In this collection Anglicanism emerges as an umbrella term stretching from residual fondness for the Prayer Book and King James Bible to an intimate knowledge of the daily rhythms of parochial communities, and even to markers of more active involvement such as retreat leadership (Underhill). To what extent modern feminist agendas have been imposed retrospectively, to insist, for instance, upon a repeated attention to spinsterhood as an honourable condition, and then elevate this to forming part of a conscious female Anglican literary tradition, is a question worth raising. A slight uncertainty persists throughout as to the book's likely readership. Some essays work at the level of general introductions to an author and their work, though even in these information more helpful to students of history and literature is often contained in extensive endnotes. The more interesting essays reflect at greater length on the tensions that exist between Anglican doctrine and the conventions of a particular fictional genre, or they engage with the tension between Anglican doctrine and the temperament or convictions of the individual author: an exemplary essay on P.D. James does both.

In that the Church of England for at least half of the time period covered by this book played so central a role in the life of England's literate upper and middle classes (and despite the inclusion of the Scottish Oliphant and the Irish-born Murdoch this is largely an English story) it must remain debatable whether an Anglican tradition of female fiction can be legitimately detached from these novelists' use of successive vogues for Gothic, social, domestic, detective or crime fiction. Whether anything as cohesive or self-referential as a tradition exists, or not, one can only echo Rose Macaulay's words: 'Thank heaven for the C. of E., which grants so much license & liberty of thought, so much free criticism, so many reserves & speculations & interpretations' (p. 115).

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Doctrine Commission of the Anglican Church of Australia, *Marriage, Same-Sex Marriage and the Anglican Church of Australia: Essays from the Doctrine Commission* (Mulgrave, VIC: Broughton Publishing, 2019), pp. iv + 312. ISBN 978-0-6482659-4-8. RRP AU$34.95.
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In September 2017, the General Synod asked its Doctrine Commission to 'facilitate a respectful conversation' about the matters contained in the title of this book, which is the result of the request. The book contains eighteen essays in four sections: 'Context', 'Scripture and Hermeneutics', 'History, Theology and Ecclesiology', and 'The Case For and Against'. The authors are drawn from across the Australian Church. Eight of the eleven authors are members of the Doctrine Commission and all are Anglicans. Overall, the entries are in pairs representing the opposing viewpoints in the debate, which I could characterize as 'conservative' and 'progressive', as Michael Stead does in his opening essay, regardless of the specific subject being addressed.

Before I embark on my review, I must make a personal disclosure. I first entered the debate about homosexuality in October 1968, when, as a young Methodist minister, I moved in the New South Wales Conference that it support the decriminalization of homosexual behaviour between 'consenting adults in private'. My action was the result of my reading the British Wolfenden Report, which had been published in September 1957. This report discussed both homosexuality and prostitution but its reputation depends most on its recommendations to decriminalize homosexuality. In principle, the report drew a distinction between morality and criminality. With respect to homosexual acts between consenting adults in private the idea of a 'victimless crime' became prominent. In such cases potential prosecution gave rise to police entrapment, corruption, blackmail and public humiliation.

My motion was referred to a committee, from which it did not reappear; my first lesson in ecclesiastical politics. At that time, I accepted that homosexual behaviour was immoral but was persuaded by the Wolfenden Report. My journey over the intervening years has brought me to my present position of support for same-sex marriage and for change within the Anglican Church of Australia. When I was a member of the Sydney Synod and its Standing Committee, I did not hide my views, which were the opposite of the official position. I do not, and cannot, claim to be an impartial reviewer.

I must also say that this discussion is about real people, including some of my best friends, whom I have known and loved for decades. Some of them have taken advantage of civil laws permitting same-sex marriage. I know the quality of their relationships. I apologize to them if this discussion adds to their hurt. Contributions identifiable as coming directly from those affected by the debate are absent from the volume of essays.

My second reason for mentioning my history is to say that the volume that I am reviewing, while apparently a respectful theological discussion, is in reality a deeply political publication. That is an inevitable consequence of the opposite pairings. They assume dissent across all the topics. I have not, however, deduced that solely from the attempt to be even-handed. The political intention of the conservative faction is made clear. It is, potentially, schism, in one form or another. I first detected this intention in the essay 'Attentively Reading Scripture', by Mark Thompson from Moore College.

In this essay, Thompson argues that our attempts to interpret Scripture through 'sophisticated hermeneutical manoeuvres' compromises our doctrine of God by suggesting that God was 'incapable of communicating clearly' or chose not to do so, or that God's word has gone out of date. These propositions, Thompson says, compromise the omnipotence and eternal omniscience of God. In making these comments, he expresses a singularly high belief in scriptural literalism and biblical inerrancy. Moore College is known for such views but the effect of them is to raise the stakes to no less than our belief in God. To differ is virtually an announcement of atheism. I found this claim quite extraordinary.

Claire Smith of St Andrews Cathedral sets out schism more directly. In her essay, 'For Better or for Worse', she notes that the Reformation discussions about marriage, which she outlines, caused a schism between the Bible-conforming

Reformers and the biblically deviant Catholic Church. The warning here is that another schism is upon us if the doctrine of marriage is changed.

The volume cannot be understood without some consideration of the Australian Church's structure. Michael Stead, in his essay, 'The Doctrine of Marriage of the Anglican Church of Australia' correctly points out the particular nature of the Australian Church as set out in its constitution. Although the Church of England first arrived in Australia in 1788 with the original settlement in Sydney and, subsequently in the other colonies, the constitution of the Australian Church was not adopted until 1961. In principle, the Anglican Church of Australia is a loose confederation of dioceses. As is usual with federations, much of the outcome is determined by those who have unnegotiable demands. The politics of consensus is like that.

In the Australian case, the Diocese of Sydney has always had a concern to maintain its form of conservative evangelicalism. This concern dates from the foundation of the diocese in 1847. The diocese inherited its first bishop, William Grant Broughton, formerly Bishop of Australia. He was an old-fashioned high churchman and influenced by the Tractarians. His successor, Frederic Barker, whom the diocese elected, was a committed evangelical, as have been all his successors. Sydney's concerns heavily influenced the 1961 constitution.

The unalterable 'Fundamental Declarations' include the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds and the 'canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the ultimate rule and standard of faith given by inspiration of God and containing all things necessary for salvation' (Chapter I). These are supplemented by 'Ruling Principles' (Chapter II). They are found in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* and the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. Michael Stead notes that 'We are more tied to the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* and 39 Articles than the Church of England' (p. 32).

Any General Synod bill that relates to the 'ritual ceremonial or discipline' of the Church is subject to special rules involving the consent of each of the dioceses (section 28). This makes amendment of the Marriage Canon to allow for same-sex marriage particularly difficult. The Fundamental Declarations and Ruling Principles also ensure that the ongoing debate about same-sex relationships will be largely hermeneutical and less related to personal relationships.

The volume opens with an essay, 'Debates over the Doctrine of Marriage in the Anglican Communion' by Michael Stead. This essay, in the section called 'Context', sets out an account of the history of the recent discussions in the Communion, beginning with the Lambeth Conference of 1998, with its now notorious Resolution I.10 on Human Sexuality. I think that it was a mistake to give the writing of this topic to a contender of either side. An outsider would have been more appropriate. I do not dispute the chronology that Stead gives. As far as I know, he is accurate. The problem is that history is not only about historical accuracy; it is also about meaning. In this chapter we have what I might call a 'contextless context'.

This essay allows, if not encourages, two dubious conclusions. The first is that conservatives in what I will call for convenience 'the West', that is the USA, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia at least, are engaged in the same discussion as that engaged in by the African and Asian members of the Communion. The alleged common discussion is the defence of Scripture.

The African bloc, in particular, lives in a context of traditional societies, post-colonialism and the presence of Islam. That is, a context of establishing a separate identity amongst competitors and after political liberation. The West lives in a modern, postmodern and post-Christian context. The debate in the West is the latest episode in a long struggle in the Communion that can be dated to at least Bishop John Colenso, whose then radical views on the Bible, including an argument that parts of the Pentateuch and Joshua were not historically accurate, led to the first Lambeth Conference in 1867. The two groups cannot be regarded as the same, despite their apparent agreement about the Bible.

The second conclusion is that the present situation is the fault of errant churches in the West, the Episcopal Church in the USA, Canada, Scotland and New Zealand in the sense that their actions provoked the righteous opposition. As set out above, this is a false conclusion, given that we are in the end stages of a long debate. Homosexuality may be the straw that broke the camel's back but it could do so only after the earlier straws, which include, but are not limited to, divorce, contraception, abortion and the ordination of women.

In an essay entitled 'Scripture and Moral Reasoning', Matthew Anstey exposes the major division that the oppositional essays represent. His essay is paired with that of Mark Thompson to which I have referred above. Anstey points out the moral ambiguity of many of the biblical stories, for example, Judg. 19.27-30. In this story a Levite offers up a 'concubine to be raped and beaten all night by strangers in place of the virgin daughter of the household where he is visiting'. In addressing this kind of immorality within Scripture, Anstey puts his thesis in this way:

> Scripture shows us how the people of God come to make moral and theological judgments, rather than providing the substantive content of those judgments. (p. 66)

He acknowledges that all the biblical references to homosexuality are negative but argues that:

> affirming same-sex marriage in my view is not to dismiss Scripture but indeed the opposite, to take it with the utmost seriousness. The rationale for our rejection of the view espoused in these seven texts is grounded then in Scripture itself, in its witness to Christ and the nature of God, and in its taking with the utmost seriousness the testimony of the presence of God in the lives of God's people. We are thus *not* rejecting the word of God, but discerning and embracing the word of God.
>
> And even if these seven texts were all in lavish praise of homosexuality, extolling its virtues, that too would not determine our moral judgment on the matter. (For the Scriptures do not condemn slavery, yet we must do so.) What matters always is that we make a coherent and cogent case to discern the mind of Christ on each issue.

I have quoted Anstey at some length because, whether you accept his argument or not, the difference between him and Thompson is made clear (p. 70).

Given that division is at the centre of the essays presented in this volume, perhaps the most important essay is that by Bishop Stephen Pickard, entitled 'Disagreement and Christian Unity: Re-evaluating the Situation'. This complex essay argues that separation and division will not settle the questions around human sexuality. This, he argues, is because the reasoning that leads to division is itself productive of more division. Pickard seeks to locate the question within our concept of church and our tendency to place 'truth' and 'unity' in opposition. Indeed, it would appear that truth is the principal issue to be pursued while unity is put into the other-worldly spiritual church or to that which survives the Parousia or second coming.

Pickard argues that disagreement is an essential step on the way towards truth. He draws an analogy with the medieval use of 'commons', areas of ground to which none can lay claim, but which all can use. He says:

> It is sometimes suggested that we must first be clear about the common ground upon which we all stand prior to arguing our points of difference and disagreement. But the idea of the commons goes beyond that. This latter notion reminds us that none in fact can lay claim to a justified place of standing notwithstanding our rhetoric to the contrary. To find our common ground we need to travel metaphorically and spiritually to the commons. ...
>
> I am suggesting that staying with the suffering Church – the visible and concrete Church that suffers its own internal enmities – may be the only way in which the Church is able to genuinely bear witness to the character of God's suffering love for the world. This will require sacrifice; a giving up without claim; a new way of engaging with those with whom we profoundly disagree; a kind of non-rivalrous disagreement; even one might say a truly 'godly disagreement'. (pp. 264-65)

I cannot imagine that this essay will forestall the schism, but it is important in challenging us all about how we deal with difference in the church on both the smaller and the larger scale.

I cannot discuss each of the essays, but three others are worthy of brief comment. Dorothy Lee's 'Friendship and Religious Life in the Bible and the Church' considers 'alternative ways of Christian living: friendship and consecrated religious life'. If same-sex sexual relationships and marriage are ruled out, which Lee does not argue, the alternatives are perhaps bleak. Lee does not seek to resolve this human problem. Instead, she argues that our concentration on sexuality and marriage is not, in the general sense, helpful. Other kinds of relationships have a value of their own. In particular, friendship, consecrated religious life and singleness may be regarded as callings of their own.

Gregory Seach, in 'Steps Towards a Theological Understanding of Desire', offers some consideration of the Song of Songs and Gregory of Nyssa's 'On virginity'. This discussion is about the 'right ordering' of both marriage and celibacy. He concludes:

> Re-imagining *Christian* desire requires us to explore again what it means to live *embodied* lives. We can see eruptions of desire – including sexual, erotic desire,

> with a consequent loss of egoistic ability to control – as signs of the in-breaking of God's Spirit, which transfigures human lives. (p. 225)

The essays by Lee and Seach tackle topics that might not, at first, have been thought relevant to the basic subject under discussion. They are relevant in that they serve to expand our range of thinking.

Rhys Bessant discusses the concept of 'blessing' in 'To What End? The Blessing of Same-Sex Marriage'. Since the blessing of same-sex marriages is, so to speak, the first cab off the rank in any movement towards actual church recognition and solemnization, this discussion is of considerable value. Bessant concludes, on biblical grounds, that such blessing is not appropriate. Nevertheless, any argument in favour must have a considered theology of what is being done. Given the contemporary tendency to bless anything at all, a pause for thought is devoutly to be desired.

In the final, and most important, section of the volume, Matthew Anstey and Michael Stead put the arguments for and against same-sex marriage. Their approaches mirror the fundamental differences in dealing with Scripture that pervade the whole text. Anstey returns to his earlier discussion about Scripture and moral reasoning. He says 'the formulation of doctrine based, so the argument goes, *solely* by the so-called "plain reading" of Scripture never actually occurs, and claims of such are simply denying the moral logic everywhere present in one's arguments' (p. 273).

Both Anstey and Stead seek to counter the arguments made by the opposite case. For example, Anstey asks why homosexual marriage should be deemed wrong. He rejects as an answer that God says so. This, he says, is not an argument, it is simply an assertion. That is to say, he asks not for an authority but for a reason.

Stead addresses and rejects the claims that are commonly made by some supporters of same-sex marriage in arguing for various interpretations of the negative biblical text. They include arguments about the issues to which St Paul refers in his negative comments in Romans and 1 Corinthians and Anstey's argument that the sinfulness must be established by argument. He concludes:

> The argument of this essay is that we must not change our doctrine of marriage, because
>
> - It is *sufficiently clear* from the Scriptures that God's pattern for marriage involves the union of one man and one woman toward a threefold *telos* ('goal') involving companionship, sexual union and procreation. A marriage is still a marriage, even if it falls short of this threefold *telos*.
> - It is *sufficiently clear* from the Scriptures that God prohibits same-sex lust and same-sex sexual intimacy as contrary to God's purposes for human sexuality. (p. 309)

Finally, I reiterate my earlier comment that schism is the future before the Australian Church. The question is not whether, it is when and in what form. Because of the constitutional restraints, a change to the Marriage Canon is unlikely

in the foreseeable future. If the history of the ordination of women in Australia is any indication, a diocese or dioceses will take action on their own initiative.

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Geoffrey R. Treloar, *The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson and Hammond* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 2016), pp. 334. ISBN 978-1-78359-432-0.
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This volume is the last to be published in the magisterial five-volume *History of Evangelicalism* series, which provides scholarly but accessible overviews of the movement from the early eighteenth century to the present, from five of the world's leading experts. It offers a stimulating synthesis of the latest literature, with excellent bibliographies for researchers who want to dig further, while also charting some important new pathways for our understanding of evangelicalism between the *fin de siècle* and the Second World War.

Geoffrey Treloar's work is a fitting capstone to the series, examining a period usually neglected in evangelical historiography though it is now thankfully beginning to attract scholars at last. In standard interpretations, evangelicalism entered the doldrums in the interwar years, disengaged from popular culture, obsessed by anti-modernism, in retreat from the academy, and generally ineffective in its witness. After the death of Charles Spurgeon in 1892 and Dwight Moody in 1899 there were no leaders of equivalent global stature until John Stott and Billy Graham spearheaded the neo-evangelical resurgence from the 1940s. Because older evangelical histories tend to gravitate towards heroic figures, they neglect this period as a painful aberration and embarrassment – unless studying the birth of Pentecostalism or Fundamentalism.

Something of that jarring dissonance is seen by comparing the titles for this series. The other four volumes speak of the 'Rise', 'Expansion', 'Dominance' and 'Globalization' of evangelicalism, but here we read of its 'Disruption'. It was an era when the foundations were shaken by traumatic crises like the Great War and the Great Depression, and evangelicals like most of their contemporaries struggled to find their feet in this disorientating new context. They also fragmented into rival camps, fighting to control both the future strategy and the nomenclature of the movement. This has classically been portrayed as an internecine war between entrenched polar opposites – conservative evangelicals versus liberal evangelicals – but Treloar shows that the reality was far more complex and fluid, even amorphous, with some surprising areas of commonality and unlikely alliances. His narrative ranges widely, from Cambridge to California and Aberdeen to the Antipodes, taking in colourful personalities like John Mott, the missionary statesman and evangelical ecumenist, and Aimee Semple McPherson, the flamboyant divorcée and single