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Resource Reviews

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The Christian Librarian **TCL** R E V I E W S

Unshakable Foundations, by Norman Geisler and Peter Bocchino. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. 413 pp. \$16.99. ISBN 0764224085.

Reviewed by Scott Lloyd, Information Services Librarian, Cincinnati Bible College & Seminary Cincinnati, Ohio.

For over thirty years, evangelical philosopher and theologian Norman Geisler has been a leading voice in Christian apologetics. In *Unshakable Foundations*, Geisler teams up with author Peter Bocchino (President of Legacy of Truth Ministries) to write a text that is a part-apologetics, part-ethics guidebook for a popular evangelical audience.

Geisler employs the same question-and-answer format as he used in his earlier book, *When Skeptics Ask* (1990). However, do not mistake *Unshakable Foundations* as simply a minor revision of this earlier work. In some cases, Geisler significantly alters his presentation of the material, expanding and strengthening the arguments presented in *When Skeptics Ask*. In *Unshakable Foundations* Geisler also develops a particular apologetic strategy. He seeks to demonstrate that the Christian faith rests on self-evident truths, or first principles, and that indeed these first principles lead inevitably to the God of the Bible (p. 14).

Despite the updated discussions of some key issues within apologetics, there are at the still some omissions to his work. In his attempt to cover as much ground as possible in the arenas of both apologetics and ethics, Geisler gives minimal coverage to some important topics in both areas of thought.

The Christian layperson and the undergraduate student will find much helpful material packed into one volume. The author covers several crucial topics with clarity and precision. While not suitable by itself as a textbook for an undergraduate apologetics course, it may be useful as a textbook if used in conjunction with supplemental readings. An advertisement in the back of the book indicates that a CD-ROM is available for purchase that includes many supplementary materials for teachers to use in the classroom. The book also has subject and scripture indexes, as well as a helpful bibliography.

Miserly Moms: Living on One Income in a Two Income Economy, by Jonni McCoy. Minneapolis: Bethany House, [1994,1996.] 2001. 3rd edition. 247 pp. \$10.99. ISBN 0-7642-2612-6.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

When Jonni McCoy and her husband came under conviction to move from two incomes to one, she anticipated a loss of all the frills and many of

the givens associated with a drastic reduction in income. What she learned instead appeared in the 1994 edition of *Miserly Moms*. McCoy has found an incredibly wide range of possibilities for streamlining costs for families (though individuals can also certainly benefit from her wisdom). The book has proved immensely popular as many women quit jobs outside the home to raise their children.

She has "Eleven Miserly Guidelines," each with its own chapter and recommended reading list. Among the guidelines are keeping track of food prices, shopping around for the best deals, buying in bulk, cutting back on meat, and cooking multiple meals simultaneously. This portion of the book—nearly half the chapters—is full of great ideas, examples, advice, and recipes. Other chapters show how to calculate the cost of working, plan for birthdays and holidays, evaluate medical expenses and utilities, use warehouse clubs intelligently, and make safe and cheap alternatives to purchasing cleaners, polishes, and personal care products. McCoy has added a chapter in this third edition on clothing and a final chapter summarizing ways to cut costs.

Since I am a mom who is employed outside the home, I was concerned that little of this book would be helpful to me (and might even make me feel guilty). I was pleasantly surprised to come away with many workable ideas for meal-planning and handling meeting nights. One chapter is devoted to working moms, with the purpose of helping them see the ideas that might be most beneficial for their circumstances. McCoy is easy to read and writes with authority. This book is an important purchase for those not owning one of the prior editions, and is appropriate for public and college libraries.

A Ten-week Journey to Standing Firm, by Donna Partow. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2001. 266 pp. \$11.99. ISBN 0-7642-2293-7.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

This is the fourth book in the ten-week devotional series Partow has authored. The first book, *Becoming a Vessel God Can Use*, was a bestseller, and Partow has shared her story and words of encouragement on more than 200 radio and TV shows, including *Focus on the Family*.

Standing Firm follows the format of the earlier books. For each week, there are five readings and sets of reflective questions, followed by a Weekly Review. Each week has a memory verse (for the reader's convenience, though the librarian's chagrin, there are perforated cards in the back with those verses and the week's main ideas). The week's themes are as follows: (1) Seek God First; (2) Sustain God's Perspective; (3) Satisfy Your Spiritual Hunger; (4) Savor the Love God Has For You; (5)

Strengthen Yourself Against the Attacks of the Enemy; (6) Speak Truth to Yourself and Others; (7) Stem the Tide of Mediocrity; (8) Suffer Like a Saint; (9) Serve Wholeheartedly; and (10) Stand Firm Until the End. Each reading is brief and can be completed (including the questions) in fifteen minutes.

I have not read any of Partow's other books, but I will. She is very honest and down-to-earth in her writing. She uses great illustrations from real life that emphasize the Scriptural truths she is seeking to impart. However, this book is intended to be written in, taken apart, and used consistently for 10 weeks—longer than most circulation periods I know of. I am hesitant to recommend its purchase for libraries because, if properly used, it will not have a long shelf life. This is more of a (worthy) individual purchase.

Portraits of God: A Biblical Theology of Holiness, by Allan Coppedge. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001. ISBN 0-8308-1560-0.

Reviewed by Charles T. Kendall, Formerly Director of Library Services, Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas.

Allan Coppedge serves as Beeson Professor of Christian Theology at Asbury Theological Seminary. In *Portraits of God* he describes eight roles in which God relates to the creation. His book has three purposes: "to identify these portraits of God and examine the implications of each one" (12); "to show how these roles link biblical materials with Christian theology" (12); and to propose a fresh examination of the holiness of God and its multiple dimensions" (16).

Dr. Coppedge regards holiness as "the attribute of God that unifies these multiple descriptions of God as well as his other attributes that are closely related to each role: (361). He also views the role of God as Father as "The only role that adequately encompasses in some measure all of the functions of the other seven roles" (365).

The author considers his book as an overview. "In this volume we have only been able to introduce the terms and concepts from Scripture, without having the opportunity to formulate them into whole doctrines" but he believes that "there seems to be significant value in using a biblical method of this sort as the beginning of a correlation of materials for the work of systematic theology" (402).

Supporting the text are a bibliography and three indexes: Names (listing authors quoted in the text), Subject Index by Theme, and Scripture Index. A list of the tables that summarize aspects of the roles would have been a useful addition.

This book should be of particular interest to scholars in theology—biblical or systematic—but any mature Christian could benefit from reading

it. It is recommended for academic or Bible college libraries. The book might also serve as a resource for serious group study.

Vaclav Havel: The Intellectual Conscience of International Politics, by James W. Sire: Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001. 137 pp. \$15.00. ISBN: 0-8308-2656-4

Reviewed by C. Brian Smith, Reference Librarian, Judson College, Elgin, Illinois

Author and lecturer James Sire is a first rate thinker who never disappoints. A stalwart, he has written such landmark books as *The Universe Next Door*, *Habits of the Mind*, and *Why Should Anyone Believe Anything At All?* These works speak to not only the scholar, but also to the layperson. Sire's recent offering, *Vaclav Havel*, is of the same caliber as his previous writings, and it meets the consistent high standards that he has set for himself and his readers.

In this introductory biography, Sire examining the life and leadership of Vaclav Havel, former Czech President (Havel retired from his second term in February, 2003). Havel, as Sire notes, is a complex and enigmatic character. He's multitalented and multifaceted: a unique combination of philosopher, playwright, politician, moralist, humorist, and much more.

After sketching Havel's background -- especially his role as a political dissident and his imprisonment in communist Czechoslovakia -- Sire provides an overview of Havel's writings. He concentrates on Havel's absurdist writings (e.g., *The Garden Party*), morality plays (e.g., *Protest*), psychological-prison plays (e.g., *Temptation*).

Yet the crux of the book is contained in two chapters: "The Intellect of the Intellectual" and "A Critical Analysis of Havel's Worldview". In this section, Sire seems to ask, what guides an individual's life? Specifically, the author focuses on Havel's major concepts such as Being, "living in the truth," and moral responsibility, which are weighty and demand in-depth study. These theories are as complicated as and nebulous as Heidegger's.

Sire's work will inevitably stoke your curiosity about Havel. To satiate your thirst for more knowledge, the author has compiled a bibliography arranged as follows: books by Havel, plays by Havel; and books and articles about Havel. Overall, *Vaclav Havel* will appeal to anyone interested in international politics, twentieth century history, biography, literature, and philosophy.

The Prophet & the Messiah: An Arab Christian's Perspective on Islam & Christianity, by Chawkat Moucarry. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001. ISBN 0-8308-2315-8.

Reviewed by Robert Ellis, Director of Library Services, The King's College, New York, New York.

Moucarry thoroughly compares and contrasts the claims of Islam with Christianity. His analysis begins with an examination of sacred scriptures,

then key doctrines (God, sin, salvation, the kingdom of God), questions about Jesus Christ, questions about Muhammad and finally contemporary issues (Arab-Israeli conflict, Muslim immigrants in Western Europe).

The Prophet & the Messiah also includes helpful features, such as an appendix of Muslim theologians, a timeline of Christian-Muslim relations, and indices of Qur'anic and Bible references.

As an Arab Christian, Moucarry offers a refreshing perspective. Overall, I recommend *The Prophet & the Messiah* for the Islamic Studies section of college and seminary libraries as well as for those ministering to Muslims.

This commentary is Gary Burge's third book on the Gospel of John. In the 1980s, he wrote a more technical work on John's understanding of the Holy Spirit, titled *The Anointed Community: The Holy Spirit in the Johannine Tradition*. More recently, Burge authored a helpful introduction to the Gospel of John, titled *Interpreting the Gospel of John*. Both of these books are worthy of shelf space in your library.

The present volume is part of the NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC) series. Commentaries in this series are marked by an unusual layout. Discussion on each major passage of Scripture is broken into three sections: original meaning, bridging contexts, and contemporary significance. Unfortunately, this arrangement means that the reader has to look three different places to find all the material pertaining to any particular passage. The "bridging contexts" division seems rather awkward, and authors in the series consistently appear to struggle with this section. However, despite this weakness in the series as a whole, Burge wrote an excellent commentary on the Gospel of John.

The author does a commendable job discussing introductory issues. Contrary to the general consensus among scholars, he dates the Gospel of John prior to A.D. 70 (pp. 28-29). He thinks that John would have mentioned the destruction of the Jewish Temple if he were writing after it had been destroyed. Burge admits that John's Gospel may have been edited after the fall of Jerusalem. However, he does not explain why such editing would not have involved adding reference to the destruction of the Temple.

Overall this commentary is one of the better volumes in the NIVAC series. Exegetically, it does not compare with the commentaries by Carson, Morris, and Barrett, but it handles the text responsibly and provides helpful ideas for communicating John's message to a contemporary audience. This volume is worth adding to a college or seminary library.

Unexpected Wisdom: Major Insights from the Minor Prophets, by Dan Schmidt. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002. 174pp. \$12.99. ISBN 0801063795.

Reviewed by Elizabeth R. Pearson, Library Director, Montreat College, Montreat, North Carolina.

Unexpected Wisdom challenges the reader to delve into the messages of the Minor Prophets of the Old Testament and to apply their ancient wisdom to contemporary life. The author reminds us that there are important lessons to be learned from these books although they may be studied infrequently. It is the author's intent to make these books of the Bible more accessible and to whet appetites for further study.

Jonah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Micah, Haggai, Amos, Hosea, Joel, and Malachi are each treated in separate chapters, with a final chapter on Nahum, Zephaniah, and Zechariah. The scope of each chapter is limited to one or two ideas from each prophet.

John, NIV Application Commentary, by Gary M. Burge. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000. 618 pp. \$26.99. ISBN 0-310-49750-7.

Reviewed by John Aloisi, Assistant Librarian, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, Allen Park, Michigan.

For example, the theme of grace and forgiveness is addressed in Joel, the issue of pride and servant hood is the focus in Obadiah, and the topic of hope in the face of obstacles is presented in the final chapter. Underlying the prophets' harsh invectives are recurring themes that examine core issues of grace, faith, mercy, and kindness that are essential for spiritual growth. This approach to the Minor Prophets combined with illustrations from everyday life works well for this introductory book.

Unexpected Wisdom effectively presents major themes from the prophets for the general reader, although it is not an in-depth or scholarly treatment. Here the prophetic messages are rendered from a contemporary perspective that will make people pause and reflect.

The refreshing approach and engaging writing style will make this an interesting book for a wide range of readers, from pastors to laypersons, new converts as well as seasoned churchgoers. It would be ideal for devotionals, as a resource for Bible study groups, or as a general introduction for anyone unfamiliar with this part of the Old Testament. This book is appropriate for church, public, and college libraries.

A Basic Booklist For Church Libraries: An Annotated Bibliography, 6th ed. by Bernard E. Deitrick. Church and Synagogue Library Association, 2002. 20 pp. \$10.00. ISBN 0-615324-46-4.

Reviewed by C. Brian Smith, Reference Librarian, Judson College, Elgin, Illinois.

Current collection development resources for church libraries are scant. Do a subject search in the Library of Congress' online catalog (catalog.loc.gov) on "Church libraries - - Bibliography" to verify this assertion. That said this twenty-page list is more than welcome.

As the title of the bibliography indicates, this list is targeted for church or special libraries. In truth, it has broader applications. This bibliography could be used for collection development and benchmarking in a variety of settings (e.g., academic, public, school, seminary, et al).

Compiler Bernard E. Deitrick quickly points out that the bibliography is by no means a comprehensive one. Instead, it's designed to "assist many denominations and faith traditions in selecting books for their core library collection." It includes some 200 books, subsumed under twenty categories such as "Christian Faith and Doctrine," "Bibliography," "Marriage and The Family," and so on.

Each entry includes standard bibliographic information for each work as well as an annotation. Moreover, the bibliography includes both an author index and a title index.

A unique feature of this list: it's multidisciplinary. That is, it's not simply a list of Christian books or "Christian classics". The list is broad-minded. For instance, Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics* is included in the "Christian Ethics" category. Likewise Elizabeth Kubler Ross's seminal *On Death and Dying* is featured in the "Death and Dying" section. And Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving* is listed under "Religious Psychology".

A Basic Booklist for Church Libraries is a helpful tool. Deitrick, the compiler of this list, is open to suggestions for future revisions. Please take him up on his offer: Bernard E. Deitrick, C/O CSLA, P.O. BOX 19357, Portland, Oregon 97280.

Ambulance. VHS. BW. 9 min. Alden Films, P.O. Box 446, Clarksburg, NJ 08510; 732-462-3522; www.aldenfilms.com

Reviewed by Phyllis E. Fox, Head, Media Services, Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, CA.

This silent, short, black and white film powerfully illustrates its message of the horrors of the Holocaust.

The scene begins with a group of school children playing on the school ground with their teacher. A vehicle marked as an ambulance drives up onto the grounds and the viewer watches the reactions of the children and teacher as the guards prepare the vehicle for their transport and ultimate death by gassing. The viewer hears only the barking guard dog and the engine revving in the background. The relative silence of the film only adds to the impact.

This film is recommended as an optional purchase for any library that collects materials on the Holocaust, or possibly those who teach the art of filmmaking.

Ease the Squeeze: Develop a Life Plan, a Giving Plan and a Financial Plan, by Doug Hagedorn. Fairfax, VA: Xulon Press, 2002. 389 pp. ISBN 1-591601-72-X.

Reviewed by Robert Ellis, Director of Library Services, The King's College, New York, New York.

At one point in time, the author was about \$100,000 in debt, (from credit cards, car loans and mortgages) and gave nothing to church or missions. Amazingly, six and a half years later, Hagedorn claims he paid off his last debt, and was now giving 30% of his income to charity. I was definitely interested in reading this book!

Its twenty-four chapters are organized into three sections: a life plan, a giving plan and a financial plan. Each chapter ends with a list of Action Points. Throughout the text are editorial pauses (pictured by a "STOP" sign) where the author requests a specific action.

Appendices include: a chronology of biblical giving, key websites, financial worksheets and endnotes. The "Key Websites" section is probably the most helpful, for it directs the reader to websites specializing in consumer protection, financial planning, calculators, discount travel, discount lodging, coupons and ministries.

I highly recommend *Ease the Squeeze* for the Personal Finances section of church and college libraries, and for anyone who wishes to improve stewardship of their lives, possessions and money.

Money Doesn't Grow on Trees: Teaching Your Kids the Value of a Buck, by Ellie Kay. Bethany House, 2002. \$9.99. ISBN 0-7642-2447-6.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

Ellie Kay strikes again! Following the success of *Shop, Save, and Share* (1998) and *How to Save Money Every Day* (2001), Kay's focus this time is parents who want to teach their children to manage money wisely. She includes lots of funny (and realistic) stories from her own experience of training five children to value money (both theirs and their parents').

The first ten chapters (the bulk of the book) are in a progressive order, from foundational (such as teaching delayed gratification by having children save for a special purpose) to more sophisticated (like the importance of a work ethic and how to survive college with their finances intact). The most basic of ideas can be used with children as young as three. There is a chapter on budgeting, an essential for the family as a whole as well as the child, one on allowance and how it should be related to responsibilities in the home, and one on teaching children to delight in giving. Chapter nine, "Gibberish 101," gives parents several ways to combat the advertising that is thrown at children and creative ideas for teaching them to see through the haze, so that they avoid impulse buying. The eleventh chapter suggests many games, exercises, and activities (such as make-believe checks and restaurant budgets) that teach children the value of money. The final chapter, "Cash for Kids," discussing jobs—both the "real" paper-route kind and the "other" kind (babysitting, car washes, pet minding, and the like).

Ellie Kay writes from a Christian perspective, and she mentions tithing more than once, but her faith is not so pervasive that non-believers will be annoyed. The combination of two topics—parenting and frugality—should ensure a wide audience for any library where parents are among the patrons.

The Disciplined Life: The Mark of Christian Maturity, by Richard S. Taylor. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, [2002] 1962. 127 pp. \$7.99. ISBN 0-7642-2597-9.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

When I first selected this title to review, I misunderstood the title. I had recently read *The Spirit of the Disciplines* (Willard) for a faculty retreat, and am currently co-teaching a course on *The Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Life* (Whitney). I presumed that this title also dealt with spiritual disciplines such as Bible study, prayer, worship, and fasting. Not so.

This small volume, written by Professor Emeritus of Theology and Missions at Nazarene Theological Seminary Richard S. Taylor, focuses on being a disciplined (as in self-controlled) individual. Taylor convincingly argues that effective Christians are disciplined Christians. He begins by showing the relationship between discipline and

power. He defines self-discipline as the “ability to regulate conduct by principle and judgment rather than impulse, desire, high pressure, or social custom” (30). He then explores the extremities of discipline, including asceticism and whether it is compatible with Christianity, and the relationship between holiness and discipline. He also discusses external, imposed discipline (particularly for parents in relation to raising children). The book concludes with fourteen practical ways to become a disciplined person and some questions for further discussion.

It’s difficult to believe that this book was written over forty years ago, because the issues Taylor raises are very timely—being prompt, overcoming laziness, conquering gluttony, cultivating a consistent prayer life and Bible study time. This is a recommended purchase for any library with Christian readers.

Behind the Stories: Christian Novelists Reveal the Heart in the Art of Their Writing, by Diane Eble. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2002. 288 pp. \$12.99. ISBN 0-7642-2463-8.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

Diane Eble is the right person to write this book. She is a freelance writer and has been the editor of Tyndale House Publisher’s *PageTurner’s Journal* for many years. Over the years, she has interviewed many writers of both fiction and non-fiction. Her love for Christian fiction in particular is evident throughout this collection.

Forty different novelists are “examined” in this collection of essays. Each entry (averaging 7 pages each) begins with a photo and quote from the author on their writing, followed by several pages written by Eble, which focus on some aspect of their writing life. Sometimes the novelist recounts his calling into writing Christian fiction. Other times, it is an examination of the struggle to break in to the world of publishing. Occasionally, there are glimpses into the novelist’s struggle to balance her writing and family (or other “career”). For each essay, Eble relies heavily on interviews she has conducted with the writers and intersperses quotes from the novelist; this ensures accuracy and also provides the reader with a clearer sense of the personhood of the novelist.

While each novelist is different, there are many common themes to be traced throughout their experiences. Eble has organized the forty essays into eleven chapters under such banners as “Not By My Strength” or “God’s Stretching Places.” A sense of calling pervades many of these writers’ experiences, and all express an ongoing reliance upon God to give them focus and keep them accountable. Among those profiled are Terri Blackstock, Jan Karon, Jerry B. Jenkins, Karen Kingsbury, Janette Oke, and Gilbert Morris.

This makes for fascinating reading for the fan of Christian fiction and for those who like biography. The reader can pick and choose among the essays, focusing on those they know best, but it’s

also fun to read about those less-familiar novelists, to discover some new interests. This book is appropriate wherever Christian fiction has a readership.

Lay Aside the Weight: Take Control of It Before It Takes Control of You, by T.D. Jakes. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2002. 247 pp. ISBN 0-7642-2749-1.

Reviewed by Robert Ellis, Director of Library Services, The King’s College, New York, New York.

Throughout his eight chapter book, Jakes refers to David’s slaying of Goliath as a metaphor for weight loss. His chapters begin with such attention getting titles as *Hey, Giant! Who You Callin’ Fat? Grip Your Slingshot, and Don’t Forget Your Bag of River Stones.*

Lay Aside the Weight contains a little bit of everything: personal anecdotes, motivational exhortations, scriptural passages, “before and after” photos of Jakes and his wife, recipes, fill-in-the-blanks chapter reviews, weight loss charts, and answer keys. It is strong in practical advice, and avoids complicated scientific terminology.

While *Lay Aside the Weight* is best suited for personal use, it would still be appropriate for the weight loss sections of church and college libraries.

The Same Sex Controversy: Defending and Clarifying the Bible’s Message About Homosexuality, by James R. White and Jeffrey D. Niell. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2002. 254 pp. ISBN 0-7642-2524-3.

Reviewed by Robert Ellis, Director of Library Services, The King’s College, New York, New York.

Ordained ministers White and Niell have organized their book into nine chapters, with a thorough examination of biblical texts, beginning with the Old Testament (Genesis & Leviticus) and then on to the New Testament (Romans, 1st Corinthians and 1st Timothy.)

The Same Sex Controversy uses a question and answer format, beginning with a pro-homosexual “objection” followed by a biblical response. One thing I learned is that opposition to homosexuality is not a recent occurrence. Apparently, even early church fathers spoke out against this practice as being against the laws of God and nature (pp169-172).

The most important chapter in *The Same Sex Controversy* is the last one, written as a pastoral appeal to those struggling with homosexual desires or practices. Extra features include Notes at the end of each chapter, a Bibliography, and a Recommended Reading section. Commentaries on Romans 1 from noted Church fathers Saint Augustine and John Chrysostom are found in the Appendices.

I enjoyed reviewing this book. It was easy to read, and well documented. If you are going to buy one book on homosexuality, this would be it. I highly recommend *The Same Sex Controversy*

for church, college and seminary libraries and for those ministering to homosexuals.

The Prophetic Literature; an Introduction, by David L. Petersen. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. 260 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 0-6642-5453-5.

Reviewed by Elizabeth Pearson, Library Director, Montreat College, Montreat, North Carolina.

David L. Petersen is the Clifford E. Baldrige Professor of Biblical Studies at the Iliff School of Theology, the Chair of Research and Publications for the Society of Biblical Literature, and a member of the Editorial Advisory Board for the Old Testament Library of Westminster John Knox Press. In *The Prophetic Literature*, he presents a lucid and comprehensive introduction to biblical prophetic literature, addressing literary structure, historical context, and theological perspectives.

After establishing a definition and setting the stage by offering an overview of prophetic literature, Petersen proceeds to analyze each prophetic book and then the prophetic literature outside those books. Separate chapters cover the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Book of the Twelve with attention to the historical and social context of the prophet and the book, the characteristic literary features present in each book, and the most significant theological issues.

Petersen’s treatment of prophets and prophetic tradition outside the prophetic books is one of the elements that set this book apart from others on the same topic. The book also differs from other studies in that it is not arranged chronologically and offers no history of prophecy.

This introduction to the prophetic literature is firmly grounded in Scripture and solidly researched. Citing classic works and examples of recent commentary, the author’s grasp of the scholarly literature is apparent throughout the book. He notes, for example, changes that have occurred in scholarly perceptions of the book of Isaiah in the past quarter century. Faculty and students alike will value the review of pertinent research and the interpretive and analytical treatment. Some familiarity with the subject is assumed, but the clear writing style is approachable for undergraduates. Well-researched, with extensive bibliographic notes and a useful scripture index, this excellent resource is highly recommended for academic libraries with religious studies collections and for seminaries.

Spirituality and Intellectual Disability: International Perspectives on the Effect of Culture and Religion on Healing Body, Mind and Soul, by William C. Gaventa, Jr. and David L. Coulter. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Pastoral Press, 2001. 182 pp. ISBN 0-7890-1685-0.

Reviewed by Robert Ellis, Director of Library Services, The King’s College, New York, New York.

Spirituality and Intellectual Disability was co-published simultaneously as the *Journal of Religion, Disability & Health*. Vol. 5(2/3), 2001.

Gaventa and Coulter have collected thirteen papers written by seventeen authors from different faiths and cultures (Christians, Jews and Muslims). These papers were grouped into four themes: theoretical foundations, cultural & religious perspectives, research & practice, and creative ways of facilitating spiritual health. Their work explores the relationship between disability and theology and addresses the spiritual needs and gifts of mentally retarded.

Of all the papers presented, I was only interested in the one about the condition of disabled women in Muslim countries. Their inferior position was attributed to Islamic texts' negative representations of both women and the disabled.

This book covered too many topics from too many perspectives. It does not belong in most church or college libraries. It is more suitable for seminaries, graduate schools and for those ministering to the disabled.

Raising Our Children Out of Poverty, edited by John J. Stretch...[et al.]. New York, Haworth Press. Published 1999. 108 pp. \$14.95 (pbk). ISBN 0-7890-0845-9.

Reviewed by Crisanta P. Bustamante, Head Librarian, International School of Theology-Asia, Quezon City, Philippines.

This excellent collection of research papers is based on April 1988 symposium sponsored by the Emmet and Martha Doerr Center for Social Justice Education and Research at St. Louis University.

The articles selected for this volume represents some of the best innovative thinking with respect to ethical and social issues affecting poor children. The studies shows the interrelation of social policy, social ethics and social work intervention and what can be done at the national and local community levels to provide empowered services to families and children living in poverty.

Social work practitioners and other helping advocates will discover chapters in this book discussing the future of foster care, ecumenical housing, collaborative practice in low income communities, fostering resiliency in children programs that are alternatives to an innovative family support and empowerment program.

Finally, the volume ends with an article describing an innovative family support and empowerment program that has received national recognition for sustained result.

Overall, this collection of essays is a welcome contribution in the field of social work and policy. The book offers a balanced approach and the contributors are both informed and sensitive to their fields of study.

Dear God Kids Series, by Annie Fitzgerald, with contributions by Ken Abraham. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2002.

Reviewed by Anne-Elizabeth Powell, Head of Technical Services and Systems, Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, California.

Appropriate for church libraries or collections focused toward home schooling, this engaging series features cartoon-style illustrations, hard binding and laminated pages, that will stand up to the abuse of even a small child. Books in the series include: *Dear God, Do You Really See Everything?*; *Dear God, Thank You for Friends*; *Dear God, It's Me Again*; and *Dear God, Thanks for Making Me Special!*

Books are written in the format of short letters addressing single questions or statements to God, such as: "Dear God, I've broken my heart, can you fix it?" "Dear God, If I gave all my love away, can I have a refill?" or "Dear God, You should've asked me first if I wanted freckles." Paragraphs following the questions or statements do not give pat answers, rather they provide a new way of looking at the topic.

These books do not condescend to children, but are written in an accessible language appropriate for preschool through elementary age children. Each page includes a topically themed scripture and the subject matter provides a nice jumping board for discussion, especially if read with a parent.

Symbols of the Christian Faith, by Alva William Steffler. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2002. 166 pp. \$12.00 ISBN 0-8028-4676-9

Reviewed by Anne-Elizabeth Powell, Head of Technical Services and Systems, Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, California.

Author Alva William Steffler is a professor of Art at Wheaton College and has also served as president of the international organization CIVA (Christians in the Visual Arts). It is not hard to imagine these influences coming together to spur the creation of this book. Steffler states the goal of his book to be "to provide meaningful models for those who are involved in the important task of designing art for the church..." (ix.).

Pages in this book present a graphic representation of most included symbols followed by explanatory text. In some cases the graphic is not included. The symbols are presented in grouped order, symbols associated with one another being presented in the same section of the book. Graphics are black and white and would be easily reproduced.

Indexes organized by both subject and Scripture Reference are provided as well as a glossary of additional symbols and a glossary of colors and numbers associated with the symbols. A section on the church calendar is also included.

This book is far from an exhaustive guide to all Christian symbols and it should be noted that the index seems a bit flawed. For instance, though the word "Ichthus" is mentioned in the text accompanying a fish symbol it does not actually make it into the index. Nor does the familiar fish with the letters IXOYE in the center appear in the book. As a supplement to more extensive guides and as a template for design in the Christian arts this is an excellent work. The book is recommended for inclusion in reference and church library collections.

Contract Pastoral Care and Education: The Trend of the Future? by Larry VandeCreek, ed. New York: Haworth Pastoral Press, 1999. 122 p.; ISBN: 0-7890-0793-2.

Reviewed by Francisco Arriola, Bolin Library for Pentecostal Research, Southeastern College, Lakeland, Florida.

The rapid changes taking place within the health care system has resulted in drastic cutback across the board. Institutional pastoral care and administration is one area that has felt the brunt of these cutbacks. In the face of such cutbacks, those who understand the importance of institutional pastoral care have resorted to creative measures to continue providing the necessary spiritual nurture and counsel to those in need. The result has been the formation of freestanding centers of institutional pastoral care that provide their services not only to hospitals and health care facilities, but also to the community at large.

There are nine essays written by a diverse group of practitioners serving in urban, suburban and rural communities, present us with the history, focus, limitations, and successes of each freestanding center. The focus of each center differs, with some offering pastoral service and education, while others emphasize service, while others still include evangelistic efforts in their program. The practitioners of this innovative form of pastoral care all point out that the need to survive has required the tailoring their efforts to the needs of their communities resulting in a broadening of their personal views on pastoral care, which has enhanced the training of new personnel. The final five chapters of the book are critiques of the new programs. Most of the critiques recognize the positive aspects of institutional pastoral care being free of hospital administration, as well as the constant need to be adaptable to the changing needs of the community. The book is highly recommended.

Academic Research on the Internet: Options for Scholars and Libraries, edited by Helen Laurence and William Miller. New York: The Haworth Press, Inc. 386 pp. \$79.95 hardcover, \$49.95 paperback. ISBN 0-7890-1177-8, 0-7890-1176-X.

Reviewed by Mary Ann Littrell, Manhattan Christian College, Manhattan, Kansas.

During the past several years an increasing number of scholars have been using the Internet as one of their resources for research. In this book Helen Laurence, Systems and Honors College Librarian, and William Miller, Director of Libraries, both at Florida Atlantic University, have compiled a series of articles as a guide for using the Internet for this purpose. The authors of these articles are information specialists, mostly comprised of university librarians or library science professors who are experts in the fields about which they are writing. These fields are as varied as biology, anthropology, English and American literature, education, art and architecture, history, medicine, law, and philosophy. Each article examines the

variety of uses of the Internet for that particular field and gives web sites where a person could go for more information.

Dr. Laurence authored the introduction in which she summarized the pros and cons of doing research on the Internet, as projected by the articles. Her conclusion was that "the Internet can now support significant research in many fields, but in most circumstances the researcher must still consult traditional library resources and use a mix of online and print materials" (p. 7). It is also important to be very careful of the quality and authenticity of the online information.

This book would make a great reference book, not only for librarians, but also for anyone wanting to find information on the web. At the end of each article is a webliography for web sites pertinent to that field; however, since the Internet is constantly changing, and this book was published in 2000, I decided to check some of the URL's. At least one was no longer viable, but that is a problem with writing any book about the Internet. In spite of that, I heartily recommend this book for any library.

Pastoral Care for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, by Daléne Fuller Rogers. New York: Haworth Pastoral Press, 2002. 122 pp. ISBN 0-7890-15420.

Reviewed by Jennifer S. Ewing, Librarian, Southern California Bible College & Seminary, El Cajon, California.

This is an introductory text written for pastors who would provide spiritual counseling for church members who suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Fuller Rogers, an Episcopal minister with the United Church of Christ, serving on the chaplaincy staff of a VA hospital and with the National Center for PTSD, has worked with women survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

After defining the causes, manifestations, and spiritual implications of PTSD, the author provides useful advice that a pastor must listen, validate emotions, and have a support mechanism in place that cares for other aspects of the healing process that the pastor is not qualified to handle, such as, psychologists, social workers, family counselors, etc. In addition to this valuable network, the author speaks about pastoral health issues: physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual, that needs to be maintained in order to provide effective pastoral care. The author suggests that various New Age techniques might prove useful for PTSD recovery, such as meditation and polarity therapy, among others. She also addresses gender issues, using alternate spirituality, exploring the more feminine aspects of God and the potentially destructive patriarchal tendencies of the church.

Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers: Missionary Women in the Twentieth Century. American Society of Missiology Series, No. 32. Edited by Dana L. Roberts. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002. 221 pp. \$25.00. ISBN 1-57075-425X

Reviewed by Donald Dean Smeeton, Director, Squires Library, Lee University and the Church of God Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee.

Collected essays are notoriously difficult to review and this book is no exception. Some contributions are more focused than others; some are better researched than others; some are better written than others.

Dana L. Roberts, whose *American Women in Missions: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (1997) stimulated new research on women missionaries, adds to the growing conversation by this collection of fifteen essays. Chronologically they range from the end of the nineteenth century to the present; theologically from Catholic to evangelical. The common theme is that those women who sense a divine call to ministry face unique challenges from male oriented theological understandings and male dominated ecclesiastical structures. These essays offer fifteen case studies that can help the reader understand that the problem is not restricted to one's own denomination or tradition. The only sensible conclusion seems to be that the situation is universal and it has not changed much during the last century. Women who have experienced spiritual freedom can be "gospel bearers" but they will soon confront "gender barriers."

One will enjoy reading the article on Susan Beamish Strachan whose ministry is often eclipsed by her famous husband and even more famous son. Seldom does one get a glimpse of the feminine hand that administered the mission and nurtured national ministers with grace and intelligence for two generations. She challenged the evangelical stereotype of a "woman role" with confidence and strength without sacrificing her family or her understanding of scripture. Yet, she too knew the barriers.

Taken together the fifteen essays describe the problem in various cultural and denominational expressions without any suggestion about the future for women missionaries. One is left with a description of the disease but not a plan of treatment.

Recommended for undergraduate and seminary libraries with a strong missions emphasis.

The Letters to the Thessalonians, Pillar New Testament Commentary, by Gene L. Green. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002. 400 pp. \$42.00. ISBN 0-8028-3738-7.

Reviewed by John Aloisi, Assistant Librarian, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, Allen Park, Michigan.

The primary objective of the *Pillar New Testament Commentary* series is "to make clear the text of Scripture as we have it" (p. xi). To that end, commentaries in the series interact with the best of contemporary scholarship, but they avoid becoming bogged down with extraneous details. The publisher has enlisted an excellent cast of evangelical scholars to write the volumes, and overall this series is shaping up to be a very important addition to NT studies.

Gene Green is well qualified to write a

commentary on the Thessalonian epistles. As a professor at Wheaton College he currently teaches courses on the Thessalonian letters, Greco-Roman culture, and other topics related to the NT. Green has written Spanish commentaries on First and Second Thessalonians and First and Second Peter as well as numerous articles in both English and Spanish.

The present volume contains a wealth of background information. Green brings to the text an excellent grasp of Greco-Roman culture and the ability to relate this information to Paul's argument. However, the commentary contains relatively little discussion of grammatical and syntactical issues. Green generally does a commendable job explaining Paul's argument, but one will need to look at the more technical works by F. F. Bruce and Charles Wanamaker for detailed analysis of the text.

The author interacts with a broad spectrum of literature on the Thessalonian epistles. Yet he avoids simply rephrasing the work of others. Surprisingly, the commentaries by D. Edmond Hiebert and Robert L. Thomas do not appear to have been consulted. This is an unfortunate lacuna in an otherwise well-researched commentary.

Although I have pointed out a few weaknesses in the volume, this commentary is quite a helpful treatment of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. Green's work adds much to our understanding of Thessalonian culture, and it will be an important commentary on these epistles for many years to come.

Candle in the Darkness, a Novel, by Lynn Austin. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002. 431pp. \$12.99. ISBN 1-55661-436-5.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

Caroline Fletcher loves her hometown of Richmond, Virginia. She watches in agony as the town is destroyed both physically and emotionally by the Civil War. Her father is running the blockades for President Davis, her beloved cousin Jonathan and fiancé Charles are both soldiers in the Confederate Army. Caroline stays at home with her family's six slaves and tends the wounded. Yet Caroline's heart is with the Yankee cause, to free the slaves. She wrestles with guilt and tough decisions, and even abets the enemy, knowing that it will most likely cost her Charles' love and maybe even her life.

Winner of the 2003 Christy Award for North American Historical Fiction, *Candle in the Darkness* is the epitome of well-written historical fiction. Vivid and painful to read, this novel unflinchingly examines the issue of slavery within a Christian context. We see Caroline mature emotionally and spiritually. The slaves at Church Hill—Eli, Tessie, Esther, and the others—are distinctly drawn; they suffer emotional trauma yet remain committed unwaveringly to their faith in God and to "Missy" Caroline. The battle scenes are recounted from Caroline's reading the newspaper, and take on importance because of Jonathan and Charles'

presence, yet still retain authenticity and vivid detail. The angst of being separated from loved ones, the agony of being labeled a traitor for doing what you believe is right, make this a book to remember.

Twilight, by Kristen Heitzmann. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002. 350pp. \$12.99. ISBN 0-7642-2605-3.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

Cal Morrison is the best firefighter on the force in Montrose, yet he cannot get past what he believes was his failure to save two-year-old Ashley Trainor from her home. His guilt drove him at first to drink, then to psychiatric counseling, and now he is Chuckles the Clown, educating children on safety. Cal knows he belongs on the line, but he fears another catastrophe. To complicate matters, his high school sweetheart Laurie has returned to Montrose, accompanied by her two children (but not her good-for-nothing husband). Cal and Laurie are still a good fit, even though neither are Christians at first. Heitzmann's narrative pulls us in as we see both wrestle with faith and become believers. The love story becomes a tale of mystery and danger as Laurie's past catches up with her. Cal must confront his fears (of both fire and rejection) to see his dreams come true.

Heitzmann does an excellent job drawing characters and spinning this yarn. Little secrets are slowly revealed which add to the readers understanding of the story's events. The characters are vivid, the setting realistic. Though Cal and Laurie both become believers, their struggles to make the right choices are accurate and they don't always succeed. The story begins as a romance, but halfway through turns into more of a thriller. *Twilight* is a strong piece of writing and has a place in any Christian fiction collection.

The Social God and The Relational Self, by Stanley J. Grenz. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. 345pp. \$39.95. ISBN 0-664-22203

Reviewed by Susan B. Robinson, Head, Document Delivery Dept., Iona College, New Rochelle, NY.

Stanley J. Grenz has written the first volume in a six volume series of systematic theology titles investigating contemporary issues concerning theological anthropology with the postmodern world.

Being the initial volume of the series, Grenz sets the stage by discussing the reconstruction of the self from a particularly Christian Trinitarian theological perspective that draws exclusively from the resources to Christian Faith. His purpose is to contribute to the renewal of the true human soul with its identity deeply rooted in Christ to the glory of God. This stands in opposition to the current postmodern view of the global soul rooted in self.

This topic of the soul rooted in Christ to the glory of God seems to be an old topic revisited.

However, what is unique is the research of Stanley Grenz. The book has been articulately documented and appeals to a variety of sources. It is ecumenical in approach with Grenz not only drawing from contemporary scholarship but also appealing to the early church tradition from both East and West theologians cited. The scholarship involved in this book is what makes it a unique work compared to other dealing with the same subject matter.

This book could be a great addition to a Christian Liberal arts collection, but would probably find its best use in a seminary collection.

Fathering Like the Father: Becoming the Dad God Wants You to Be, by Kenneth O. Gangel and Jeffrey S. Gangel. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book, 2003. 175pp. \$12.99; ISBN 0-80-106432-5

Reviewed by David Holifield, Librarian, William Jessup University (formerly San Jose Christian College), Rocklin, California.

Father knows best. We've all heard the saying. Who better to model true fathering skills than the One who truly knows best? After all, doesn't fathering come naturally to God?

Ken and Jeff Gangel (father and son) have written an enriching, and at times humorous, workbook on fatherhood. According to the authors, the key to effective fathering is grounded in Scripture, modeled after God's own attributes. These attributes serve as the key text for each chapter. Personal observations, practical advice, and discussion questions follow each section.

As stated in the preface, the authors' position is threefold. First, fathers are communicators of God's revelation. Second, they converse with their Heavenly Father on a regular basis. Third, successful fathers imitate godly attributes to their children 24/7. Biblical examples, both positive and negative, are used to successfully illuminate the authors' position.

In an age when most fathering books are approached from the perspective of an author's experience or from the framework of social psychology, *Fathering like the Father* is a welcome arrival. It is well-organized, suitable for personal as well as group study. Though the bibliography is short, the sources cited are current, relevant, and reflect a solid evangelical perspective. Readers will also notice a slight bias toward the father/son relationship. This is perhaps due to the authors' own personal experiences rather than an explicit ignorance of the father/daughter relationship.

This book will appeal to the casual as well as the scholarly reader. Though the authors are not experts in the field, their personal experiences lend credence to a sound, biblical approach to fatherhood.

Recommended for church libraries, personal book collections, and academic libraries with a strong marriage and family collection.

Judas: Images of the Lost Disciple, by Kim Paffenroth. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. 207 pp. \$24.95. ISBN 0664-22424-5

Reviewed by Roderick T. Leupp, MLIS student, University of Oklahoma, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

The New Testament figure of Judas Iscariot has frequently aroused the Christian imagination. As Kim Paffenroth shows in his careful study of Judas, the result is a book that is part biblical studies, part morality tale, part political exhortation, and part theology of culture, as he unpacks twenty centuries of tangling with Judas.

The five images—the obscure (where he treats the biblical materials more decisively than elsewhere), the arch-sinner, the villain, the tragic hero, the penitent—evoke five corresponding responses. Depending on one's angle of vision, one might feel any of the following toward the one customarily identified by only word, betrayer. Curiosity, horror, hatred, admiration, and hope are all possible takes on the Judas saga.

The author consistently applies a "let the reader decide" hermeneutic to his presentation. At times he is mildly or even extremely critical of some Judas traditions, especially as they have promoted anti-Semitism. A figure as complex as Judas is bound to attract attention from across the ethical and political and religious spectrum. The author feels little or no obligation to condemn Judas, nor to lionize or valorize him. If the reader can set aside all the cultural associations connected with Judas, and listen to Paffenroth, at the very least more data on how to approach Judas can be gleaned.

With only one other recent major Judas study available, William Klassen, *Judas: Betrayer or Friend of Jesus?* (1996), Paffenroth's more or less comprehensive work deserves at least a first look.

Holocaust Politics, by John K. Roth. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001, 354 pp. \$29.95. ISBN: 0-664-22173-4.

Reviewed by Roderick T. Leupp, MLIS student, University of Oklahoma, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

A mystery is different than a problem, said one very wise philosopher, because a mystery can only be pondered, deepened, clarified, or sifted, but never laid to rest or solved like a problem. In *Holocaust Politics* John K. Roth reports on the mysterious quality of the Holocaust, the systematic elimination of Jews, gypsies, homosexuals and others deemed undesirable by the Nazi regime. Thousands of books and films have yet to explain the Holocaust fully, and they never will.

Why then should anyone continue to care about this event, whose survivors dwindle with each passing year? Roth makes the case for the Holocaust's continuing claim upon us in six chapters sandwiched between a prologue that defines the nature of Holocaust politics and an epilogue declaring that the Holocaust will always matter to civilized minds.

Holocaust politics refers not to the Nazi machinations that led up to and perpetrated the "Final Solution." The phrase rather identifies a host of philosophical and ethical issues that together identify past, present, and future thinking about this

unspeakable event. Chapters such as "Who Owns the Holocaust?" and "What Can and Cannot Be Said about the Holocaust?" suggest that perennial philosophical and ethical questions continue to be raised by this defining period of the 20th century. Recent scholarly trends such as gender studies have also made their mark on Holocaust studies.

Roth is a well-read Holocaust scholar who has contributed several works on this subject over the past fifteen years. Among Holocaust scholars he is probably the leading Christian interpreter. His 1987 book with the Jewish writer Richard L. Rubenstein, *Approaches to Auschwitz: The Holocaust and Its Legacy*, identified him as a significant Holocaust scholar. This earlier work, like *Holocaust Politics*, is at its best when it allows stories, poems, and narratives to triumph over analysis and classification, which can be deadening. That the letter kills but the Spirit gives life is also true of Holocaust scholarship.

Roth's main academic identity is that of philosopher, and while he may intend the style of *Holocaust Politics* to be philosophical, in reality it is more journalistic, probing, and anecdotal, at times drawing upon his many years of teaching Holocaust studies at Claremont McKenna College in southern California. While Roth's prose is seldom labored, it is often redundant and to that degree tedious and tiring. The enormity of the Holocaust overwhelms Roth, as it must do to every writer approaching it. Roth's sincerity is evident in every paragraph, and all sane souls must commit to the perpetual remembrance of the Holocaust. Yet if its mysteries are finally opaque, then what really is the point?

Holocaust Politics is an enlightened guide by a tremendously well-informed observer who is able to lead the interested reader to the most searching questions and the most vital literature on the subject. Anyone who is numbered among the "interested reader" group will benefit greatly from reading parts or this entire book.

The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination, by Gary A. Anderson. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001, 257 pp. \$24.95. ISBN 0-664-224032.

Reviewed by Roderick T. Leupp, MLIS student, University of Oklahoma, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

A preacher and a writer have at least this much in common: each should orient the listener and the reader as to what lies ahead. Gary Anderson, who teaches Old Testament at Harvard Divinity School, is clear about his intentions from the beginning. Concisely put, this book's thesis is "first things can only be understood by virtue of last things." (p. 85). By "last" Anderson means not only what is sequentially final, but moreover what has the power to explain the whole sequence up to and including the end.

The story of Adam and Eve provides the practical anchor by which Anderson can demonstrate his thesis. Mary, for example, completes, recapitulates or in some ways reverses who Eve was and what she did. The corruption entering the world

via Eve is relieved by Mary. Anderson notes the tension between 1 Timothy 2:14, which seems to blame Eve for the first sin, and Romans 5, where Adam is the culprit. Majority opinion places equal blame on both Adam and Eve. On the whole, Anderson seems more interested in the correlation between Eve and Mary than between the first Adam and the Second Adam, Jesus Christ. That is regrettable.

To his credit, Anderson is conversant with a range of interpretations that have been applied to Genesis 1-3. He is especially interested in three streams: various Jewish approaches, those of Augustine, and the formulations of the fourth-century writer Ephrem, who is important for Eastern Orthodoxy. Anderson also frequently calls upon John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Dante to a lesser extent.

Imagination is key to this book. Not only does it appear in the subtitle, but also Anderson obviously has a developed one himself. The thesis of this book is not original with Anderson, but his style of advancing it is. He employs no footnotes, but rather cites his few quotations at the close of the book, also offering bibliographic suggestions for each of his eight chapters and appendix on "Biblical Origins and the Fall." Several charts and diagrams are employed to corroborate Anderson's thesis, and various modes of art, especially Michelangelo's "Sistine Chapel," are reproduced.

This book does not fit into one of the common categories of either biblical studies or theological monograph. It is some of both, and theology of culture besides. The writing is clear and sometimes poetic. The main drawback to this creative effort is the occasional difficulty of discerning how all of Anderson's musings contribute to his significant overall thesis. It is more suited for the scholar more than the general reader.

Down by the Riverside, a Brief History of Baptist Faith, by Everett C. Goodwin. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2002. 134 pp. \$13.00.

Reviewed by Suella H. Baird, Director of Library Services, Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ.

Everett C. Goodwin is pastor of Scarsdale Community church in Scarsdale, New York, and former chaplain at Fling Hill School in Oakton, Virginia.

Recognizing that many people, even those who are Baptists, are unaware of just how Baptists came to be, or what they believe, the author sets out to write an easily read, informative book on the history of the Baptist Faith.

The book presents three different foci, resulting in three sections. Each section focuses on a different aspect of the Baptist story: The first focus is the history of the development of the denomination in England, and moving on to America. The second focuses on showing how the Baptist became more organized in response to a recognized need to an avenue for carrying out mission activities. The third focus is on the actual belief of Baptists in regards to theology, the Bible, their churches, and missions. In addition, there is

a interesting preface that exposes the author's heart for his task, a conclusion focusing on the current controversies Baptists face, a rather extensive bibliography, and a helpful index.

This book is simple, and easily read. A casual reader will probably be satisfied with what is mostly information condensed into a list of whos, whats, and whens. Others who really want to understand the people and the catalysts involved in the development of the Baptists will find themselves frustrated by bare statements like "The tireless leadership of several strong Baptist personalities advanced Baptist interests..." (22-23). However it does an excellent job of putting before the reader names, dates, places and events, and the bibliography and citations provided will guide a reader to further resources. This book is recommended for church libraries, and is useful to academic libraries.

Stallions at Burnt Rock (West Texas Sunrise, Bk. 1), by Paul Bagdon, Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 2003. 191 pp. \$11.99.

Long Road to LaRosa (West Texas Sunrise Bk. 2), by Paul Bagdon, Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2003. 192 pp. \$11.99.

Reviewed by Suella H. Baird, Director of Library Services, Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ.

Inspirational Fiction, Romance, and Action Adventure lovers laud Paul Bagdon's new series, West Texas Sunrise. *Stallions at Burnt Rock* and *Long Road to La Rosa* are the first and second books the series. A third, *Stranger from Medina* is published and another, *Thunder on the Dos Gatos*, is due out in October 2003. All of these tell the story of the small, West-Texas town of Burnt Rock and the surrounding ranches in the 1870's. Like all of West Texas, Burnt Rock was one of the few towns between large ranches in a land of wide, empty spaces, sparse vegetation and almost no water.

In *Stallions at Burnt Rock*, we are introduced to the series' main characters, Lee Morgan and Ben Flood. Lee is a 39 year-old woman who owns her own ranch, the Busted Thumb Horse Farm. She is a rarity in for the time and place—an independent woman. Ben Flood is the local marshal. They are both Christians and good friends. Their Christian faith is tested and their friendship deepens as they face the difficulties caused by an innocent decision by Lee and another rancher to attempt to attract buyers for their horses by advertising a race between their best stallions. They do attract the ranchers and army but, unfortunately, also unsavory characters as well. Their presence makes Ben Flood's life difficult. Quiet Burnt Rock is suddenly anything but quiet. Lee's life also becomes complicated when faced with the loss of a friend, and the widespread consequences of her decision.

Long Road to LaRosa takes place two years later. As the plot unfolds, we see some of the struggle Lee has striving to be independent. We also see more of Ben's struggle to reconcile his past actions, as well as his present job as a lawman, with his being a Christian. In this book, Lee has

donned her best womanly attire to sign papers at the local bank for a loan to purchase more stock. Unwittingly, she walks into a robbery in progress and becomes a hostage. The robbers' leader has had dealings with Ben in the past, and uses Lee as bait to seek revenge. He succeeds partly, but Lee does not remain bait for long as she escapes and joins Ben, much to his relief and consternation, in the chase.

These books are well written and show a good grasp of horses and horsemanship; however, the plots are predictable and some of the dialogue seems almost too colloquial to the point that it distracts from the read. Also, while the visual description of the countryside is clear, mistakes like placing Saguaro cacti in Texas detract from the overall effect.

These books are a good fit for those wanting a quickly read, well written story featuring likeable, Christian characters. However, these are not for those who want accuracy in setting, detailed, realistic, Christian characters and a less predictable plot.

The Seven Churches of Revelation Rediscovered, directed and presented by David Nunn. Blue Skies Productions, distributed by Vision Video, Worcester, PA. VHS, 40 min. \$19.99.

Reviewed by Suella H. Baird, Director of Library Services, Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ.

The purpose of this video is to not only give background information on the seven churches addressed in Revelation 2-3, but to really bring them alive to the Bible reader. David Nunn, the host, accomplishes this by taking the viewer on a beautifully produced, visual tour of Turkey (Asia Minor), showing the ruins of each of the seven churches set in their natural setting. This gives the viewer a mental picture to carry with them in their Bible study. But what really brings the Scripture alive is the host's description of the history and culture of the area during the writing of Revelation, relating these to the specific issues addressed in each of the letters, as well as to the specific names used for the Risen Christ in the letters.

It is obvious from the enthusiasm of the presentation and the sincerity of the words that Mr. Nunn loves the Lord and his Word. This video is recommended to all who are interested in more fully understanding Revelation 2-3. It would be a valuable asset to all Bible readers, church libraries, and academic libraries.

A Parent's Guide to Preventing Homosexuality, by Joseph Nicolosi and Linda Ames Nicolosi. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002. 254 pp. \$15.00. ISBN 0-8308-2379-4.

Reviewed by Tammy Brawn, Acquisitions Librarian, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Lubbock, Texas.

Dr. Nicolosi provides an incredible amount of convincing scientific evidence, including numerous studies and case histories, to the negative

impact of this lifestyle. The goal of this book is well achieved: to present scientific information describing a clear and common road that leads to homosexuality, and ways to block that path. He illuminates warning signs to look for and environments that nurture gender confusion, as well as the current media bias and cultural acceptance of the homosexual agenda.

Little has been written on homosexual prevention. Previous generations avoided the discussion. Current writers dismiss talk of treatment or change as bigotry. Nicolosi's work fills a void in the literature. While he never addresses homosexuality from a Biblical perspective, only mentioning religious concerns of parents from a neutral stance, he presents logical rationale for a pro-heterosexual viewpoint. The absence of Biblical argument may invite non-Christians into the discussion more comfortably. However, Christians may find, as I did, the avoidance of Biblical references to be a crucial missing element. This is the only defect in an otherwise comprehensive topical review.

Joseph Nicolosi is well qualified to write on this topic. He is the president of NARTH, the National Association for Research & Treatment of Homosexuality. He has counseled many gender-confused people in his career as a clinical psychologist and written two other books in this subject area. Both parents and educators will find this book an enlightening read.

The Smart Step-Family: Seven Steps to a Healthy Family, by Ron L. Deal. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2002. 272 pp. \$16.99. ISBN 0-7642-2657-6.

Reviewed by Tammy Brawn, Acquisitions Librarian, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Lubbock, Texas.

The purpose of this book is twofold: describe the healthy Christian stepfamily and demonstrate how to apply Biblical principles to those relationships. Ron Deal fulfills this objective, presenting an excellent resource on a difficult subject. His experience as a church family life minister, licensed therapist / counselor, and seminar speaker gives credence to his discussion of this topic.

The unique environment of blended families is clearly explained, including the potential pitfalls and difficulties. Suggestions for solutions and coping techniques are based on solid Biblical wisdom. The author advocates each individual's need to be grounded in Christ before healing, forgiveness, and integration can successfully occur. One noteworthy passage distinguishes "God-esteem" from "self-esteem" as the proper perspective for handling these complex situations. A challenge is also given for churches/ministries to create programs designed specifically for the stepfamily, a severely underserved population.

Bookstore shelves are replete with books on divorce, remarriage, step parenting and blended families. Fewer resources are available that present the issue from a Christian perspective. Most religious authors are more interested in stopping the tide of divorce than helping those who have

suffered from it cope. This book compassionately assists people through that reality while neither placing blame nor condoning marital dissolution. Within these pages, parents will find practical help while educators, ministers and counselors will gain needed insight and understanding. I recommend it for all readers and libraries.

Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues: Exploring the Spiritual Themes of *The Lord of the Rings*, by Mark Eddy Smith. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002. 141 pp. \$11. ISBN 0-8308-2312-3.

Reviewed by Rory Patterson, User Education Librarian, Cedarville University, Cedarville, Ohio.

The Lord of the Rings (LOTR) movies have sparked a great interest in Tolkien's fictional writings. Trying to fill this fad with fare from a more explicitly Christian viewpoint is Smith's *Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues*. Smith is very familiar with the LOTR world, admitting to having read the books more than twelve times, and his examples demonstrate that familiarity. This book obviously comes from a deep love for the LOTR, and expresses Smith's desire to integrate the LOTR into his Christian walk. The very last page of the book – right inside the back cover – even has links to reading group discussion guides for the LOTR. This book does not lack enthusiasm or emotion.

Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues is useful for introducing a reader to the LOTR as it is broken into six sections, which correspond to the books, or sections, within each of the three volumes of the LOTR. It is also helpful in providing teaching or sermon illustrations. *Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues* falters, however, by trying to cover too much. There are thirty virtues covered (warning: not all are positive) in less than one hundred and twenty pages. This provides almost four pages to defining each virtue, demonstrating it in one of the LOTR books, and drawing a parallel from the Bible. The reader just starts to settle into a topic when that virtue ends and the book hurries on into the next virtue. With thirty chapters for discussion, it seems too long for group discussion by itself. *Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues* never gets deep into the depiction of the virtues in the Bible or Christian life, limiting its usefulness for a Sunday School or college class. This book is not recommended for academic libraries.

Profit at Any Cost? Why Business Ethics Makes Sense, by Jerry Fleming. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003. 190 pp. \$17.99. ISBN 0-8010-12597.

Reviewed by Donald D. Smeeton, Ph.D., Director Squires Library, Lee University/Church of God Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee.

The news media frequently reports a plethora of corporate scandals that destroy companies, depress markets, discourage investors, and devastate financial stability. Companies that were apparently solid and profitable are revealed to be a con game. Manipulated reporting and inflated earnings eventually burst and revealed the company to be little

more than hot air with everyone pointing a finger at someone else.

Such news stories make the questions raised by Jerry Fleming important and timely. When immorality dominates the marketplace, can a Christian thrive or even survive in the American business environment? Is the person who wants to do the "right thing" in business on a course that leads to disaster? Does the business world operate on different ethical system than that expected of individuals? Is honesty punished in the marketplace?

Fleming contends that, when one considers the long-range implications, a business will be more profitable if it defines and adheres to a core set of moral values. He should know. The author has been a top executive in several major corporations and looks back on his years in business with both pleasure and regret. Adding to his own experience, he builds his case by citing secondary sources and his own research that seems to suggest that ethical companies show greater profits than unethical competitors. Furthermore, Fleming asserts that ethical companies enjoy greater employee satisfaction and greater consumer confidence.

This book targets the Christian business owner or manager. Fleming helps explain the ethical implications that Christians need to consider when making business decisions. His casual style makes the book a quick read. Readers will be bothered by way the author combines Biblical absolutes with an American capitalistic economic system. Even in America, many committed Christians, as well as ethical companies, have suffered great economic loss by advocating the ethical absolutes Fleming promotes.

In spite of these reservations, Fleming challenges Christians in business to make decisions in the context of Christian ethics. It echoes Paul's admonition that believer must not be conformed to culture but rather be transformed by Christ.

John Wesley: A Personal Portrait, by Ralph Waller. NY: Continuum, 2003. 147 pp. \$18.95. ISBN 0-8264-1512-1.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

Waller is a Methodist minister and leading scholar on the Wesleys, and he brings to this biography all of his knowledge without overwhelming the reader with too many facts or theological intricacies. We meet Samuel and Susanna, the parents of John (and Charles), and see the youngster's home life in Epworth (including the famous fire where he was "a brand plucked from the burning" according to Susanna). John enters Christ Church at age seventeen, then becomes a Fellow at Lincoln College at twenty-three. In Waller's narrative, we see John struggle to form the Methodist movement. We learn of his encounters with various Moravians, and his doctrinal differences with them. We gain an understanding of this gentle-hearted man who lost many loves and when he does finally marry, it becomes an unhappy and tempestuous relationship.

Waller explores John's relationship with George Whitefield and their eventual falling out over the doctrine of predestination. We also witness John's unending energy (which lasted nearly to his death at eighty-eight years of age) and dedication to social reform. A brief but readable biography, this book has a place in any library where the Methodist movement is studied.

Honored, by Roberta Kells Dorr. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2003. 94 pp. \$10.99. 0-8007-1817-8.

Reviewed by Melissa Moore, Reference Librarian and Team Leader for Public Services, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee.

Though the characters are biblical, *Honored* is fiction. Dorr tells the story of the Greek physician Luke, who lives in Antioch yet has heard stories of a healer and prophet called Jesus of Nazareth. Luke relates his growing obsession with finding out whether or not these stories—of miraculous healings, of angels and a virgin birth—are true and his journey to Jerusalem to meet with Jesus' mother, Mary, and some others who knew him. He asks many questions of Mary and the others, which reflect his Greek (rather than Jewish) background. At the end of the tale, he is not convinced yet of Jesus' divinity (and indeed, the focus of the novella is to offer eye-witness testimony to some of the miracles related in Luke's gospel), yet he returns to Antioch still turning events over in his mind.

From a literary standpoint, this story is fairly well done. We do see Mary and Luke as real people with questions, pain, and difficulties. Sometimes the dialogue is stilted or contrived. Some librarians (and patrons) may have biblical reservations about a work of this nature. The only thing that gave me pause was in fact the ending; I found myself wondering when Luke would become a believer and when he would write his gospel account. The lack of mention of the death and crucifixion of Christ weakened the book. Dorr includes an afterword explaining her use of tradition as well as Scripture texts. This novella would be considered an optional fiction purchase for those libraries who collect Christian fiction.

Library and Information Center Management (6th ed.), by Robert D. Stueart and Barbara B. Moran. Series: Library and Information Science Text Series. Greenwood Village, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2002. 494 pp. \$50.00. ISBN: 1-56308-986-6; ISBN: 1-56308-990-4 (pbk.)

Reviewed by Jeff Gates, Head Librarian, Faith Baptist Bible College and Theological Seminary, Ankeny, Iowa.

Library and Information Center Management was written to show "the complex and interrelated functions common to all organization and is intended specifically for managers...of services and staff." (Preface, xvii) The reader will find that librarians are not mentioned here. Illustrations and examples of library staff are used, but seem to be

tacked on almost as an afterthought. The authors support their points well, but most of the supporting information is from outside the library field. This is both a strength and weakness. Library managers need to be stimulated by non-librarians who are experts in management. This does, however, make the book harder to apply to libraries.

The authors seem well qualified to write this book. Stueart is an international consultant and professor and dean emeritus of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts. He has received many awards and has served in leadership roles in many professional organizations. Moran has been a professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill since 1981 and served as dean there from 1990-1999. She has authored or co-authored four books and more than fifty articles and teaches primarily in the area of management.

The sixth edition of this book suggests that it is a standard resource. The current edition expands upon the North American emphasis to an international audience. A website was created with this edition that provides further resources and suggestions at <http://www.eLearning@lu.com/management>. The book has 16 chapters divided into the following seven sections: evolving, planning, organizing, human resources, leading, coordinating, and managing in the 21st Century. A reading list is located at the beginning of each section and a bibliography at the end of each chapter. An eighteen page subject index is located at the back of the book.

This book lives up to the reputation of most textbooks by being informative but not easy to read. It is useful to library managers as a check-list and to stimulate their thinking about library management. ♣

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