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Resource Reviews

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Resource Reviews

Donald G. Bloesch: A Research Bibliography, by Paul E. Maher. ATLA Publications Series, No. 3. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007. 232 pp. \$60.00. ISBN 0-8108-5989-0.

Reviewed by Barry W. Hamilton, Theological Librarian and Associate Professor of Historical and Contemporary Theology, Northeastern Seminary, Rochester, NY

This comprehensive bibliography on the work of Donald Bloesch enhances access to a broad range of contemporary scholarship in a convenient volume. One of its most valuable features is the twenty-page section, "An Introduction to the Theology of Donald G. Bloesch." Written by Patrick M. McManus, a former student of Bloesch's, this overview begins with a brief biography of Dr. Bloesch and locates his career and the development of his theology within the intellectual currents of the period.

After McManus' priceless introduction to Bloesch's theology, Maher opens his bibliography with an indispensable guide, "Introduction to the Bibliography" (pp. 21-23). He leads readers through the main sections of his book: Chapter 1, "attempts to provide a comprehensive list of all works by Donald G. Bloesch published in English and as many variant editions as possible." Chapter 2 "includes book reviews of Bloesch's works, responses to specific articles, general critiques, theses and dissertations, and biographical citations." Chapter 3 contains two groups of indexes. These include an alphabetical listing of books where Bloesch is the author or primary editor and a checklist of those books to which he has contributed." To his credit, Maher states: "The checklists are provided to assist acquisitions librarians or others who might wish to compare their holdings" (p. 22).

Donald G. Bloesch: A Research Bibliography is a remarkable publication – a benchmark for published bibliographies, with first-rate scholarship on display throughout the entire

work. Each section appears to be the result of painstaking research, a deep love for the subject and the highest respect for Dr. Bloesch, a fitting monument to a lifetime of outstanding academic work and Christian service. Perhaps the most telling mark of quality in an intensely-researched resource of this nature is the extensive section, "Acknowledgements," where the author extends his "deepest appreciation to Dr. and Mrs. Donald G. Bloesch" in the first paragraph, and fills the rest of this section with his gratitude to librarians and libraries. This volume speaks highly of the persons and institutions involved in its making, including the American Theological Library Association and Scarecrow Press. This title is highly recommended for theological collections.

Christians at the Border, by M. Daniel Carroll R. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008. 174pp. \$16.99. ISBN 978-0-8010-3566-1

Reviewed by Jamie Gates, Director, Center for Justice and Reconciliation., Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, CA

It is hard to underestimate the timeliness of Carroll's *Christians at the Border* for Christians living in the United States in 2008 and seeking greater wisdom on the relationship between immigration, the Bible and life as a Christian.

Although I find the greatest words of wisdom in this book to be some of the final thoughts in the final chapter, don't skip past the introduction to get to the end more quickly. M. Daniel Carroll's biographical notes in the introduction and dust cover are as essential for understanding what remains as they are for establishing the legitimacy of his claims. As someone whose very life transverse the borders of Guatemala and the United States, Hispanic and Anglo America, Carroll brings a sensitivity that moves his role beyond interlocutor to translator, mediator, even perhaps an "ambassador of reconciliation."

*Compiled by Phyllis Fox
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Writing from what is reputedly one of the more conservative seminaries in the country, Carroll shows some of the strengths of returning to the sources, the biblical texts/narratives in this case, for grounding and guiding ethical action. Moving well beyond proof-texting, Carroll allows the narratives of scripture to make their case for the care of the alien/stranger, the extension of hospitality as a fundamental practice of the Christian church and for defining Christians as that group of “resident aliens” whose loyalty to Christ and his Kingdom should supersede loyalty to any nation-state or ethnic group.

Christians at the Border is accessible to a broad audience, an audience well beyond academic circles but with enough citations to set the critical researcher off in a good direction. It would be a particularly helpful book to use in Sunday School classes, Adult Bible Studies or reading groups as well as discussions groups for older teenagers. College ethics classes would benefit greatly from the discussion it generates and Carroll’s dogged refusal to oversimplify. A strong combination of pastoral and academic literature, I find this book as useful a tool for discipleship as Phil Kenneson’s *Life on the Vine: Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit in Christian Community*.

Broadly, *Christians at the Border* is written primarily to two audiences: 1) Christians living as citizens of the United States who are curious about what Christian scriptures and tradition have to say about living across the modern borders of nation-states and 2) Christians who are citizens of other nation-states, mostly Mexico, Central and South America, who find themselves living in the US as tenuous guests and second-class persons.

Carroll makes a helpful shift from “Immigration” as an abstract, polarizing issue/debate with two supposedly clear and opposite “sides” to humanizing and historicizing the challenges faced by migrants and those who host them. The concerns of hosts and guests are equally considered. Shifting but not shying away from language such as “the illegal immigrant” in favor of “undocumented migrants,” Although

limited in its historical detail, Carroll rightly places contemporary Hispanic immigration into the United States in historic perspective. As borders are historically situated and politically charged human constructs, Carroll cautions Christians to guard against allowing these modern constructs to guide our identity, sense of security and action. Borders should not stand in the way of our abilities to be truly Christian.

As we read in the final section of the final chapter, this is not the text of a detached observer weighing in on the pros and cons of Hispanic immigration to the United States. Rather, this is an important call for all Christians to engage people, politics and economics in such a way that they may be commensurate with the life of Jesus.

A Passion Most Pure, by Julie Lessman. The Daughters of Boston, 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2008. 477 pp. \$13.99. ISBN 978-0-08007-3211-0.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference and Reader Services Librarian, Union University, Jackson, TN

Faith O’Connor is a miraculous survivor of polio and has had a crush on Collin McGuire since he rescued her from a playground bully years before. But now she’s eighteen, and Collin is courting her younger sister in spite of the intense attraction he feels for Faith. So Faith tries to content herself with the typing pool at the Boston *Herald* and prays for Collin’s salvation. But when America becomes involved in World War I, Collin enlists, and her father and brother are both drafted. Suddenly the entire O’Connor family is faced with returning to Ireland and the inherent fears that war brings. Faith needs guidance and strength – will her relationship with the Lord survive?

This remarkable first novel blends a taut romantic story line with several viable options, with a true sense of historical place (in both Boston and eventually Ireland). The struggles with faith and passion are keenly felt. The horrors of war, emotional as well as physical, are palpable. The incorporation of Biblical truth

into living one's life is beautifully illustrated, and the conclusion thoroughly satisfies yet leaves the reader wanting more. I immediately passed on the book to a seventeen-year-old girl at our church because of its extraordinary portrayal of sexual purity. This title is appropriate for all Christian and public libraries.

A Passion Redeemed, by Julie Lessman. The Daughters of Boston, 2. Grand Rapids: Revell, 2008. 477 pps. \$13.99. ISBN 978-0-8007-3212-7.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference and Reader Services Librarian, Union University, Jackson, TN.

Picking up where *A Passion Most Pure* left off, this sequel focuses on Charity O'Connor, Faith's younger sister who has decided to stay behind in Dublin, Ireland, with her grandmother and continue working as the top sales clerk in Shaw's Emporium. She has set her cap for Mitch Dennehy, Faith's former fiancé, and will do literally anything to win him. Convincing the rogue Rigan Gallagher to play the part of boyfriend to make Mitch jealous has terrible consequences, and a battered Charity must return home to Boston and try to make peace with her family, with Mitch, and ultimately with God.

Charity's character is fully realized in this well-written novel that explores how our past molds who we are. Lessman is an adept writer, capable of handling the sexual tension between Charity and Mitch and the related issues of faith without being dogmatic. Her sense of place is strong, and her pacing is excellent – bombshells go off at just the right point in the plot. Readers who are not even Christians will appreciate Charity's struggle to overcome her past and her desire to be loved. Lessman is daring to tackle a difficult issue – Christian sexuality – through the powerful medium of fiction, and fully succeeds. Readers can look forward to the third and final volume in this series in 2009.

Lady of Milkweed Manor, by Julie Klassen. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2007. 405pp. \$13.99. ISBN 978-0-7642-0479-1.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference and Reader Services Librarian, Union University, Jackson, TN

Charlotte Lamb lost her mother years ago, and now the twenty-year-old sorely misses her mother's counsel and gentleness, because her proper vicar-father has disowned her for getting pregnant out of wedlock. She escapes to the Manor Home for Unwed Mothers, only to come face-to-face with Dr. Daniel Taylor, a former suitor with secrets of his own. Charlotte's compassionate nature makes her a welcome addition to the Home, and when her son is born, she faces the painful choice of keeping her child or allowing him to be raised by the father. Both Charlotte and Daniel must face inner demons and ghosts from the past if they are to have any hope for the future.

Klassen's first novel succeeds in a multitude of ways. Set amid the smells and conventions of Regency England, the story is historically rich and fresh. The reader will immediately connect with Charlotte and her sense of loss on several levels. Her modesty is refreshing, her servant's heart and willingness to sacrifice all for the sake of her son thoroughly admirable. Daniel is a strong yet imperfect man, with high ideals and a true vocation for healing. The romantic portion of the storyline has several plausible options, and the conclusion immensely satisfying. Yet the overall focus of working out one's faith in the midst of life's mistakes and challenges remains center-stage, and the result is a unique tale that deserves a wide readership.

Love That Lasts: When Marriage Meets Grace, by Gary and Betsy Ricucci. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006. 174 pp. \$12.99. ISBN-13: 978-1-58134-782-1. ISBN-10: 1-58134-782-0.

Reviewed by Noelle C. Keller, Technical Services Librarian, Shipman Library, Adrian College, Adrian, MI

Gary & Betsy Ricucci as a married Christian couple have presented marriage seminars and counseled over the past 25 years. They have co-authored a biblical treatment of marriage intended for married or engaged couples in

Love That Lasts: When Marriage Meets Grace. This is a revision of a 1992 work.

This book is about the grace of God that makes provision for a love and marriage that last to the glory of God. It clearly places Jesus Christ as the focal point of marriage in intent, purpose and goal. Chapters range from the roles of husband and wife to communication and conflict resolution through romance and intimacy in light of Scripture to provide help and hope.

The first chapter focuses on the definition, purpose and plan for marriage. Planning, preparing and participating are emphasized in laying the foundation for a successful marriage.

Three questions guide this thoughtful study of marriage. First, does your marriage find its purpose primarily in God? Second, does your marriage find its hope in the gospel of grace? Finally, does your marriage find its home in the local church? Study questions and suggestions for further reading complete the book.

The authors have an enthusiasm for marriage according to God's plan which is conveyed by their collaborative writing style.

I would recommend this book to any Christian couple preparing for marriage or seeking to grow in their marriage. It is an in-depth, scriptural perspective on marriage that would be an appropriate personal or church library purchase or for a Christian college/university library collecting in this area.

Heaven on Earth: Capturing Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Living in Between, by Stephen J. Nichols. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006. 142 pp. \$12.99. ISBN 1-58134-785-5.

Reviewed by Fred Youngs, Reference Librarian, Golden Gate Seminary Library, Mill Valley, CA

This is a splendid book. In seven short, readable chapters Stephen Nichols, Research Professor of Christianity and Culture at Lancaster College

and Graduate School, presents a major theme that colored Edwards's life and thought. This motif is that "in between being too heavenly-minded or too earthly minded there is a third way: living in this world from the perspective of the next. To state the matter more clearly, it's a vision of heaven on earth" (20) that can only be lived through a life of love (33). And "when we live the way of love, then we have heaven on earth, even if it is in miniature" (38).

Nichols gives a much more accurate portrayal of Edwards and Puritans in general than left in our minds by having read "Sinners in The Hands of an Angry God" in our high school literature class or being exposed to H. L. Mencken's caricature of a Puritan as "anyone who fears that somewhere, someone might just be having a good time" (51). In fact, in chapter three Nichols presents what was probably Edwards's first apologetic for Christianity, an interesting and radical "pleasure argument" in which he contends that "we should be Christians ... because of the sheer pleasure it brings *in this life*" (49). For Edwards, Christianity "helps one realize how to fully enjoy sensory pleasure" (50), a pleasure only experienced within God's intentions (51-52). By living in between heaven and earth "we can enjoy this world and even contribute to the enjoyment of others not in spite of our heavenly citizenship but entirely of it" (57).

This book would be an excellent addition to any church, college or seminary library. While devoted to one theme, it captures in significant measure the essence of Edwards's life and thought, and in doing so provides an interesting introduction that whets one's appetite for more of Edwards.

The Journals of Dr. Thomas Coke, edited by John A. Vickers. Nashville: Kingswood, 2005. 293 pp. \$37.00. ISBN 0-687-05421-4.

Reviewed by Darcy R. Gullacher, Head Librarian, Rocky Mountain College, Calgary, AB

Thomas Coke was a pivotal figure in the history of Methodism, particularly in the years immediately following the death of John

Wesley. As the founder of Methodist overseas missions, Coke devoted himself to the work in the Americas and British West Indies from 1784 to 1804, dividing his energies between the missions and the British Isles during this time. This book is a critical edition of Coke's published journals of his travels to North America and the Caribbean, collected and annotated by prominent Coke scholar John Vickers.

The book begins with a brief introduction to Coke, including his early life, conversion to Methodism, and subsequent itinerancy. The biographical information is not meant to be exhaustive, and the more inquisitive reader will want to consult Vickers' *Thomas Coke: Apostle of Methodism* for a fuller account of Coke's life and work. The main focus of the book are the journals themselves, including helpful introductions written by Vickers placing each journal section in its proper historical context, providing helpful insights to controversies and incidents that Coke chose to gloss over or ignore in his published accounts. The journals are presented verbatim as they originally appeared; using the 1816 London edition as the base text, and Vickers provides clarifying notes, variant readings and comments in footnotes to the text.

This volume serves as an excellent companion to the above-mentioned biography on Coke, and provides interesting insights into the inner workings of a key figure in American Methodism. This title is recommended for undergraduate college, graduate and seminary libraries, particularly those within the Methodist and holiness traditions.

The Prophetic Literature, by Marvin A. Sweeney. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005. 240 pp. \$21.00. ISBN 9780687008445.

Reviewed by Garrett Trott, Instruction-Reference Librarian, Corban College & Graduate School, Salem, OR

The Prophetic Literature is part of a series entitled *Interpreting Biblical Literature*, which aims at introducing serious readers to the textual world of the Bible. It does not focus on the

historical aspects that lie behind the prophetic texts, but on the world created by the texts in their engagement with the readers.

This title begins with a brief overview of the role that prophetic literature has played in both Jewish and Christian faiths. Sweeney argues that the prophetic literature played a profound role in the theological development of the Judeo-Christian faith. Sweeney then discusses each of the prophetic books. It should be noted that he does not include the book of Daniel. While Protestant tradition understands the book of Daniel aligning with the prophets, modern Judaism sees Daniel as part of another division of the Old Testament, the writings. Sweeney follows this understanding.

Sweeney gives a brief historical background, enough so that one can understand who the prophet was, who he was addressing and the historical context. He then gives an overview of the content, helping the reader to understand how the original audience would have comprehended what the prophet was saying. This series does not replace a commentary, but supplements them. Sweeney's work, while it does provide some interpretation, attempts to provide a brief survey of a book. It does not cover a book verse by verse, but rather breaks it up thematically, commenting on each section and how the original audience would have understood that passage.

This book would do well at any college or graduate school library that offers a major in biblical studies. However, as noted above, it does take a "serious reader" to understand his writing. Some of Sweeney's points would be difficult to follow unless one has some background in Old Testament literature. Overall, this book would be a great asset to anyone having some familiarity with the Old Testament and desiring to become more acquainted with the prophetic literature.

Grace and Holiness in a Changing World: A Wesleyan Proposal for Postmodern Ministry, by Jeffrey E. Greenway and Joel B. Green ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 2007. 117 pp. \$15.00. ISBN 978-0-687-46570-5.

Reviewed by Barry W. Hamilton, Theological Librarian and Associate Professor, Roberts Wesleyan College, Rochester, NY

These six essays explore the Wesleyan message of grace and holiness in the context of postmodern ministry. Written by well-known scholars affiliated with Asbury Theological Seminary, these meditations ask readers to reflect on these themes in terms that resonate with the present state of Christian ministry. Each author assumes that the Church has moved into a context of “postmodern ministry” that entails rethinking the Christian message for a new generation. To their credit, these writers have abandoned much of their cultural baggage and sought to engage these themes through careful exegesis of Scripture. This entails a major shift away from the way theological reflection took place only a generation ago, when themes of grace and holiness followed a well-worn path of acceptable exposition.

Rather than assuming the audience’s obligation to think on these matters according to a prescribed range, the authors proclaim a variegated diet of biblically-rooted perspectives on grace and holiness. All of them stay faithful to the spirit of the life and ministry of John and Charles Wesley, as well as other Methodist family members, but more importantly, these writers declare the good news of grace and holiness to a broad audience. Here’s where the essays betray the authors’ experience with postmodern ministry – they address people who may not have a distinctly Wesleyan background.

From meditations on biblical passages and cultural myths to studies of historical transitions (e.g. modern to postmodern) and global concerns (e.g. earth stewardship), these six authors tackle issues of interest to the entire Church.

This type of book probably doesn’t belong in every library’s collections; rather, pastors and educated laity will find *Grace and Holiness in a Changing World* to be an excellent group study text or an inspirational “quick read” for private meditation and reflection. Libraries that

belong to institutions with a Wesleyan and/or Evangelical heritage may find this book a worthy addition to their circulating collection. This book is especially recommended for church libraries and pastor’s professional libraries.

A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, by Klaus Koschorke, Frieder Ludwig, and Mariano Delgado. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007. 426 pp. \$35.00 9780802828897.

Reviewed by Garrett Trott, Instruction-Reference Librarian, Corban College & Graduate School, Salem, OR

A history of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America provides a unique perspective. The work contains a variety of primary documents covering the broad sweep of the history of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the brief commentaries given by the editors provide the background that is needed to understand the context in which these primary documents were originally written.

Christianity is no longer solely a religion of Europe and North America, but has established footholds in other countries, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It is argued that almost 60% of Christians in the year 2000 lived in one of these areas. Because of this fact, the resources listed in this book are becoming increasingly vital to the church and educational institutions that develop ecclesiastical leadership. The extensive list of resources is organized by area and each area is arranged chronologically.

This title is appropriate for almost any college or university library. It would be particularly helpful for schools with a strong intercultural or missions emphasis. This book provides some great background to students who are considering missions in a certain area. It would allow them to understand more about what a country or people group has been through regarding the Christian faith.

Assist Me to Proclaim: The Life and Hymns of Charles Wesley, by John R. Tyson. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007. 347 pps. \$22.00. ISBN 978-0-8028-2939-9.

Reviewed by Donald Dean Smeeton, Director of Libraries, Harrisonburg, VA

During much of their lives the brothers, John and Charles Wesley, were inseparable but today people are apt to recognize the name of John Wesley, but not that of his older brother. It is ironic that today Christians of many denominations sing “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” and “Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” but would be surprised to learn that those familiar words were composed by the co-founder of Methodism, Charles Wesley.

There is much excitement in Wesleyan studies at the present time with at least one significant contribution to our understanding of the brothers published each year for the last decade. In addition to the title presently being reviewed, two other works about the elder Wesley were published last year: *Charles Wesley: Life, Literature and Legacy* by Kenneth G. C. Newport and Ted A. Campbell and *Charles Wesley: A Biography* by G.M. Best.

John R. Tyson's biography will hold its own among these recent studies. Having published *Charles Wesley: A Reader* (1989) and *In the Midst of Early Methodism* (2006), Tyson has established his reputation as a reliable interpreter of early Methodism. He tells the story well but like many knowable extemporaneous speakers and writers, Tyson repeats himself occasionally. A glaring example is a famous quote from King Charles that appears on page 298 and again two pages later. Tyson follows a general chronology, but each chapter presents a specific aspect of Wesley's life, such as his marriage or his treatment of the stillness controversy. This arrangement allows one to understand the issue comprehensively within one period of reading but makes it more difficult to integrate the issue into the whole story. Although the research in the primary documents is evident, there are no footnotes.

Given the current high level of interest in Wesleyan studies, Tyson's *Assist Me to Proclaim* will not be the definitive biography of the poet, but it is certainly recommended for all academic collections, especially those with an emphasis on Methodism and/or music.

William Wilberforce: A Biography, by Stephen Tomkins. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2007. 238 pp. \$18.00. ISBN 978-0-8028-2593-3.

Reviewed by Amanda M. Flower, Head of Bibliographic Services, Ursuline College, Pepper Pike, OH

Stephen Tomkins wrote *William Wilberforce: A Biography* to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Great Britain's Anti-Slavery Trade Act. Tomkins, who is an experienced journalist with a doctorate in church history from the London School of Theology, describes Wilberforce as a man of deep conviction and faith.

Wilberforce experienced a Christian conversion in his early twenties after his election to the House of Commons. As he was a good friend and excellent speaker, William Pitt approached Wilberforce to bring the first anti-slave trade bill before the House. Wilberforce agreed and was horrified by what he learned about the slave trade. The French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, and the slave trade itself stalled the act from being passed. Despite personal illness, Wilberforce persevered, and nineteen years after he proposed the first anti-slave trade act, the Act became law.

Wilberforce did not work alone in his crusade to end the slave trade. Dozens of people worked tirelessly to gather the evidence to convince Parliament to end it, including evangelist Thomas Clarkson, former slave Olaudah Equiano, and numerous faithful Quakers. Tomkins is a fair biographer and acknowledges their involvement.

After the Anti-Slavery Act, Wilberforce continued to fight injustice. He advocated bills that cried for complete abolition, protection of

animals, and punishment for illegal slave traders. Nevertheless, Tomkins writes Wilberforce was not perfect. Many complained he ignored the plight of the working class in England and the discrimination against the Irish.

The life of William Wilberforce illustrates how God can move an imperfect man to battle injustice for His glory. The biography is an excellent read and is suitable for both scholars and lovers of biographies. It is a valuable and honest look into the life of Wilberforce and would be a worthy addition to academic libraries that support social justice or religious scholarship.

William Tyndale: Man with a Mission [DVD cassette] Christian History Institute, distributed by, Worchester, PA: Vision Video, no date. 42 minutes. Cat. #500884D. 800-523-0226. www.visionvideo.com.

Reviewed by Donald Dean Smeeton, Director of Libraries, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA

Do we take our English Bible for granted? Do we assume that the Bible has always been available in print, readable in our language and obtainable at a reasonable cost? By tracing the story of the 16th century translator William Tyndale, this 42 minute documentary reminds us that the “world’s best seller” in English has not always been so conveniently accessible. Until the reign of Henry VIII, possessing a Biblical passage in English was not only a crime; it was a capital offense.

The video re-tells the story of how William Tyndale – a highly educated scholar, self-exiled from England – evaded capture while preparing the first New Testament in English (1525). It is the story of corruption in high places, near escapes, a painful betrayal and a tragic ending. Most of all, it is a story of full obedience to God’s calling. This vignette of church history captures the passion of one who understood that following God can be costly; Tyndale was certainly a man with a mission.

David Daniell, whose biography of Tyndale

is often cited as among the best of recent scholarship, presents most of the narration. The scenario is made visually appealing by extensive use of clips from the film “*God’s Outlaw: The Story of William Tyndale*” also produced by the Christian History Institute, the creator but not the current publisher of the *Christian History* journal. Other segments are illustrated by on-location footage and still pictures. Although such visual enrichment avoids a static monologue, the mixture could lead to confusion about who is saying what. Elsewhere the narrator comments on the beauty of early printing as the illustration shows a book page in full color! (Every librarian knows that such color could not have been part of early printing process, but was added later by the hand of a text illuminator.) On another occasion, the narration speaks of the text of the New Testament in Greek but the visual shows a Bull of Leo X in Latin! More careful film editing could have avoided such distractions, but the average viewer would probably be so engrossed by the story that such mix ups would go unnoticed.

With a choice of subtitles in English or Spanish, the video could be used in an academic classroom, a Sunday School class or a small group. Those desiring a well rounded assessment of Tyndale might want to consider viewing both the enactment (*God’s Outlaw*) and the documentary (*Man with a Mission*) because the overlap would reinforce the message that the Bible in English came at a high price. This title is recommended for adolescent and adult audiences in either an academic or a church context.

Video Series Book by Book New Testament: James, with co-hosts Richard Bewes and Paul Blackham and guest Jonathan Edwards. Worcester, PA: Vision Video, 2004. 106 minutes. \$34.99. ISBN 1-85078-570-8. www.visionvideo.com

Reviewed by Sharon Hinton RN, MSN, LP, Librarian, First United Methodist Church, Floydada, and RNR Parish Nurse Community Outreach Library, Floydada, TX

Vision Video has produced another excellent selection in their study of the New Testament. Guest Jonathan Edwards is an Olympic gold medalist and biblical scholar. Hosts, Bewes, rector of All Souls Church in London and Blackham, a theologian, cover the five chapters of James in six segments of approximately fifteen minutes each. Topics include the testing of your faith, doers of the word, faith without works is dead, no man can tame the tongue, humble yourselves before the Lord, and the judge is standing at the door. The accompanying study guide is written by Blackham and includes key truths, short discussion of content, additional questions, and daily reading suggestions for each segment. Also in the study guide is a table and discussion comparing James and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in the book of Matthew.

The video follows a straightforward discussion format that will not appeal to those interested in entertainment styled Bible study. The discussions are well thought out and follow scripture. It is appropriate for clergy, congregational and academic libraries as well as small group Bible study and as a student reference for the study of James.

Truth Prevails: The Undying Faith of Jan Hus (DVD) Cartesian Coordinates, distributed by Worcester, PA: Vision Video, 2007. Seven segments, 56 minutes total. \$19.99. www.visionvideo.com.

Reviewed by Amy VanHuisen, Fort Wayne, IN

This nearly hour-long documentary traces the life and struggles of the 14th century Czech martyr Jan Hus. His "undying faith" is framed in the dual historical contexts of his own times and of the modern scholarly research which ultimately led Pope John Paul II to apologize for the Church's actions against him. Produced by the Christian History Institute and award-winning filmmakers Jerry and Misha Griffith, *Truth Prevails* combines location footage, historian interviews, and period artwork to expose a turbulent period when popes, pestilence, and corruption held sway.

A scholarly look at Hus' life and times is made manageable for the more casually interested student by its division into segments. Each segment focuses on a different aspect of Hus' life; within each division, one is also given an excellent overview of that part of history. The film's epilogue does a good job of underscoring Hus' overall significance in church history. A timeline feature goes even further than the documentary itself in offering a broad historical context. A discussion guide, available at the distributor's website, expands the usefulness of the DVD. The content is significant, if narrow in scope, and does a good job of making historical connections for the viewer unfamiliar with Hus.

Technically, the DVD is lacking. The background visuals used to add interest seem rather hodge-podge and even distracting in places. The audio and visual are periodically out of sync. The music, though, is a plus, adding a travelogue flavor that serves to lighten up the overall feel of the presentation.

In spite of its technical flaws, this DVD would be a good value as an addition to church history resources where the intended use is for personal enrichment or for a very specific classroom focus.

Wanting to Be Her: Body Image Secrets Victoria Won't Tell You, by Michelle Graham. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. 169 pp. \$13.00. ISBN 0-8308-3266-1.

Reviewed by Kathleen Kempa, Circulation Services/Steelman Library, Southeastern University, Lakeland, FL

Wanting to Be Her is a handbook for Christian women and men who feel uncomfortable about a core value that insinuates value judgments based on looks into nearly every aspect of our experiences of ourselves. This is not a compilation of frightening statistics about teen cosmetic surgeries, eating disorders, piercings and body mutilations. It is an examination of how our habits of thought promote and support the beauty value agenda.

Michelle Graham details specific mindsets and personal habits, along with examples from popular media to illustrate the depth, strength, and pervasiveness of the culture of beauty worship in which we live. She uses personal experiences and examples from popular media to illustrate specific aspects of her own and other women's experiences confronting the "beauty only" value. She points out how black, Hispanic, and Asian women are particularly impacted harshly by the beauty ideal. While most of the books dedicated to exposing this problem try to find individual topical solutions in self-image improvement, Michelle Graham attacks the root of the problem. When loving parents and concerned friends, television, magazines, music, clothing, virtually every aspect of our lives promotes the same message, something more than positive thinking is needed.

The book is designed to be used individually or in group discussions. Each chapter presents an aspect of this problem: ideal beauty – what is it and what is its origin; shame over particular body parts; the impossibility of being good enough. Considerations for changing our personal values, scriptural insights, and discussion questions conclude each chapter.

Wanting To Be Her is written in a very conversational and easily read style. It would be a very fine addition to libraries serving young women from middle school through college, and their parents. It would be a valuable discussion starter and good book club choice for young Christian women and parent groups.

AD 33: The Year That Changed The World, by Colin Duriez. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006. 256pp. \$22.00. ISBN-13: 978-0-8308-3396-2 ISBN-10: 0-8308-3396-X.

Reviewed by Noelle C. Keller, Technical Services Librarian, Shipman Library, Adrian College, Adrian, MI

Colin Duriez has been an author, editor and teacher for nearly thirty years. Winner

of the Clyde S. Kilby Award in 1994 for his research on the Inklings, Duriez's best-known books have focused on C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien.

In *AD 33*, Duriez employs a variety of historical and literary techniques to present a number of perspectives on "the year that changed the world." He presents the position of A.D. 33 being the year of Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension and, as such, the year of the birth of Christianity.

This topical study of the year A.D. 33 presents a type of guide to the world in that year. This guide is an amalgamation of styles. Nearly two-thirds of the book focuses on Rome and Jerusalem utilizing the Gospel accounts, Roman histories (including Tacitus and Suetonius) and Josephus' Jewish history. This cultural history becomes biographical in its focus on Tiberius and Jesus, as well as Pilate, Herod, Annas, Caiaphus, and the Apostles. The use of fictional narrative and vignettes intends to portray the cultural settings and relationships of historical figures. The book attempts to cast a larger view of what was happening in the world that would eventually be impacted by Christianity including China, India and South America. *AD 33* is supplemented with timelines, maps and illustrations. The endnotes and bibliography would be useful to the reader interested in more in-depth study.

AD 33 is suitable for general readers or perhaps undergraduate students for a wide-ranging overview of the history of the early Christian church.

The Danger of Raising Nice Kids: Preparing Our Children to Change Their World, by Timothy Smith. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006. 202pp.

Reviewed by Amy VanHuisen, Fort Wayne, IN

"The goal of effective parenting is not to raise safe, nice kids. It's to raise strong ones..." (Foreword). Such is the main thrust of this work by Timothy Smith, co-founder of Life Skills for American Families; researcher with

George Gallup; seminar leader; and personal family coach. Addressed primarily to parents, the volume challenges them to abandon practices that focus mainly on the externals and, instead, to embrace parenting as discipline and influencing hearts. The author inspires his readers to model and teach nine Biblically-based, but often overlooked, values: vision, authenticity, empathy, compassion, discernment, boundaries, contentment, and passionate love.

With chapters organized around those nine values, the structure of the book is easy to follow. In addition, helpful appendices include a guide to defining a family's core values and mission, benchmarks toward independence, and worksheets for determining negative and positive behavior consequences. These structural components compensate somewhat for the book's lack of an index. Plentiful endnotes will lead the reader to significant authors and works cited in the text, adding weight to a book that appears to be more anecdotal than research-heavy in substance.

Users will find this a helpful resource that dares to take an approach somewhat out of the mainstream. The book would be a practical, immediately-useful addition to a library collection which supports courses of study in ministry, education, social work, or criminal justice. Although no study questions are included in the book itself, it could easily be adapted for group study as well.

Violence Among Us: Ministry to Families in Crisis, by Brenda Branson and Paula J. Silva. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2007. 150 pp. \$14.00 ISBN 978-0-8170-1515-2.

Reviewed by Amy VanHuisen, Fort Wayne, IN

Statistics show that one in every four women who is part of a church community is being, or has been, abused. This reality challenges pastors, counselors, and lay people to move from what is often vague and clumsy awareness to informed, compassionate action on behalf of these victims. Authors Branson and Silva, co-founders of FOCUS Ministries, Inc., a not-for-profit organization for women in

dysfunctional or abusive relationships, have crafted a tool that powerfully, practically, and passionately interfaces with that challenge.

Reading this book is like taking an intensive course on addressing domestic violence; a great deal of substance is compacted into a relatively small volume. The authors do an outstanding job of taking a reader without firsthand experience of abuse into the mind, body, and spirit of the abused, as well as that of the abuser. Having established that basis of understanding, principles and specific actions for helping victims are offered with the balanced voices of personal and professional insight.

The feature that makes this book a stand-out is the comprehensive ready-to-use resource section that comprises nearly one-third of the pages. It is here that the reader will find everything from a "Things-to-Take Checklist" for the woman who must leave an abusive situation to a state-by-state listing of contact information for domestic violence ministries and organizations.

This book qualifies as a must-read for every pastoral, counseling, social work, or education student. Whether used as collateral course reading or as a required supplemental text in the curriculum, this surprisingly easy-to-read-and-comprehend work should be in every college library collection.

The Rhetoric of Operation Rescue: Projecting the Christian Pro-Life Message, by Mark Allen Steiner. New York: T&T Clark, 2006. 226 pp. 0567025624/\$95 (hc). 0567025721/\$29.95 (pb).

Grace Veach, Dean of Library Services, Southeastern University, Lakeland, FL

The failure of Operation Rescue to mobilize Americans against abortion is examined as a rhetorical problem in Mark Allen Steiner's *The Rhetoric of Operation Rescue*. Steiner is a professor at Regent University, so he is well-acquainted with the evangelical subculture that birthed Operation Rescue. Employing many of the rhetorical tools provided by Kenneth Burke

and other mainstream rhetoricians, Steiner analyzes the terminology of Operation Rescue and evangelicalism in general to pinpoint crucial errors that led to the eventual passage of the FACE Act, legislation which specifically targeted the right-to-life movement. He is even-handed in displaying both his sympathy for evangelicalism and his criticisms of the missteps in communication that have minimized the voice of the right-to-life movement to secular Americans. The failure of partisan debaters to come to useful agreement on essential issues should illustrate for us the importance of word choice and conceptualization as Christians engage the world in discussion about matters which will affect every American citizen, and this book builds a foundation for the kind of rhetorical technique which might have a more positive effect on a non-Christian audience. Although there is enough rhetorical theory to delight a serious student of the discipline, Steiner always clarifies meanings and explains the theories that he applies, so that any reader with an interest in modern evangelicalism, the right-to-life movement, or the church in the political arena will be interested in this book and the conclusions Steiner draws which pertain to evangelicalism in general.

INTERESTED IN REVIEWING A TITLE?

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