

same chapter sets up the reader for Farmer's application, in the fifth chapter, of the idea of conversion in the practice of medicine in the midst of the world's worst health conditions: medicine must change from a commodity that is dispensed based on one's ability to pay (and that relegates those unable to pay to the violence of a premature death) to an equitable health system that provides the best health care according to need. The sixth chapter is another republished essay of Gutiérrez's, arguing that an authentic faith in Christ generates a preferential option for the poor. Finally, the book closes with an interview of Farmer and Gutiérrez conducted by the latter's Notre Dame colleague Daniel G. Groody, CSC. Both men recapitulate, on a personal note, themes presented throughout the book.

The editors, helpful despite a tendency to gush over the book's persons and events, correctly point out in their introduction that professionals and students in the fields of theology, medicine, public health, anthropology, economics, political science, philosophy, and community development would benefit from reading the volume. This book's greatest strength is the example it sets, showing how two scholars developed a virtuous cycle of dialogue between sound theory and effective practice that yields lasting, concrete results for the poor. The reader is left hoping that persons in other fields who are inspired by theology in the same way that Farmer was and still is can develop similar dialogues with theologians as critically engaged with the world as Gutiérrez.

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Ethics: A Liberative Approach. Edited by Miguel A. De La Torre. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013. xi + 256 pages. \$35.00 (paper).

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Miguel A. De La Torre's latest edited volume, *Ethics: A Liberative Approach*, breaks both practical and symbolic ground in the field of Christian ethics. In practical terms, this textbook offers a highly accessible introduction to a variety of liberationist movements and thinkers from both global and US contexts. Such a wide-ranging survey of the diverse strands of liberative ethics is, to my knowledge, unavailable elsewhere in textbook form. The volume therefore will be of immense practical help to teachers, undergraduate and graduate students, and even seasoned scholars of Christian ethics (and theology) who are looking for an introductory guide to the diverse nature of ethical reflection and praxis that takes place on the margins of society and the academy. Thirteen chapters written by experts in their

fields delve into liberative schools of thought as diverse as Latin American liberative ethics, Women of Color liberative ethics, and disability ethics. Each essay contains sections touching on historical background, the contextual need for liberation, basic tenets, major figures and themes, and possible future trends in the field. Helpful sidebars and text boxes offer readers definitions of key terms, case studies, and examples of liberative ethics in action. Each chapter also ends with study questions and a selected bibliography of suggested readings.

The clarity and quality of the essays vary. While most chapters are very well organized and easy to follow, others do take a more meandering approach. There is a fair amount of overlap among several of the chapters, but this should be seen as a strength rather than a weakness. Such connections between differing schools of liberative thought point to the interlocking nature of various forms of oppression, the intersectional nature of identity, and the potential for solidarity across difference. Instructors of Christian ethics should be aware that not every chapter focuses exclusively on *Christian* liberative ethics. Some chapters are more philosophical in nature (e.g., Ezra Chitando's chapter on African liberative ethics), while others explicitly reject Christian sources for ethics in favor of indigenous sources (e.g., Mark Freeland's chapter on American Indian liberative ethics). Depending on the instructor and the course, this comparative perspective could also be seen as a strength in that it demonstrates the diversity within and among the various strands of liberative ethical thought. Instructors should note that some of the case studies and study questions might require that the instructor provide further background information in order to be of use for thoughtful discussion and critical analysis in the classroom. This minor weakness aside, the information presented in each chapter is invaluable for beginning to understand the contexts and concerns of major twentieth- and twenty-first-century theories and praxes of liberation.

In symbolic terms, this volume also breaks new ground. As a textbook, it does not offer a newly constructed ethical system or a new set of ideas and practices. Its task is descriptive and presentational rather than constructive. Nevertheless, the text does break new ground in that it represents—concretely, on the written page—a massive, collective, and momentous decentering of Euro-American Christian ethics (and theology). In the concluding remarks to the volume, De La Torre notes that he and his authors “have strived to *center the margins* of ethical thought” (239, my emphasis). The majority of the world's population—who often experience varying forms of dispossession and disenfranchisement and whose voices therefore seldom are heard in the mainstream of society and the academy—take center stage in this

collection. Taken together, the pages of this textbook communicate that the true sociological (and even theological) center of history's ethical progression lies not with the privileged and powerful minority, but in the struggles and liberatory praxes of the world's marginalized majorities. Nevertheless, this new, liberative center is not a monolith offering a new set of universal "truths." Its ethical wisdom lies, at least in part, in its diversity. And yet the diverse strands of liberative ethics presented in De La Torre's textbook do intersect, intertwine, and coalesce to weave a strong and hopeful symbol and practice of freedom, empowerment, and justice.

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Karl Rahner's Theological Aesthetics. By Peter Joseph Fritz. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014. xvii + 286 pages. \$49.95 (paper). doi: 10.1017/hor.2015.39

It is noteworthy that at least three monographs examining aspects of Karl Rahner's theology have appeared in the last twelve months or so. The three books—Peter Fritz's work, which is the subject of this review, joins Gregory Brett's *The Theological Notion of the Human Person* and James Bacik's *Humble Confidence*—are diverse in theme and style, but it is perhaps not too extravagant to claim that an apologetic tone marks all three. In highlighting the communal dimension central to Rahner's analysis of the human person and the pastoral applications of his theology, Brett and Bacik, respectively, address the oft-heard criticisms that Rahner focused only on the individual and is the archetypal "ivory-tower" theologian. The apologetic, even revisionist, impulse is strongest in Fritz, who sets himself over against much conventional wisdom regarding Rahner's theology.

What establishes Fritz's revisionist credentials is that he disputes not only disdainful readings of Rahner, but also many that are favorable to their subject. In so doing, Fritz seeks to bring into relief the beauty, no less than the breadth and depth, of Rahner's understanding of God, faith, and Catholic life. At the heart of Fritz's study is the relationship between the philosophy of Martin Heidegger and Rahner's theology. In this domain, Fritz rejects both those who dismiss Rahner as an uncreative echo of Heidegger and those who deny any significant connection between the two.

The particular focus for Fritz's inquiry is whether Heidegger, and Rahner as his alleged acolyte, is simply a representative of modernity's "turn to the subject." As Fritz demonstrates, that term has come to imply that the human being is the measure of all things and marked by self-sufficiency.