

Johnstone teaches a course regularly at Fuller Seminary with the title of this book, so he has broad experience of what he is communicating. I learned a lot, and it is a corking good read to boot.

The other volume, *Savior of the Silver Screen*, also arose from the teaching of a seminary course, this time at Saint Meinrad in Indiana. This book does many of the things that the Johnstone book does, but it does it much more explicitly and directly. As the title implies, the three authors focus all their attention on nine movies which have portrayed Jesus of Nazareth, from the 1927 silent epic, *The King of Kings*, to the modern explications of the 1989 *Jesus of Montreal*. The book is designed in such a way that the movies are to be viewed, the discussion of the book is to be read, and leading questions are provided before viewing and after viewing. Each discussion is ordered by three "lenses." These are: (1) the relationship of the movie's portrayal of Jesus and the historical record of the New Testament; (2) how those who created the film "create and communicate the content;" (3) the viewer can "read" the film in many different ways, searching for portrayals of humanity, church, world, as well as Jesus. By employing these lenses, the authors attempt to teach the viewer the sorts of gifts Johnstone suggested they must have if they are going to read a film in all its breadth and to evaluate it effectively for what it can provide. The two books are thus completely complementary. Johnstone moves with rather broader strokes to teach the reader the skills of film evaluation while Stern, et.al. lead us directly to the powerful films about Jesus in order to teach many of the same lessons.

After finishing this second book, I felt much the same as I did after finishing the first: there is a vital set of skills that I need to cultivate if I am to speak to the film-saturated culture I find myself in. Each year, Hollywood churns out more films, and each year, at least in the last few years, more and more citizens of the US, and around the world, flock to see them. For example, it has been estimated that over one billion people have seen the epic movie, *Titanic*, and perhaps more than that have viewed one or more of the *Star Wars* sagas. Reason enough to take films with genuine seriousness. Reason enough to learn how better to view films with a theological lens. More than reasons enough to read these two books.

• John C. Holbert

Human Sciences and Culture

Editor: John S. McClure, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary

Marc P. Lalonde, *Critical Theology and the Challenge of Jürgen Habermas: Toward a Critical Theory of Religious Insight*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1999. \$41.95.

Many contemporary homileticians today eschew the ontological reason used by New Homileticians and make use of pragmatic forms of communicative reason that are in many ways similar to that found in the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas. For instance, whenever homileticians insist that the truth of the Gospel must be determined by placing it within the largest possible critical conversation, including especially the voices of those who have been marginalized by society, they are making use of a consensus-based form of rationality similar to that of Jürgen Habermas and other critical theorists. Homileticians such as Christine Smith (*Preaching As Weeping, Confession, and Resistance*), Kathy Black (*A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disability*), or McClure and Ramsay (*Telling The Truth: Preaching About Sexual and Domestic Violence*) insist that it is especially important to include those whose voices tend to be marginalized in today's society in order that the preacher's decisions about the meaning of the Gospel can be informed by all. This is directly parallel to Habermas' insistence that "truth" must emerge within an "unlimited conversation."

According to Marc P. Lalonde, critical theory is "a broad tradition of social thinking that strives to illuminate the root causes of unwarranted suffering and injustice by producing explanations that self-consciously avoid perpetuating such problems at the level of theory." (2) Critical theory is relentlessly open-ended, considering knowledge to be in a constant state of "self-revision in view of changing historical circumstances and other developments." (2) The problem with critical theory, however, is that, in spite of its open-endedness, it has remained a product of the Enlightenment, in that it has been largely closed to critical insights that might come by way of religious thought. *In Critical Theology and the Challenge of Jürgen Habermas, Toward a Critical Theory of Religious Insight*, Lalonde proposes to examine the "critical theology" that has grown up around Habermas' thought, and to discover how critical theory can be "critically reconfigured with an innovative assist from religious thought." (2)

In order to accomplish this task, Lalonde examines three attempts to supplement or engage critical theory from within Christian theology. The first of these is found in Helmut Peukert's book *Science, Action, and Fundamental Theology*. According to Lalonde, Peukert "asserts that a definite convergence between contemporary theology and communicative action can be established at the level of reason." (44) In essence, Peukert concludes that Habermas' "nonviolent, non-instrumental procedure for justifying and coordinating interpersonal relations based on a rational consensus," (44) is co-terminus with a Christian theology "marked off by the death of the innocent other in history." (45) Peukert, therefore, attempts "to demonstrate that communicative action points beyond itself to a reality that saves the other and the self in death: namely, God." (45) In this way "Peukert is claiming that theology and religious faith have always already been imbedded in the structures of

communicative action because it designates the primary locus for the divine-human encounter in this world." (45) In a *tour de force* Peukert asserts that the resurrection comprises the "normative core of communicative action." (46) Lalonde concludes, however, that Peukert's position constitutes an orthodox Christian "raid" on critical theory. (49) He summarizes Peukert's position as saying, in essence: "...either publicly attest to the fact that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is universally true, or concede the irrationality and critical impotence of communicative action." (48) In other words, Peukert seems more concerned to prove the resurrection than to subject Christian faith to the kind of critical scrutiny necessary to integrate it successfully with critical theory.

After considering the work of Peukert, Lalonde moves on to assess the writings of his mentor at Concordia University in Montreal, Charles Davis. For Davis, critical theology must become a "thoroughly public theology." (4) Theology "cannot take refuge in the authority of revelation or tradition but must submit religious language, thought, and practice to ideology-critique." (4) According to Lalonde, Davis' work hints at three potential contributions of religious faith to critical theory.

First, as absolute transcendence and openness to Reality, faith can be counted as among the sources of human freedom and emancipation. Second, Davis also contends that faith, not without some irony, is the very foundation of the critical activity itself. The transcendence of faith keeps the argument open, resisting any finite explication as complete or final.... Third, critical theology is conceived as the critique of theology. Through a critique of existing theology, the unmasking of its ideological distortions, the possibility of its future development may be revealed. (52)

Lalonde critiques Davis as someone who essentially has a negative (but not nihilistic) understanding of faith that ultimately subsumes any "positive claims about reality, God and humankind; and to ... concern for the religious truth of things." (55) For the most part Davis fails to "recognize the need for critical religious thought to push beyond the negativity of transcendence...." (55) In other words, without some "object of transcendence" (56) how does transcendence avoid becoming simply an iconoclastic posture or a creeping of nihilism? Later in the book, Lalonde returns to this problem, via the work of Emmanuel Levinas, substituting for this missing "object" of transcendence a "relationship with the other." (56)

The third theological model that Lalonde discusses is John Milbank's "radical orthodoxy." According to Lalonde, John Milbank's work attempts to take critical theory through the looking glass into the brave new world of postmodern relativism. Milbank "radicalizes Nietzschean suspicion by positing the idea of a 'meta-suspicion' that throws methodical suspicion into serious doubt." (63) In other words, Milbank points out that suspicion (hermeneutical or ideological) assumes "...a transcendent basis despite the absence of unequivocal proof." (64) Milbank therefore asserts that "to pass critically beyond Nietzsche is to pass into a recognition of the necessity and yet the ungrounded character of some sort of metanarrative, some privileged transcendent factor." (64) The "privileged transcendent factor" that Milbank chooses is the Christian metanarrative found in "the account of history given by Augustine in the *Civitas Dei*." (69) Milbank chooses this metanarrative because it contains a social theory that "does not accredit an original violence to the first moment of existence. Rather, its foundational tropes confer peace, love, and mercy as the root metaphors which ground 'sociality of harmonious difference.'" (66) Lalonde, however, is quick to point out, given the anti-Judaism within this metanarrative, that, at the level of *history*, it is not possible to contend that there is "no original violence" at work in Augustine's metanarrative. Even this metanarrative of peace and harmony, therefore, will depend on the development of some kind of self-critical process or theory in order to

realize its own inherent potential. Lalonde further critiques Milbank's proposal because, although it "assumes the existence of narrative knowledge within each human subject and community . . . there is no reason . . . why we must close ourselves off to the various challenges and insights that can accrue from...a narrative plurality . . ." (73-74) In other words, "if we are to open the doors to the importance and function of narrative knowledge, then let us open them all the way." (74) Otherwise, all we are left with is a form of narrative "triumphalism" that attempts unsuccessfully to devour critical theory. (75)

Having examined the three critical theologies represented by Peukert, Davis, and Milbank, Lalonde returns to Habermas in order to examine the so-called "religious turn" in Habermas' recent thought. In some of his recent writings, Habermas seems to have some interest in the "semantic potential" of religion as somehow "essential to the vitality of human interaction." (86) Because of his modernist commitments, however, Habermas is unable to abandon or supplement his "colossal effort to secure the progressive imposition of a strictly ordered rationality" in favor of "the resuscitation of an ethically declining life-world." (88) For Habermas, the "extraordinary" within religious experience is more a way of coping with "the reflexive and sociocultural fragmentation precipitated by modernity," (88) than a positive vision of other-centered, and other-directed life that could provide ethical criteria for critical theory. For this reason, Habermas cannot tolerate the postmodern philosophers (such as Derrida) who "have allowed the extraordinary to rear its ugly head once again under the banner of 'deconstruction.'" (89) Deconstruction, like the religious "other", threatens to "overthrow the primacy of logic over rhetoric," (89) a primacy fundamental to the modern socio-political arrangement. In spite of this, Lalonde notices within Habermas' version of critical theory a "dearth of positive ethical meaning . . ." and Habermas ". . . seeks to redress this deficiency with a religious assist toward the growth of spontaneous empathy and caring relationships." (102) Lalonde raises the crucial question ". . . does not Habermas' evocation of the religious signal the conscientious exaction of the compassion of critique? In other words, does not the compassion of critique show up here as an awkward appeal to the religious that necessarily conflicts with Habermas' main theoretical suppositions?" (102)

It is here that Lalonde makes excellent use of the work of Richard Kearney to assert that the "postmodern critique of the controlling subject and the concomitant stress on otherness may portend an ethical moment by exploding the narrow, isolated, and impervious model of human being that governs so much of modern thought." (103) Lalonde feels that part of the way through Habermas' impasse is to raise for him the same question that one must also put to Milbank: Must one only think that individuals can "live, converse, and think in one social world at a time(??)" (103) For Lalonde the multi-tasking community of others that constitutes postmodern identity constitutes "a key move toward a critical theory of religious insight." (103) Lalonde argues that it is possible to "design . . . a far more agile model of critical deliberation," one that could incorporate a variety of interpretive horizons that would not have to be bound to either the relentless logic of instrumental reason (Habermas) or narrative (Milbank). (104) Along these lines, he argues for a version of moral-practical reason similar to that put forward by Charles Taylor in *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, in which arguing "best accounts" instead of achieving rational consensus or enforcing narrative recitation is the basic operating agenda. At the heart of this pluralistic, error-reducing "best-accounting" Lalonde argues for a preeminently "other-directed" vision of reason and intelligibility. It is here that Lalonde appeals to the work of Emmanuel Levinas for whom the "laying down by the ego of its sovereignty" and the "ethical inspiration of the self through and for the Other" achieves the status of a normative criterion for the "infinite" critique of all totalities. (109-112)

As I have already suggested, the theologically and ethically "assisted" rationality that Lalonde pursues in this book can already be found in many of the "other-directed"

homiletic theories that have sought to incorporate critical theory informed by Judeo-Christian ethics into homiletics. Approaches such as González and González's *Liberation Preaching: The Pulpit and the Oppressed* or Christine Smith's *Preaching As Weeping, Confession and Resistance* would be closer to the critical theory of the early Habermas and the critical theology of Charles Davis. The post-liberal homiletics of Charles Campbell (*Preaching Jesus: New Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei's Postliberal Theology*) or Mark Ellingsen (*The Integrity of Biblical Narrative: Story in Theology and Proclamation*) would be closer to the work of Helmut Peukert or John Milbank. The testimonial homiletics of Rebecca Chopp (*The Power to Speak: Feminism, Language, God*) or Walter Brueggemann (*Cadences of Home: Preaching Among Exiles*) would move more in the direction charted out by Lalonde by the end of his book. Although one laments the brevity and cost (116 pages for \$41.95!), and exploratory nature of Lalonde's study, this book is important for homiletics. Better than any other book of which I am aware, it traces the development of the ethical and communicative forms of reason that undergird many of the homiletic theories that have been operating for nearly thirty years outside the boundaries of the ontological reason maintained by liberal theology and the New Homiletic.

• John S. McClure

Dissertations

Editor: Michael W. Casey, Pepperdine University

Maryanne Cole. "Voices of Travail: Autobiographical Journey Narratives by English Sectarian Women, 1641-1700." Ph.D., Case Western Reserve University, 2000. DAI-A 61/04. Order # 9968142.

The most prolific of these seventeenth century women writers were the women of the radical religious sects, who began to publish their prophecies and conversion narratives or spiritual autobiographies frequently. The radical sects, marginalized and severely persecuted groups because of their departure from orthodox religious thinking, also allowed women to participate in the public itinerant ministry. Both of these public activities, publishing and preaching, however, were considered defiant of the norms for female behavior by most political and religious leaders, even by the general public. Thus these women suffered religious persecution in the course of their activities that was complicated by their gender. Their journeys were "travails," a word that signified both travel and hardship at once in the seventeenth century, and the published accounts of them were meant to expose this persecution. Traditionally, in women's religious writing the voice of the author has been dismissed by critics primarily because the author herself insists that she is the instrument or vessel of God, performing God's will, without any agency of her own. However, the texts investigated here, journey narratives by sectarian women, directly contradict this critical axiom. The voice of the female author, the presence of a gendered human behind and through the text, is very clear. The strategies these women writers adopted to fashion a sense of authority for themselves as writers are examined. Examples are: presenting herself in the role of martyr, possessing the heroic courage of Christ and the apostles, resisting persecution through polemics as well as in the images of newness. The narratives examined are all by sectarian writers, the Fifth Monarchist Anna Trapnel (1654), and Quakers Katherine Evans and Sarah Cheevers (1662), Barbara Blaugdone (1691), Alice Curwen (1680), Joan Vokins (1691) and Elizabeth Webb (1699).

Roy Otis Collins, III. "Landrum Pinson Leavell II as a Model of Contemporary Topical Preaching: A Proposal." Ph.D., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2000. DAI-A 61/04. Order # 9968209.

The research of topical preaching, the analysis of sermon content and structure, and an investigation of the preaching of Landrum P. Leavell II, suggested the following for contemporary topical preaching: The topical sermon can be biblically based in the origin of the sermon, and the topical sermon should be included in a study of homiletics proper.

Paul Mark Cross. "The Pedagogy of Proclamation: Homiletical Training Among Pastoral Interns in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." D.Min., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2000. DAI-A 61/06. Order # 9978865.

Major findings of this study include: that an internship, while a valuable venue for homiletical pedagogy and enthusiastically embraced by seminarians, has yet to be

thought cannot always express the depths of our awareness of a situation or issue. On the one hand, preachers need to maintain a proper humility before the depths of existence. On the other hand, preachers sometimes use such humility as an excuse for sloppy thinking. Critical reflection in conventional modes often helps us move closer to understanding an issue. Preachers need to press reason as far as we can. While reason may not always tell us everything we need to know, it often enlarges our perception and helps us relate appropriately to what we cannot explain in conventional (or even poetic) language.

• Ronald J. Allen

Human Sciences and Culture

Editor: John S. McClure, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary

James R. Nieman and Thomas G. Rogers, *Preaching to Every Pew: Cross-Cultural Strategies*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001. \$16.00

With the publication of this book, the move toward the hearer in recent homiletics has taken another decisive step forward. After sifting through the results of scores of interviews with cross-cultural preachers taken over a two-year period, Nieman and Rogers are able to distill a coherent pattern of homiletic wisdom for cross-cultural preaching. Although the authors seek to relate their efforts to the "New Homiletic" that emerged in the 1970s, this book actually moves far beyond the humanist understanding of "common human experience" that undergirded the New Homiletic. This book stands more in the tradition of recent books that take into account the fragmentation of experience into a multiform diversity. These include Christine Smith's *Preaching as Weeping, Confession and Resistance*, Kathy Black's *A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disability*, Susan Bond's *Trouble with Jesus: Women, Christology and Preaching*. Making use of a theological ethic of neighborliness, Nieman and Rogers invite preachers to consider cross-cultural preaching within four frames: ethnicity, class, displacement, and beliefs. They ask preachers to consider various manifestations of cultural difference through these cultural frames. Their goal is to equip preachers to understand the cultural diversity within their congregations and to develop preaching strategies that will welcome, embrace, and nurture that diversity. Each chapter deals with one of these frames and includes several "group characteristics" that preachers should study. It also offers a set of practical "preaching strategies" that grow from these characteristics.

First, the frame of *ethnicity*. After defining ethnicity as a richer, less essentialist and more deeply communal concept than race, the authors move on to describe four group characteristics that preachers should take into account within the frame of ethnicity. They are "trusting relationships" as the necessary ground for preaching, "sub-group tensions" within each larger ethnic group, the "core values" within each ethnic group, and "preaching expectations" regarding both the authority of the preacher and scripture that exist within each ethnic group. Although the preaching strategies at the end of this chapter are largely enlightened common sense, there are at least two suggestions that may not readily come to mind: the incorporation of everyday ethnic "sayings" into sermons, and the possibilities for preaching that accrue from paying careful attention to the "artistic treasures" of each ethnic group represented in the congregation.

Second, the frame of class. Every culture gives expression, in a variety of ways, to class, by which these authors mean roughly "status," "station," "rank," or "privilege." Class is not always associated, as it is within many Western capitalist societies, with economic privilege. It may be based more upon family, land ownership, religious affiliation, caste or other social variables. Class, however, does imply the formation of a certain hierarchy of groups within a culture, usually designated by "higher-class" and "lower-class." In general, this chapter does not challenge this form of social ordering, and assumes that "lower"

classes tend to be more “economically destitute” than higher classes. In most Western cultures there is a close association between education and class-status. Within the frame of class, Nieman and Rogers advise preachers to pay attention to four group characteristics. The first is “multiple identity,” the fact that there are subtle diversities of status within congregations and within a single class itself. The second characteristic is “ambiguous authority,” the fact that the authority of the preacher means something different to those of “higher” and “lower” class status. The third group trait is “thought process,” the fact that forms of reasoning are influenced by class. The final group trait is “symbolic burden,” the fact that major symbol systems such as “order,” “health,” and “security” will be understood very differently by those of different class status. The preaching strategies in this chapter move more in the direction of the New Homiletic, looking for ways to reach across class boundaries, in order to bind people together in some form of common humanity, albeit with a “liberative vision.”

Third, the frame of displacement. This chapter proves to be one of the most helpful in the book. Nieman and Rogers point out that within the larger nomadic culture of North America, in which mobility and rapid cultural change are norms, displacement or placelessness is an important cultural frame for understanding nearly every person in the pew. They point out that displacement is actually an “‘anti-culture’ cultural frame, that undermines the very benefits culture can give: ways toward identity, belonging, and action.” (86) Because of this, a new set of feelings has invaded church life, “ranging from mild discomfort to significant fear of perceived danger.” (87) Within this frame, the authors encourage preachers to pay attention to three things. The first is “hidden wounds,” the memories and feelings that people who have been displaced carry about with them all the time. The second is “perilous journeys,” the ways in which a displaced person’s narrative journey is in search of both roots and a destination. The third is “special bonds,” the ways in which displaced people connect generationally, through levels of language proficiency and unique forms of piety. Preaching strategies in this chapter encourage preachers to step into the midst of the life journeys of displaced people, offering rebuilding, redirection, and an enduring sense of spiritual place. In a very helpful section at the end of this chapter, the authors point to the ways in which biblical lament can be used to give voice to a variety of cultural displacements.

Fourth, the frame of beliefs. In this chapter, Nieman and Rogers drift back and forth between inter-religious preaching and preaching within the context of congregations in which other religious influences are present. Preachers are made aware that people in the pews bring with them beliefs that devolve from cultural and regional backgrounds that may range from Buddhism to snake handling. Oddly, this chapter is the first place where the language of “difference” and “dialogue” surfaces. The authors make use of a model of inter-religious dialogue similar to that espoused by Mark S. Heim in his book *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995). Preachers are instructed to pay attention to three significant things within this cultural frame. The first is “ordinary instances,” the ways in which beliefs are woven into the fabric of everyday life. The second is “difficult barriers,” the ways in which beliefs can become barriers to understanding. The third is “welcome openings,” those places where beliefs have parallels within the Christian witness or tradition represented by the preacher. The preaching strategies in this chapter are designed to promote a dynamic form of pluralism in which both the distinctiveness and creative growth of Christian faith can be fostered through inter-religious dialogue.

In the last analysis, *Preaching to Every Pew* leads, as the authors acknowledge, to a collaborative and conversational homiletic, expanding in new ways on collaborative and conversational models already in existence. Used in conjunction with these models, this book becomes a vital, even necessary new resource.

The only issue that must be raised with this book is the notable lack of endnotes that might help the reader track these authors’ obviously well researched ideas. This disturbing characteristic hopefully does not indicate that Fortress Press considers homiletics to be something less than an academically thorough and exacting enterprise. This book is written in a way that any “professional book” reader can readily understand, and endnotes would take nothing away from its readability and usefulness by the average preacher. Cudos to Nieman and Rogers for a well-written, insightful book, that advances our understanding of the way that preaching and diversity can be mutually transforming.

• John S. McClure

Molodovsky with a midrash on Exodus 19:6, "but you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation:"

O God of Mercy
Choose —
another people.
We are tired of death, tired of corpses,
We have no more prayers.
Choose —
another people.
We have run out of blood
For victims,
Our houses have been turned into desert,
The earth lacks space for tombstones,
There are no more lamentations
Nor songs of woe
In the ancient texts.

God of Mercy
Sanctify another land,
Another Sinai.
We have covered every field and stone
With ashes and holiness.
With our crones
With our young
With our infants
We have paid for each letter in your Commandments. . . .
(pp. 167-168)

There are also poems of wit and humor, things that set me laughing aloud such as God's acknowledging in a poem by Alain Bosquet:

'I am not always fond of what I create.
For instance, this man:
I give him two eyes, two arms, two legs . . .
which is very practical . . .
but all of a sudden I'm more stingy:
. . . a single skeleton,
and only one heart —' (p. 47)

There is a similar deflation of humanity's arrogance in Anthony Hecht's "Naming the Animals." Contemplating the procession of "biped and quadruped," Adam looked into the eye of his first cow "And shyly ventured, "Thou shalt be called "Fred"" (p. 61). And Alicia Ostriker undercuts patriarchy in a funny retelling of Abraham's story:

I started by reading the banner headline
The way you read the big print at the eye doctor's.
It said I AM THE LORD GOD
ALMIGHTY AND I LOVE YOU
ESPECIALLY. No problem. Very good. . . .

But when Abraham finds the requirement of circumcision in small print, Abraham says "I'd like to check/Some of this out with my wife," and God responds: "NO WAY. THIS IS JUST BETWEEN US MEN."

There is so much in this book for prayer, for reflection, and for preaching that it is difficult to decide what to quote. But I will end with some lines from Ernesto Cardenal's gloss on psalm 150 which demonstrates a poet expanding our language of praise in light of the technological world that Susan White has examined in her book:

Praise the Lord in the cosmos
His sanctuary
with a radius of a hundred thousand million light years

Praise Him through the stars
and the interstellar spaces . . .
Praise Him through the atoms
and the interatomic voids . . .

Praise Him with violas and cellos
with pianos and pianolas
Praise Him with blues and jazz
and with symphonic orchestras
with Negro spirituals

and with Beethoven's Fifth
with guitars and marimbas
Praise Him with record players
and with magnet tapes
Let everything that breathes praise the Lord
every living cell
Hallelujah

□ Thomas H. Troeger

HUMAN SCIENCES & CULTURE

Editor: John S. McClure, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary

20 Robert Jewett, *Paul the Apostle to America: Cultural Trends and Pauline Scholarship*. Westminster/John Knox, 1994. \$16.99.

Can a preacher overcome the problem of Eurocentrism in Pauline scholarship and faithfully interpret the Apostle Paul in the North American context? Do the manifest problems and latent possibilities within American culture open up new trajectories of meaning within the Pauline epistles? Is there anything new that can be said about Paul? After reading Robert Jewett's engaging and provocative book, *Paul the Apostle to America: Cultural Trends and Pauline Scholarship*, the reader will answer all of these questions with a resounding "yes!"

According to Jewett, Eurocentric interpretations of Paul accentuate the characteristics, interests, and worldview of European society, especially hierarchical pecking orders, aristocratic emulation of "great men," and social pessimism. Reading Paul in the North American context, on the other hand, the interpreter notices in Paul's writing an incipient form of egalitarianism, encouragement for a collegial style of ministry, and the grounds for social optimism.

Within this new framework, Jewett sets out, in the first half of the book, to see what Paul has to say to three cultural trends in the American context: anti-semitism, sexual liberation, and racism. Summarizing the literature to date on the Jew-Gentile issue, Jewett concludes that "to expect the fulfillment of Paul's hope that 'all Israel will be saved' in the sense of accepting Gentile doctrine and self-identity is a misunderstanding of Paul's original vision of a pluralistic world community." (p. 44) On sexual liberation, Jewett notes a shift from "equality in principle" to "consistent equality" in Paul's writings, and finally a regressive rejection of equality in the later Pauline tradition. He invites the preacher to "recover this theological legacy" and to preach and teach "an egalitarian ethic" similar to the one "toward which Paul was moving in the last decade of his life." (p. 58) On racism, Jewett focuses on the transformational rhetoric of Philemon in which Paul "insists that he wants 'nothing by compulsion' from Philemon" . . . but "seeks to persuade an equal brother in Christ to act in a way consistent with the transforming event of Christ." (p. 68) This we may take as our own strategy as we preach and teach about racism.

In the second half of the book, Jewett highlights several new Pauline resources for the American future. First, he observes in the early tene-ment churches and in the Pauline love feasts a mutuality and egalitarian form of church leadership that counteracts the usual view of the early church as defined by hierarchically organized house churches. In the next chapter, "Discharged from the Law of Consumerism," Jewett interprets Paul's conversion "not as the relief of a guilty and introspective conscience" but as a revelation of a new status before God that discharges us from the law of conformity and covetousness—an important message for our consumer society. From there, Jewett moves on to the issue of education and knowledge in the American context. He identifies in Paul's writing a commitment to a communal, pluralistic, and countercultural epistemology that provides an important critique of both essentialist and progressivist educational models. Jewett concludes his book with a chapter on "Paul and the Democratic Prospect." In the wake of the Oklahoma bombing, this chapter is a very valuable contribution. According to Jewett, Paul critiques political zealotism as an uncritical form of cultural conformity. Jewett goes on to celebrate the radical democratization of the Pauline churches as a model for the democratic process.

This book is nicely written and well organized. I used it in a course on "Preaching the New Testament" and it was an odds-on favorite with students. Each chapter presents a useful summary of Pauline scholarship relevant to the various topics discussed. Chapters end with applications to the American cultural scene. Take the time to read this book. You will be richly rewarded.

□ John S. McClure

21 Nibs Stroupe and Inez Fleming, *While We Run This Race: Confronting the Power of Racism in a Southern Church*. Orbis, 1995. \$13.00.

In *While We Run This Race*, Nibs Stroupe, the white pastor at Oakhurst Presbyterian Church in Decatur, Georgia, and Inez Fleming, an African-American elder at the church, confront the "system of race," which, they argue, remains fundamental in U. S. society. In light of heightened racial tensions, recent Supreme Court decisions, and proposed budget cuts, Stroupe and Fleming have written a timely and important volume.

The central thesis of the book is that race is a system for classifying people in order to determine who gains access to power and privilege in the United States. Developed and maintained by the white majority and based on arbitrary and artificial categories ("white" and "black"), the system of race denies people of darker color access to power and opportunity, while simultaneously holding those very people responsible for their oppression.

The first six chapters examine the system of race in the United States, highlighting particularly the developments that have taken place since the end of the Civil Rights Movement. In a suggestive comparison, Stroupe (who wrote most of this section) argues that recent reversals of civil rights gains echo developments during the post-Reconstruction period. History is repeating itself as race again takes priority over equality. Stroupe explores the specific issues of poverty, family values, education, and law enforcement, as well as the more general issues of the "code language" of racism, the claim of "reverse discrimination," and the relationship between intention and results in racial matters. This section concludes with two moving chapters (five and six) in which Fleming and Stroupe each share autobiographical reflections on what it means to be black and white in American culture.

In the final four chapters, readers are challenged to acknowledge the system of race and to take steps to abolish it. Two models are provided to guide reflection and suggest avenues toward healing: a therapeutic model, in which racism is compared to the diseases of addiction and cancer; and a theological model, in which racism is viewed as demonic possession. In addition, the authors suggest several concrete steps for challenging and subverting the system of race. The book concludes with the story of Oakhurst Presbyterian Church, a multicultural congregation. Through the struggles and faithfulness of this church, Stroupe and Fleming offer a prophetic, realistic vision of new possibilities and a genuine, costly word of hope.

Although the writing is rather repetitious in places, such repetition may be necessary for hearts that have been hardened. The truth that Stroupe and Fleming present will be difficult for many people to swallow. But it is truth that needs to be preached, heard, and done.

□ Charles Campbell

Editor: John S. McClure, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary

- 27 Carol J. Adams and Marie M. Fortune (editors), *Violence against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook*. Continuum, 1995. \$29.95.

Americans are increasingly exposed to violence in marriages and families. Pastors and lay persons want to know what the Bible and church have to say about violence against women and children. Those who sit in the pews on Sunday morning need a clear understanding of the ethical and theological dimensions of sexual, psychological and social violence. They are unlikely to achieve that understanding as a community of believers, if the topic is not addressed effectively from the pulpit.

Domestic violence and child abuse are difficult subjects, especially since we now know that it is likely that there are survivors and perpetrators in the congregation. It is clear, however, that when violence is addressed responsibly in the pulpit, individuals and congregations feel they are given permission and an opportunity to speak about it themselves. This in turn can encourage many to seek help, or to discover what they can do to make a difference in the lives of those who have suffered violence. It can also begin the difficult task of confronting abusers and bringing them to accountability.

If I were to recommend one resource on violence to women and children to have on the preacher's or homiletician's bookshelf, it would certainly be this "theological sourcebook" edited by Marie M. Fortune and Carol J. Adams. Directly or indirectly, this book provides answers to many of the questions about domestic violence and child abuse that preachers are likely to ask: What are the distinct issues that violence raises for our society and our churches that need to be engaged from the pulpit? What theological resources and perspectives are most helpful to preachers? What biblical texts should be addressed, and how can they be approached? What do we need to know about perpetrators? What do we need to know about victims and survivors? How do we preach so that it enhances the ministry of pastoral care to victims of abuse or violence?

Since there are so many essays in the volume, it is difficult to provide a summary. Some of the essays that are likely to provide help to preachers and homileticians include: "Reading Adam and Eve: Re-Visions of the Myth of Woman's Subordination to Man" by Charles Ess; "Structures of Forgiveness in the New Testament" by Frederick W. Keene; "The Transformation of Suffering: A Biblical and Theological Perspective" by Marie M. Fortune; "Born Again, Free from Sin?: Sexual Violence in Evangelical Communities" by Andy Smith; "Reorganizing

Victimization; The Intersection between Liturgy and Domestic Violence" by Marjorie Procter-Smith; "Saving the Family: When is the Covenant Broken?" by Mitzi N. Eilts; and "Calling to Accountability: The Church's Response to Abusers" by Marie M. Fortune and James Poling.

This book represents many years of research, teaching, training, and soul-searching around a topic that is crucial to the lives of countless persons in the pews on Sunday morning and beyond the walls of the church. I applaud the editors and writers for this rich and timely resource.

□ John S. McClure

- 28 Jung Young Lee, *Marginality: The Key To Multicultural Theology*. Fortress, 1995. \$16.00.

When a book arises that links our pluralistic, multicultural world with theology, many in religious circles stand up and take notice. Such is the contribution by the late Jung Young Lee, former Professor of Systematic Theology at the Theological School, Drew University.

Lee writes his theology from the social perspective of marginality. His autobiographical perspective is rooted in Northeast Asian culture and his theological training in the United States. He speaks as an immigrant and as one who is a visible minority. When he refers to "Asian-American," he is specifically designating Northeast Asian-Americans, mainly Chinese-Americans, Korean-Americans, and Japanese-Americans.

The first chapter establishes Lee's autobiographical view of contextual theology. In good Asian form the "I am" is transformed to "we are" in a shared story about life in America. Lee exposes the suffering, rejection, and discrimination experienced by each of three groups, the Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese.

Chapters 2 and 3 explore the meaning of marginality. The classic and negative understanding of marginality is "in-between." One is between two worlds, two cultures. The contemporary and positive perspective on marginality is "in-both." A person can benefit from having two cultures. Lee propounds a transcending "holistic" dimension, "in-beyond." This affirms both views simultaneously. He states, "To transcend or to live in-beyond does not mean to be free of two different worlds in which a person exists, but to live in both of them without being bound by either of them." (p. 63) With this affirmation, the new marginal person finds freedom and is a reconciler and a wounded healer. Lee's holistic marginal approach serves as a hermeneutic paradigm and foundation for the substance of the Christian faith.

The prime example of the new marginality is the hyphenated person, Jesus-Christ (chapter 4). According to Lee, Jesus-Christ experienced divine marginalization in the incarnation and in episodes throughout his life on earth. As followers of Jesus-Christ, Christians are the new marginal people of God (chapter 5). He traces biblical history from this marginal perspective.

- 14 Richard A. Jensen, *The Crucified Ruler: Sermons for Lent and Easter*, Cycle B, Gospel Texts. C.S.S., 1987. \$7.25.

For better or worse, books of brief, "model" lectionary sermons are becoming more and more popular. For those who preach the lectionary week after week, and who are committed to preaching 12-14 minute sermons, this kind of resource can be a real help. This seems to be the audience Jensen has in mind for this book of sermons.

My reading of these sermons found them to be very inconsistent in quality. Jensen's simple, face-value interpretation of each biblical text is sometimes refreshing and insightful. Often, however, I found myself wishing that he would let the redactional and formal qualities of the text speak more loudly. He tends to skim the surface of the text and preach the obvious. He also has a tendency to take an idea on the surface of the text and force it to match an idea he wants to preach.

An ordained Lutheran (former ALC clergyman) and radio preacher for Lutheran Vespers, Jensen is an evangelist at heart. Throughout these sermons he returns to the recurring theme (perhaps adapted from another Lutheran, Gustaf Aulen) of Christ the victor over the pervasive power of sin, evil, and death. The significance of the atoning work of Christ is almost invariably focused upon the need in each individual for salvation and a sense of personal eschatology.

Jensen has a knack for imaginatively recreating the biblical narrative in his preaching. At times, however, this becomes a time-consuming retelling of the text. At other times this habit leads Jensen into eisegetical psychologizing ("You can be sure that Peter was really tickled by his own confession" . . . or . . . "Peter must have thought to himself 'You are the Messiah, I can hardly wait to see all the marvelous things you are going to do for me.'").

Jensen has a penchant for cliché, ("Practice makes perfect," "The disciples, if they had their wits about them . . .," "He was always putting his foot in his mouth," etc.). He uses very few images, metaphors, or similes. He does use many narrative illustrations, most of which are well written, integral to his message, and easily adaptable.

Although Jensen uses the Lutheran Lectionary, he provides handy references to the Roman Catholic Lectionary and the Common Lectionary. This is helpful for those from other lectionary-using denominations who want to make use of his material.

Read as a whole, these sermons provide a theologically consistent if sometimes homiletically meagre treatment of the Lenten lections for Cycle B. The sermons are short in length and could be read easily at a single sitting (that is, if you are not too distracted by the numerous typos and editorial errors). If you are willing to look carefully and critically, this book could provide several "sparks" to keep the preaching fires of Lent and Easter burning. JSM

- 15 *Servant of the Word: Selected Sermons of Friedrich Schleiermacher*. Translated with an Introduction by Dawn De Vries. Fortress, 1987. \$14.95.

Friedrich Schleiermacher, one of the most important Protestant theologians of modern times, is best known to English readers for his path-breaking work, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, and his scholarly dogmatics, *The Christian Faith*. Important as these works are, however, there is a real sense in which they amount to the tip of an iceberg—an iceberg which English readers are only now beginning to see thanks to a number of recent translations. Schleiermacher was remarkably versatile: He was a classics scholar, a philosopher, a philologist, a theologian, a theological ethicist, a political commentator, a church administrator, and more.

As the present volume points out, and as is indicated too by the selections from his lectures on practical theology published in this series, Schleiermacher was more than an academic. He was a Reformed minister engaged in regular preaching, teaching, and pastoral care for more than forty years. An incomplete set of his sermons fills ten volumes in his collected works! As Dawn De Vries notes, "Schleiermacher saw himself essentially as a preacher. From 1790 to 1834 he occupied the pulpit almost weekly. . . . His sheer prolificacy in this area is the strongest argument for its importance to him" (p. 13).

The 15 sermons presented here are arranged topically under the rubrics of "The Redeemer," "The Church and the Word," and "The Christian Life." The result is a modest compendium that enriches one's understanding of Schleiermacher's theology at the same time that it displays his pastoral sensitivities and homiletical style. For example, in a sermon entitled "Christ the Liberator," one finds a straightforward rendering of grace and law as well as a sharp insistence that Christ's work of redemption cannot be reduced to his teaching and example. A sermon titled "Teaching the Reformation Faith to Our Children" offers an uncluttered interpretation of the free use of scripture and of righteousness by faith as basic Reformation themes, while it also affords a glimpse of the pastor concerned about mistaken practices in Christian education. "On Christian Marriage" shows clearly that Schleiermacher is a 19th century European, yet also that he is concerned for an equality of mutual community and service. The "Sermon at Nathanael's Grave," translated by Albert Blackwell and previously published in the *Journal of Religion*, is Schleiermacher's moving homily at the gravesite of his nine-year-old son. It presents a profound acknowledgment of personal tragedy in the light of an enduring faith, and it powerfully exhibits Schleiermacher's conviction that, in religious communication, one speaks through and from one's heart and experience. A final sermon states that the Christian community is founded and preserved through the Redeemer's communicating, prevention, and serving love — a love which brings people into mutual and reciprocal relationship.

De Vries' fine introduction sets a context for the sermons by discussing Schleiermacher's extemporaneous style, his understanding of the role of the preacher and of the nature of religious discourse, the impact of his preaching and its relationship to his theology, and the rationale behind