

satires, and hymns of thanksgiving to saints and to Christ upon recovery from illnesses. Most are occasional pieces inspired by contemporary personalities and events, varying in length from couplets to several hundred lines. They are erudite and elegant, often witty, rich in allusion both to the *personae* of Greek and Roman literature and to the women and men of the Bible. Generally edifying, they seek to foster piety and good conduct.

The Renaissance poets were not interested in poetic innovation, but sought rather to copy the forms and techniques of Greek and Latin masters. Erasmus was scrupulous in his attention to his models from the past: there was, he is reported to have said, "no metric form which he had not tried to duplicate." The translations are thorough, but literal; they read well, but there is no attempt to follow the form and meter of the Latin and Greek verses—likely an indication of good judgment on the part of the translator.

The second volume of this set comprises detailed notes providing extensive commentary, indicating variants and explaining the occasions for the poems and allusions both to contemporary events and literature and to classical and scriptural sources. Both volumes are amply illustrated with plates of woodcuts and paintings from the period. Title pages of volumes in which poems originally appeared are also included. The useful and informative introduction places the poetic work of Erasmus within the context not only of his other work but also of the poetic concerns of the literary artists of the Renaissance. These volumes are a significant contribution to the scholarship of the history of western literature and of the poetry of the European Renaissance.

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*A Documentary History of Religion in America. Volumes 1 and 2. Second edition. Ed. Edwin S. Gaustad. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1993. ISBN 0-8028-0617-1 and ISBN 0-8028-0618-X. Pp. xx+535 and xx+651.*

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Edwin Gaustad, professor *emeritus* of history at the University of California, is a widely-known scholar highly respected for his studies in American religion. He is, therefore, well-qualified for overseeing these two volumes which set out to chronicle the diverse American religious experience. They represent a veritable treasure chest of documents.

Unlike an earlier collection of documents edited by H.S. Smith, R.T. Handy and L.A. Loetscher in 1960, this compilation of primary source materials is not limited to the study of Christianity. Priority has been given to pursuing the elusive objective of giving a representative voice to as many of the variegated layers and divisions of America's religious life as possible. While such sensitivity to religious pluralism is a laudable objective—and one that has generally been successfully achieved within these two volumes—largely absent are indications of the relative strength and influence of the many different traditions featured. Selections have

not always been made in proportion to the actual number of adherents of the different religious traditions. Nevertheless, the collection effectively illustrates that "religious variety was already present in bountiful profusion" long before the advent of the twentieth century.

The diversity within the two volumes extends also to the type of materials chosen for inclusion. Gaustad moves well beyond the usual "public" documents issued by religious leaders by including extracts from sermons, personal letters, court records, newspaper accounts and diaries that *vibrate* with passion, revealing "men and women in all their vulnerable humanity" (xvi). The collection thus reflects not only the transitions and developments within ecclesiastical institutions, but also examines the impact of religion on popular culture.

The first volume is dedicated to religious developments in America to the Civil War. It begins with a selection of readings on "natural" religion, i.e., the pre-European traditions of American's native peoples. The section is, at least in part, a reaction against long-standing assumptions that European religious traditions are "higher" and "therefore endowed with a pre-emptive right to prevail." This is followed by a helpful collection of continental selections featuring the historical context and the nationalistic religious impulses that gave birth to the exploration and colonization of North America. Subsequent chapters document the process by which several distinct European traditions were initially transplanted in America but gradually transformed by economic, political and geographical factors. The result was a unique religious (and racial) *mélange* that challenged the prevailing assumption that social and political stability rested on a foundation of religious uniformity. Variety and dissent, rather than quiet conformity, came to characterize religion in America.

The final chapters of the first volume examine the varied relationships between different religious traditions and the War of Independence, and the subsequent decision to separate churches from all agencies of government—a radical innovation at the time. With the exception of certain bibliographic updates in the list of suggested readings at the end of each chapter, the first volume of the second edition is virtually identical to its counterpart in the first edition—even the pagination throughout remains exactly the same in both editions.

The second volume continues the story from 1865 to the present. It begins with a series of documents that reveal a nation struggling to come to terms with a wasteful and devastating civil war. It then explores the impact of the enormous influx of diverse immigrant groups on the religious demographics of the nation, the controversial nature of the struggle for the emancipation of women, and the impact of missionary endeavours in the American West. The documents selected serve as windows into hundreds of diverse religious worlds. A substantial proportion of the volume features developments in the twentieth century, with the final chapters highlighting more recent debates surrounding issues such as abortion, public education, the New Christian Right, and the explosion of "new religions." Other than updates in the list of suggested readings, the only substantive change between the first and second editions is found in the final chapter of the second volume.

Both volumes are well-organized and well-illustrated. Because individual

chapters, each introduced with 3–5 page synopses, highlight themes, the readings are not always presented in strictly chronological order. The readings are preceded by a brief introduction, and each chapter concludes with a bibliographic essay of suggested readings. The sources of all documents are meticulously recorded.

Either edition will serve as a valuable and popular complement to any course on religion in America. Certainly this new edition will benefit from the first edition's use as a textbook. Considering the relatively few editorial changes, however, I suspect that few librarians and scholars already in possession of the first edition will find the cost of purchasing the second edition justifiable.

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*Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century: An Introduction to Its Character.* By John G. Stackhouse, Jr. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993. ISBN 0-8020-7468-5. Pp. xii+333.

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Studies indicate that religious demographics among Protestant groups in Canada have changed dramatically during the last half of the twentieth century. Perhaps one of the most surprising stories has been the way in which a "transdenominational evangelicalism" has emerged to become a powerful force within Canadian religion, dominating theological education, campus youth ministries, Protestant missionary endeavours, and religious broadcasting in Canada.

After a long dearth of scholarly research on the development of this particular orientation within Canadian Protestantism during the twentieth century, John G. Stackhouse, Jr., Associate Professor of Modern Christianity at the University of Manitoba, has produced a timely, path-breaking study. The result of a modified doctoral dissertation, the volume is one of the first serious studies of a world that has often been ignored (and at times even denigrated) by Canadian scholars. It complements several current studies of Canadian evangelicalism in earlier periods as well as the burgeoning number of studies of evangelicalism being published in the United States. By "evangelicalism" the author means "an important organizing principle" that drew a variety of Protestants together into a cooperative fellowship by their common commitment to three central priorities: orthodox doctrine, personal spirituality, and evangelism at home and abroad. This encouraged a kind of ecumenism that was quite different (and ultimately more successful) than the drive to achieve organic union which preoccupied many other Protestants.

The book begins with a fresh look at T.T. Shields and William Aberhart, two flamboyant individuals who have been viewed erroneously as typical representatives of twentieth-century Canadian evangelicalism. The author convincingly demonstrates that both individuals effectively alienated themselves from the majority of evangelical groups within the country. The pugnacious Shields, whose prominence within the Baptist Union of Ontario and Quebec lasted only a brief time, precipitated several schisms during his lifetime that eventually left him in charge of only a tiny denomination of loyal followers. Aberhart, the founder and