

Guaranteed Pure: The Moody Bible Institute, Business, and the Making of Modern Evangelicalism

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is “west” entails an “eastern” perspective, he nowhere engages with the Midwest region—does it overlap with the West? The recently rejuvenated Midwest studies movement was probably too recent for Kerstetter to take account of, but, there is no sign of his having read, for example, Philip Barlow’s case for a Midwest “Bible Suspender” of religious affiliation. (Indeed, it is puzzling that he did not seem to consult any of the five trans- or straddling-the-Mississippi volumes of AltaMira Press’s Religion by Region series, in one of which Barlow’s case appears. See “A Demographic Portrait: America Writ Small?” in *Religion and Public Life in the Midwest: America’s Common Denominator*, ed. Philip Barlow and Mark Silk [2004].)

Iowa makes no appearance in Kerstetter’s volume. He could have brought it in, say, with his discussion of Presbyterian home missionary Sheldon Jackson. He treats the important role Jackson played in territorial Alaska (116–17), but he could have noted the 1869 Sioux City Presbytery of Missouri River, which provided Jackson with the authority for his church-planting work around the West. Or, he might have considered discussing the Iowa-Oregon-California Quaker roots of Herbert Hoover. Or, he could have discussed Transcendental Meditation and its headquartering in Fairfield.

There are other problems. In coverage, his section “Modernism, Fundamentalism, and the Spirit of the West” (172–77) has no western examples of modernism. Also absent are the role of Judaism in Hollywood and Las Vegas and the importance of religion in the West in the rise of environmentalism (there is no mention of John Muir). In analysis, the theme of inspiration and innovation at times becomes a cookie-cutter “interpretation” in place of more nuanced reflection.

Kerstetter’s book, then, does not fully live up to its promise for western or Iowa religion. Still, the author has accomplished a great deal in synthesizing important developments and examples of religion in the American West.

Guaranteed Pure: The Moody Bible Institute, Business, and the Making of Modern Evangelicalism, by Timothy E. W. Gloege. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. xv, 307 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Bill R. Douglas recently retired from his role as a downtown carrier for the *Des Moines Register*, freeing him to concentrate on studying Iowa’s religious history.

Guaranteed Pure, along with Kevin Kruse’s *One Nation Under God*, may spark a new trend in American religious studies, combining business

and religious history. In pointing out the trend, I'm not denigrating it; most trends add significantly to our understanding and also speak to our present situation. And trends can create synergy, redefining or refining our perceptions.

This book challenges the reviewer's word limits, as it ranges from Protestant evangelical divergences in the late nineteenth century to Chicago labor history to the rise of corporate and advertising dominance over the economy—and, as Gloege argues, over swaths of American religion as well.

The book divides neatly into two eras: In the late nineteenth century, evangelicalism was dominant and, for successful revivalists like Dwight Moody, undifferentiated. But despite Moody's success as an evangelist in places like Chicago, higher criticism liberals, social gospel advocates, and dispensationalists all would play their part in derauling Moody's hoped-for consensus. (I question Gloege's reluctance to use Holiness as a category—Moody's problematic protégé Reuben Torrey was in that subset, as was the Keswick movement that the Moody Institute would embrace and the Pentecostal revolution it would shun.) But Moody did preach individual rather than social salvation—effectively embracing robber baron capitalism and rejecting radical alternatives to it.

Moody always seemed ambivalent about the Moody Bible Institute, but after his death came more certitude. Henry Crowell took over the institute, remaking it in his own image. Crowell had made his fortune consolidating the oat mill industry and using advertising to corner the market (that Quakers were not consulted in naming Quaker Oats did not faze Crowell; "pure" read the scroll of the iconic figure, hinting that other oatmeals were not). If the first half of the story is Moody searching for an elusive evangelical consensus, the twentieth-century half is Crowell seeking a Moody Institute brand that would be safely middle class, dispensationalist without being Pentecostal, and with a "product" that would gain dominant market share in the target demographic.

According to dispensationalist guru and Moody ally C. I. Scofield, interpreting the Bible meant dividing biblical history into seven dispensations, with the world currently in the sixth, or church, phase. Gloege gleefully describes how Scofield interpreted this to mean that only the Pauline epistles were relevant for contemporary Christians. Pentecostals accepted the dispensationalist schema, but jolted it forward: in the seventh, Kingdom era, passages less comfortable to the status quo like the Sermon on the Mount and the Book of Acts were in play. (On that point, non-dispensationalist social gospelers would agree.)

The Pentecostal interpretation was anathema to businessmen like Crowell.

Gloege also deftly describes how The Fundamentals project, which sought a new American Protestant orthodoxy, was funded by West Coast oil baron Lyman Stewart but largely framed and controlled by Crowell. Gloege is particularly good at showing the ways this “old-time religion” was not only not old but also ever shifting; how direct-mail marketing begat fundamentalism; and how capitalists like Crowell, whose success was based on retail sales and advertising, thought differently from speculators like Stewart. The contrast between Stewart’s obsession with end-time prophecy and Crowell’s careful cultivation of middle-class respectability, Gloege suggests, had roots in their divergent business paths.

Moody Bible Institute entered the 1920s thinking itself poised to be dominant in American religion but instead was hemmed in by a more militant fundamentalism (largely of its own creation) on the right and the Moody family’s dissatisfaction with its appropriation of Moody’s name for dispensationalist purposes in the center. Wary of fundamentalism while preaching dispensationalism, it did manage to influence the neoevangelicalism that emerged in the 1950s.

Gloege is not quite as sure-footed in dealing with the labor movement; he makes the tired, redundant mistake of identifying the IWW as “International” (rather than Industrial) Workers of the World. He does not fully explore religious connections with the Haymarket riot or the revolutionary potential of early Pentecostalism. Gloege also just hints at the funding and ideological ties that modernism had with capitalists like Rockefeller. But maybe all that is just opening the door for more of the trend.

Sacred Land: Sherwood Anderson, Midwestern Modernism, and the Sacramental Vision of Nature, by Mark Buechsel. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2014. xii, 371 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$65.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Thomas K. Dean is senior presidential writer/editor and adjunct assistant professor at the University of Iowa. His extensive writings about the importance of place include *Under a Midland Sky* (2008).

With *Sacred Land*, Mark Buechsel seeks to bring a new understanding of modernist midwestern literature through the lens of “sacramentalism.” For Buechsel, a “sacramental worldview” is “one in which the physical realities of Creation—such as food, sex, other people, our human selves, all of nature—are not merely material realities but realities containing and conferring spiritual . . . presence” (13) Buechsel