knowledgeable or curious about sociological theory. Anderson's short introductions and conclusions for each of the two halves of the book, the first on child labor laws and the second on factory inspection laws, concisely present the historical arguments she makes in those chapters, allowing readers who are uncomfortable with or uninterested in sociological theory to dive more directly into this highly worthwhile history.

Christian Nationalism: The Persistence of an Idea

Wetzel, Benjamin J., *American Crusade: Christianity, Warfare, and National Identity, 1860-1920*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2022. x + 215 pp. $47.95 (hardcover), ISBN 9781501763946.

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Benjamin Wetzel has authored a fascinating and brilliantly organized book investigating the wartime connections between Christianity and American nationalism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Christian nationalism has often been understood as characteristic of earlier time periods, as depicted in works by historians such as Nicholas Guyatt, Eran Shalev, and Sam Haselby. But Wetzel is not only interested in highlighting how wartime Christian nationalism surged during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, but also how it was contested by critics from competing "ideological positions" and "social locations."

Social historians long ago challenged American historians' myopic focus on the ideas held by, institutions built by, and positions taken by prominent white men by broadening the possibilities for new "ground-up" retellings and centering their narratives upon long-ignored historical voices. But some religious historians wondered whether new grassroots histories lost sight of institutional power dynamics and politics more broadly. Wetzel, for instance, approvingly quotes historian Harry S. Stout, who called for religious historians to "re-engage the original preoccupations of historians with politics" (4). Wetzel's response is to demonstrate not only how, on the one hand, wars such as the Civil War (1861-1865), the Spanish-American War (1898), and World War I (1914-1918) were justified by white Christian Protestantism but also, on the other hand, how marginalized voices (whom Wetzel labels "counterpoint groups") criticized American militarism and overseas interventions as "unholy." As Wetzel investigates the various wartime debates over religion and American nationalism, he pursues three argumentative goals. First, he seeks to "take up the older questions" surrounding American political dynamics by paying close attention to both the ideas *and* social locations of the various Americans who engaged in these debates (5). Second, he argues for historical commonalities that

stretched over a large swath of American history (1860-1920) belied by traditional divisions between the Civil War Era, the Gilded Age, and the Progressive Era. Such a reframing allows Wetzel to show how even older traditions of American Christian nationalism—stretching back through the colonial and antebellum periods—persisted across time into the twentieth century. Third, Wetzel shows how the old secularization thesis—the argument propounded by sociologists from Max Weber to Emile Durkheim that societies would abandon religion as they modernize—fails to capture the historical reality of religious life in North American history. The United States was well under way industrializing prior to the Civil War, and industrialization exploded in the decades afterward, but prominent Americans such a Josiah Strong continued to profitably conflate ideals of religion and nationalism just as previous generations of American religious leaders had, revealing the tenacity—if variety—of religious politics among upper-, middle-, and lower-class Americans.

Wetzel examines prominent religious periodicals to locate strands of pro-war and anti-war sentiments among various denominations and social classes of American Christians. Christian nationalism, Wetzel shows, has ebbed and flowed across American history. He unfolds his chronological narrative into three sections dealing with the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and World War I. Each is broken into two chapters. The first chapters focus on white mainline Protestants who advocated for U.S. involvement under the rubric of Christian patriotism. The second chapters examine the "counterpoint groups." While Wetzel's longer history of white Christian Protestantism will be insightful, the chapters dedicated to the counterpoint groups will likely prove the most dramatic and insightful, and therefore likely the most closely read.

Wetzel's section on the Civil War begins by analyzing Northern Protestants' thoughts and opinions on the war. It focuses on familiar clergymen such as Lyman Abbott, Henry Ward Beecher, and Horace Bushnell and explores how religious leaders saw God's Providence in northern blessings and southern curses. The section's second chapter, on the American Methodist Episcopal Church, demonstrates how ideas about God's blessings were neither necessarily widespread nor unqualified. The book's second section, on the Spanish-American War, looks at white Protestant support for American intervention. Prominent religious leaders viewed the United States as a tool in the hand of God. They were committed to a "democratic Christian republicanism," an idea of personal and political freedom rooted in Christian ideals. Interestingly, Wetzel looks at proponents of the Social Gospel, such as Congregationalist pastor Washington Gladden, and their arguments for American involvement in both the Spanish-American War and World War I rooted in concepts of Christian morality. Wetzel locates the counterpoint group for the Spanish-American War among American Catholics. Though individual views might have been generally mixed, Catholic and other dissenters grounded their antiwar stance in ideas about the "unrighteousness" of the United States. The third section covers World War I. Wetzel captures Protestant enthusiasm for American entry in the war by showing how religious leaders interpreted the conflict as "a twentieth century crusade" (101) that positioned the United States as Christ-like and Germany as "devilish" (Chapter 5). Meanwhile, Missouri Synod Lutherans, Wetzel's counterpoint group, were less enthusiastic. Despite the Protestant commitments of these Germans, their nationalistic and social positions, as well as their distinctive theological orientations, challenged the wartime enthusiasm of more vocal pro-war American Protestants.

Wetzel makes a convincing claim for the centrality of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era to the story of American Christian nationalism. His claim that "neither before 1860s nor after 1920 did any generation of mainstream American Protestants offer the kind of

unqualified endorsement of American conflicts that those generations did" (8) may be overstated, but students and scholars of American religious history, military history, and foreign policy will greatly benefit from Wetzel's contribution to a debate that is ever louder and ever more immediate in the American present.

Translating Empire: The United States and European Imperialism before 1898

Priest, Andrew. *Designs on Empire: America's Rise to Power in the Age of European Imperialism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2021. xi + 290 pp. $35.00 (paperback), ISBN 978-0231197458

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For many years now a vibrant and robust historiography has traced the multiple connections and entanglements of the United States in the world. Empire has provided a particularly fruitful analytical lens to highlight such connectivity and de-exceptionalize U.S. history by embedding the nation's historical trajectories within global developments. In contrast to the many studies that focus on the trans-imperial networks which developed in aftermath of the Spanish-American War of 1898, Andrew Priest explores earlier American attitudes by analyzing American perceptions of European imperialism between the 1860s and 1880s.

Priest, who teaches U.S. history at the University of Essex, argues that European empires served as a discursive reference point to advance, conceptualize, and oppose an American Empire decades before it acquired substantial colonies in the Caribbean Basin and the Pacific Ocean. This recalibration of imperial temporalities allows Priest to de-emphasize 1898 as the commonly referenced starting point of U.S. overseas empire-building. Instead, his cast of subjects—mostly members of Washington's foreign policy establishment but also reformers, suffragists, and social activists—increasingly embraced the idea of empire-building abroad. According to Priest, while Americans were initially hesitant and ambivalent, a consensus emerged which not only discursively distanced U.S. imperial practices from those of the Old World but simultaneously transposed imperial rule onto American notions of civilizing uplift and reform. The increasing infatuation with empire was neither coincidental nor temporary but grew naturally out of the American experience and developed from desires to displace the global reach of the *Pax Britannica*.

The book consists of five chronological chapters and opens with an exploration of contradictory attitudes in the United States towards European empires before the 1860s.