

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

leader of a political party that came to power in Alberta during the Depression, has understandably received more scrutiny. Evidence reveals that the proportion of evangelicals who supported his political campaign was no greater than that of any other Protestant group. Moreover, Aberhart's strident insistence on unorthodox doctrines, on his personal authority in his church, and his involvement in politics cost him the support of many evangelical groups.

The best representatives, according to Stackhouse, of mainstream Canadian evangelicalism during the twentieth century are not individuals but institutions. The largest part of the book is therefore devoted to detailed histories of Toronto Bible College (presently known as Ontario Bible College and Theological Seminary), Prairie Bible Institute (PBI), Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF), Sermons from Science, Trinity Western University, Regent College and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

Stackhouse argues that two distinct patterns, two kinds of evangelical disposition or *mentalities*, characterize these groups: "churchish" groups represented by Toronto Bible College, IVCF and Regent College are contrasted with the more "sectish" institutions like Prairie Bible Institute and Trinity Western University. The first drew its support from evangelicals among practically all Protestant denominations, whereas the second was supported almost exclusively by smaller, wholly evangelical denominations. The first was strongest in urban areas of long-standing British immigration (Toronto and Vancouver); the second was strongest in rural areas of more recent American and East European immigration. The first actively engaged contemporary culture and scholarship, while the second was more cautious, and even suspicious or hostile toward "modern" ideas. According to Stackhouse, the first readily affirmed its fundamental belief in the unique authority and inspiration of scripture, while the second insisted on the word "inerrancy" or a verbal equivalent. The first believed in the practice of personal holiness but gave more discretion to the individual, while the second tended to prescribe acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Stackhouse argues that during the 1980s the mainstream of Canadian evangelicalism welcomed a wider variety of traditions into its network as more Mennonites, Christian Reformed and Pentecostals emerged from their enclaves. In addition, the two dispositions have gradually come together during the last two decades with common concerns in higher education, self-conscious identity, and exertion of political influence.

Focusing on the two dispositions does indeed help one get a flavour of some of the internal dynamics present within Canadian evangelicalism, but the prominence of the churchish-sectish typology creates an impression that may inhibit the usefulness of this volume as a guide to the historical development of the movement. The selection of ideal examples as case-studies that fit a typology rather than conducting a more systematic chronological analysis of the development of twentieth-century evangelicalism can distort perceptions concerning the significance of the historical influence exerted by the institutions selected. While the volume does provide a sense of context through helpful surveys at the beginning of sections, the historical development of evangelicalism is more multi-faceted than the impression created by isolating and tracing the changing way two "dispositions" have been displayed by seven evangelical organizations.

To be fair, factors such as the preservation of ethnic identity, the social impact of premillennialism, an emphasis on particular denominational distinctives, and Canadian regionalism are all mentioned in passing as being significant elements in various corners of Canadian evangelicalism. A fuller analysis of these important dynamics remains to be done before historians are able to gain a better understanding of *why* certain transitions took place within Canadian evangelicalism.

Stackhouse provides a good definition of evangelicalism—a category he considers essential to understand present patterns of allegiance and activity among Protestants. One of the questions, however, that might have been elaborated more fully has to do with the origin and exact nature of the category “mainstream” evangelicalism within Canada. Prairie Bible Institute was for years the largest Bible school in Canada, but what made it “the central institution” of “sectish” evangelicalism as Stackhouse claims? Dozens of other denominational Bible schools co-existed with PBI in Western Canada (some even preceding PBI), yet Stackhouse does not provide data demonstrating that PBI actually attracted the majority of Canadian evangelical students (in fact, he shows that a substantial proportion of PBI’s large student population came from the United States).

Among other things, the book represents a direct challenge to the careless application of the church-sect thesis to Canadian evangelicalism, an approach that Stackhouse claims has dominated scholarly treatments of the movement and obscured its diversity and complexity. Stackhouse briefly outlines his general points of divergence with the church-sect thesis at the outset, but one might have expected a more extensive treatment of such an important historiographical shift especially considering the two-chapter coverage given to Aberhart and Shields. This shift is at least as important to the underlying premises of the book as is his point about Aberhart and Shields. Moreover, such minimal treatment, somewhat ironically, serves to perpetuate caricatures of how the church-sect thesis has been applied in Canada. A further question that might have been fruitfully explored is why did the church-sect thesis (or at least the terminology) linger so much longer in Canada than it did, for example, in the United States? While the story of the changing treatment of evangelicalism within Canadian religious historiography is not as sensational as that of the roguish Shields, it probably deserved more than three pages.

These queries and objections should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the volume admirably sets the record straight on many of the current misconceptions propagated about the nature of evangelicalism in Canada. For example, Stackhouse demonstrates that Canadian evangelicals are neither a British residue nor some bizarre American import. Despite some common concerns, there is substantially less evidence within Canadian evangelicalism of the militant type of fundamentalism that had such a divisive impact in the United States. Moreover, the significant growth experienced by the evangelical institutions featured by Stackhouse should also force scholars to reassess claims made by some sociologists concerning the diminishing importance of religious institutions within Canadian society.

*Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century* is an important contribution to an understanding of evangelicalism in Canada. It has placed the scholarly study

of twentieth-century Canadian evangelicalism on the menu of Canadian religious history: this is no small achievement. Readers will be disappointed *if* they expect this volume to be the definitive work on Canadian evangelicalism; it is, as the subtitle appropriately indicates, an *introduction* to its *character*. Stackhouse also warns that the study is not designed to be a comprehensive survey, and to his credit challenges others to move beyond this work to obtain a fuller understanding of evangelicalism in Canada.

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***Political Philosophy at the Closure of Metaphysics.* By Bernard Flynn. Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1992. ISBN 0-391-03739-0. Pp. vii+234.**

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Flynn tackles a problem that has plagued contemporary Continental philosophy: "How can one develop a political philosophy that resists the temptation to build a system based on metaphysical dichotomy?" He assumes at the outset that today one must suspect the age-old dominions of truth over appearance, mind over matter, divine over human, being over becoming, and so on. Poised at the closure of metaphysics, we are challenged to develop a new way of understanding political systems and political action, apart from, yet cognizant of, the conceptual dominance of binary thinking.

The book is organized into two parts. The first part examines three thinkers—Marx, Habermas, and Foucault—who strive but ultimately fail to escape metaphysical determination. His critique of Marx, though thoroughly justified, lapses occasionally into bouts of postmodern jargon ("the denegation of castration"), but these excursions are rare enough to not be too distracting. The first half of the second chapter ignores large sections of Habermasian scholarship, and it is not until the latter half that Flynn puts away his straw men and attacks a sufficiently nuanced version of Habermas's thought. Both of these philosophers, Flynn claims, point toward a reality (the forces of production or communicative rationality) brought to light despite a contrary, illusory appearance (created by ideology or a limited *Lebenswelt*). Even Foucault's argument, proposing a "grid of power" that underlies juridical appearance, is accused of being unwittingly metaphysical. While all of these readings are (and have been) open to counter-argument, this critique is certainly worth some attention.

The second part moves to those thinkers—Arendt, Merleau-Ponty, and Lefort—who manage to articulate a path to political philosophy which avoids the pitfalls of metaphysics. Arendt, for example, refuses to push reason from men to Man, insisting instead that the tendency to ignore the many in lieu of the one gives rise to totalitarianism. She thereby sidesteps the temptation to subsume political reality under the domain of a singular "real." Merleau-Ponty opens a space for a political discourse at the margins of metaphysics. But Flynn offers near-categorical praise only of Lefort, whose discussion of "disincarnation" takes