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BOOK REVIEW

Douglas H. Shantz and Tinu Ruparell, eds. *Christian Thought in the Twenty-first Century: Agenda for the Future*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012. xx + 212 pp. Pbk. ISBN: 9781610975759.

In 1986 the University of Calgary established the Chair of Christian Thought to provide ongoing discussion of the Christian intellectual tradition in the university, and also to function as a bridge to the wider ecclesial community. The original appointee to the Chair, Alan Sell, wrote one chapter in this book, and one editor, Douglas Shantz, has held the Chair since 1999. The book was originally planned to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Chair's founding, but a delay in securing a publisher means that articles written in 2007 have only seen the light of published day in 2012. In a few cases, this time lag is unfortunate, but generally it is not a great problem.

The professor holding the Chair has been responsible to arrange four endowed lectures each year, and 25 of those lecturers have provided the chapters for this book. Each scholar was asked to describe briefly how their field of study has changed over the past two decades, to explain how their own mind has changed on significant points (if at all), and to identify key issues that need to be addressed going forward. The 25 chapters take up less than 200 pages of text—these are, in fact, brief summaries.

The chapters are written by major scholars on a wide variety of topics, most of which are theologically oriented in a broad sense, although the last five chapters deal with English literature and film. Many, but not all, of the chapters include a bibliography that includes the author's major publications, to orient the reader to past and future directions in the author's discipline.

Scholars with a narrow focus on their own specific disciplines may find little that they want to read in this book, given its

nature as a summary of thought on many topics. On the other hand, self-confessed generalists like me will learn a bit about a lot of interesting topics. Chapters I found especially interesting include Craig Evans on Jesus and the Gospels, Doug Shantz on early modern German Protestantism, Terence Penhelum on contemporary Christian philosophy, John Cobb on process theology, Margaret Somerville on bioethics, Charles Nienkirchen on spirituality as a discipline in the academy, and Alan Sell on the experience of connecting the university and the local churches.

A number of aspects of the book grabbed my attention. Margaret Somerville shows from her own experience that bioethics is actually a very young discipline. When she was appointed in 1978 to teach in that area at McGill University, many people had no idea what her field was about, but the landscape has definitely changed. Wesley Kort's chapter deals with attitudes prevalent in the churches about cities and appeals for a greater appreciation for the possibilities of church life in the urban world. However, I was surprised to find no reference at all to the work and writing of Tim Keller, growing out of his pastoral ministry in New York City; perhaps that is due to the time lag between the writing of the chapter and the publication of this book. Given the fact that each author was asked to comment on personal changes of mind, it is quite appropriate that Clark Pinnock, who celebrated his "pioneer" disposition, wrote one of the chapters, and he does not disappoint. He moves beyond the language of "open theism" and suggests that Christian theology should move in the direction of a "Trinitarian panentheism," although a distinction between the two terms is not spelled out with any clarity. He also freely describes the Holy Spirit as "she"—I confess to being annoyed.

Given the literary genre of the book, there is bound to be frustration at various points about the lack of depth; however, given the purpose of the book, I can live with the frustration. It is encouraging to think that the Christian intellectual tradition is taken seriously in the context of a major public university, and it would have been a pleasure to be present for the lectures and dialogue that gave birth to this book.

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