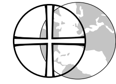
Reviews



THE FOURTH GOSPEL IN FOUR DIMENSIONS: JUDAISM AND JESUS, THE GOSPELS AND SCRIPTURE, by D. Moody Smith. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2008. Pp. xvi + 286. $29.95 (paper).

Moody Smith has been a significant voice in Johannine studies for the past half century. This collection of sixteen essays provides a helpful overview of some of the questions that have dominated the study of John's Gospel in recent decades.

The three essays in Part 1 focus on "John and Judaism," an issue that has had a central place in treatments of the Fourth Gospel since the 1960s. Prior to that time, many focused on John's relationship to the Hellenistic world. For C. H. Dodd, the prominence of the *logos* in its opening line seemed to invite connections with the cultured world of philosophy. Rudolf Bultmann made connections with Hellenism by reading the Fourth Gospel as a critical engagement with Gnostic thought. Perspectives began to change, in part through the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were Jewish texts that depicted the conflict between light and darkness as vividly as John's Gospel. The historical work of Raymond E. Brown, J. Louis Martyn, and others also gave priority to the controversy with Judaism that dominates many sections of the gospel. Many came to see John as a gospel that was principally shaped by questions arising from Judaism.

This, in turn, raised new questions about the gospel's relationship to its Jewish heritage. Sharp polemics in the narrative cast Jesus' Jewish opponents in a highly negative light. They are often called "the Jews," as if clearly separate from the followers of Jesus, and they are identified with "the world" that is alienated from God. Yet the Fourth Gospel also is deeply connected with Jewish life. It appeals to Old Testament scripture in the assumption that it is authoritative, and the narrative of Jesus' public ministry works with the major themes of Jewish festivals. Smith's judgment on this complex issue is well taken. He finds that the approach of the Fourth Evangelist is "not to destroy or negate Judaism, but to remain in dialogue with it" (25).

The six essays in Part 2 consider "John and the Historical Jesus." Many scholars attempting to reconstruct the earliest traditions about Jesus have focused on the parables and pithy sayings that appear in the Synoptic Gospels, assuming that the long christological discourses in John's Gospel are the product of the later church. Smith helpfully revisits the question of how one might assess the historical material in the gospels. He assumes—rightly, in my judgment—that John is an independent witness to the Jesus tradition rather than a text derived from the Synoptic Gospels. He also notes that at points John seems to have the best claim to preserve historical tradition. For example, it seems more plausible that Jesus had a ministry lasting nearly three years, as John tells it, than a ministry that was perhaps only a year long, as one might infer from Mark. Similarly, it seems more likely that Jesus was crucified on the day before the Passover meal, following John's chronology, than it does to think that Jesus was arrested on the night the Passover was eaten, as in the Synoptics. Conversely, the Synoptic focus on the kingdom of God seems to preserve a major theme of Jesus'

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preaching that is less obvious in the elevated christological discourses of John's Gospel.

This leads to Part 3, which consists of four essays focusing on "John among the Gospels." The last of these identifies the problem of faith and history as one that is common to both John and the Synoptics and peculiar to neither. The Fourth Evangelist makes clear that he is preserving the story of Jesus and yet interpreting it from a post-resurrection perspective (e.g., John 2:22; 12:16). But Smith also notes that Mark's Gospel—which sets the basic Synoptic framework for Jesus' ministry—does something similar. Remembering and interpreting the story of Jesus go together in all the gospels.

Finally, Part 4 turns to the question of John's role as Scripture and its place within the canon. College and seminary courses in New Testament regularly stress the importance of letting each gospel have its own voice. Smith agrees that this is important—and I would agree—but he also notes that including texts composed by various authors in the same collection allows each voice to balance the others. John's high Christology has provided a lens through which much of the New Testament is read. Yet if taken in isolation, the trajectory set by the Gospel's soaring prologue and its emphasis on things "above" could lead to a portrait of Jesus in which the humanity of Jesus is diminished. A gospel like Matthew, which begins with Jesus' genealogy, helps to root the story in Israel's tradition and this world.

When reading these essays, one is reintroduced to the contributions made to Johannine scholarship by the generations that preceded and followed World War II, as well as by those like Smith, who built on those earlier efforts and set new directions in the decades that followed. The shape of Johannine studies continues to change as the literary form of the Gospel, its place in the Roman imperial world, and its theology and ethics increasingly attract attention. Yet the questions Smith raises and explores remain important for the study of this gospel. They invite us to keep the conversations about the meaning of John's text as rich and multifaceted as the Gospel itself.

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FRACTURE: THE CROSS AS IRRECONCILABLE IN THE LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT OF THE BIBLICAL WRITERS, by Roy A. Harrisville. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006. Pp. 298. $20.00 (paper).

For many readers, as for this reader, it will be impossible to engage the treasures of this book objectively or dispassionately. Emotions and appreciation lie too close to the surface. I still recall vividly my intense and transforming experience as a young seminarian of Professor Roy Harrisville's lectures on the Gospel of Mark and its central witness to the death of Jesus. In that I join thousands of students, pastors, and laypersons who have sat at the feet of a learned, passionate, and dear professor as we were initiated through lecture and sermon (one could never quite decide which) into the persuasive power of the gospel.

This book offers another opportunity to encounter and reflect on what Harrisville argues to be the creative center of the New Testament witness—the cross and death of Jesus. Though to some the particular framing of the discussion under the title catchword of "fracture" may be somewhat novel, readers familiar with Harrisville's lectures or writings will have heard this word before, and will recognize in its use throughout this volume recollections of a theme that has encompassed his lengthy and prolific career.

Harrisville's doctoral dissertation on *The Concept of Newness in the New Testament* explored the creative power of the witness to the gospel in the writings of Paul. That interest and power still characterizes, as here, his reflection and writing in retirement on the New Testament witness. Along with that familiar theme,

those familiar with Harrisville's lectures and writing will meet here, again and again, names of his special companions on the journey of interpretive reflection: names like F. C. Bauer, Rudolf Bultmann, and Ernst Käsemann.

In that sense, though not advertised explicitly in the title, this is a work of New Testament theology. At this point the subtitle is partially misleading: *The Cross as Irreconcilable in the Language and Thought of the Biblical Writers.* The focus is essentially only on the New Testament and its witness to the cross and death of Jesus, but the title is not ambiguous in its framing of the argument. Harrisville's proposal is clear in the way it addresses the familiar New Testament theology question of "continuity" and "discontinuity." When it comes to the central place of the cross of Jesus in the New Testament witness, the language of "fracture" is intentionally chosen to come down on the side of discontinuity. In the opening line of his preface, Harrisville "assumes that a discontinuity exists between the New Testament message and its religious environment." He goes on immediately to state his thesis that this discontinuity "is created by the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, who was witnessed to in the New Testament as risen and exalted Lord" (viii).

This theme of "continuity" and "discontinuity" establishes the rubric for Harrisville's investigation of the death of Jesus. The introductory chapter provides a preliminary overview of the way the death of Jesus initiates throughout the New Testament a discontinuity of language and thought forms with its religious and conceptual past, whether in Judaism or in the Hellenistic context. The subsequent chapters, each adopting the rubric of "use" and "fracture," explore in more depth the treatment of Jesus' death in the writings of Paul; in the gospels Mark, Matthew, and Luke; in the combined Synoptic witness; in John; in the Letter to the Hebrews; and in the First Epistle of Peter. Under the rubric of "use," each chapter first rehearses the traditional resources of religion, experience, or culture—for example, wisdom, sacrifice, law, apocalyptic, stoicism, gnosis, or servant motif—that may have shaped the perspective of the writer in question. Under the rubric of "fracture," Harrisville then shows the way in which the event of the cross and death of Jesus "fractures" that tradition, eventuating in a new and radical experience, language, and message. The overall argument is simple and clear in its proposal, compelling in its attention to detail and the marshalling of the evidence in support of its thesis.

Years ago, Harvard professor Amos Wilder, in his *Early Christian Rhetoric: The Language of the Gospel*, argued that the event of Jesus of Nazareth was a life-changing and language-shaping experience that called forth a new form of utterance in the proclamation of the dynamic word of the gospel. Harrisville joins in that conviction in his argument that Jesus' death in particular, and the corresponding affirmation and proclamation of a crucified Messiah, created a new world that brought with it the new paradigms of experience and life that form the New Testament witness to the gospel. Harrisville repeatedly uses the language of "anomaly" to describe this newness. He writes:

> For the authors of the New Testament, the death of Jesus of Nazareth was the "anomaly" that threatened allegiance to whatever language- and thought-forms they may have inherited, and that required a new model, or "paradigm," by which to see themselves, to see others, and to see God. (271)

In its character as "anomaly," for Harrisville, the death of Jesus in the New Testament thwarts every attempt to assimilate it or adsorb it into a systematic scheme (39). There is no uniform terminology or "orthodox" view for speaking about Jesus' death in the New Testament. Still, he argues, there is a convergence in the New Testament witness to the power of this event to transform the hearer.

In this volume, "fracture" and "conver-

sion" stand close to one another. The consistent conviction is that, in the event of the cross, experience and language come together in the persuasive power of the gospel to effect newness and change, a newness to which only the language of "conversion" seems appropriate (15). Not surprisingly, the language of "new creation" in Gal 6:14–15 and 2 Cor 5:17 finds frequent reference in these pages.

This book will provide rewarding reading on a number of counts. For Professor Harrisville's former students it will offer a compelling reminder of the way his witness to the cross and death of Jesus has centered his interpretation of the New Testament and empowered his dynamic witness to the gospel in his lectures and preaching. As a proposal of New Testament theology, it takes up and argues persuasively a particular stance on the question of continuity and discontinuity, coming down on the side of a "new creation" seen in the "fracture" occasioned by the event of the cross. Finally, Harrisville's knowledge of the history of New Testament interpretation is vast. In the attention to detail in each of its chapters, this book offers a rich resource for reading the New Testament in conversation with its contemporary context and in conversation with a rich host of more recent interpreters.

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CALL AND CONSEQUENCES: A WOMANIST READING OF MARK, by Raquel Annette St. Clair. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008. Pp. 224. $23.00 (paper).

Raquel St. Clair's biblical work arises out of her ministry concerns as an African American. A while back, she found herself in a congregation whose white pastor had removed all language of blood and the cross from the liturgy. While St. Clair appreciated that pastor's desire to disentangle violence from sacredness, she knew that Jesus' cross has stood as a sign of God's presence with her community in their suffering. This experience led her to reflect on the meaning of the cross in the life of Jesus and those who follow him.

Call and Consequences focuses on the passion prediction in Mark 8:31 and what it means when Jesus says of his suffering that "it is necessary." St. Clair argues that many Markan scholars have interpreted the Greek *dei* in terms of divine necessity. The word is understood so that "suffering becomes the purpose or goal rather than the consequences of discipleship in a hostile world" (48). Another set of scholars similarly wed suffering and discipleship by so focusing on the Mark 8–10 discourse on necessary suffering that this unit is divorced from Jesus' ministry, which has preceded it. Still others suggest that the narrator implies divine necessity, saying that the suffering fulfills prophecy. All of these interpretive moves negatively affect African American women, whom St. Clair insists are not called to suffer but rather to faithful caring: "the interpretations of Markan scholars do not fully attend to womanist concerns" (68).

St. Clair then uplifts a smaller group of scholars who move in a helpful direction. The political reading of Ched Myers, the narrative readings of Mary Ann Tolbert and Don Juel, as well as Brian Blunt's sociolinguistic reading all point to fruitful directions for womanists. They understand Jesus' agony as a *consequence* of his faithfulness rather than as *an essential condition* of it. The actions and decisions of the power-laden characters in Mark's Gospel explain Jesus' death. Jesus dies because of the ministry for life he embodies. Inevitably the powerful violently resist this way of being in the world. But their resistance is not because of divine necessity. Historical or political motivations rather than metaphysical ones determine his death.

St. Clair explains the reason for the agony that Jesus undergoes as she correlates the social dynamics of honor and shame in Jesus'

world with those in her own contemporary context. In both worlds, honor is seen as a limited commodity controlled by the honorable. The elite inevitably challenge those who seek to redistribute honor. They attack Jesus for doing precisely that. The social context had allowed a limited amount of honor for those at the bottom of society: they would be honored for staying in their place (107). But Jesus does not keep people in their places. His ministry provides unlimited access to honor for those largely denied it by social custom and political expediency. For this reason, the leaders inevitably must destroy him, not only by taking life from him, but by dis-honoring him in the process.

St. Clair uses the distinction between pain and suffering to make her case. Following womanist theorists, she defines pain as agony that is named, claimed, and undergone for the purpose of transformation (28). Suffering, she continues, is agony that is unnamed and repeatedly undergone with no movement forward. Within this paradigm, Jesus is one who knows pain in his redemptive resistance, not one who suffers as a victim. Thus the call to take up the cross is the call to follow in the way of Jesus' ministry shown in the first eight chapters of Mark. The primary point of identification with Jesus will be in relieving the agony of others whether that leads to reliving pain or not. Seek the ministry and know that the violence may come unbidden. She writes, "We are called to partner with Jesus in service, not pain. Pain is a consequence of discipleship. It is not a lifestyle, a life sentence, or a life goal. Pain only signals the level of opposition to ministry" (166). This distinction has practical implications. African American women should not patiently bear the suffering inflicted upon them by a racist, sexist, and classist system. Domestic violence and inferior housing "are not crosses for us to bear. They are challenges that we must overcome." (167)

St. Clair's argument is compelling. By engaging with utter seriousness the realities of her own parish and the details of the Gospel of Mark she makes fundamental distinctions that help us disentangle the will of God from human travesties. Her book embodies the kind of ministry that she calls forth, using her sophisticated knowledge of biblical studies to change the world.

Her work is indicative of the transformation that has been wrought in biblical scholarship during the last half century. In fact, the publication dates of interpretations she notes that focused on divine necessity primarily are from the '60s to the '80s. The interpretations that she sees as friendly to her proposal are from the very late '80s to the turn of the century. At the hinge between these two approaches, the first great womanist publications appeared. Those early womanists wrote their resistance, effectively opening up a space where their voices could be attended to and honored so that even scholarship itself could be transformed.

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THE CONSOLATIONS OF THEOLOGY, edited by Brian S. Rosner. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008. Pp. 159. $14.93 (paper).

Brian S. Rosner, senior lecturer in New Testament and ethics at Moore Theology College (Sydney, Australia), has presented an accessible and heartfelt piece in *The Consolations of Theology*. The book, an edited work, is compiled of chapters born from a conference at which Rosner and his colleagues sought to explore the relevance and meaning of theology for our time. Following Alain de Botton's *Consolations of Philosophy*, in which de Botton sketches out the colorful characters of philosophy to show the significance of their systems for real life, this handful of Australian scholars set out to do the same with theology.

Blending biography, anecdotal contextual analysis, and theological reflection, they offer

the reader a way of studying some of the tradition's greatest thinkers in view of human suffering, brokenness, and impossibility. The genius of the chapters rests in each author's ability to use the very suffering and struggle of the thinker they are examining to show the importance of his thought for our own suffering and struggle. Therefore, in the end, they are able to show the significance of theology in consoling our broken hearts. Most chapters begin in our time, introducing us to the topic of discussion through, for instance, Zidane's head-butt in the World Cup, the movie *The Simple Plan*, or examples of echoes of despair in pop music. From these introductions we are taken into the biographies of thinkers such as Augustine and Luther that articulate not only how they personally confronted obsession or despair, but how their very theological systems or assertions address these issues.

The book, relatively short, offers the reader six chapters on six significant figures of theology. Richard Gibson presents the first chapter, on the early church apologist Lactantius. Gibson uses Lactantius to lead the reader into contemplation about anger in relation to God. In light of the escalation of road rage and anger management, Gibson believes Lactantius's thought helps us not to swallow our anger but understand it in relation to God.

From the relatively unknown Lactantius, the book enters the land of the more familiar, with a chapter on obsession and Augustine. Here Andrew Cameron discusses Augustine's position on passion, which can so easily turn to obsession (such as with shopaholics, alcoholics, or stalkers). Chapter three, perhaps the best chapter in the work, turns to Luther and his battles with despair. Here Mark Thompson richly articulates how deeply Luther's own experience of *Anfechtungen* becomes not only the engine for his theological breakthrough, but the continued fuel for theological construction. Thompson shows movingly how deeply Luther believed that the presence of God was encountered through despair. While carefully avoiding an avalanche of fatalism that can so easily occur when pushing Luther beyond his biblical commitments, Thompson shows how despair is present within our world and how Luther's perspective may be a great comfort, and paradoxically empowering.

Following this strongest chapter of the book are the two weakest. Peter Bolt's chapter on Kierkegaard and anxiety provides some nice scholarly overviews but lacks the pathos and contextual connections of the chapters before it. Brian Rosner's chapter on Bonhoeffer and disappointment, while offering an interesting analysis of *Letters and Papers from Prison*, in the end seems to make Bonhoeffer into an exemplar without flaws, something the chapters on Lactantius, Augustine, Luther, and even Kierkegaard did not do.

The work concludes with a chapter on C. S. Lewis and pain by Robert Banks. The chapter is essentially an analysis of *The Problem of Pain* and *A Grief Observed*, the latter of which is an autobiographical piece written as Lewis dealt with the death of his beloved wife, Joy. This chapter is interesting for its well-presented content and its description of Lewis's thought in relation to our own experiences of pain, but the intrigue of the chapter is even heightened in light of the situation of its author. While only seeing one brief reference to it in the chapter, the reader should know (and when knowing, can feel) that Banks himself had not too long ago lost his beloved wife. This final chapter then succeeds beautifully in the hope of the work, to show that theology itself can be a great consolation to our weary souls, and to reveal to the reader that there have been many others holding a significant place in our tradition who have themselves needed such consolation.

The Consolations of Theology is not a deep piece of systematic or constructive theology; it offers no new direction in theological construction. But this is not its objective, which is to show the significance of theology and thinking theologically for our existential journeys. Therefore, for pastors and students wanting an

introduction to or review of these thinkers and their significance for ministry, this book is well worth its price.

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MARTIN LUTHER AND BUDDHISM: AESTHETICS OF SUFFERING, by Paul Chung. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2008. Pp. 446 + xxv. $52.00 (paper).

In this book, Paul Chung not only introduces Luther's theology and aspects of Buddhism, but he also models how one might engage the two in a critical and creative dialogue. Although wide-ranging in scope, the book presents a highly insightful reading of Luther in light of Buddhism and charts a bold new area for theological work as a result. I strongly recommend it to theologians, pastors, and anyone interested in serious theological reflection.

Chung's motivation for writing the book arises out of his own experience of *dukkha* (suffering) as a pastor of a Korean American Lutheran Church in Orinda, California. There, he found himself involved in a "struggle with and compassion for the community of the different, innocent, and suffering" (xix) that encouraged him to pay attention to the "aesthetics of the *theologia crucis* as a way of understanding, recognizing, and affirming God's strange but mysterious voice of beauty coming from people of other faiths" (xix). The result is this book: a "hermeneutical theology of interfaith dialogue" that engages suffering by "interpreting and actualizing Luther's theology in its encounter with (Mahayana) Buddhist wisdom" (399). In sum, Chung seeks to relate Luther's emphasis on God's embrace of Christ's suffering on the cross with the Buddhist premise—the basis for its wisdom and ethical action—that everything and everybody is in *dukkha*.

In addition to engaging in Buddhist-

Christian dialogue, the book also provides a thoroughgoing reading of Luther's theology, one that situates his theology of the cross within a Trinitarian context and in relation to its "universal and cosmic" dimensions. Chung not only provides an overview of Luther's life—arguing that his thought cannot be divorced from his spiritual and social biography—but also manages to discuss the main themes in Luther's theology in a fresh reading that remains faithful to the main contours of Luther's work. These themes include justification, the theology of the cross (of which, Chung argues, the theology of the resurrection is an intrinsic component), a christocentric reading of the Bible, word and sacraments, the priesthood of believers, the two kingdoms, and a theology of creation.

From this standpoint, Chung engages the wisdom of Buddhism spirituality, which has its classic locus in the Four Noble Truths: (1) life is full of suffering (*dukkha*); (2) suffering is caused by the desires of the senses; (3) suffering ends with the cessation of these desires, which means attaining *Nirvana*; and (4) the path to nirvanic liberation is the Eightfold Path (right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditation).

As noted, the main point for conversation in this dialogue is the link between Luther's *theologia crucis* and a Buddhist understanding of *dukkha*. Presupposing that God's suffering for others, what God has done in Jesus Christ, is an integral part of Godself as absolute love and freedom, Chung relates Luther's understanding of the divinity and humanity of Christ—as seen from the standpoint of the *theologia crucis*—to the Buddhist notion of cosmic suffering. From this standpoint, he brings a number of other points of similarities and differences to the fore. He relates God's mysterious action of self-emptying in Jesus Christ—for everyone and everything—to the Buddhist notion of *Sunyata* (emptiness), which is central to the Buddhist path of liberation from suffering. *Sunyata*, he argues, has particular relevance for Christian-Buddhist dialogue if interpreted as a "boundless openness" and not simply as a negation of all experience. He observes that Luther's understanding of the *deus absconditus* (hidden God) and *deus revelatus* (revealed God)—as related to a *theologia crucis*—has parallels with Buddhist conceptions of non-duality ("not one, not two"). He relates Luther's "wonderful exchange," where Christ takes our sinful selves in exchange for his life, to Buddhist conceptions of how one can liberate oneself from the desiring, empirical ego by uniting with "cosmic Buddhahood." He notes that Luther's theology converges at points with the soteriology of Shinran Buddhism, which seems to stress the universal grace of a power other than one's own spiritual striving. Finally, he suggests that—when seen from the standpoint of the theology of the cross—Luther's theology of creation, eucharistic theology, and understanding of the universal and cosmic dimensions of Christ's rule provide a fruitful entry point for dialogue with Buddhist conceptions of universal compassion.

Chung's primary concern, in this fusion of horizons between Luther's theology of the cross and Buddhism, is to bring to the fore the experience of "God's strange beauty" in *dukkha* in Jesus Christ. Throughout, his concerns are practical—seeking to establish points of contact between Christian and Buddhist approaches to compassion, especially for those who are poor and suffer from injustice. In this, he stands in the tradition of Korean *minjung* liberation theology. *Minjung* is a combination of the two Chinese characters *min* and *jung*. *Min* may be translated as "people" and *jung* as "the mass." Thus, *minjung* literally means "the mass of the people," or more simply "mass" or "the people." The confession of Jesus as the crucified and risen Lord, he argues, leads to a humble attitude and radical openness towards God's eschatological reign in the world. Faith in the God of Jesus Christ by

the power of the Spirit leads us to attend to God's radical grace in Christ *extra nos* (outside of us) and the universal dimensions of the Spirit's work in favor of all people. From that standpoint, we can discern, quoting Luther, "traces of divinity" in other religions—in this case Buddhism—and how those traces lead us to a more fruitful witness to Gods' eschatological compassion and justice for all people.

The book is fascinating, although difficult to follow at points, since it tends to go off in so many different directions. Its readings of both Buddhism and Luther are so wide-ranging that the focus of its conversations tends to be lost at times. I would have preferred a more focused conversation that integrates the various strands more carefully. That criticism notwithstanding, I would—along with Jürgen Moltmann, who wrote the foreword for the book—encourage "anyone interested in theology in Europe, America, and Asia to urgently and repeatedly read it" (ix). Not only does Chung radicalize what it means to be a theologian of the cross, but he also exalts to a new level "the dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism, and also between Asia and the West" (ix).

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THE WESTMINSTER HANDBOOK TO WOMEN IN AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY, edited by Susan Hill Lindley and Eleanor J. Stebner. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008. Pp. 249. $29.95

This book will be welcomed by everyone who wants to know more about women as religious leaders. From Anne Hutchinson to Tammy Faye Bakker, the women in these pages tell the history and the breadth of female religious leadership over several centuries. In these pages one can find the stories of mission-

aries and educators, teachers, doctors and medicine women, philanthropists, social workers, artists and hymn writers. Scholars and ministers are represented, but the creators of the book put their emphasis on women who were directly involved as leaders in faith communities. Entries are concise but thorough, expertly recording the biography, contributions, and significance of each leader. Cross references to other articles are given in the text, though somewhat sparsely, with additional sources listed at the end of each entry.

The originators of the *Westminster Handbook to Women in American Religious History* chose not to duplicate areas covered in other works. There are articles on a few women's organizations, such as the Muslim Women's League, or the Sisters of Charity. But there are, intentionally, no articles about particular denominations, movements, or vocations. Thus, one must come to this book already knowing the names of women to be looked up, or be willing to browse just for the fun of it. For the curious browser, this book is a treasure trove. The range of activities of women is fascinating, and the ecumenical and interreligious range is refreshing.

The Westminster Handbook to Women works best when used alongside of other books that supply connective tissue and leads to the names of women in whatever field one is looking for. The three-volume *Encyclopedia of Women and Religion in North America,* edited by Rosemary Skinner Keller and Rosemary Ruether (Indiana University Press, 2006), offers full-length topical essays on a huge range of subjects relating to women and religion. This is a good starting place for those who want to know about African American religious leaders, for example, but have yet to discover their names. A middle way (between the sprawling three-volume *Encyclopedia* of Ruether and Keller and the compact *Westminster Handbook*) is the *Encyclopedia of American Women and Religion*. Edited by June Melby (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1998), this volume has somewhat fuller entries than the *Westminster Handbook*, and a helpful chronology and bibliography at the end.

There is a deeply poignant aspect to *The Westminster Handbook to Women*: the first director of the project, Susan Hill Lindley of St. Olaf College, died of cancer in 2005. Eleanor Stebner and other colleagues completed the work as a testament to Lindley and to all the women whose contributions are honored in these pages.

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