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Review

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Review by: Donald A. Luidens

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the role and importance of the laity in the church, it was actually Napoleon who imposed parish councils, not for religious purposes, but for the control and administration of church property seized during the French Revolution. The members of these councils were elected among the wealthiest parishioners. Thus, originally, the parish councils constituted a kind of religious power elite mandated by civil society. At the end of the nineteenth century in Alsace and Moselle, then part of Germany, it was also the civil society (namely Bismarck) who imposed parish councils among Lutherans. Thus, originally, parish councils were far from theologically revolutionary institutions promoting the priesthood of the laity against the supremacy of the clerical class.

Since the pastor is a member *ex officio* of the parish councils, there is little antagonism between the two. Moreover, pastors usually select new council members. If there are elections, there is no campaigning as in the civil society; in eight cases out of ten, elections only ratify previous selections presented on a closed list (134). Among Calvinists and Lutherans, the main purpose of the parish councils is administrative and/or consultative rather than spiritual (139). In most cases, decisions are made by consensus rather than by majority vote (153). The clergy-laity relations tend to favor cooperation and complementarity, rather than subordination and/or control, this tendency being strongest among evangelicals (167).

In conclusion, the parish councils do not constitute a power elite. Their members do not constitute a "specifically religious elite, but an elite that holds a leading position in the various sectors of public life" (173). There is no theological antagonism between pastors and the laity. This study will be of special interest to those specializing in European Protestantism; it could also inspire comparative research in the U.S.

PIERRE HEGY

*Adelphi University
Garden City, NY*



THE NEW RELIGIOUS RIGHT: PIETY, PATRIOTISM, AND POLITICS. By Walter H. Capps. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1990. xii + 241 pp. \$27.95 cloth; \$12.95 paper.

This is an unusual book to be reviewing for *JSSR*. Although it has some systematic description and analysis of religious phenomena, it is primarily a reflec-

tive work on the religious and political ideologies of the New Religious Right. His descriptive narrative is interesting, but it is when Capps makes historical and philosophical assessments that he presents his most useful insights.

Capps contends that the principal goal of the New Religious Right has been to marry fundamentalist Christianity with a reconstructed understanding of American history. Unprecedented in its annals, the Religious Right (which runs the theological gamut from evangelicals through fundamentalists to pentecostals) has engaged in the political arena to propound this new gospel. The "demise" of contemporary society, whose weakness and travail are evident in all of life, is attributable to the failure of the American nation to live up to its divine commission as a chosen people. With the threat of apocalyptic disaster, the nation is called to a past marked by Christian morality and theocentricity.

Capps builds on five case studies for his discussion of "the movement." He begins with an account of the rise of Jerry Falwell, "the prophet" and "preacher." Falwell articulated the political agenda of the Religious Right and gave it form in the Moral Majority. Citing Francis Fitzgerald (whose *Cities on a Hill* presents a more satisfying portrait of Falwell and his community), Capps remarks that the New Religious Right is "about war," a militant religious movement which seeks to transform the culture and politics of America.

Francis Schaeffer is described as "the theologian, the teacher" of the movement, the first to give intellectual respectability to its critique of contemporary society, and the architect of its principal targets: secular humanism, utilitarian education, the Enlightenment, and so on. Schaeffer, a disciple of J. Gresham Machen (whose defrocking Schaeffer called "the most significant U.S. news in the first half of the twentieth century"), saw the twentieth-century church losing its moral keel and veering after false idols.

The Bob Jones University racial discrimination case, culminating in a 1983 Supreme Court ruling against the University, serves Capps as an illustration of the official backlash which has been marshalled against the movement, as well as of the galvanizing of the Right. The Supreme Court, in fact, is perceived as one of the principal agents for the collapse of "Christian America."

The rise and fall of Jim and Tammy Bakker illustrates the precariousness of the Religious Right's forays into wider public notice. It also highlights the diversity of the movement, for the first time revealing to the general public the fissures which run between fundamentalists and pentecostals, parish pastors and prime-time preachers.

The 1988 presidential campaign of Pat Robertson serves Capps as the high watermark of the movement. A logical extension of the ideological marriage of politics and religion, the campaign foundered on its internal inconsistencies. While the politics of democracy are inherently pluralizing, the explicit

claims of fundamentalist Christianity are absolute. Robertson ran into strong resistance from the "secular" world but also saw his stature within the movement tarnished because of his willingness to make political compromises (such as demitting his ministry during the campaign).

In the final analysis, according to Capps, these internal contradictions have undermined the New Religious Right. While it was working to establish a new "civil religion in the conservative key," it was also striving to be a "revitalization movement" committed to reinvigorating the public's moral resolve. In the end, the movement overloaded its circuits. While it might have helped to revitalize fundamentalism, which now has new music, a new openness to media technology, and a new level of theological sophistication, it has had little lasting effect on the American body politic. This epitaph for the Religious Right is predicated on Capps's contention that revitalization movements are single-generation struggles, and that the New Religious Right has had its time in the sun. In this conclusion, he presents a testable hypothesis that has yet to be confirmed.

DONALD A. LUIDENS

*Hope College
Holland, Michigan*



THE DARKER SIDE OF VIRTUE: CORRUPTION, SCANDAL AND THE MORMON EMPIRE. By Anson Shupe. Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1991. 186 pp. \$22.95 cloth.

Sociologist Anson Shupe's *THE DARKER SIDE OF VIRTUE* is bound to arouse controversy, as did *The Mormon Corporate Empire* (Beacon, 1985) which he co-authored with anthropologist John Heinerman. In fact, the present one in many ways serves as a sequel, exploring somewhat different aspects of issues covered in the earlier work. Many undoubtedly will assert that Shupe has written muckracking journalism rather than a sociological treatise, but few will be able to deny that he has written an engaging account of the seamier sides of a religion that Rodney Stark predicts is evolving into the next major world religion. Admitting that there is much in Mormonism that exemplifies a "triumph of community spirit and cooperation in the best American tradition" (11), the author sets out to reveal "a darker side to many of these well-known

Mormon virtues" (10).

In Chapter 1, Shupe briefly discusses some of the main features of Mormonism: (1) its claim to ongoing revelation, (2) its post-millennialism, (3) its historical tension with the larger society, (4) its special worldview, (5) its networks of kin and church, and (6) its incorporation of the Protestant work ethic. Drawing upon earlier research conducted by Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, the author reports in Chapter 2 ("The Myth of Mormon Missionizing: Where the Real Conversions Have Happened") that the home mission conversion system, in which Mormons befriend neighbors, work colleagues, or practically any Gentiles with whom they might interact on a regular basis, has proven to be a far more effective method of recruitment than has the well-known missionary program that sends young clean-cut Mormon youth to the corners of the world. This chapter also discusses Mormon missionary efforts, including covert ones, in Islamic and socialist-oriented societies. Chapter 3 covers scams and schemes that various Mormons, "despite their reputation for having hard-nosed economic sense" (45), have been involved in. Chapter 4 discusses the best well-publicized scam involving Mormons, namely the one in which the Mormon Church purchased forged documents from Mark Hofmann, and essentially provides a synopsis of information covered in three books written about the affair.

By focusing in Chapter 5 on the Lehi child sexual-abuse scare, which pitted small town Mormons against one another, the author demonstrates that Mormon domestic life suffers more or less from the same strains, real or imaginary, that Americans in general do. Chapters 6 and 7 discuss the dubious dealings of certain Mormons in high places, namely in U.S. intelligence agencies and the military-space-industrial complex. The congruence of Mormon hyper-patriotism and U.S. government intelligence activities helped to create "the 'Mormon Mafia,' a good-ol'-boy system of LDS favoritism in the FBI that surfaced during the 1980s" (124). The pressure that various Mormon church leaders placed on Utah politicians and James C. Fletcher, the former NASA director and a Mormon, to obtain a government contract for the Utah-based Thiokol Corporation to produce a booster rocket, played a role in the Challenger shuttle disaster.

In the concluding chapter, Shupe asserts that in contrast to the televangelist scandals of the late 1980s, "the darker side of Mormon virtue has received much less light" (161), in large part due to the Mormon Church's slick public relations program. Although Mormonism emerged as a despised sect forced to migrate from place to place, it has, like other successful religions, accommodated itself to the institutions of the larger society.

Despite his detailed discussion of how well Mormonism is integrated into the political economy of American society, Shupe asserts that "in many ways, Mormonism is still a colony marking time in modern America," a unique subculture. I do not wish to