

chapter looks at Wolcott's images of migrant workers and early boomtown life in the "Magic City" of Miami, then situates her work with that of the more commercially driven Samuel Gottscho and Max Waldman to better examine those paradoxical identities intensely brewing in south Florida. While the first chapter more predictably discusses the high-profile figures (Stieglitz, Paul Strand) who set the mark for American art photography, Woods does complicate this canon of urban imagery with questions of gendered perspective by following through with leading woman photographers of the period, namely Helen Levitt, Bernice Abbott, and Lisette Model, whose conflictual portraits of "the city as performer" blur the distinction between Lefebvre's notion of "representational space (created by human use) and representations of space (imposed spatial order)" (80). And, indeed, this analysis of a gendered and spatially lived perspective – and in turn, how the photographic equivalents have been appropriated by the American canon – carries its momentum into the next two chapters, but to quite different targets: the infiltration of the past by the present in a Jim Crow South, and the *tabula rasa* of Miami in great socio-economic flux.

The overall layout is quite superb, with the text generously supported by 140 black-and-white photographs; in addition, there is a high-quality, twenty-one-plate colour insert for those images most critical to her argument. While the conclusion does venture interesting links with contemporary photographers such as Jeff Wall and Thomas Ruff who are dramatically changing the scope of architectural photography today, it would have been helpful to see more than brief speculation as to how and why these shifts have occurred over the decades in between modernity and the present moment, and perhaps a more extensive reading of this resurgence of European photographic (Bernd and Hilla Becher and their protégés, that is) and architectural influences upon the American built environment. Yet this is a minor point to make given the overwhelming breadth of research and argument already delivered in the preceding chapters with Woods's telling analysis of so many photographers and photographs of buildings that not only occupy space but also fuse past, present and human experience.

University College, Dublin

WENDY WARD

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Gerald R. McDermott (ed.), *Understanding Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to America's Theologian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, \$24.95). Pp. xvii + 228. ISBN 978 0 19 537344 8.

Though the name of Jonathan Edwards is as well known as that of any colonial American Protestant divine, the only image it evokes except among scholars of the literature or history of the period is that of the hellfire and damnation preacher who in 1741 delivered the sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." This is unfortunate, for Edwards was a far more complex figure with a far more sophisticated theology than such an image suggests. Hoping to correct this misapprehension, editor McDermott has gathered short essays on topics such as Edwards's career, his theology and philosophy, his approach to Scripture, his

interest in other religions, and his significant contribution to the Protestant missionary movement. Penned by scholars, these articles were written for the general public. Each of eight topical essays is followed by a response described as an “alternative viewpoint.” Some responses do offer alternative understandings of Edwards, but many simply comment on the earlier article. The focus and approach of the authors vary considerably. Some essays are more historical or biographical in nature while others are theologically oriented. McDermott has sought out the views of European scholars, who provide about half of the material. Eastern European contributors are far more numerous than those from the west, and one is left wondering if there is a particular affinity for Edwards’s work in that region.

Kenneth P. Minkema provides a superb introduction to Edwards’s life and career set in the context of eighteenth-century New England. This contextual biography is essential both for understanding and for evaluating the work of Edwards. Sang Hyun Lee addresses the theme of beauty as central to Edwards’s theology and philosophy. He insists that for Edwards it is divine beauty that defines God. Creation occurs to replicate divine beauty, and beauty becomes a dynamic reality with ethical and political consequences. Relying on Edwards’s “Miscellanies” and other lesser-known works, McDermott explores the New Englander’s fascination with religions other than Christianity and Judaism. McDermott argues that Edwards pursued a variety of approaches to other faiths resting on the *prisca theologia*, Edwards’s conviction that God speaks through nature and history as well as Scripture, and what he terms Edwards’s dispositional soteriology (the notion that a proper disposition is all that is required for salvation). Harry S. Stout looks at Edwards as revivalist, and other contributors examine Edwards’s use of Scripture and other literature. If any important topic is neglected, it is Edwards’s relationship with the scientific thought of his day.

Edwards is a critical figure in the evolution of New England Puritanism from its British origins into the transcendentalism of Emerson and the Progressive Orthodoxy of Horace Bushnell. His theological resolution of the free will/predestination problem may with equal justification be seen as a defense of the Reformed tradition or its capitulation. His compelling theology of beauty would, in the hands of later generations, undermine much of that which the revivalist Edwards sought to sustain. Like his Arminian critics, Edwards lived in a time of intellectual and social change with one foot in the old order and one in the new. Directly or indirectly he inspired the Protestant missionary movement and provided its theological justification. This renders Edwards a subject worthy of careful study, and this small volume offers a helpful introduction to his life, his work, and his thought. Yet whether Edwards is truly “America’s theologian” is far from established. Perhaps this appellation only confirms the lack of other serious contenders for such an honor. These essays certainly confirm Edwards’s significance for his time and place, but they also remind us that he was very much a man for that season and for that place.

Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville

SAMUEL C. PEARSON