



8-1-2007

Danger on the Doorstep: Anti-Catholicism and American Print Culture in the Progressive Era (Book Review)

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Recommended Citation

Bademan, R. Bryan. "Danger on the Doorstep: Anti-Catholicism and American Print Culture in the Progressive Era" (Book Review). *Choice* 44.12 (2007): 2166.

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in Philadelphia. E. Mellen, 2006. 386p index ISBN 0773457542, \$119.95: ISBN 9780773457546, \$119.95

In his book *The Philadelphia Negro*, W.E.B. Du Bois examined African American leadership during the 1890s, concluding that black professionals sought to maintain their class advantages at the expense of a shared racial identity. Nelson (Univ. of California, Los Angeles) contends that little had changed over the ensuing decades. The author convincingly argues that African American leaders did indeed protect their own interests at the expense of identity. However, this notion isn't all that surprising. In this regard, black leaders were no different than their urban Irish or Italian counterparts. What is surprising is the contempt Nelson shows for the black professional classes. He seemingly asserts that black leaders were not "authentic" African Americans because they were imbued with "white" middle-class values, but fails to say exactly what is wrong with these supposedly "white" values. In the same vein, Nelson attacks northern-born black leadership for being "subservient" to whites because they differed culturally from southern-born blacks. To Nelson, white approval, not the obvious merits of "bourgeois" values, was to blame for interracial discord. **Summing Up:** Not recommended.—P. G. Connors, *Michigan Senate Majority Policy Office*

44-7037 BX1770 2006-17249 CIP
Nordstrom, Justin. **Danger on the doorstep: anti-Catholicism and American print culture in the Progressive Era.** Notre Dame, 2006. 296p index afp ISBN 0268036055 pbk, \$30.00: ISBN 9780268036058, \$30.00

In this first major exploration of anti-Catholic print culture in the 1910s, Nordstrom (Penn State Univ., Hazleton) argues that such anti-Catholicism became prominent by its "critical overlap" with discourses of progressivism, masculinity, and nationalism, but later in the decade took backstage to international wartime priorities. Progressive Era anti-Catholicism was distinctive, Nordstrom argues, because it insisted that Roman Catholicism was insufficiently liberal and therefore posed a threat to the nation's political fabric. In other words, anti-Catholic writers and editors worried that Roman Catholicism undermined US civic traditions, rather than its evolving racial or hereditary sense of national identity. And, of course, this development stands as the central, if predictable irony of the book: the purported enemy of liberalism ("Romanism") effectively brings to light the illiberal strains in US Progressive Era political culture. Nordstrom has nicely positioned his study historiographically, and has also included a helpful appendix with annotated anti-Catholic illustrations from the period. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Advanced history students and faculty.—R. B. Bademan, *Sacred Heart University*

44-7038 E467 2006-22090 CIP
Robins, Glenn. **The bishop of the Old South: the ministry and Civil War legacy of Leonidas Polk.** Mercer University, 2006. 243p bibl index afp ISBN 0881460389, \$35.00: ISBN 9780881460384, \$35.00

Bishop and general, Polk embodied many of the tensions within the Old South. Scion of a martial family and West Point educated, he left the military to become an Episcopal minister. But, as Robins shows, Polk melded the High Church ecclesiastical tradition with the evangelicalism of the southern frontier. At the same time, his seaman's ministry in New Orleans foreshadowed the postbellum social gospel movement that much of southern evangelicalism rejected. Slaveholder Polk attempted to attract slaves to his church while urging his white brethren to treat slaves with humanity, the core tension within the Christian South. As a general, Polk acted properly in occupying ostensibly neutral Kentucky; overall, Robins (Georgia Southwestern State Univ.) considers Polk's military performance "suspect." Polk found more success supporting revivalism in the Army of Tennessee. His death in battle made him a powerful symbol as soldier-priest to the lost cause movement. Although promised, Robins does not really complete the comparison between Polk and Charles Colcock Jones as slaveholders and Christians, but he does succeed in making Polk and the Episcopal Church part of the southern religious landscape. **Summing Up:** Recommended. All levels/libraries.—E. R. Crowther, *Adams State College*

44-7039 HX84 2006-41558 CIP
Ruotsila, Markku. **John Spargo and American socialism.** Palgrave

Macmillan, 2006. 336p bibl index ISBN 1403975000, \$75.00: ISBN 9781403975003, \$75.00

Ruotsila (Univ. of Tampere, Finland) has written a superb biography of a fascinating political activist and theorist whose intellectual odyssey began with doctrinaire Marxism and ended with Goldwater republicanism. Born in dire poverty in Cornwall, Spargo began as a promising leader in the British Social Democratic Federation. Coming to the US at age 25 in 1901, he served on the executive committee of the American Socialist Party, where he gravitated to the more moderate revisionist wing. His book *The Bitter Cry of the Children* (1906) established his reputation as a leading muckraker. From the outset of the Russian revolution of November 1917, Spargo was an impassioned enemy of Bolshevism, being particularly influential in framing the State Department's famous nonrecognition note of August 1920. He soon abandoned his socialism to support the Republican Party and long remained a staunch backer of Herbert Hoover. His later years involved fighting the New Deal, warning against Soviet expansion, and manifesting enthusiasm for the Episcopal Church and Freemasonry. The author writes well and ably catches the subtleties of ideological combat, and draws heavily upon manuscript and oral history collections, scholarly articles and monographs and the contemporary literature. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Most levels/libraries.—J. D. Doenecke, *New College of Florida*

44-7040 HC106 2006-44947 CIP
Schivelbusch, Wolfgang. **Three new deals: reflections on Roosevelt's America, Mussolini's Italy, and Hitler's Germany, 1933-1939.** tr. by Jefferson Chase. Metropolitan Books, 2006. 242p bibl index ISBN 080507452X, \$26.00: ISBN 9780805074529, \$26.00

In this wide-ranging, largely critical look at the New Deal compared with National Socialism and Fascism, the "Reflections" in the title are mostly about National Socialism and the New Deal; there are about only ten pages focusing on Italian Fascism, with occasional references to the Soviet Union. The author bases his definition of liberalism on "economic and political laissez-faire philosophy," not the liberalism of more recent decades. Schivelbusch compares the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Subsistence Homestead Program with programs in Nazi Germany, and the Tennessee Valley Authority with the autobahn. He describes the New Deal as "a homogeneous American movement with Fascist affinities." There seems to be a serious lack of familiarity with the voluminous US literature on the New Deal, and with the US political system. Although the author recognizes that FDR did not have absolute power, he sees congressional investigating committees of the 1930s as similar to the purge or show trials in the Soviet Union. Schivelbusch strongly criticizes the National Recovery Administration but fails to recognize that Henry Ford did not participate, or that the National Industrial Recovery Act was declared unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court in 1935. There is no formal bibliography, and quite a few quotations are not footnoted or identified. **Summing Up:** Optional. Upper-division undergraduates and above.—P. L. Silver, *Johnson State College*

E 44-7041 [Internet Resource]
The "Second Wave" and Beyond: Primary Sources of the Women's Movement, 1960 to Present
URL: <http://scholar.alexanderstreet.com/display/WASM/>

[Visited May'07] Four distinguished female scholars—Stephanie Gilmore, Kimberly Springer, Judith Ezekiel, and Sherri Barnes—edit this unusually well-designed site, hosted by Alexander Street Press. The site advertises itself as a collection of primary sources, but it is not (as is so often the case) a static assortment of random links and time lines that somebody posted and subsequently neglected. This site is an ongoing concern, providing relevant material to both researchers and teachers and inviting browsers to participate actively in its improvement. It is frequently updated, and in what seems like the epitome of the democratic feminist spirit, the site's users are encouraged to join in discussions and post their own topics, guaranteeing plenty of new content. The editors have divided the site into a number of sections. Researchers at all levels can benefit from the images, oral history collections, book reviews, and links to other feminist Web sites. One feature this reviewer particularly liked was the link to university archives, including detailed descriptions of women's history holdings. Additionally, there are