

Congregational women contributed to the still contentious set of policies that separated Aboriginal parents and children. The book is well written and structured. The only quibble is the placing of captions in the prelims of the book rather than with each photograph. Overall this is a thoughtful and accessible synthesis of narrative and analysis that makes a valuable contribution to the wider history of women and religion.

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Preacher girl. Uldine Utley and the industry of revival. By Thomas A. Robinson. Pp. xii + 320 incl. 19 ills. Waco, Tx: Baylor University Press, 2016. \$49.95. 978 14

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Fundamentalists' war on theological modernism and cultural decadence in the 1920s often forged strange alliances in the United States. Contending for the old time religion and opposing Darwinism, alcohol, divorce and worldly entertainment united forces otherwise rent asunder by theology, ecclesiology and such contentious issues as the proper role of women in ministry. With America's identity as a Christian nation at stake, distinctions blurred in ways that challenge assumptions a century later on where the battle lines were drawn in postwar America. Revival in the Church and in American culture mobilised all sorts of crusaders in a common cause. Even child evangelists answered the call to do battle with the world, the flesh and the devil. Illuminating a forgotten field of that war, Thomas Robinson, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Lethbridge in Canada, reconstructs the story of Uldine Utley (1912–95), largely forgotten now but once as famous as Billy Sunday and any Hollywood starlet of the Jazz Age. Utley succeeded beyond anything she or her parents imagined in the revival 'industry' of the Twenties, drawing large crowds, attracting headline notice in the press, winning celebrity endorsements from leading Fundamentalists, and publishing her own magazine and sermon collections. John Roach Straton, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Manhattan, overrode the objections of his deacons to promote the child prodigy at the height of her career, sharing his pulpit with a child, a female, and a Pentecostal baptised in the Holy Spirit and blessed with the gift of tongues and faith healing. Utley began preaching at the age of eleven, soon after her conversion in Southern California under the ministry of Pentecostal revivalist Aimee Semple McPherson. She ended her public career at twenty-four, by then licensed and ordained in the Methodist Episcopal Church. In this sympathetic account, Robinson confronts the dark side of fame, the costs imposed on a child evangelist by a rootless family life, and the suffering endured through mental illness. This is a recognisably human story. It puts a face on what are too often abstract categories. Robinson was both blessed and cursed by his discovery of a trove of new material late in the writing of his book. His unwieldy account ends up being two books – one an intimate family portrait, one a story of the big business of modern revivalism – that never really hold together. It is marred by disorganisation, repetition, extraneous details and a distracting amount of speculation that raises nagging questions about how much concrete evidence there is for many of his generalisations about

Utley's place in the history of American revivalism. Historians of American religion will be left wanting to know more about the criticisms levelled against her and her supporters in the religious and popular press. Nevertheless, Robinson succeeds in reintroducing a neglected yet once widespread phenomenon in American religious and cultural history – the child evangelist. At the very least, he confronts readers with the problem of what it meant to be a 'conservative' in the culture wars of the 1920s when contending for the faith often took the form of anything but adherence to traditional ecclesiology or statements of faith and practice.

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The doctrine of God in Reformed orthodoxy, Karl Barth, and the Utrecht School. A study in method and content. By Dolf te Velde. (Studies in Reformed Theology, 25.) Pp. xiv + 820 incl. 1 table. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2013. €231. 978 90 04 25245 5; 1571 4799

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A monograph researching the material consequences of methodological choices for the doctrine of God among Reformed orthodox theologians (roughly 1565–1790) would be a challenge in its own right. A monograph on the intersection of methodology and the doctrine of God in the theology of Karl Barth would also be a monumental undertaking. And, again, a monograph investigating the impact of methodology on theology proper among a group of diverse Dutch systematic theologians, the so-called 'Utrecht School', would be a formidable task. But this is exactly what Dolf te Velde has set out to accomplish, not separately, but in one lengthy volume. The question under consideration is relatively simple: does the way in which and means by which the doctrine of God is formulated substantially inform the material content of the Reformed doctrine of God? Te Velde attempts to answer this question by combining historical and systematic research. He is aware that differing cultural and intellectual contexts will certainly impact methodological choices (for example, the dominant form of liberal Protestantism, as well as influence of Neo-Kantianism, in the case of Karl Barth; or Ramism and Aristotelianism in the case of Reformed Orthodoxy), but also aware that the systematic potential of each strand of thought needs to be evaluated in order to conclude whether their methodological choices are fatal to a thoroughly Christian concept of God within a Reformed context. Therefore, the overall argument pertains not simply to historical contexts, but also systematic conclusions that could or should be considered permanent milestones in a Reformed doctrine of God.

When seen as a whole, te Velde's thesis demonstrates that the correlation and interaction between method and content occurs mainly on the level of questions asked, concepts employed and manner of argumentation employed. In short, 'method (understood as the whole of argumentative strategies) serves in theology as a vehicle to transmit the message of scripture in response to historical and cultural circumstances' (p. 724). In the context of Reformed Orthodoxy, te Velde argues, contrary to many contemporary detractors, that the 'doctrine of God ...