

The final topical chapter suggests why Catholics have been slow to engage environmental issues, either in sermons or in social action groups. Since Pope Francis's *Laudato Si* in 2015, however, this pattern may be changing, as the Vatican's support for ecological initiatives and care for the planet are being mirrored in local efforts to support the Green Revolution.

With a nice blend of anecdote, ethnography, sociological and theological reflection, *Catholic Social Activism* is informative and necessary reading for undergraduate and graduate students and for those who can only regard the Catholic Church as bound by an archaic conservatism. This work demonstrates the significant challenges that progressive Catholics have made against labor injustice, just war theory, militarism, gender ideology, a male-only clergy, colonialism in Central and South America, and environmental degradation.

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***This Is Our Message: Women's Leadership in the New Christian Right.* By Emily Suzanne Johnson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. viii + 224 pp. \$29.95 cloth.**

For those old enough to remember the 2008 presidential contest between Barack Obama and John McCain, Sarah Palin's interview with Katie Couric is still likely a fixed data point in the Republican ticket's failure. The Alaskan governor that McCain picked as his running mate was going to have to prove herself to the CBS news anchor if the public was going to take Palin as a serious choice for vice president. Her assertion, "I can see Russia from my house," became a punch line in coverage of Palin and damaged McCain's reputation for sensible statesmanship. But, as Emily Suzanne Johnson argues, Palin's remark about Russia was a real punch line—not from the governor, but *Saturday Night Live*. It was remotely a translation of the governor's interview with Charlie Gibson on ABC news. There, in response to a question on foreign policy, Palin had said that someone could see Russia from an island in Alaska. What she actually said is less important for appreciating this new book by Emily Suzanne Johnson than what the Republican vice presidential candidate exemplified. The vice presidential nominee was the culmination of forty years of evangelical women in the public eye. Instead of a risible conservative Republican, as Johnson argues, Palin's candidacy demonstrated the force that evangelical women had become in national life and within the Republican Party.

That perspective on GOP women characterizes a smart monograph that chronicles the most popular women in the New Christian Right. Johnson devotes chapters that run roughly chronologically, from Marabel Morgan and Anita Bryant, through Beverly LaHaye and Tammy Faye Bakker, down to Palin and Michele Bachmann. Morgan's best-selling book, *Total Woman* (1974), in effect domesticated feminism for stay-at-home wives and mothers by calling attention to the value of women's work in the home. Bryant indirectly built on Morgan's appeal as a beauty queen (she finished third place in the 1959 Miss America Pageant) who later became a spokesperson both for national corporations and political organizations opposed to gay rights. LaHaye built indirectly on both Morgan and Bryant's legacies, first to amplify the former's

advice about making a happy home (and sexually satisfied husband), and second to advance the latter's activism. In LaHaye's case, the cause was opposing the Equal Rights Amendment. Her vehicle was the 1979 organization Concerned Women for America. Bakker is an odd presence in the book since she (and her husband, Jim) were not political nor were they particularly aggressive about family values. But Johnson argues persuasively that Bakker demonstrated the wide berth that women had in the New Christian Right and that evangelical conservatives built their own kind of feminism. Palin and Bachmann, for Johnson, function as heirs to a generation of female leadership within the religious Right that enabled them both to hold public office and participate meaningfully in contests for America's presidency.

These biographical sketches allow Johnson to make two important points. One concerns the rise and growth of family-values ideology among political conservatives in the United States. The other, perhaps more significant than the first, is the place of conservative women within modern feminism. Johnson's book raises a question about the degree to which movement feminism has represented conservative women. She observes that the prevailing outlook among scholars in the field is that women who do not share the feminist movement's platform of pro-choice, pro-diversity, and left-leaning public policy are not truly feminists. But, Johnson adds, to dismiss Morgan and the rest of her subjects "as simply patriarchal or anti-woman is to ignore the millions of women who attend conservative Christian churches" and vote for Republican candidates. If the history of women matters, it should not exclude the ones with conservative outlooks.

If Johnson's monograph has deficiencies, they revolve around the history of conservatism since World War II. Although the author devotes some attention to Phyllis Schlafly, another prominent conservative woman whose Eagle Forum preceded LaHaye's Concern Women for America by six years, the emphasis on evangelical figures obscures the degree to which Roman Catholics like Schlafly forged many of the organizations, policies, and arguments that conservatives championed and that transformed the Republican Party. At the same time, that neglect of the wider conservative movement, spearheaded in the 1950s by figures like William F. Buckley, Jr. and Schlafly, renders an understanding of the Right that leans more on family values and sex than on national security, limited government, and American patriotism. Had Johnson attended to the wider set of conservative attitudes, she could have rendered a valuable exploration of the ties between hearth, bedroom, national pride, and international stability.

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***The Election of the Evangelical: Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, and the Presidential Contest of 1976.* By: Daniel Williams. Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas. xviii + 446 pp. \$39.95 hardcover.**

Newsweek magazine declared 1976 as "The Year of Evangelical" after Jimmy Carter, an unknown former Governor of Georgia and self-declared born-again Christian, surprised political pundits by winning the Democratic Party's nomination for