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Volume 60 | Issue 1

Article 67

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4-2017

## Strivens' "Philip Doddridge and the shaping of evangelical dissent" (Book Review)

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### Recommended Citation

Hartog, Paul (2017) "Strivens' "Philip Doddridge and the shaping of evangelical dissent" (Book Review)," *The Christian Librarian*: Vol. 60 : Iss. 1 , Article 67.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl/vol60/iss1/67>

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business” rather than just existing to bring patent suits. He also suggests adopting some approaches from the European Patent Office that he asserts have been effective.

Hearing the *This American Life* program I referenced above is what first piqued my interest in patent trolls and their predatory litigation. I recommend listening to that program (or reading the transcript) as a compelling and concise introduction to this topic. Mr. Watkin’s book is effective as a basic primer but its discussion and proposals merely dip one’s toe in the water of the subject. Appropriate for level 100 or 200 undergraduate course work.

### Reviewer

Judson L. Strain, Olivet Nazarene University

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Strivens, R. (2016). *Philip Doddridge and the shaping of evangelical dissent*. Ashgate studies in evangelicalism. New York: Routledge. 201 pp. \$87.96. ISBN 9781472440754

Robert Strivens has reworked his University of Stirling doctoral dissertation on Philip Doddridge (1702-1751), a leading English Dissenter. Strivens portrays Doddridge within his eighteenth-century socio-cultural context, including the intellectual-philosophical and ecclesiastical-theological trends of his era. His theology has been characterized as a Baxterian “middle way” or “moderate Calvinism.” Doddridge opposed demands for confessional subscription (and deviated in his explanation of Christ’s pre-existent nature). Instead, he focused upon biblical language, while maintaining a preliminary role for natural theology. In his spirituality, he highlighted the means of prayer, journaling, solemn covenanting, family worship, and the Lord’s Supper. Major influences upon him included the philosophy of John Locke, the apologetic and ethical work of Samuel Clarke, the theology of Richard Baxter, and the personal impact of Isaac Watts (although he diverged from all four at various points). Like Watts, Doddridge was a prolific hymn writer, although his corpus of nearly 400 hymns are not listed among the primary sources “principally” informing the volume (p. 17), meriting only a brief discussion (pp. 131-132). Doddridge sought a plain style of preaching (frequently targeting young people), and his sermons focused on the person of Christ and the need for regeneration. He emphasized a “heart religion” but also an ordered ecclesiology, and he remained cautious toward the growing revivalism of his day. Doddridge’s correspondence and relationships webbed him into an international network of Evangelicals. Strivens discusses Doddridge’s penchant for unity (while opposing Deism and Catholicism), without ever referencing his relevant theology of baptism. Regarding paedobaptism, Doddridge declared that Christians should “avoid all severe and unkind censure on account of

such difference” (*Course on Lectures*, p. 522). Overall, Strivens’ work modifies David Bebbington’s influential *The Emergence of Evangelicalism*, by demonstrating strands of continuity between the eighteenth-century revivals (led by Wesley and Whitefield) and their immediate predecessors (represented by Doddridge).

### **Reviewer**

Paul Hartog, Faith Baptist Bible College & Theological Seminary

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Moody, K. S. (2016). *Radical theology and emerging Christianity: Deconstruction, materialism, and religious practices*. New York: Routledge. 285 pp. \$119.95. ISBN 9781315603506

Moody, who has her PhD from the University of Lancaster, builds her arguments from thinkers in radical theology. This book would be identified as scholarly and philosophical in nature. Moody examines the works of John D. Caputo and Slavoj Žižek to argue her points. Moody utilizes a radical theology and atheistic perspective to prove her argument. She references a few scripture passages from Paul’s writings to argue for change in Christianity from a social-political perspective.

When Moody references scripture, difficulties arise in understanding what she is trying to explain. Context of the scripture passages are missing from her explanation and it becomes difficult to follow her argument. References to modern Christian scholars are lacking in her explanation to give an argument from a philosophical perspective and a Christian perspective. The Apostle Paul is mentioned in the work to use him as a comparative argument, but the comparison becomes unclear.

Moody uses the majority of the book to continually reference philosophers and theologians throughout history. The reader has trouble at times following the thesis of the book because of the constant shift from one author to the next. Moody has extremely distinct points for Christians to listen to radical theologians and atheists. The conversations need to be a two way communication between the radical theological/atheist perspective and Christians about the Triune God. The conversations would seem to be beneficial to both perspectives in order for both groups to have a true encounter with the Triune God. This book would be beneficial for a pastoral theology or an apologetics class. This book would also be beneficial to a philosophy class at a Christian college. In these classes, the book would provide a platform to answer Moody’s questions in the conclusion of the book. These conversations would teach students how to continue the conversation.

### **Reviewer**

Craig Rosenbeck, University of North Texas