

by the church. Chapter 4 examines novels that “reinvent” the Marian persecutions of 1555–58, the authors of many drawing from Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* as a reminder of the price that Protestant martyrs paid for their faith. Chapter 5 discusses novels written by Anglo-Catholic and Roman Catholic authors that represent the Reformation as a “traumatic moment in European history, yet one that could be healed” (181), a moment in which both Marian and Elizabethan persecutions were caused by political and historical forces that had passed into history. Finally, as if to demonstrate how valuable these controversial historical fictions are for understanding canonical texts, chapter 6 interprets Charles Dickens’ 1841 novel *Barnaby Rudge*, and the coda that follows discusses George Eliot’s novel *Romola*.

The quality of Burstein’s scholarship is extraordinary: her analyses encompass some six centuries of primary and secondary sources, ranging from Foxe through Charles Taylor’s *A Secular Age* (2007) and Euan Cameron’s *Enchanted Europe* (2011). Yet this impressive scholarship “reads easily”; many of her references and discussions of sources and interpretations occur in the footnotes, where they do not interrupt the flow of her analysis, but support it impeccably. Burstein’s study serves as a model for how to read and discuss literary texts: always incorporating analyses of specific novels, histories, and scholarship into the broader patterns of Victorian religious discourse, while consistently providing fine, close readings of the texts. Finally, Burstein’s writing offers a model of intelligent, often witty, handling of complex ideas with balance and detachment—that is, of fairness to all sides on important questions that even today can be fraught with emotion.

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Catholic Progressives in England after Vatican II. By Jay P. Corrin. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013. 523 pages. \$49.00 (paper). doi: 10.1017/hor.2014.51

In their radical 1966 *Slant Manifesto*, a group of Cambridge-based academics made the audacious claim that “Christians can never be conservatives, or liberals, or even right-wing socialists; they must fight capitalism as evil; they must align themselves perhaps with all those traditional enemies of the Church, left-wing socialists and atheistic Marxists” (217). The efforts of this small, elite, quixotic, and marginal movement, described by the distinguished church historian Adrian Hastings as a sort of “intellectual Beatles” group during its heyday (1964–70), are the focus of Jay P. Corrin’s fascinating and accomplished study of British Catholicism after the Second World War.

Building on his acclaimed book *Catholic Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democracy* (2002), Corrin devotes the first half of this work to providing a background to and context for the intellectual formulation of *Slant's* theological philosophy of revolution. In so doing, he provides a well-grounded introduction to the diverse currents synthesized by the movement, such as Continental “New Theology,” British Marxist New Left politics, and the shifting theological agendas manifest in the 1960s Johannine encyclicals and the Vatican II decrees. This eminently readable, though lengthy, overview provides (for a predominantly American audience) a helpful if somewhat caricatured introduction to the English Catholic Church—this is a tale of the ghetto, an authoritarian and conservative hierarchy, and a cowed, mostly Irish, obedient laity.

Corrin is a more reliable and assured guide in his persuasive analysis of the foundations of 1960s progressivism in the legacy of Cecil and G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc—despite the failure of most within the *Slant* movement itself (with the notable exceptions of Angela and Adrian Cunningham) to acknowledge this Distributist influence or “taproot” (41), as Corrin describes it. Chapter 4, exploring the contours of the “New Theology” liturgical reform, and most especially the long-term, little-appreciated influence of Teilhard de Chardin, is particularly helpful in situating not only the Catholic New Left, but also in describing a cultural climate propitious for the development of Catholic liberalism leading into, and beyond, the “Conciliar event.” In this vein, I would have liked to see a more nuanced discussion of the intellectual and relational networks between this interwar generation and a vibrant English Catholicism in the 1940s and 1950s—foreshadowed by Sheed and Ward, and encouraged by Catholic Action associational culture, especially through the Young Christian Workers, the Catholic Social Guild, and the Sword of the Spirit. While James Lothian, in *The Making and Unmaking of the English Catholic Intellectual Community, 1910–1950* (2009), has described this period as the “unmaking” of the English Catholic community, for Corrin it is a lacuna before a “remaking” through the efforts of *Slant* intellectuals such as Terry Eagleton, Bernard Sharratt, Martin Shaw, Adrian and Angela Cunningham, Neil Middleton, Brian Wicker, and the Dominicans Herbert McCabe and Laurence Bright. Attention to the everyday aspirations, anxieties, and activities of ordinary English Catholics, not merely to those of an intellectual elite, foregrounds a slightly different landscape and, in doing so, challenges Corrin’s flat descriptions of postwar “conformity, conservatism, subcultural separation, and religious quietude” (5). For more on this point, a reader can reference my recent book *Faith in the Family: A Lived Religious History of English Catholicism, 1945–1982* (2013).

Corrin's narrative hits its stride in part 3 with his discussion of Catholic involvement in the New Left (and movements such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), a detailed intellectual critique of the *Slant* movement and its publications, and the efforts of these Catholic radicals to promote Christian-Marxist dialogue. There is also an important synoptic summary of the Charles Davis and Herbert McCabe, OP, "affairs," which offers invaluable insights into a complex brouhaha and serves itself as a case study of the broad theological spectrum within the English Catholic community during the conciliar years. Corrin's commentaries here, and more tellingly his footnotes, are rich in anecdotes, the interplay of personalities, the illumination of personal/political commitments, and reflections (both nostalgic and judicious) on the contribution of the movement from a distance of fifty years. Corrin's assiduous efforts to harness the participation of these individuals and to archive their written correspondence—especially given the recent deaths of three key participants—constitute one of the most significant and innovative contributions that this study makes to the historiography of twentieth-century English Catholicism.

While not the first study of the *Slant* movement—and Corrin could have done more to explicitly acknowledge previous scholarship in this area—his tour de force will stand as the definitive history of a daring, utopian, ineffectual, but exciting constellation of individuals who "occupy a significant niche in the history of British Catholicism" (368). Sixty years on, and in the context of a new papacy, this is a timely account of the collective efforts of a middle-class, well-educated, and energetic group of English Catholics to "synthesize and integrate Catholic social thinking with some of the most advanced epistemological innovations in the social sciences" (368). As such, it just might rouse a new generation of Catholics, inspired by Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium*, to think more about the historical and intellectual resources, or taproots, available for a present-day, theological prioritization of the poor, marginalized, and oppressed.

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Disciplining Christians: Correction and Community in Augustine's Letters. By Jennifer V. Ebbeler. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. vii + 254 pages. \$74.00.

doi: 10.1017/hor.2014.52

Jennifer V. Ebbeler advances the hypothesis that Augustine departed from the customary epistolary practice of late antiquity to develop a novel