

Several essays touch on recurrent themes in the study of the monastic lives of women: men and women living in adjoining houses of the same order and the relationships between the order and its patrons, who frequently had close ties to the women. The essays seem intended not only to refine our understanding of the Hospitaller Order but also to extend our knowledge of the variety of monastic options available to women in the high and late Middle Ages. Although these essays may appear somewhat out of the mainstream for church historians, the careful research and analysis of each one deepens our understanding of the possible variations in medieval religious life for women as well as men. Each of the essays whets one's appetite for even further research and analysis and demonstrates the need for continued exploration of the subject. One hopes that these essays will lead to a series of monographs regarding the contribution of the military orders to medieval society and a revision of accepted beliefs about women's religious life. This volume is a valuable contribution to the history of religious orders in the Middle Ages and to gender studies.

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***Reformation and Early Modern Europe: A Guide to Research.***

Edited by **David M. Whitford**. Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies  
79. Kirksville, Mo.: Truman State University Press, 2008. xii + 459  
pp. \$52.00 cloth.

This latest edition of a guide to Reformation research, following fifteen years after the last of its kind, presents an engaging collection of scholarly essays surveying the breadth of past and current Reformation historiography. Editor David Whitford assembled this comprehensive work under three topics, confessional trends, regional trends, and social and cultural trends, providing general categorization for the increasing diversity of approaches to Reformation history. Each of the eighteen essays answers three questions: "what is the present state of research in the field, especially the trendsetting new studies that are challenging (or perhaps trying to reassert) traditional views? What are the key issues scholars in the field are struggling with and trying to resolve? And what are the fundamental works in the field and where are the strategic collections or centers of research?" (x). The quality of the answers commends the book as an indispensable resource for both the new and the veteran scholar of Reformation history.

The first section on confessional trends includes essays on Lutheran, Reformed, Catholic, Radical, and Jewish historical research, and includes an essay examining the historiographical approach of confessionalization. Each of the essays presents a wealth of helpful insight along with a substantial bibliography. Amy Nelson Burnett's essay, "Contributors to the Reformed Tradition," ably surveys the present state of research in the field, but appears nonplussed by the firm critique and comprehensive positive scholarship on the development of Reformed Orthodoxy presented by Richard Muller and others. While she terms it a "redefinition" of Protestant Scholasticism (41), a longer view of historiography might view it as a reassertion of a traditional view prevailing prior to a twentieth-century neo-orthodox "redefinition." R. Emmet McLaughlin's "Radicals" provides a wealth of material on this diverse strand of Reformation history, along with sharp criticism of Andrea Strübind's evaluation of revisionist studies of Anabaptism; the latter appears hasty in its negation of her effort toward a working theological paradigm, failing to adequately interact with the epistemological and hermeneutical issues underlying positivist, revisionist, and other methodologies. Ute Lotz-Heumann provides a fascinating survey of the debates over confessionalization approaches, adeptly surveying the current field. Also germane to his discussion would have been an assessment or notice of recent and ongoing work on the history and context of Reformation and post-Reformation confessions, such as the effort currently under way by the Westminster Assembly Project, based in the Faculty of History, University of Cambridge.

The second set of essays examines the development and trends in historical research on the regions of Central Europe, 1500–1700, France, Italy, England, Netherlands, Spain, and the Swiss. Howard Hoston's essay "Central Europe, 1550–1700" chronicles seminal developments and opportunities in Polish, Czech, Hungarian, and other areas of Central European Reformation studies. He accurately notes that "the field described here is not only far larger geographically and chronologically than the older unit of Reformation Germany; it also embraces a far more diverse set of themes and traditions" (169). Hoston provides a wealth of helpful research tools and resource information for this hitherto largely neglected field. Peter Marshall's thorough chapter on England accurately notes the present trend in English Reformation studies toward what has been termed a "Catholic revisionism" with its disparagement of the Reformation movement as "an immensely destructive force" (252). Marshall notes some of the difficult questions unanswered by this approach, along with alternate views; scholars of opposing conviction may find this a fertile field for critical engagement. The conversation itself exemplifies the underlying reality of competing truth claims in Reformation historiography along with the worldview shift in Britain as a society increasingly distanced from its Protestant tradition. The following chapters

on the Netherlands, Spain, and the Swiss continue with capable assessments of their respective fields, including leading debates, new developments, and opportunities. Somewhat surprisingly, the regional essays include no discussion of Scotland or Scandinavia; both would have been worthy of consideration in this volume.

The third grouping, social and cultural trends, covers popular religion, witchcraft, gender history, art history, and books and printing. Kathryn A. Edwards's essay gives a useful survey of popular religion, though she focuses primarily on continuities of Roman Catholic and popular medieval aspects of societal life and custom into the Reformation and early modern period. She could also have mentioned opportunities for scholarship in the development of popular Reformed, Lutheran, and Radical piety, such as the various movements to establish conventicles, family worship, catechizing, and the growing popular transition from image to print dominance in Protestant societies, with the attendant remarkable growth in popular literacy. Merry Wiesner-Hanks's essay, "Society and the Sexes Revisited," surveys historiography on women, noting the dominant, though not exclusive, influence of Foucault's work. Her essay reflects much of the field, with its general weakness of failing to venture beyond the bounds of the somewhat tired modernist historiography of women struggling against repression. One looks eagerly for alternate approaches with greater empathy to women in context as early modern and Reformation individuals, rather than only via paradigms of feminist and deconstructionist theory. Larry Silver's brief but helpful, well-annotated article on art history and Andrew Pettegree's fine essay on books and printing round out this excellent volume. Its few weaknesses and limitations included, the overwhelming strengths of this invaluable collection of essays and bibliographies mean it should find an accessible location on the shelf of every serious student and scholar of Reformation and early modern history.

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***Patterned Lives: The Lutheran Funeral Biography in Early Modern Germany.*** By **Cornelia Niekus Moore.** Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 111. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006. 405 pp. €79 cloth.

This substantial study approaches the Lutheran "funeral biography" in early modern Germany as a genre within the rhetorical tradition of biographical writing. Beyond an account of a person's life and death, the church historian