

questions about the relationships between human suffering, spirituality, and sexuality. Godfrey points to the correlations by showcasing personal narratives and reflections about the crisis. However, a deeper investigation of Catholic theologies and practices regarding suffering and changing attitudes about human sexuality remain unexplained.

In the early 1990s, Father Zachary Shore followed McGuire's tenure and guided MHR through a changing relationship with the diocese and reactions to church politics. MHR's activities became more transparent under Shore's relaxed management style, and MHR parishioners more vocally expressed their frustration with wider church politics on homosexuality. Nonetheless, the parish delicately maintained a moderate position with an eye to what might and might not be acceptable. Godfrey expounds on this in-between status in the final chapter when he conveys his own experience of a double bind—criticized by the church for being too openly gay and slandered by some queer activists for being part of a homophobic organization. Yet it is exactly this experience of marginality and vulnerability that Godfrey links to the protective and comforting attributes of MHR, which make it a growing, active parish. In other words, it is the experience of vulnerability and perhaps suffering that the people of MHR embrace but also heal, thus giving MHR a type of sacred and empowering status.

Overall, *Gays and Grays* provides an excellent local history of Catholic culture and gay and lesbian issues. Godfrey has adequately crafted a story of MHR's unique and distinctive identity, but readers might question MHR's significance beyond the scope of San Francisco. Godfrey's conclusion that MHR is a new model of holiness in Catholic culture raises questions about alternative and competing models of "holiness" and who or what defines this sacred status beyond the Bay City (160).

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After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty- and Thirty-Somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion. By **Robert Wuthnow**.

Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007. xx + 299 pp.

\$29.95 cloth.

According to the conventional wisdom, American religious institutions are divided by a ruinous culture war and beset by militant atheists. Mainline Protestants have dwindled because of their failure to present a strong

alternative to evangelical churches, whose members know just what they believe and have won the loyalty of teenagers and young adults for doing so. Indeed, the conventional wisdom continues, evangelicals' affinity for youth-oriented cultural innovation—everything from Christian pop music to the emerging “virtual church” on the Internet—has all but guaranteed them a central role in the shaping of twenty-first-century American society.

According to Robert Wuthnow, however, most of this conventional wisdom is wrong. The prolific sociologist's latest book, outlining the issues facing a rising generation of young adults (those ages 21 to 45), presents a far more nuanced and disturbing picture. If current social trends continue, Wuthnow warns, all American church bodies are in trouble: although young adults comprise some 40 percent of their membership, that proportion has been steadily declining, and there is no end in sight.

Wuthnow's study fills a significant gap in the current sociological literature on American religion, lately dominated by studies of teenagers, college students, and baby boomers. Statistically speaking, the current generation of young adults accounts for a larger percentage of the population than did their boomer parents, and it stands to reason that their life decisions will fundamentally affect the future viability of churches across the theological, racial, and ethnic spectrum.

Indeed, one might conclude that the biggest threat to religion today is not a belligerent atheist like Christopher Hitchens or Sam Harris, but the unattached twenty-something emerging from the neighborhood bistro with a latte in one hand and an iPod in the other. Wuthnow demonstrates that trends toward later marriage—now edging into the late twenties for both men and women—directly affect churchgoing. In other words, it is now marriage, not a college education, that is the most significant predictor of religious adherence. All of the other major long-term commitments of early adulthood, from children to jobs to thirty-year mortgages, hinge on that first step into matrimony.

Wuthnow is careful not to depict his subjects as deracinated slackers, camped out in front of a television or a computer screen. Young adults are not apathetic toward religion, he says, as much as they are frantically improvising their lives in other areas. Wuthnow points out the lack of any “caretaker institutions” in American society for people who are out of college but are not yet established older adults. All of the opportunities for support and socialization available from preschool through college end with graduation and, as Wuthnow writes, “We provide *almost nothing* for the developmental tasks that are accomplished when people are in their twenties and thirties” (12). Young people may well be highly individualistic, but they are also, as Wuthnow says, largely “forced” to be so.

Wuthnow has plenty of bad news to spread around, to mainline and evangelical Protestants alike. It is now well-known that mainline denominations declined in the 1970s and 1980s primarily because of demographics: members of those churches did not have enough children to replace themselves. The consequences of that statistical fact are now sadly evident, as moderate to liberal churches struggle to attract young people and families with children. But as the childless demographic of the mainline now typifies American society in general, Wuthnow warns, evangelicals are now heading toward a similar slump.

Clearly, the young adults in Wuthnow's study pose significant questions about the future prospects of evangelical Christianity. Much like their baby boomer parents, they are spiritual "bricoleurs," constructing custom-made faiths from a range of religious resources. But they are also, Wuthnow says, "tinkerers" and "hedgers," engaged in complex negotiations with the received truths of their traditions. Though the majority of young evangelicals might insist, for example, that the Bible is the inerrant word of God, in less guarded moments they would also allow that adherents of other faiths stand a decent chance of salvation. All in all, it's an odd picture: Wuthnow's young evangelicals are fairly tolerant of homosexuality, polarized against abortion, and relatively hostile toward immigrants and outsiders.

Evangelical churches are missing the mark in other areas as well. Wuthnow shows, for example, that the biggest fans of contemporary Christian worship are people in their early 40s; only 12 percent of men and women ages 21 to 29 share their enthusiasm. The highly touted "virtual church," allowing culturally relevant access to religion through the wonders of the Internet, has also been oversold, according to Wuthnow. Although most young adults do spend a great deal of their time surfing websites, they are usually not looking for an online worship experience.

What do young adults want from religion? Wuthnow quotes one commentator who argues that most of them are "looking for love, not salvation" (223). That means, apparently, that churches will have to offer authentic community and maintain a range of open spiritual choices. Size, worship style, and theological content do not particularly matter. "Vital churches" will need to be open and honest about religious pluralism, provide opportunities for conversations with people of other faiths, and confront rising polarization around religiously charged social issues.

All told, this is a bleak and still fairly confusing picture of what may prove to be a significant watershed in American religious history. If Wuthnow's projections are accurate, then a great deal of the spiritual apparatus in this country is simply headed in the wrong direction. He raises hard questions for purveyors of Christian colleges and for the "pro-family" advocates in both mainline and conservative churches. Certainly, fears about the rising generation are nothing new, and in the past such anxieties have spurred creativity and innovation. But

this time around, Wuthnow seems to suggest, the past may no longer provide the answers that an unprecedented present will require.

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The Cambridge History of Christianity V: Eastern Christianity.

Edited by **Michael Angold**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. xx + 724 pp. \$180 cloth.

Though most are informative, the contributions in this volume are uneven in scope, approaches to subject matter, and quality. Overall, the work strikes one less as an authoritative reference than as a pastiche. In comparison to the Cambridge Ancient History volumes, which also deal with Eastern Christianity, for example vols. 13 and 14, the present collection was not as well-planned. It should have carried the title “Eastern Christian Churches” rather than “Eastern Christianity.” Judging from its presentation, it would seem that between 1000 C.E. and the modern period the population east of the Adriatic numbered merely a few hundred clerics and theologians, and one pilgrim.

Taken individually, many of the articles are done well, but as an ensemble they are incoherent. The best example of this is Alexander Grishin’s contribution, “Bars’kyj and the Orthodox Community” (210–228). This text constitutes one of two articles on Byzantine Orthodoxy that also offer data on what actual Christians believed and experienced, the other being Chris Chulos’s “Russian Piety from Peter the Great to 1917” (348–370). However, unlike Chulos’s contribution, Grishin’s is much too narrow in scope for a work of this type. It is essentially a retelling of the travels of one person. Grishin does not even attempt to provide a reflection on the social data that can be found throughout his work. In another context, the article would be a gem in the rough. In the present setting, it feels out of place.

Paschalis M. Kitromilides, in “The Legacy of the French Revolution: Orthodoxy and Nationalism” (229–249), offers something other than objective historiography. The author’s bias is stated clearly on 246, in reference to two Arab Christian intellectuals of the twentieth century, Khalil Sakakini and Iskandar Quburisi. According to Kitromilides, “It turned out that, if an Arab was to commit his life to the nationalist cause, he had to leave his Christianity behind. This is what both of these remarkable thinkers opted to do, leaving a powerful existential testimony on the incompatibility between Orthodox Christianity and nationalism.” Many Palestinian Orthodox