

quest to reimagine the human condition. Here the postmodern discourses on vulnerability, deconstruction, and suspicion find counterdiscourses on vulnerability as openness to love, deconstruction's instinct for dramatic integration, and suspicion leavened in a horizon of hope. This dialogical space for paradoxical human expressions opens up the possibility for transcendence. Of the many essays that illustrate this well, Jeffrey Keuss' "Love among the Ruins: Hermeneutics of Theology and Literature in the University after the Twentieth Century" stands out as exemplary, offering four methodologies of interpretation that continue to quarrel within the modern university. He states explicitly what other authors in the volume illustrate: that a "theological hermeneutics adds to the manifold disciplines of human flourishing" because its aim is "to point and reference the infinite depth of meaning in the structure of literary, philosophical, or for that matter, scientific hermeneutic as an outsider that is also of the heritage of all these" (176).

For any student or scholar interested in ways to move beyond contested theoretical spaces of academia for a more hospitable space of dialogue, these essays embody one way forward. In a world in which the political sphere no longer allows for any depth of reflection on the human condition, these authors suggest that theology and religion, like artistic and literary production, can become the public square for this conversation.

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At the Heart of the Liturgy: Conversations with Nathan D. Mitchell's "Amen Corners," 1991-2012. Edited by Maxwell Johnson, Timothy O'Malley, and Demetrio Yocum. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014. 190 pages. \$34.95 (paper).

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I do not recall whether I ever met Nathan Mitchell. I do not think I ever heard him speak, and I know I never took a class with him. This volume, a "celebration of [Mitchell's]...thought" (xxv), makes me wish that I had had such opportunities. The editors have selected nine of Mitchell's approximately 120 "Amen Corner" essays appearing over the span of two decades in *Worship*, organized them along six themes, and paired them with essays written by six of his former students; in these six essays Mitchell's "thought is put into dialogue with their own developing theological reflection" (xxv).

The six themes in question are "body," "word," "Spirit," "beauty," "justice," and "reconciliation." The companion essays on these themes are

authored respectively by Kimberly Hope Belcher, Joél Schmidt, Anne McGowan, Clare Johnson, Katharine Harmon, and Melanie Ross. Given the nature of this text as an anthology with seven different authors in total, I am not able in this space to provide a thorough assessment of all the parts of the book. What follows, then, are impressions and sketches of a book that is well worth reading.

As Johnson observes, one of the key features of the “Amen Corner” is the way that Mitchell “effortlessly weaves together everything from politics, papacy, and pop stars, to arts, aesthetics, and architecture, offering his readers a measured and critical view of the most recent happenings and topic issues of both a secular and sacred nature” (xxiv). Mitchell’s essays in this volume engage *inter alia* the works of T. S. Eliot, Adrienne Rich, Flannery O’Connor, Emily Dickinson, Peter Singer, John Calvin, Thomas Aquinas, Walter Burghardt, and Annie Dillard. The essays make for dense reading, but in the end what matters for Mitchell is that people be aware of the ways in which liturgy can and should touch them in the marrow of their bones, shaping them and challenging them to live as disciples of Christ.

Though all of the companion essays are stimulating, I especially appreciated Belcher’s comments on the body, with its important claim that “a theology that seeks to find Christ in the Eucharist to the exclusion of Christ elsewhere will end with a Christ that remains nowhere” (11), and Harmon’s insights into the ways in which liturgy has and has not addressed concerns related to racism, poverty, and the place of women in church and society. Particularly in the cases of Harmon (“justice”) and McGowan (“Spirit”), I was aware of the “dialogue” feature mentioned above. Harmon has published on the role of women in the American liturgical movement, and McGowan has published on the status and function of the epiclesis in eucharistic prayers.

I offer three comments by way of critique. First, I happen to be aware of the work of Harmon and McGowan. I am somewhat less familiar with the other contributors. It might have been helpful if the editors had included a bit more about how Mitchell shaped the contributors’ scholarly trajectory (or if the contributors had said more on this topic). Second, some contributors refer to Nathan Mitchell as “Nathan” and others as “Mitchell.” I found the contrasting intimacy and formality a little jarring. Third, there is a question of consistency with respect to the axiom *lex orandi, lex credendi*. Early in the book, Mitchell is quoted as challenging the sufficiency of the adage, to the effect that doctrine also checks liturgy (xviii), but later he is quoted affirming that “doctrine arises from doxology” (105). This inconsistency is not explained or discussed.

I would recommend each of the individual sections of the book for use in undergraduate or graduate instruction. The book as a whole would be useful for courses treating major (American) liturgical theologians.

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A Theology of Grace in Six Controversies. By Edward Oakes, SJ. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. xxii + 248 pages. \$28.00.
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A Theology of Grace in Six Controversies by the late American Jesuit Edward Oakes, SJ (1948–2013), proves a daunting book to review because of the breadth of learning and erudition of its author, a prodigious theologian who wrote approximately 500 indexed pieces of writing in twenty-five years. Equally daunting is the task Oakes sets out for himself in this, his last and posthumous book from Eerdmans Interventions (a series dedicated to countering contemporary nihilism, reductionism, and the “accommodationist impulse” in theology). That task is to analyze and solve the major problems in theological anthropology. Yet, given Oakes’ talent and expertise, one could argue that he may be perhaps one of the very few theologians in the English-speaking world who could pull off such an endeavor.

As the title indicates, the monograph divides the topic of theological anthropology into six distinct yet related controversies, each with its respective chapter. In each chapter, save chapter 5, Oakes put forth his own “champion” to help solve what he calls the “antinomies” of each controversy.

Chapter 1 lays out the protracted nature-grace debates between the extrinsicists (i.e., neo-Thomistic manualists) and the intrinsicists (DeLubac) Here Oakes relies upon the nineteenth-century German theologian Matthias Joseph Scheeben and his theology of “nuptial union” to bring nature and grace together. Oakes believes that the debate can be resolved if one replaces the image of “architecture” with that of “love and marriage” (44). After delving into some of the more difficult passages in Paul’s letter to the Romans and the debate that has raged since the time of the Reformation, that of justification in chapter 2, Oakes calls to light Saint Thérèse of Lisieux’s own utterances of renunciation and abandonment to the loving mercy of Christ. Quoting the “Little Flower”: “I haven’t any works! He will not be able to reward me ‘according to my works.’ Well then, He will reward me according to *His* works” (89). On the issue of original sin in chapter 3, after a thorough dismantling of Augustine’s theory of “seminal transmission,” largely courtesy of N. P. Williams’ 1927 treatment of the subject, Oakes