

to see true Christian grace in action as they and the Reverend Hawkes engaged their opposition with “soul force” techniques of nonviolent resistance (see <www.soulforce.org>).

The saga continues in the courts and in the federal and provincial responses. Our lives are going to be touched by this event and it is wise to have the perspective that this book gives its readers.

Lorraine MacKenzie Shepherd. *Feminist Theologies for a Post-Modern Church: Diversity, Community, Scripture.* New York: Peter Lang, 2002. 264 pp. US\$29.95. ISBN 0-8204-5572-5.

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Lorraine MacKenzie Shepherd's book testifies to the impact of postmodern methods in the theological academy. Diverse feminist approaches, poststructuralism, postliberal approaches and postcolonial theory are all shaking up the pre-conceptions exemplified by the historical critical method, which held sway in biblical interpretation for several generations.

Shepherd locates herself as a lesbian feminist pastor/theologian of the United Church of Canada (4). Interestingly, she does not choose the queer construction for her work, although she might be tempted to do so, insofar as it draws on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender identity and experience in church and society. Intersecting identities, another topic of interest to queer theorists, is also a significant subtheme in the book. Her raw material is the work of theologians, three of whom — Mary McClintock Fulkerson, Kwok Pui-lan, and Kathryn Tanner — have an affinity for germinal thinkers who have inspired queer theorists: Judith Butler (55), Jacques Derrida (89), Michel Foucault (108), Gayatri Spivak (81), and others.

In the first part of her book, Shepherd competently summarizes and critiques the work of Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Fulkerson, Kwok, and Tanner. All four have responded to the problems of theologies in modernity, including the claims to objectivity, false universalism (15), sexism and patriarchy (or “kyriarchy” in Schüssler

Fiorenza's vocabulary) (18), Eurocentrism and colonialism (79), dualism (110), and reification of identities (112).

Shepherd examines her sources' responses to modernism through the lenses of theological method, revelation, power, and authority. Although her approaches to the four scholars differ, they are similar enough to provide helpful comparisons. Throughout the book, Shepherd makes reference to how each of her sources might have a liberative effect for those on the margins of power for reasons of class, race, sexuality, or gender identity.

The overview of Schüssler Fiorenza's critical response to modernism traces two decades of evolution in her thought. Shepherd sees Schüssler Fiorenza's hermeneutics of suspicion and rhetorical criticism of scriptural texts by faith communities, especially the "ekklesia of wo/men" (a term that seeks to honor "the multiple identities of women and oppressed men" 22), as key elements in her effort to locate revelation within the struggle for freedom and dignity by communities of people, rather than within a text (39).

Where Schüssler Fiorenza seeks primary accountability with the "ekklesia of wo/men" Fulkerson's poststructural response to modernism plays to the academy. Referencing her work to biblical scholar Stephen Moore (53) — whose work resonates with the thought of Michel Foucault (54) and Judith Butler (55) — the 'sins' of modernism include the assumption of a stable transcendental intent, which might be elucidated from the text, and the stable subject as author or reader of the text. Fulkerson wants to build a hermeneutic that will honor the diversity of women readers who read biblical text diversely; the standard by which multiple readings might be judged are the "community's canon" (65). For Fulkerson, the performance of scripture (65) in a faith community whose members are aware of their own "location" will enable them to "attend to the other," which might include being challenged by the other with a greater degree of "agapic love" (71).

Kwok's East Asian and multifaith heritage lead her to propose a postcolonial multifaith hermeneutic. The Jewish and Christian scriptures must be read alongside, and informed by, the sacred writings of other faith traditions. Also for Kwok, "God's truth" can be revealed in the context of the lives of oppressed people whenever liberation is *enacted* (89). Shepherd disagrees with Kwok's Derridian "rejection of a prior unmediated presence behind the text" (89) and

believes the Word, while not the text itself, can be revealed in the engagement between community and text. Kwok also draws on Korean *minjung* theology, or theology from the view of the common people. She does not want a Western use of *minjung* to continue a colonialist pattern of homogenizing all “the masses” but rather to point to the multiple and intersecting identities of those who engage scripture and enact its liberative intent (95,101).

Tanner takes up the unenviable task of finding the “radical, liberative potential” in mainstream tradition (108). For Tanner, modernism has sterilized the tradition itself with its dualism and essentialism, which ultimately allowed totalitarianism to arise in Western societies. To traditional notions of “God’s transcendence and God’s universal providential agency” (114), Tanner offers a postliberal response. She argues that a radical commitment to God’s transcendence *and* providential agency has the potential to create a new basis for our relationship with plants, animals, and the Earth (128), and can lead to a healthy “non-idolatrous self-esteem” (129) that counters individualistic hubris and honors the other.

The second part of Shepherd’s book offers two practical applications of her work. The first is a critical assessment of the nearly half-century of theologizing on marriage and human sexuality by the United Church of Canada. The second is her contribution of a “more adequate feminist theological method” (216), “a braided approach” (11) based on the insights of her sources. Shepherd’s analysis of the United Church of Canada’s marriage and sexuality statements offers valuable insight for church and human sexuality historians and for anyone doing theological or ethical work in this area in our time. Shepherd does not condemn those who worked on these statements — which were progressive for their time — but points out how these documents and their genesis would have been ethically and theologically richer had their authors had access to the resources that she has at hand. Shepherd shows how the United Church documents have a modern, liberal bias since they use historical critical biblical methods and defer to science. The authors of these reports (except the one from 1988) did not have access to such concepts as the possibility of multiple meanings in biblical texts, suspicion that the race, gender, and location of the authors might affect the content of the reports, respecting “the other” as a valued source of insight, and mining the liberative strands within the United

Church of Canada's own tradition. Shepherd thus highlights how several postmodern feminist methods could genuinely enrich the process of making theological statements in regard to sexual orientation and gender identity, and beyond.

This book is of practical use to those who study theology, ethics, or biblical text in a postmodern key. Shepherd does not set her sources against each other, but rather tries to see the best in each one based on her location and goals. Building on her respect for her sources, Shepherd "braids" their contributions into a feminist theological method of her own. She has made a valuable contribution in synthesizing the work of four diverse feminist theologians and elucidating the usefulness of their methods for theologizing on sexuality and gender identity in the Canadian context. One hopes her work will influence both the academy and the current generation of church theologians and ethicists whose statements affect the lives of queers in Canada and elsewhere.

Bruce MacDougall. *Queer Judgments: Homosexuality, Expression and the Courts in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000. 360pp. \$60.00 (Cdn); \$24.95 (Cdn). ISBN: 0802009514; 0802079148.

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In *Queer Judgments*, Bruce MacDougall explores an important and timely question. The goal of the book is identified in the introduction: "This book is concerned with expression of and about homosexuality and how the courts have been implicated in that expression. Its subject is the way in which judges in Canada, particularly in the period 1960 to mid 1997, have constructed homosexuals and homosexuality and how they have betrayed their assumptions about both in their decisions" (3). That is, the book is not about the outcomes of court decisions; they have been fairly

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