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thinker's works, it is a major strength of the book that he is able to distill matters into such clear lines of thought.

What struck me time and again while reading this book was its entirely readable quality, as if I were listening to someone who wasn't trying to hastily dispatch a difficult argument but has such a strong grasp of the field as to render their commentary in crisp and lucid prose. This book is a reliable guide to a series of ongoing debates in Continental thought that have seemed for some time to be at an impasse. My intuition is that this impasse has mainly resulted from somewhat partisan entrenchments (phenomenology versus deconstruction) that refuse to engage with the connections between diverse methodologies. Schrijvers' fine work navigates this impasse with precision and fairness, and thereby gives us a path forward for maintaining embodied religious practice in our world today.

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Prophecy without Contempt: Religious Discourse in the Public Square. By Cathleen Kaveny. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015. ix + 451 pages. $49.95.

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At a time when contempt is pervasive in political discourse, arguing for more prophetic political speech may seem counterintuitive. Yet Cathleen Kaveny's most recent book tries to do just this. Readers who are familiar with Kaveny from her writing on faith and politics in *Commonweal* magazine, as well as her recent books, *Law's Virtues: Autonomy, Community, Solidarity in American Society* (2012) and *A Culture of Engagement: Law, Religion, and Morality* (2016), will know that Kaveny has something subtle and provocative to offer. Unsurprisingly, she succeeds in her ambitious attempt to retain prophetic political speech while placing it firmly within the boundaries of a pluralistic society.

In this weighty work, she attempts to (1) dismantle three influential narratives that seek to explain why public discourse has become so fractured, (2) trace the history of the jeremiad in order to show how this popular form of prophetic speech that originally served to unite Americans gradually came to divide them, (3) distinguish between two forms of public discourse: practical deliberation and prophetic indictment, and (4) identify best practices for prophetic rhetoric in public life while insisting on practical deliberation as the default.

Kaveny's critiques of philosophers Alasdair MacIntyre and John Rawls and legal scholar Stephen Carter are largely persuasive. MacIntyre's diagnosis fails to account for vigorous disagreement among those who inhabit the same

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tradition, especially Evangelical Christians and Roman Catholics. Rawls' claim that public dialogue stripped of particularity will be less divisive is proven wrong by the many intractable public arguments that rely on the language of reason (e.g., abortion and same-sex marriage). Carter calls for civility as a balm, but tell that to abolitionists or antiwar protestors whose arguments cannot be strapped into polite form without losing something fundamental.

Kaveny turns to rhetorical analysis of public speech in order to find a way forward. She insists that the failure to understand our divisions is due to a focus on content and a neglect of rhetoric. Her careful and well-documented history of the jeremiad from the Puritans to the present illustrates the endurance of this form of political speech and presents a persuasive case as to why it no longer serves the common good. The in-depth historical study proving this point is fascinating, though perhaps not necessary for most readers interested in the future of political speech.

The constructive second half of the book is more compelling. Using the examples of abortion and torture, Kaveny illustrates how prophetic indictment and practical deliberation are used by those on both the right and the left. This evenhandedness helps her avoid demonizing one side and helpfully shows both how necessary prophetic indictment can seem in the face of evil and how miserably it can fail, especially when the public is divided.

In her constructive proposal for best practices, Kaveny draws upon legal ethics, just-war theory, and the best of biblical prophecy. She argues for caution with concern for the common good. Even when prophecy is justified, Kaveny advises looking to Martin Luther King, who, in his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, cloaked prophetic discourses in unifying language and stood with, rather than above, the public he sought to move. Some readers may wonder whether an analysis of the later, more radical King might complicate the case for restraint.

Kaveny's invocation of humility and irony in her final chapter is more persuasive. To a prophet speaking to the horror of human suffering, humility and irony may seem completely inappropriate. Yet Kaveny is at her best in this chapter as she mines the speeches of Abraham Lincoln and the book of Jonah to make the case that irony, humility, and prophecy belong together. It is only ironic, humble prophecy, she holds, that has any chance of influencing public debate. If the current political context includes outsized outrage, calls for understanding, and widespread political disengagement, Kaveny offers something else: an argument for more ordinary speech, and a way forward for times when ordinary speech will not suffice.

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