role in U.S. public life and continued to appeal to state power for inclusion.

Across *Making Catholic America*, Cossen reads Americanist Catholic actions through the lens of confidence, suggesting that Catholics of the time would have rejected the idea that they needed to accept Protestant norms to be part of the nation. While this is certainly one way to analyze these instances, the examples found throughout the book do not always support the idea that American-born Catholics felt no pressure to adapt to Protestant norms in order to secure their place in American society. For example, Cossen interprets

the connections that Catholics like William James Onahan, Richard H. Clarke, and Isaac Hecker drew between Catholics and the New England Puritans as incidents of confidence. While an inventive rather than a reactionary move, these Catholics’ decision to embrace the memory of a religious group that emerged to *purify* the Church of England from Catholicism might also reflect deep insecurities about their position in society and their grasp on the power they hoped to wield. Cossen succeeds at demonstrating that Catholics absorbed Protestant ideas and reframed them to include them in the national story, but the emotions behind their stance—whether it be confidence or insecurity—remain open to different interpretations.

Despite these minor criticisms, *Making Catholic America* undoubtedly succeeds at demonstrating the power and significance of Americanist Catholics and the persistence of their Catholic nationalism over a longer time period than scholars have previously allowed. This intervention provides a much-needed justification for studying a numerical minority with an outsized influence on the path of American Catholicism moving into the 20th century. Other scholars who also study American-born Catholics will thank Cossen for how he uncovers Catholics as actors rather than passive victims of Protestant aggression. He shows how Heckerite Catholics participated in public life and abetted the burgeoning American empire in the West and the Philippines. He also reveals the troubling legacy of Catholics in this ideological vein, who asserted their belonging at the expense of Indigenous, Filipino, and Southern and Eastern European fellow Catholics who got pushed to the side by racial rhetoric and the dialogue of civilization. Anyone who studies American religion in the long 19th century—particularly scholars of Christian nationalism or white Catholics—should read *Making Catholic America* and consider how Cossen’s intervention interacts with their own scholarship.

Ella Hadacek is a doctoral student in history at the University of Notre Dame.



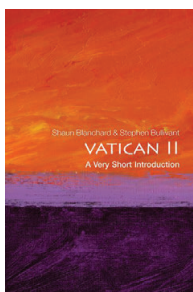
Thomas C. Berg

Religious Liberty in a Polarized Age

EERDMANS 2023

As our political and social landscapes polarize along party lines, religious liberty faces threats from both sides. From antidiscrimination commissions

targeting conservative Christians to travel bans punishing Muslims, recent litigation has revealed the selective approach both left and right take when it comes to freedom of religion. But what if religious liberty is part of the cure for our political division? Drawing on constitutional law, history, and sociology, Thomas C. Berg explains the features of polarization and the societal benefits of diverse religious practices, offering practical counsel on balancing religious freedom against other essential values.



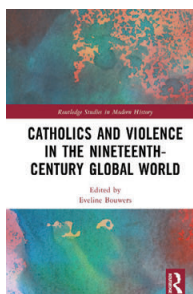
Shaun Blanchard & Stephen Bullivant

Vatican II: A Very Short Introduction

OXFORD 2023

In this *Very Short Introduction*, Shaun Blanchard and Stephen Bullivant present the backstory to the Second Vatican Council,

exploring it in light of the wider history of the Catholic Church and placing it in the tumultuous context of the 1960s. The book distills the research on Vatican II, employing the first-hand accounts of participants and observers and the official proceedings of the council to paint a rich picture of one of the most important events of the last century and arguably the most significant event in the life of the Catholic Church since the Reformation.



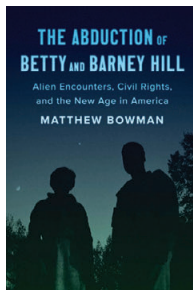
Eveline Bouwers (ed.)

Catholics and Violence in the Nineteenth-Century Global World

ROUTLEDGE 2023

Focusing on incidents involving members of the Roman Catholic Church across the globe, this book offers a kaleidoscopic

overview of situations in which physical or symbolic violence attended inner-Catholic, Catholic-secular, and interreligious conflicts. Focusing especially on the role of agency, the authors explore the motives behind, perceptions of, and legitimation strategies for religion-related violence, as well as evaluating debates about conflict and discussing the role of religious leadership in violent incidents. The book brings to light the variety of ways in which religion and violence have interacted historically.



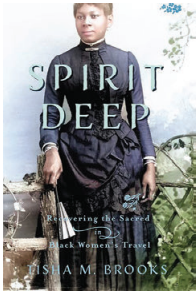
Matthew Bowman

The Abduction of Betty and Barney Hill: Alien Encounters, Civil Rights, and the New Age in America

YALE 2023

In the mid-1960s, Betty and Barney Hill became famous as the first Americans to claim that

aliens had taken them aboard a spacecraft against their will. Their story—involving a lonely highway late at night, lost memories, and medical examinations by small gray creatures with large eyes—became the template for nearly every subsequent encounter with aliens in American popular culture. The Hills were civil rights activists, supporters of liberal policies, and Unitarians, and historian Matthew Bowman examines their story as a microcosm of 1960s America.

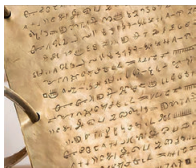


Tisha M. Brooks

Spirit Deep: Recovering the Sacred in Black Women's Travel
 VIRGINIA 2023

What would it mean for American and African American literary studies if readers took the spirituality and travel of Black women seriously? With *Spirit*

Deep, Tisha Brooks addresses this question by focusing on three 19th-century Black women writers who merged the spiritual and travel narrative genres: Zilpha Elaw, Amanda Smith, and Nancy Prince. Brooks challenges the divides between religious and literary studies, and between coerced and “free” passages within travel writing studies to reveal meaningful new connections in Black women’s writings.



Richard Lyman Bushman

Joseph Smith's Gold Plates: A Cultural History
 OXFORD 2023

In this book, renowned historian of Mormonism Richard Lyman Bushman offers a cultural history of the golden plates,

the source from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon. Bushman examines how the plates have been imagined by both believers and critics—and by treasure-seekers, novelists, artists, scholars, and others—from Smith’s first encounter with them to the present. Why have they been remembered, and how have they been used? And why do they remain objects of fascination to this day? By examining these questions, Bushman sheds new light on Mormon history and on the role of enchantment in the modern world.

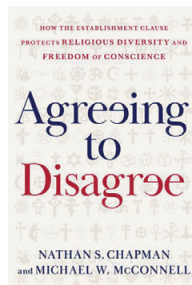


J. Kameron Carter

The Anarchy of Black Religion: A Mystic Song
 DUKE 2023

In *The Anarchy of Black Religion*, J. Kameron Carter examines the deeper philosophical, theological, and religious history that animates our times to advance

a new approach to understanding religion. Drawing on the Black radical tradition and Black feminism, Carter explores the modern invention of religion as central to settler colonial racial technologies wherein anti-Blackness is a founding and guiding religious principle of the modern world. He sets Black religion apart from modern religion, even as it tries to include and enclose it. Black religion emerges not as doctrinal, confessional, or denominational but as a set of poetic and artistic strategies for improvisatory living and gathering.

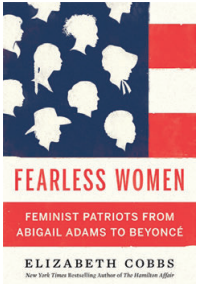


Nathan S. Chapman & Michael W. McConnell

Agreeing to Disagree: How the Establishment Clause Protects Religious Diversity and Freedom of Conscience
 OXFORD 2023

The Establishment Clause of the First Amendment may be

the most contentious and misunderstood provision of the entire U.S. Constitution. But what is an “establishment of religion”? And what is a law “respecting” it? In *Agreeing to Disagree*, Nathan S. Chapman and Michael W. McConnell detail the theological, political, and philosophical underpinnings of the Establishment Clause, state disestablishment, and the disestablishment norms applied to the states by the 14th Amendment. Chapman and McConnell argue that the clause is best understood as a constitutional commitment for Americans to agree to disagree about matters of faith.



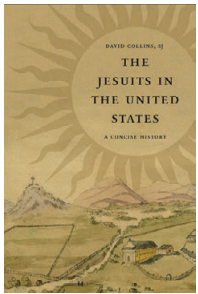
Elizabeth Cobbs

Fearless Women: Feminist Patriots from Abigail Adams to Beyoncé

HARVARD 2023

Drawing on stories of women rich and poor, famous and obscure, religious and progressive, and from all backgrounds and

regions of the country, *Fearless Women* shows that the women’s movement has never been an exclusive club. While some women devoted their lives to the cause, millions more pressed their demands far from the spotlight, insisting on their right to sit on a jury, vote, control the timing of their pregnancies, and make a living. Elizabeth Cobbs gives voice to fearless women on both sides of the debate.



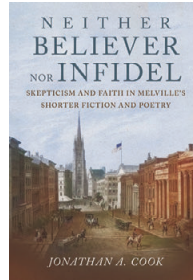
David J. Collins, S.J.

The Jesuits in the United States: A Concise History

GEORGETOWN 2023

The history of America cannot be told without the history of religion, the history of American religion cannot be told without the history of Catholicism, and

the history of Catholicism in America cannot be told without the history of Jesuits in America. *The Jesuits in the United States* offers an overview of the Jesuit order in the United States from the colonial era to the present. David J. Collins, S.J., describes the development of the Jesuit order in the United States against the background of American religious, cultural, and social history.



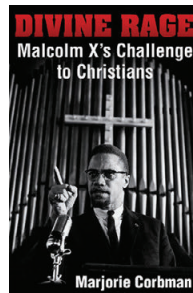
Jonathan A. Cook

Neither Believer nor Infidel: Skepticism and Faith in Melville's Shorter Fiction and Poetry

NORTHERN ILLINOIS 2023

Shedding new light on both classic and lesser-known works in the Melville canon with particular attention to the

author’s literary use of the Bible, *Neither Believer nor Infidel* examines the debate between religious skepticism and Christian faith that infused Herman Melville’s writings following *Moby-Dick*. Jonathan A. Cook’s study is the first to focus on the decisive role of faith and doubt in Melville’s writings following his mid-career turn to shorter fiction, and still later to poetry, as a result of the commercial failures of *Moby-Dick* and *Pierre*.



Marjorie Corbman

Divine Rage: Malcolm X's Challenge to Christians

ORBIS 2023

Malcolm X asked: did Christianity have nothing more to offer Black Americans than spiritual “novocaine,” enabling them to suffer peacefully? His apocalyptic

vision—in which the world’s oppressed would join together to make God’s righteous judgment on racism, colonialism, and all forms of slavery—galvanized, outraged, and troubled many. In *Divine Rage*, Marjorie Corbman shows how Christian activists and theologians wrestled with it, including Rev. Albert B. Cleage Jr., James Cone, Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons, Thomas Merton, and Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera.



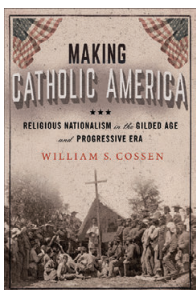
John Corrigan

The Feeling of Forgetting: Christianity, Race, and Violence in America

CHICAGO 2023

The traumas of colonialism and slavery are still felt by Native Americans and African Americans as victims of ongoing violence

toward people of color today. In *The Feeling of Forgetting*, John Corrigan calls attention to the trauma experienced by white Americans as perpetrators of this violence. By tracing memory's role in American Christianity, Corrigan shows how contemporary white Christian nationalism is motivated by an effort to forget the role race plays in American society. White trauma, Corrigan argues, courses through American culture like an underground river that sometimes bursts forth into brutality, terrorism, and insurrection. This book traces the river to its source.



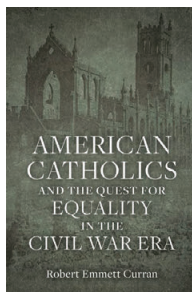
William S. Cossen

Making Catholic America: Religious Nationalism in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era

CORNELL 2023

In *Making Catholic America*, William S. Cossen shows how Catholic men and women worked to prove themselves to

be model American citizens in the decades between the Civil War and the Great Depression. Far from being outsiders in American history, Catholics took command of public life in the early 20th century, claiming leadership in the growing American nation. They produced their own version of American history and claimed the power to remake the nation in their own image, arguing that they were the country's most faithful supporters of freedom and liberty and that their church had birthed American independence.



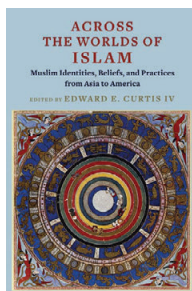
Robert Emmett Curran

American Catholics and the Quest for Equality in the Civil War Era

LSU 2023

Robert Emmett Curran offers the first comprehensive history of Roman Catholics in the North and South before, during, and

after the war, examining how the momentous developments of the Civil War era affected the entire Catholic community, including Black and indigenous Americans. He also explores the ways that Catholics contributed to the reshaping of a nation. Curran concludes the revolution that the war touched off remained unfinished and indeed was turned backward, in no small part by Catholics who marred their pursuit of equality with a truncated vision of who deserved to share in its realization.



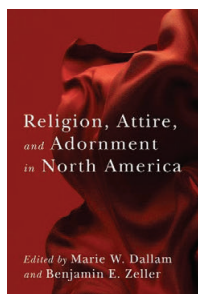
Edward E. Curtis IV (ed.)

Across the Worlds of Islam: Muslim Identities, Beliefs, and Practices from Asia to America

COLUMBIA 2023

This book offers an inclusive view of the diversity and complexity of the many worlds of Islam, investigating ethics

and aesthetics as much as scriptures and theology. By paying attention to Muslims who are socially, culturally, doctrinally, or politically marginalized, it provides a comprehensive and all-embracing vision of the religion and its many interrelated communities. Contributors from a range of personal and intellectual backgrounds explore the capaciousness of Muslim identities, helping readers achieve a broader understanding of the past, present, and future of the Muslim world.

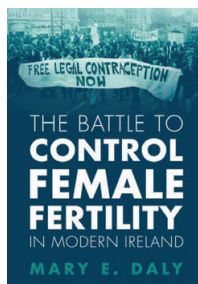


Marie W. Dallam & Benjamin E. Zeller (eds.)

Religion, Attire, and Adornment in North America
COLUMBIA 2023

Clothing, dress, and ornamentation are crucial parts of individual and communal religious life and practice, yet

they are too often overlooked. This book convenes leading scholars to explore the roles of attire and adornment in the creation and communication of religious meaning, identity, and community. Contributors investigate aspects of religious dress in North America in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries, considering adornment practices in a wide range of religious traditions and among individuals who straddle religious boundaries. The collection is organized around four frameworks: theological interpretation, identity formation, negotiation of tradition, and activism.

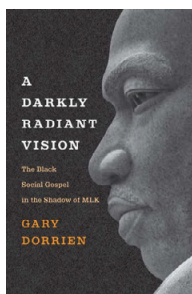


Mary E. Daly

The Battle to Control Female Fertility in Modern Ireland
CAMBRIDGE 2023

The Irish battle for legal contraception became lengthy and divisive because it challenged key tenets of Irish identity: Catholicism, large families,

traditional gender roles, and sexual puritanism. The Catholic Church argued that legalizing contraception would destroy this way of life, and many citizens agreed. In this book, Mary E. Daly provides new insights on Irish masculinity and fertility control. She highlights women's activism in both liberal and conservative camps, and the consensus between the Catholic and Protestant churches' views on contraception for single people. It tells a story of gender, religion, social change, and failing efforts to reaffirm Irish moral exceptionalism.

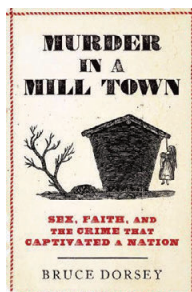


Gary Dorrien

A Darkly Radiant Vision: The Black Social Gospel in the Shadow of MLK
YALE 2023

The Black social gospel is a tradition of unsurpassed importance in American life, and it remains ongoing. So Gary

Dorrien argues in his trilogy of books on the history of Black social Christianity, with this third, concluding volume offering an interpretation of Black social Christianity since the early 1970s. Beginning in the shadow of Martin Luther King Jr., it examines the past 50 years of this intellectual and activist tradition, interpreting its politics, theology, ethics, social criticism, and social justice organizing. Dorrien shows how those who carried on the struggle in King's name were often lifted by King's moral example.

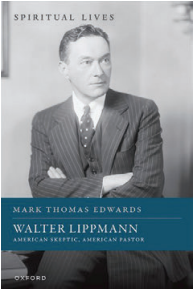


Bruce Dorsey

Murder in a Mill Town: Sex, Faith, and the Crime That Captivated a Nation
OXFORD 2023

In December 1832, a farmer found the body of a young, pregnant woman hanging near a haystack outside a New England

mill town. When news spread that Methodist preacher Ephraim Avery was accused of murdering Sarah Maria Cornell, a factory worker, the case gave the public everything they found irresistible: sexually charged violence, adultery, the hypocrisy of a church leader, secrecy and mystery, and suspicions of insanity. *Murder in a Mill Town* tells the story of how a local crime quickly turned into a national scandal that became America's first "trial of the century."



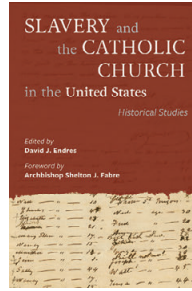
Mark Thomas Edwards

Walter Lippmann: American Skeptic, American Pastor

OXFORD 2023

Walter Lippmann: American Skeptic, American Pastor considers the role of religion in Lippmann’s life and thought, prioritizing his affirmation and rejection of

Christian nationalisms of the left and right. It also yields fresh insights into the philosophical origins of modern American liberalism, including liberalism’s blind spots in the areas of sex, race, and class. Most importantly, the book highlights the constructive power of doubt. For Lippmann, the good life in the good society was lived in irreconcilable tension, to recognize the dangers yet also the necessity of a civil religion and to strive for a just and enduring world order that can never be.



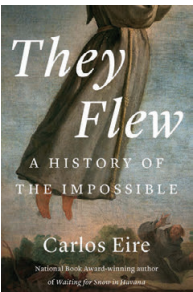
David J. Endres (ed.)

Slavery and the Catholic Church in the United States: Historical Studies

CUA 2023

The intertwining of U.S. Catholicism and race-based slavery is a painful aspect of the Church’s history. Many

scholars have shied away from this uncomfortable topic, but in recent years a cadre of historians have studied Catholics’ varied roles: as enslaved persons, slaveholders, defenders of slavery, and, in a few cases, advocates of abolition and emancipation. This collection of nine essays—many of which are informed by recent archival discoveries—is divided into three sections: enslaved persons and slaveholders, debating abolition and emancipation, and historians and historiography.



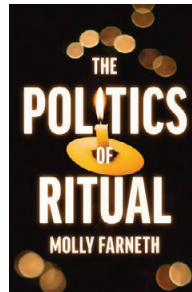
Carlos M. N. Eire

They Flew: A History of the Impossible

YALE 2023

Accounts of seemingly impossible phenomena abounded in the early modern era—tales of levitation, bilocation, and witchcraft—even as skepticism,

atheism, and empirical science were starting to supplant religious belief in the paranormal. Carlos Eire explores how a culture increasingly devoted to scientific thinking grappled with events deemed impossible by its leading intellectuals. He observes how levitating saints and flying witches were as essential a component of early modern life as the religious turmoil of the age, and as much a part of history as Newton’s scientific discoveries.



Molly Farneth

The Politics of Ritual

PRINCETON 2023

In *The Politics of Ritual*, Molly Farneth argues that rituals are social practices in which people create, maintain, and transform themselves and their societies.

Far from mere scripts or mechanical routines, rituals are dynamic activities bound up in processes of continuity and change. Emphasizing the role of rituals in democratic engagement, Farneth shows how people adapt their rituals to redraw the boundaries of their communities, reallocate goods and power within them, and cultivate the habits of citizenship. The book examines a broad range of rituals enacted to just and democratic ends, including border Eucharists, candlelight vigils, and rituals of mourning.



Decolonization
and the
Remaking of
Christianity

EDITED BY
Elizabeth A. Foster and Udi Greenberg

**Elizabeth A. Foster
& Udi Greenberg (eds.)**

*Decolonization and the
Remaking of Christianity*

PENN 2023

In the decades following the era of decolonization, global Christianity experienced a seismic shift. While Catholicism and Protestantism have declined in their historic European strongholds, they have sustained explosive growth in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. This demographic change has established Christians from the Global South as an increasingly dominant presence in modern Christian thought, culture, and politics. *Decolonization and the Remaking of Christianity* unearths the roots of this development, with essays that investigate how religious leaders, politicians, theologians, and lay people debated and shaped a new Christianity for a postcolonial world.

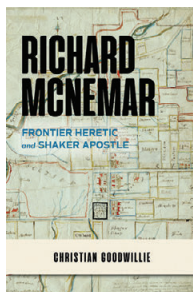


Christopher M. Gleason

American Poly: A History

OXFORD 2023

This book traces the evolution of polyamorous thought and practice within the broader context of American culture. Drawing on personal journals and letters, underground newsletters, and publications from the Kinsey Institute archives, it reconstructs polyamory's intellectual foundations, highlighting its unique blend of conservative political thought and countercultural spiritualism. Offering an original perspective on sexuality, marriage, and the family, *American Poly* reveals the history of polyamory in the United States from fringe practice to a new stage of the sexual revolution.

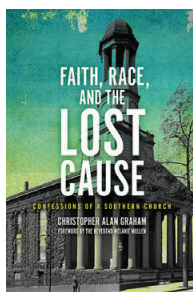


Christian Goodwillie

*Richard McNemar: Frontier
Heretic and Shaker Apostle*

INDIANA 2023

Richard McNemar (1770–1839) led a life replete with twists and turns that influenced American religions in many ways during the early 19th century. Beginning as a Presbyterian minister in the Midwest, he took his preaching and the practice of his congregation in a radically different, evangelical “free will” direction during the Kentucky Revival. After encountering Shaker missionaries, McNemar converted and soon played a prominent role in expanding and raising public awareness of their religion. Goodwillie's mastery of the archival records surrounding McNemar and the Shakers allows him to capture the complexity of the man and the scope of his enduring legacy.

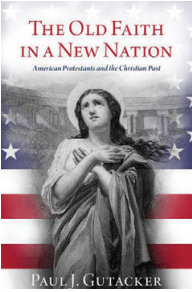


**Christopher Alan
Graham**

*Faith, Race, and the Lost
Cause: Confessions of a
Southern Church*

VIRGINIA 2023

Faith, Race, and the Lost Cause is a new history of Richmond's famous St. Paul's Episcopal Church, attended by Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis during the Civil War and a tourist magnet thereafter. Christopher Alan Graham's narrative charts the congregation's theological and secular views of race from the church's founding in 1845 to the present day, exploring the church's complicity in Lost Cause narratives and racial oppression in Richmond. Placing the legacy of St. Paul's self-described benevolent paternalism in dialogue with the racial and religious geography of Richmond, Graham reflects on what an authentic process of recognition and reparations might be.



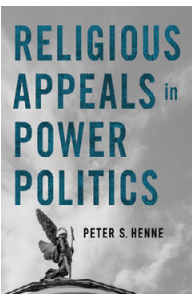
Paul J. Gutacker

The Old Faith in a New Nation: American Protestants and the Christian Past

OXFORD 2023

Conventional wisdom holds that tradition and history meant little to 19th-century American Protestants, who relied on

common sense and “the Bible alone.” *The Old Faith in a New Nation* challenges this portrayal by recovering evangelical engagement with the Christian past. Even when they appeared to be most scornful toward tradition, most optimistic and forward-looking, and most confident in their grasp of the Bible, evangelicals found themselves returning to Christian history: they studied religious historiography, reinterpreted the history of the church, and argued over its implications for the present.



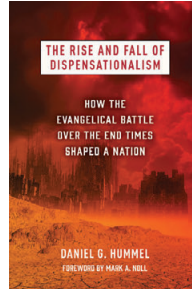
Peter S. Henne

Religious Appeals in Power Politics

CORNELL 2023

Public policy analysis often minimizes the role of religion, favoring military or economic matters as the “important” arenas of policy debate. However,

as Peter S. Henne shows, at transformative moments in political history, states turn to faith-based appeals to integrate or fragment international coalitions. Henne highlights Saudi Arabia’s 1960s rivalry with Egypt, America’s post-9/11 leadership in the Global War on Terrorism, and the Russian Federation’s contemporary expansionism to reveal the presence and power of calls for religious unity and to emphasize the uncertainty and anxiety such appeals can create.



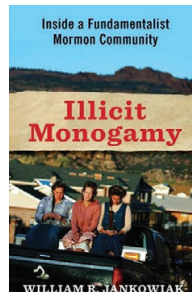
Daniel G. Hummel

The Rise and Fall of Dispensationalism: How the Evangelical Battle over the End Times Shaped a Nation

EERDMANS 2023

In *The Rise and Fall of Dispensationalism*, Daniel G. Hummel illuminates how

dispensationalism, despite often being dismissed as a fringe apocalyptic movement, shaped Anglo-American evangelicalism and the larger American cultural imagination. Hummel locates dispensationalism’s origin in the writings of the 19th-century Protestant John Nelson Darby, who established many of the hallmarks of the theology, such as premillennialism and belief in the rapture. Though it consistently faced criticism, dispensationalism held populist, and briefly scholarly, appeal—visible in everything from turn-of-the-century revivalism to apocalyptic bestsellers of the 1970s to current conspiracy theories.



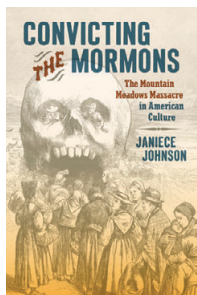
William R. Jankowiak

Illicit Monogamy: Inside a Fundamentalist Mormon Community

COLUMBIA 2023

Angel Park is a Mormon fundamentalist polygamous community where plural marriages between one man

and multiple women are common. In contrast to mainstream America’s idealization of the nuclear family and romantic love, its residents esteem notions of harmonious familial love, a spiritual bond that unites all members. Based on many years of in-depth ethnographic research in Angel Park, William R. Jankowiak gives a balanced account of the complications and conflicts of the plural family. Jankowiak also challenges stereotypes of polygamous families as bastions of patriarchal power, showing the weight that interpersonal and social expectations place on men.



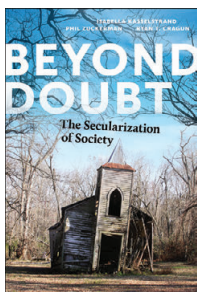
Janiece Johnson

Convicting the Mormons: The Mountain Meadows Massacre in American Culture

UNC 2023

On September 11, 1857, a small band of Mormons led by John D. Lee massacred an emigrant train of men, women,

and children heading west at Mountain Meadows, Utah. Historian Janiece Johnson analyzes how sensational media attention used the story of the Mountain Meadows Massacre to inflame public sentiment and provoke legal action against Latter-day Saints. Ministers, novelists, entertainers, cartoonists, and federal officials followed suit, spreading anti-Mormon sentiment to collectively convict the Mormon religion itself. This troubling episode in American religious history sheds important light on the role of media and popular culture in provoking religious intolerance.



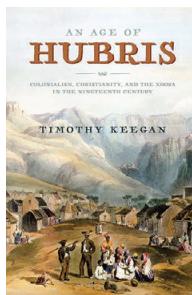
Isabella Kasselstrand, Phil Zuckerman, Ryan T. Cragun

Beyond Doubt: The Secularization of Society

NYU 2023

In the decades since its introduction, secularization theory has been subjected to

doubt and criticism from a number of leading scholars, who have variously claimed that it is wrong, flawed, or incomplete. In *Beyond Doubt*, Isabella Kasselstrand, Phil Zuckerman, and Ryan T. Cragun mount a strong defense for the theory, providing compelling evidence that religion is indeed declining globally as a result of modernization. The book engages with the most prominent criticisms levied against the theory, and it draws on extensive survey data from around the world to demonstrate the robust empirical support for secularization theory.



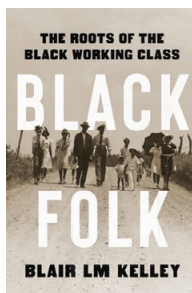
Timothy Keegan

An Age of Hubris: Colonialism, Christianity, and the Xhosa in the Nineteenth Century

VIRGINIA 2023

An Age of Hubris is a comprehensive overview of the impact of missionary enterprise on the Xhosa chiefdoms of South

Africa in the first half of the 19th century, chronicling a world punctuated by war, millenarian eruptions, and the steady encroachment of settler land hunger and colonial hegemony. Timothy Keegan contributes a new approach to Xhosa history as well as a new dimension to the much-trodden but still vital topic of the impact—cultural, social, and political—of missionary activity among African peoples.



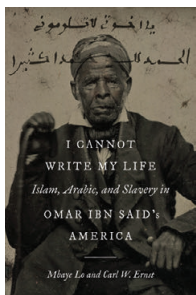
Blair LM Kelley

Black Folk: The Roots of the Black Working Class

LIVERIGHT 2023

In *Black Folk*, historian Blair LM Kelley situates the Black working class at the center of the American story. Spanning 200 years, the book highlights

the lives of laundresses, Pullman porters, domestic maids, and postal workers who established the Black working class as a force in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Black workers found community in intimate spaces, from stoops on city streets to the backyards of washerwomen, where multiple generations talked and laughed in a space free of white supervision. The church yards, factory floors, railcars, and postal sorting facilities where Black people worked were sites of possibility.



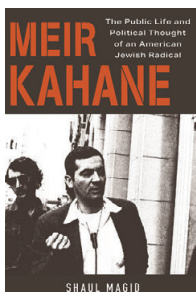
Mbaye Lo & Carl W. Ernst

I Cannot Write My Life: Islam, Arabic, and Slavery in Omar Ibn Said's America

UNC 2023

Omar ibn Said (1770–1863) was a Muslim scholar from West Africa who spent more than 50

years enslaved in the North Carolina household of James Owen. In 1831, Omar composed a brief autobiography, the only known narrative written in Arabic by an enslaved person in North America, and he became famous for his Arabic writings. His enslavers provided him with an Arabic Bible and claimed Omar as a convert to Christianity, prompting wonder and speculation among amateur scholars of Islam, white slave owners, and missionaries. But these self-proclaimed experts were unable or unwilling to understand Omar's writings, and his voice was suppressed for two centuries.



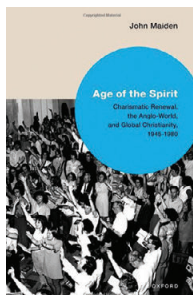
Shaul Magid

Meir Kahane: The Public Life and Political Thought of an American Jewish Radical

PRINCETON 2023

Meir Kahane came of age amid the radical politics of the counterculture, becoming a militant voice of protest against

Jewish liberalism, founding the Jewish Defense League in 1968, and declaring that Jews must protect themselves by any means necessary. Shaul Magid sheds new light on Kahane's radical political views and his use of the "grammar of race" as a tool to promote Jewish pride. The book examines how tradition and classical Jewish texts profoundly influenced Kahane's thought later in life and argues that Kahane's enduring legacy lies in the challenge he posed to the liberalism and assimilatory project of the postwar American Jewish establishment.



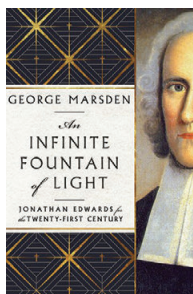
John Maiden

Age of the Spirit: Charismatic Renewal, the Anglo-World, and Global Christianity, 1945–1980

OXFORD 2023

This book offers an interpretation of the "new Pentecost": the rise of charismatic Christianity before, during, and after the "long

1960s." It examines the translocal actors, networks, and media which constructed a "Spiritscape" of charismatic renewal in the Anglo-world contexts of Australia, the British Isles, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States. It places this arena also in a wider and dynamic worldwide setting, exploring the ways in which charismatic imaginations of an "age of the Spirit" were shaped by interpenetrations with the "Third World," the Soviet Bloc, and beyond in the global Sixties and Seventies.



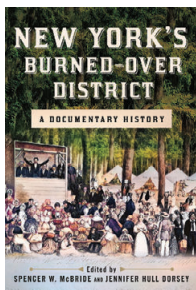
George M. Marsden

An Infinite Fountain of Light: Jonathan Edwards for the Twenty-First Century

IVP ACADEMIC 2023

Drawing on deep expertise on Jonathan Edwards and American culture, historian George Marsden explains where Edwards stood

within his historical context and sets forth key points of his complex thought, especially his view of the centrality of God's beauty and love. Christians' love for God, Edwards taught, can be the guiding love of their lives, opening them to transformative joy and orienting their lesser loves, and Marsden guides readers through these and other of Edwards's teachings, ultimately unpacking the cultural and religious impulses that have shaped our times.



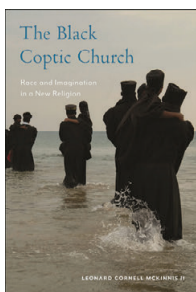
**Spencer W. McBride
& Jennifer Hull Dorsey
(eds.)**

*New York's Burned-over District:
A Documentary History*

CORNELL 2023

In *New York's Burned-over District*, Spencer W. McBride and Jennifer Hull Dorsey invite

readers to experience early American revivals and reform movements through the eyes of the revivalists and the reformers themselves. The anthology highlights how Christian revivalism transformed the region into a critical hub of social reform in 19th-century America, and it revises standard interpretations by showing how the putative grassroots movements of the era were often coordinated and regulated by established religious leaders.



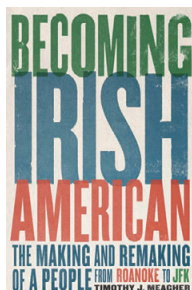
**Leonard Cornell
McKinnis II**

*The Black Coptic Church:
Race and Imagination in
a New Religion*

NYU 2023

Black Coptics combined elements of Black Protestant and Black Hebrew traditions

with Ethiopianism as a way of constructing a divine racial identity that embraced the idea of a royal Egyptian heritage for its African American followers, a heroic identity that was in stark contrast to the racial identity imposed on African Americans by the white dominant culture. This embrace of a royal Blackness—what Leonard Cornell McKinnis II calls an act of “fugitive spirituality”—illuminates how the Black Coptic tradition in Chicago and beyond uniquely employs a religio-performative imagination.



Timothy J. Meagher

*Becoming Irish American: The
Making and Remaking of a
People from Roanoke to JFK*

YALE 2023

Historian Timothy J. Meagher traces the Irish American experience from the first Irishman to step ashore at Roanoke in 1585

to John F. Kennedy's election as president in 1960. As he chronicles how Irish American culture evolved, Meagher looks at how various groups adapted and thrived—Protestants and Catholics, immigrants and American born, those located in different geographic corners of the country. He describes how Irish Americans made a living, where they worshiped, when they married, and how Irish American politicians found particular success from ward bosses on the streets of New York, Boston, and Chicago to the presidency.



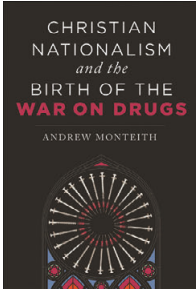
**Florian Michel (transl.
by James G. Colbert)**

*Étienne Gilson: An Intellectual
and Political Biography*

CUA 2023

Étienne Gilson was a French philosopher and historian of philosophy as well as a scholar of medieval philosophy. In 1946 he

attained the distinction of being elected an “Immortal” (member) of the Académie française. This major biography, first published in France in 2018, arrives in an English translation that traces Gilson's life through his time as a professor at the College de France and member of the French Academy. Gilson did not hesitate to engage in quarrels with the bishops and allows us to understand how one passes from a critical modernism before the First World War to a liberal Thomism and to the Second Vatican Council.



Andrew Monteith

Christian Nationalism and the Birth of the War on Drugs
 NYU 2023

Many people view the War on Drugs as a contemporary phenomenon invented by the Nixon administration. But as this new book shows, the conflict

actually began more than a century before, when American Protestants began the temperance movement and linked drug use with immorality. Reformers pursued the “civilizing mission,” a wide-ranging project that sought to protect “child races” from harmful influences while remodeling their cultures to look like Europe and the United States. Most reformers saw Christianity as essential to civilization, and missionaries felt that banning drugs would encourage religious conversion and progress.

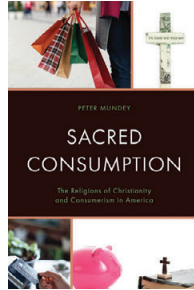


Samuel Moyn

Liberalism against Itself: Cold War Intellectuals and the Making of Our Times
 YALE 2023

By the middle of the 20th century, many liberals looked glumly at the world modernity had brought about, with its

devastating wars, rising totalitarianism, and permanent nuclear terror. They concluded that, far from offering a solution to these problems, the ideals of the Enlightenment, including emancipation and equality, had instead created them. Historian of political thought Samuel Moyn argues that the liberal intellectuals of the Cold War Era—among them Isaiah Berlin, Gertrude Himmelfarb, Karl Popper, Judith Shklar, and Lionel Trilling—transformed liberalism but left a disastrous legacy for our time: a philosophy that privileged preserving individual liberty at all costs.

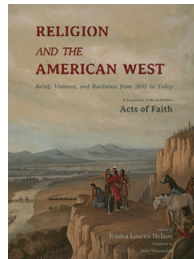


Peter Munday

Sacred Consumption: The Religions of Christianity and Consumerism in America
 LEXINGTON 2023

How does consumerism function as a quasi-religion in America, and how does the Christian faith interact with the consumerist

pseudo-faith? Answering these questions is the focus of *Sacred Consumption*. Peter Munday draws on both quantitative and qualitative data to explore how habitually consuming nonessentials is sacred in American culture and how the Christian sacred interacts with such consumption. Munday unpacks the history of American consumerism and the creeds of consumerism. His emphasis throughout is to enumerate the underlying cultural ideology derived from both Christianity and consumerism that partially makes and shapes American consumers.

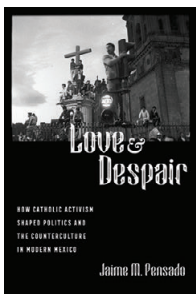


Jessica Lauren Nelson (ed.)

Religion and the American West: Belief, Violence, and Resilience from 1800 to Today
 NEW MEXICO 2023

Religion and the American West offers an illustrated and comprehensive overview of the

ways religion has shaped the idea of the American West and how the region has influenced broader religious and racial categories. Starting when the concept of the “American West” emerged in the early 19th century and continuing through modern times, *Religion and the American West* explores the interplay between a wide range of American belief systems, from established world religions to new spiritual innovations. The contributors challenge longstanding definitions of the American West and provide a new narrative that recenters attention on the lived experiences of diverse peoples and communities.



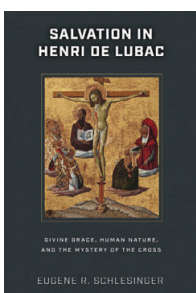
Jaime Pensado

Love and Despair: How Catholic Activism Shaped Politics and the Counterculture in Modern Mexico

CALIFORNIA 2023

Love and Despair explores the multiple and mostly unknown ways progressive and conservative

Catholic actors, such as priests, lay activists, journalists, intellectuals, and filmmakers, responded to social and cultural shifts that formed competing notions of modernity in Cold War Mexico. Jaime Pensado demonstrates how the Catholic Church, with key transnational networks in Latin America and Western Europe, was invested in youth activism, state repression, and the counterculture from the postwar period to the more radical 1960s. Progressive Catholics often saw themselves as revolutionary actors and nearly always framed their activism as an act of love.



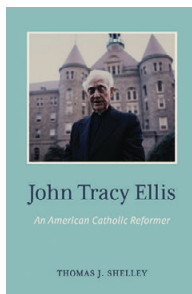
Eugene R. Schlesinger

Salvation in Henri de Lubac: Divine Grace, Human Nature, and the Mystery of the Cross

NOTRE DAME 2023

The writings of Henri de Lubac have left an indelible mark on Catholic theology, preparing the ground for, giving shape to,

and explaining the seminal event of 20th-century Catholicism: the Second Vatican Council. This book presents an overview of de Lubac's major works in light of his own statements that a mystical vision animated them all. De Lubac's mystical theology hinges upon a vision of salvation, understood as humanity's incorporation into the triune God through the cross and resurrection of the incarnate Christ. By attending to de Lubac's work in this light, Eugene R. Schlesinger brings themes from French language scholarship into the English-speaking conversation.



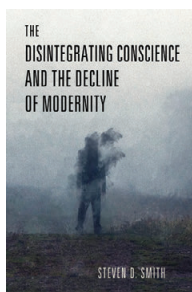
Thomas J. Shelley

John Tracy Ellis: An American Catholic Reformer

CUA 2023

For several decades prior to his death in October 1992, Monsignor John Tracy Ellis was the most prominent historian of American Catholicism. Ellis'

ecumenically minded scholarship led to his election in 1969 as the president of both the American Catholic Historical Association and the predominantly Protestant American Society of Church History. In his later years, Ellis became an advocate of reform in the Church. His fellow church historian Jay P. Dolan remarked that Ellis "used history as an instrument to promote changes he believed necessary for American Catholicism. . . . No other historian of American Catholicism matched Ellis in this regard."



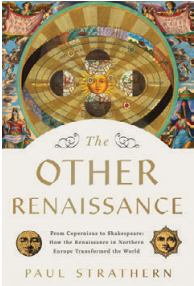
Steven D. Smith

The Disintegrating Conscience and the Decline of Modernity

NOTRE DAME 2023

Steven D. Smith considers the question of decline in relation to a theme—conscience—that has been central to much of what has happened in Western politics,

law, and religion over the past half-millennium. The book focuses on three particularly portentous episodes: Thomas More's execution for his conscientious refusal to take an oath mandated by Henry VIII; James Madison's contribution to Virginia law in removing the proposed requirement of religious toleration in favor of freedom of conscience; and William Brennan's pledge to separate his religious faith from his performance as a Supreme Court justice.



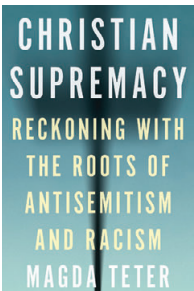
Paul Strathern

The Other Renaissance: From Copernicus to Shakespeare: How the Renaissance in Northern Europe Transformed the World

PEGASUS 2023

It is generally accepted that the European Renaissance began in

Italy. However, a historical transformation of similar magnitude, initially centered on the city of Bruges in Flanders, also took place in northern Europe at the same time, and its influence was soon felt in France, the German states, London, and Italy itself. Following major figures including Copernicus, Gutenberg, Luther, Catherine de' Medici, Rabelais, van Eyck, and Shakespeare, Paul Strathern tells the story of how this "Other Renaissance" played as significant a role as the Italian renaissance in bringing the modern world into being.



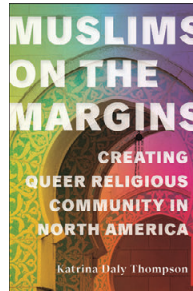
Magda Teter

Christian Supremacy: Reckoning with the Roots of Antisemitism and Racism

PRINCETON 2023

Since the earliest days of Christianity, theologians expressed pervasive anxiety about Jews as equal members of society, and,

with European expansion in the early modern period, that anxiety extended to people of color. *Christian Supremacy* demonstrates how theological and legal frameworks created by the Church centuries ago laid the seeds of antisemitism and anti-Black racism and reveals why Christian identity lies at the heart of the world's violent white supremacy movements. Drawing on primary evidence ranging from the theological and legal to the philosophical and artistic, *Christian Supremacy* outlines an enduring Christian heritage of exclusion, intolerance, and persecution.



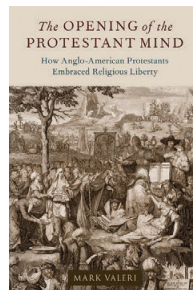
Katrina Daly Thompson

Muslims on the Margins: Creating Queer Religious Community in North America

NYU 2023

The turn of the 21st century ushered in a wave of progressive Muslims, whose modern

interpretations and practices transformed the public's perception of who could follow the teachings of Islam. *Muslims on the Margins* tells the story of their even more radical descendants: nonconformists who have reinterpreted their religion and created space for queer, trans, and nonbinary identities within Islam. Katrina Daly Thompson draws extensively from conversations and interviews conducted both in person in North America and online in several international communities, centering the real experiences and diverse perspectives of nonconformist Muslims.

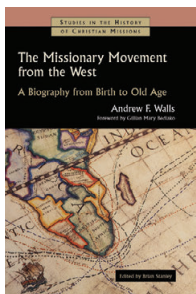


Mark Valeri

The Opening of the Protestant Mind: How Anglo-American Protestants Embraced Religious Liberty

OXFORD 2023

Using travel narratives, dictionaries and encyclopedias of the world's religions, missionary tracts, and sermons, *The Opening of the Protestant Mind* traces a transformation in how English and colonial American Protestants described other religions during a crucial period of English colonization of North America. Mark Valeri shows how Protestants—liberal Anglicans, Calvinist dissenters, deists, and evangelicals—began to see other religions not as entirely good or entirely bad, but as complex, and to evaluate them according to their commitment to religious liberty. He reveals the ambiguity in their ideas while showing how those ideas contained the seeds of modern religious liberty.



Andrew F. Walls

The Missionary Movement from the West: A Biography from Birth to Old Age

EERDMANS 2023

Though modern missions began with European colonialism, the outcome was a largely non-Western global Christianity. The late scholar Andrew Walls explores every facet of the movement from its birth with the Puritans and Pietists through to the 20th century, by which point colonialism and missionary work turned out to be essentially incompatible. Prior to his passing in 2021, Walls entrusted the editing of his lectures to his friends and students. The result of their labor of love, *The Missionary Movement from the West* represents the culmination of scholarship by a pioneer in the study of missiology and global Christianity.



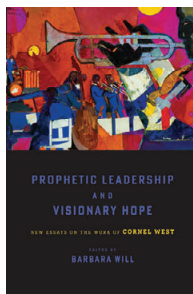
James Walvin

Amazing Grace: A Cultural History of the Beloved Hymn

CALIFORNIA 2023

Sung in moments of personal isolation or on state occasions watched by millions, “Amazing Grace” has become an unparalleled anthem for humankind. How

did a simple Christian hymn, written in a remote English vicarage in 1772, come to hold such sway over millions in all corners of the modern world? Walvin follows the song across the Atlantic to track how it became part of the cause for abolition and galvanized decades of movements and trends in American history and popular culture. By the end of the 20th century, “Amazing Grace” was performed in Soweto and Vanuatu, by political dissidents in China, and by Kikuyu women in Kenya.



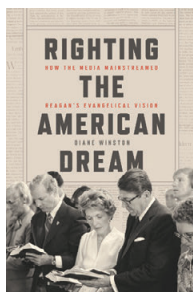
Barbara Will (ed.)

Prophetic Leadership and Visionary Hope: New Essays on the Work of Cornel West

PENN 2023

Prophetic Leadership and Visionary Hope, a volume of essays by scholars in Black studies, religious studies, and social justice history,

looks back to the 1993 publication of *Race Matters* and forward into the future of racial understanding and healing, responding to Dr. West’s repeated insistence that we can only understand our present and future by looking back. The book offers new points of entry into thorny issues, including the challenge of leadership in a culture marked by the legacy of white supremacy, the limited value of liberal affirmative action programs in promoting the affirmation of Black humanity, and the necessity and difficulty of cross-race solidarity and cross-religious affinity.



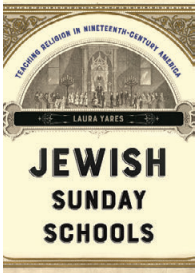
Diane Winston

Righting the American Dream: How the Media Mainstreamed Reagan’s Evangelical Vision

CHICAGO 2023

In *Righting the American Dream*, Diane Winston reveals how support for Ronald Reagan emerged from a new religious

vision of American identity circulating in the popular press. Through four key events—the “evil empire” speech, AIDS outbreak, invasion of Grenada, and rise in American poverty rates—Winston shows that many journalists uncritically adopted Reagan’s religious rhetoric and ultimately mainstreamed otherwise unpopular evangelical ideas about individual responsibility. The result is a new account of how Reagan, together with the press, turned America to the right and initiated a social revolution that continues today.

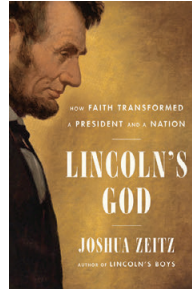


Laura Yares

Jewish Sunday Schools: Teaching Religion in Nineteenth-Century America

NYU 2023

The earliest Jewish Sunday schools were female-led, growing from one school in Philadelphia established by Rebecca Gratz in 1838 to an entire system that educated vast numbers of Jewish youth across the country. These schools were modeled on Christian approaches to religious education and aimed to protect Jewish children from Protestant missionaries. *Jewish Sunday Schools* argues that the work of the women who shepherded Jewish education in the early Jewish Sunday school had ramifications far outside the classroom, extending even to the question of how American Judaism sustained itself in an overwhelmingly Protestant context.



Joshua Zeitz

Lincoln's God: How Faith Transformed a President and a Nation

VIKING 2023

Abraham Lincoln, unlike most of his political brethren, kept organized Christianity at arm's length. He never joined a church and only sometimes attended Sunday services with his wife. But as he came to appreciate the growing political and military importance of the Christian community, and when death touched the Lincoln household in an awful way, the erstwhile skeptic effectively evolved into a believer and harnessed the power of evangelical Protestantism to rally the nation to arms. The war, he told Americans, was divine retribution for the sin of slavery. Joshua Zeitz probes ways in which war and spiritual convictions became intertwined.

Book descriptions in this section originated with the publishers. They have been edited for clarity and style.

- WILLIAM ROBERT BILLUPS**, “The Cost of Civil Rights: White Supremacist Violence and Economic Resistance against Koinonia Farm during the Civil Rights Era,” *Journal of Southern History* 89, no. 1 (February 2023): 89–130.
- TRICIA C. BRUCE**, “Placemaking in a Postsecular Age: Sorting ‘Sacred’ from ‘Profane’ in the Adaptive Reuse of Relegated U.S. Catholic Churches,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 93–115.
- KELSY BURKE**, “The False Dichotomy of Sex and Religion in America,” *Sociology of Religion* 83, no. 4 (Winter 2022): 417–33.
- JEFFREY M. BURNS**, “History and the Catholic Sixties: A Work in Progress,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 41, no. 2 (Spring 2023): 53–77.
- JAMES CAVENDISH**, “Religion as a Resource in an Increasingly Polarized Society,” *Sociology of Religion* 84, no. 1 (Spring 2023): 1–15.
- MATT D. CHILDS**, “The Roots and Routes of African Religious Beliefs in the Atlantic World,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 80, no. 2 (April 2023): 325–54.
- BRIAN J. CLITES**, “In Search of a Historiography of Clergy Sexual Abuse,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 41, no. 2 (Spring 2023): 79–102.
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- JENNIFER DAUBENMIER & JUDITH DAUBENMIER**, “The Nun Hit by a Brick: Sister Angelica Schultz and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Chicago,” *American Catholic Studies* 134, no. 1 (Spring 2023): 21–54.
- SUSANNA DE STRADIS**, “Defending the Nation Under God: Global Catholicism, the Supreme Court, and the Secularist Specter (1946–1963),” *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 32, no. 2 (Summer 2022): 267–303.
- ALEJANDRO DÍAZ DOMÍNGUEZ**, “Mexico’s Supreme Court Decisions During the Cristero Rebellion,” *Journal of Church and State* 65, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 67–89.
- AUDRA DUGANDZIC**, “Reconnecting Religion and Community in a Small City: How Urban Amenities Afford Religious Amenities,” *Sociology of Religion* 83, no. 4 (Winter 2022): 434–58.
- MADELINE GAMBINO**, “As we contemplate our future’: Fiscal Responsibility, Archdiocesan Authority, and Race in Philadelphia’s 1993 Parish Closures,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 47–70.
- ANDREW GARDNER & GERARDO MARTÍ**, “From Ordaining Women to Combating White Supremacy: Oppositional Shifts in Social Attitudes between the Southern Baptist Convention and the Alliance of Baptists,” *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 32, no. 2 (Summer 2022): 202–35.
- CLAIRE CHIPMAN GILLILAND & LAURA M. KRULL**, “Getting Permission to Break the Rules: Clergy Respond to LGBTQ Exclusion in the United Methodist Church,” *Sociology of Religion* 83, no. 4 (Winter 2022): 480–504.
- RICHARD GRIBBLE, C.S.C.**, “The Reconciliation of Father Leonard Feeney,” *American Catholic Studies* 133, no. 4 (Winter 2022): 1–24.
- NANCY HAMPTON, KATHLEEN DORSEY BELLOW, CECILIA A. MOORE**, “Preserving Black Catholic Archives: Creation and Use,” *American Catholic Studies* 134, no. 1 (Spring 2023): 1–20.
- WORTH K. HAYES**, “A heritage of which it can be proud’: Holy Name of Mary Parish, African American Catholics, and Education in the Black Freedom Struggle,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 1–25.
- SONIA HAZARD**, “The Politics of Media Format: Printing Poor Sarah During the Removal Crisis in Cherokee Nation,” *Church History* 91, no. 4 (December 2022): 824–63.
- JOSHUA ALAN HOXMEIER**, “Growth in the Midst of Decline: Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lincoln, Nebraska, in the Late Twentieth and Early Twenty-First Centuries,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 27–46.
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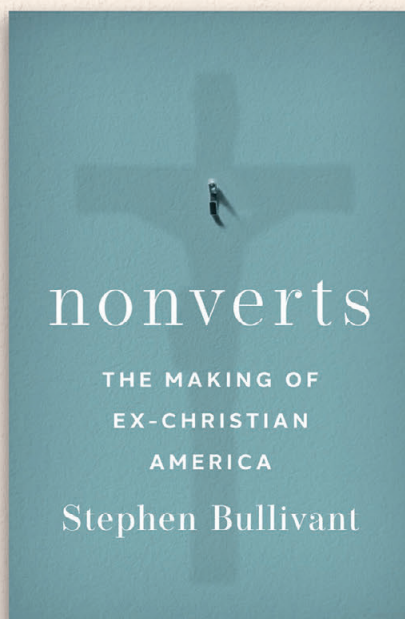
Jay P. Dolan Seminar in American Religion

Spring
2024

At the Cushwa Center's spring 2024 seminar, Stephen Bullivant will discuss his book *Nonverts: The Making of Ex-Christian America* (Oxford, 2022). Ruth Braunstein and David Campbell will offer opening commentaries.

Saturday
April 6, 2024
9 a.m.

205-7 **McKenna Hall**



Ruth Braunstein
University of Connecticut



Stephen Bullivant
St. Mary's University, London



David Campbell
University of Notre Dame



Join us also on Friday, April 5, for a roundtable on *Vatican II: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2023) with Bullivant and coauthor Shaun Blanchard (University of Notre Dame Australia). Details at cushwa.nd.edu/events.



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