

This comparative study makes a valuable contribution to feminist efforts to shake up binary assumptions about what it means to be empowered or oppressed. In religious studies, this is a matter of some urgency, given popular perceptions of organized religion—Catholicism and Islam in particular—as inimical to women. The book uses rhetorical analysis of eleven religious women’s writings in dialogue with those of two charismatic clerical leaders, Pope John Paul II and Ayatollah Khomeini, to demonstrate that Catholic and Shi’i women are simultaneously “in the game” of patriarchal religious frameworks and dissenters against the logics of that game. The structure of the book foregrounds the comparison: Each chapter takes up a single theme—exemplary womanhood, motherhood, gender in sacred texts, women’s bodies, and politics—by analyzing first the writings of one of the clerics, then the responses to those arguments made by a woman from that tradition, then a parallel treatment of the second tradition. A brief comparison elucidating important, sometimes surprising, similarities and differences in the women’s rhetorical tactics ends each chapter. The book is thick with rhetorical theory and meticulous in its analysis of the component parts of moral arguments; it would be tough going for most undergraduates. But those working in comparative religion and gender studies will appreciate the breadth of topics—hijab, divorce, ordination, censorship, contraception, hermeneutics—that are treated with nuance and precision, in not one but two religious contexts. There are limits to the analogies suggested by this configuration, but the payoff is worth it: Religious women are shown to be creative moral agents whose relations with their traditions and clerical authorities are complex, and whose work lays important ground for cross-cultural religious feminism.

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NATURAL LAW AND EVANGELICAL POLITICAL THOUGHT. Edited by Jesse Covington, Bryan McGraw, and Micah Watson. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013. Pp. v + 287. \$80.00.

Evangelicalism centers on the special revelation and redemptive work of Jesus Christ. How can evangelicalism be reconciled with natural law theory rooted in the principles of reason and not faith? And is such reconciliation a necessary precursor to the formation of a coherent evangelical approach to real-world politics? In this excellent, scholarly volume, thoughtful essays by J.D. Charles, R. George, and others examine the reticence of most modern evangelicals to the claims of natural law theory. Some of the contributors view natural law as a direct challenge to the supremacy of God’s will and an unwelcome relic of the pre-Reformation scholasticism that Protestantism hoped to supplant. This view comes forth especially in the context of perspectives pioneered by thinkers such as Karl Barth and C.F.H. Henry, who help to provide a solid theoretical framework to the discussion. Others wisely attempt rapprochement by looking

to the Bible, the primary evangelical reference point, to assuage evangelical concerns about natural law. J. Budziszewski argues that evangelicals’ problem is cultural (the desire to break with all tradition), not theological, and thus, there is plenty of common ground. Most of the contributors ultimately ascribe a degree of necessity to natural law, stating that it persists as a result of humanity’s fallen nature and that reason and the will of God can coexist in peace without threatening the ultimate authority of the *Logos*. What the book lacks are robust discussions of applied political thought and how natural law can inform evangelical policy prescriptions.

Eric Patterson and Rushad Thomas
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A DEFENSE OF DIGNITY: CREATING LIFE, DESTROYING LIFE, AND PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE. By Christopher Kaczor. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013. Pp. 216. \$30.00.

This volume is a collection of previously written essays by the author, and the basic premise is the intrinsic dignity of every human being and their subsequent protection. There is extensive discussion of what dignity is, and why the concept of universal inherent dignity is an extremely important ethical principle. The book focuses particularly on beginning and end-of-life issues, paying considerable attention to embryos. Its chapters cover such diverse topics as humans in relation to animals, access to fertility treatment, genetic enhancement technologies, embryo adoption and artificial wombs, ectopic pregnancy, fetal surgery, physician-assisted suicide, organ donation after cardiac death, and the role of conscience for health-care providers. In each chapter, the author engages with one or two scholarly opponents, and thereby both sides of each issue receive attention. The book is written from a Catholic perspective, and its moral reasoning appears to be entirely consistent with official Church teaching, with many references to previous Church documents and teaching. It is well written and well researched. Although not all will agree with the methodology or the conclusions reached, this book would be of interest to anyone interested in the Catholic Church’s teachings on these subjects, and could be a useful textbook in a graduate-level bioethics class at a Catholic institution.

Donna Yarri
Alvernia University

RESISTING STRUCTURAL EVIL: LOVE AS ECOLOGICAL-ECONOMIC VOCATION. By Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013. Pp. xix + 309. \$22.00.

Moe-Lobeda’s book takes aim at the “over-consuming class” and invites an alternative. In this way, it contributes to the theological literature on Christian responses to the

interrelated issues of human environmental impacts, consumption patterns, and economic inequality. Although Moe-Lobeda's purpose is not unusual, her argument approaches the issue of consumption in a unique way. What makes Moe-Lobeda's work distinctive is the way she names environmental and economic problems as a form of structural evil that requires the development of a "critical mystical vision" among all people. This vision results from a better understanding of the meaning of love as a Christian-oriented "environmental and economic vocation." Thus, at the heart of this work, Moe-Lobeda provides a well-developed, environmentally oriented discussion of love of the neighbor as an antidote for the structural sin of consumption and environmental imbalance. Love, she argues, counteracts the "moral oblivion" that all too often impacts our moral vision. Recognizing the force of this moral oblivion requires both critical reflection and a spiritual vision, something that emerges through a better interpretation of neighbor love. This suggests the book's importance, insofar as both evil and love have been underdeveloped terms in ecotheological discourse. Theologians and ethicists will find that this systematic investigation raises new concepts for environmental ethics and theology. At the same time, the book is interspersed with short stories meant to represent some of the theoretical discussions in more concrete terms, making this book useful for students.

Forrest Clingerman
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ONE BODY: AN ESSAY IN CHRISTIAN SEXUAL ETHICS. By Alexander R. Pruss. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013. Notre Dame Studies in Ethics and Culture. Pp. 465. \$45.00.

This volume is written by a philosophy professor who is also very well versed in Christian theology. Its purpose is to propose a consistent Christian—but specifically Catholic—sexual ethic focused on a thorough unpacking of the notion of love in all its forms. The author argues that love is the ultimate essential virtue, from which all others flow. His understanding of love is that it contains three aspects: willing good for the beloved, appreciating the beloved, and seeking union with the beloved. It is the last point that is the central theme of the book and sexual ethic. The author maintains that the NT texts, as well as its overall message, can inform this sexual ethic, which is ultimately based on the union of the body as the key in sexual ethics. The chapters include discussion on sex in marriage, contraception and natural family planning, pornography, masturbation, same-sex attraction, reproductive technology, and celibacy. The title of the book is a bit of a misnomer, in that it is specifically Catholic sexual ethics, and some of the positions in the book even many Protestant conservative evangelical Christians would disagree with (such as birth control and in vitro fertilization). It does not always acknowledge other possible positions on these issues. However, it would be interesting for anyone wanting to understand Catholic moral reasoning

with regard to sexual issues, and could be especially helpful as a graduate level textbook on marriage and sexuality at a Catholic institution.

Donna Yarri
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FAMILY ETHICS: PRACTICES FOR CHRISTIANS.

By Julie Hanlon Rubio. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010. Pp. ix + 260. Paper, \$29.95.

Part I of *Family Ethics* argues for the often-overlooked moral seriousness of ordinary family life, identifies the family as a place where the personal and social converge in Catholic thought, and asserts the grace of human limitations. Part II considers five realms in which Christian families might enact their faith through counter-cultural practices. The book is both accessible and versatile while advancing scholarly conversation regarding the family. It is suitable for undergraduate and graduate students, especially those preparing for ministry, or adult study groups. Rubio marshals a thoroughgoing knowledge of tradition and a nuanced understanding of contemporary scholarship to craft practical, moderate, yet challenging responses to the ordinary moral decisions of contemporary families. Her arguments often draw upon John Paul II's vision for the family, yet she freely notes limitations in and scholarly disagreements with his teaching. Readers strongly committed to presently divisive moral issues within Catholicism may bristle at Rubio's attempt to move beyond these contentions without a definitive resolution, and idealistic students may be uninspired by Rubio's temperance. Also, the book's focus on middle class American Catholic families may be a limitation for some. Yet, the book masterfully blends scholarly acumen with deep ministerial concern as it proposes realistic and transformative faith practices for families across an impressive range of concerns. *Family Ethics* is a significant achievement that merits wide readership and appreciation.

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INTERFAITH JUST PEACEMAKING: JEWISH, CHRISTIAN, AND MUSLIM PERSPECTIVES ON THE NEW PARADIGM OF PEACE AND WAR.

Edited by Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite. Prefaces by Bryan Hehir, Jamal Badawi, and Reuven Kimelman. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Pp. xvi + 236. Cloth, \$90.00; paper, \$30.00.

This edited volume provides an excellent and timely interfaith engagement with the Just Peacemaking practices that have garnered ever-increasing attention over the last two decades. By bringing together the perspectives of eleven Muslim scholars, eight Jewish scholars, and ten Christian scholars, this work presents a unique and valuable resource on peacemaking and justice issuing from the traditions of three significant world religions. Each of the