

Department of History
TTP Readings and Prompts

Articles

Cadegan, Una "Not All Autobiography is Scholarship: Thinking, as a Catholic, about History," in John Fea, Jay Green, and Eric Miller, eds., *Confessing History: Explorations in Christian Faith and the Historian's Vocation* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2010) 39-59. (20 pages)

- Cadegan explores the new vistas of imagining made possible by the convergence of historical scholarship and Christian faith. The author suggests that the Christian historian's pursuit of scholarly intellectual tasks ultimately results in the reinvigoration and deepening of the historian's faith.

Huffman, Joseph, "Faith, Reason, and the Text: The Return of the Middle Ages in Postmodern Scholarship," *Christian Scholars Review* 19 (1999), 281-302. (21 pages)

- Joseph P. Huffman examines the cultural affinities between the medieval and the postmodern as alternatives to the modern Enlightenment project. He concludes that medieval and postmodern approaches to textual authority reveal the epistemological limitations of modernism. He therefore encourages Christians to cease privileging modernism and to recover their neglected medieval Christian legacy as a valuable resource for speaking with relevance to the postmodern world.

Kirby, James, "Providence, Progress, and the Incarnation," (chapter 8), *Historians and the Church of England. Religion and Historical Scholarship* (Oxford University Press, 2016) 189-215. (26 pages)

- Kirby's exploration in Victorian intellectual history explores the vital relationship between the Church of England and the development of historical scholarship in the Victorian and Edwardian era. What emerges is a compelling portrait of the Church of England as concerned not just with narrowly religious functions, but also with scholarly and cultural ones that would last into the early twentieth century.

LaGrand, James, "The Problems of Preaching Through History," in *Confession History: Explorations in Christian Faith and the Historian's Vocation* (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2010) 187-217. (20 pages)

- LaGrand argues that understanding the past on its own terms without succumbing to the temptation to pass moral judgement is essential to the historical enterprise. Christians need to avoid the pitfalls of preaching through history or taking a providential approach to explain the workings of God when all we can discern is the activity of humans.

Marsden, George. "Human Depravity: A Neglected Explanatory Category," in Wilfred McClay, ed., *Figures in the Carpet: Finding the Human Person in the American Past* (2007), pp. 15-32. (17 pages)

- Wide-ranging and insightful, Marsden's essay touches on everything from original sin and scapegoating to American optimism and the "culture of 'whatever'" while

engaging with the work of Reinhold Niebuhr, Alan Wolfe, Richard Rorty, and others along the way. Marsden's argument is that the traditional Christian teaching about the doctrine of original sin and pervasiveness of human depravity can be empirically verified through the activities of humans in the modern world.

McGreevy, John "Faith Histories," in Andrea Sterk, ed., *Religion, Scholarship, & Higher Education. Perspectives, Models, and Future Prospects* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2002) 63-75. (12 pages)

- McGreevy argues that religious perspectives can play a legitimate role in spurring academic interpretations, reaffirming the well-known epigram of Anselm of Canterbury, "I believe in order to understand."

Mullen, Shirley. "Faith, Learning, and the Teaching of History" in *Teaching as an Act of Faith: Theory and Practice in Church-Related Higher Education*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2002 (277-293). (17 pages)

- Mullen argues for the integration of faith in learning, calling for teachers to deepen their commitment to Christian faith in their presentation of historical subjects and class discussions. She encourages Christian educators to help students to develop empathy, encourage humility, and foster sensitivity to historical complexity.

Schweiger, Beth Barton "Seeing Things: Knowledge and Love in History," in John Fea, Jay Green, and Eric Miller, eds., *Confessing History: Explorations in Christian Faith and the Historian's Vocation* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2010) 60-83. (23 pages)

- Christian historian Beth Barton Schweiger argues that the professionalization of the historical discipline became the vehicle by which the guild established its boundaries to ensure conformity to its rigid standards. This poses a problem to the Christian historian whose scholarly endeavors also include the pursuit of love, compassion, mercy, and reconciliation. In a profession where 'knowledge is power' Barton reminds her audience to find mercy, justice and love in the busy, productive, and yet chilly gatherings of professional historians.

Book

Williams, Rowan *Why Study the Past? The Quest for the Historical Church* (Eerdmans Publishing, 2006). (135 pages)

In this slender but thoughtful book, respected theologian and churchman Rowan Williams suggests that the study of church history is important not for winning arguments about the church's past but for clarifying who we are as time-bound human beings. Good history is a moral affair because it opens up a point of reference that is distinct from us yet not wholly alien.

Total Pages:

Articles: 123

Book: 135

Grand total: 258 pages

Prompts:

Drawing on the assigned TT&P Reading List, please offer your assessment of the issues at stake in the prompts provided below. Please keep your response to approximately 1-2 single-spaced pages per prompt.

1. What kinds of questions have Christian historians pursued at the intersections of their faith and the discipline of history?
2. How have the rich and varied traditions of the Christian faith informed and sustained the historiography and practices of history?