America's religious crossroads. Faith and community in the emerging Midwest. By Stephen T. Kissel. Pp. xviii + 243 incl. 12 ills and 2 maps. Chicago–Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2021. $28 (paper). 978 0 252 08627 4

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This is a meticulously researched study of American religion through the lens of the Old North-West, the 'pioneer' territory of the United States that, bordered by the Mississippi (to the west) and the Ohio River (to the south), includes present-day Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. Between 1790 and 1850, thousands of immigrants settled in the region, reshaping the landscape through new social, literary and political practices. Kissel's study, rooted in extensive archival research from historical societies, libraries and university centres in these 'Midwestern' states, provides a compelling narrative for the many ways that '[o]rganized religion facilitated many of the region's earliest advances in literacy, formal education, civic and moral accountability, charitable public outreach, and social reform' (p. 2). During this pivotal time, the region shifted from 'territories of evolving wilderness' to 'fully integrated states of the nation' (p. 3). Among the greatest strengths of this book is the constant sense of place: Kissel uncovers disparate social and religious histories and thoughtfully links them in a coherent, thematic narrative that avoids hasty generalisations. In the first chapter, for example, the religious practices of a Methodist family in Wisconsin – beginning on the Sabbath day by feeding the cattle, followed by family Bible reading and prayer – are brought into a shared conversation with the family and domestic practices of Baptists, Quakers, Presbyterians and even emerging Utopian communities such as Shakers or Mormons. In other chapters, Kissel focuses on the religious aspects of the Midwest's literary boom (ch. ii), formal education (ch. iii), sacred community spaces (ch. iv), civic order (ch. v) and public welfare (ch. vi). Take the rise of Sabbath schools during this period as another case in point. Through an exploration of this widely studied transatlantic movement, Kissel helps readers to discover not only that the Sunday schools were forerunners of public education in America, but also a means whereby diverse denominations won converts, engaged in moral formation and fostered cultural identity (pp. 61–7). In turn, with the establishment of religious colleges and seminaries, the region became a magnet for ecumenically-minded students from many different religious backgrounds. While attempts to convert, educate and otherwise engage American Indians appear throughout, readers will not discover a comparative analysis of indigenous religious beliefs and practices here. Kissel instead focuses on how specific Christian communities emerged in contested spaces and engaged in specific forms of religious discipline and community-building. For example, priests and bishops shaped the spirituality of Roman Catholics in Ohio with regular synods that enforced moral and spiritual norms, while combative Protestants such as the famed Methodist Peter Cartwright responded to one group of unhappy youth who attempted to stone the itinerant preacher's tent (for confiscating their whiskey) by 'pelting them in turn with a shower of rocks' (p. 118). Thus, by the end of the period, a distinctly 'Midwestern' character of the populace emerged, 'rooted in rural, middling-class, and Christian values' (p. 147). Indeed, while the religious character of the region continues

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to evolve, these religiously inspired traits are 'characteristics that in many ways continue to define the region today' (p. 147).

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Protestant children, missions and education in the British world. By Hugh Morrison. (Religion and Education.) Pp. vi + 122. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2021. €70 (paper). 978 90 04 47103 0

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In this slim volume one is confronted by a topic of unusual importance for recognising the connections present among Christian missions, children and the British Empire from the early nineteenth century through to the first part of the twentieth century. Even though the role of children in promoting Christian missions has been largely overlooked, children offer an important window into the dynamics of culture, race, economics, politics, nationality, citizenship, empire and religion that was dynamic and contentious. Based on over a decade of researching and writing about the topic, Morrison's work brings together a vast array of primary sources that reaches beyond the British Isles and considers the whole of the British imperial world from Canada to New Zealand. The children's missionary movement, as Morrison argues, was primarily educational in terms of the purpose and the content of what children encountered. Education linked together children living across the vast expanse of the British world. He also affirms that children mattered in the missionary movement and that they made personal sacrifices to help those in need in faraway places. Although there is much complexity in examining the role of children and missions, the educationally-minded rhetoric, the illustrated periodicals, imperially rooted ideas of citizenship and emotional engagement were all important pedagogical techniques for fostering a sensitivity to missions in children. By examining these key elements in his analysis of the children's missionary movement, Morrison contends that a more holistic understanding of the history of children's religious lives in the modern era can be ascertained.

Morrison organises his study into six chapters. The first chapter reviews the historiography and outlines the nature of the book. The following four chapters are thematic and examine children's support of missions, children's periodicals and pedagogy, notions of citizenship and missions and the 'emotional turn' related to children and missions. The concluding chapter notes the educational ideas and strategies that were essential to the children's missionary movement and how children experienced an interpersonal enculturation into communities that affirmed their denominational, religious, political, national and even imperial citizenship. Naturally, contexts mattered a great deal and some children found themselves oriented toward entrenched colonial and imperial prerogatives that caused them to view missions from a distinctly metropolitan perspective while others remained subjects, even if they too supported the missionary movement from the periphery, since they were seen as primarily receivers of missionary efforts. For children, missions remained an emotionally conceived project that was constructed as part of their religious education that was promoted by well-intentioned

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