


1995

Wesleyan Holiness Studies Center bulletin 3:2 (Summer 1995)

Wesleyan Holiness Studies Center

Follow this and additional works at: <http://place.asburyseminary.edu/revitalizationbulletin>

 Part of the [Christian Denominations and Sects Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Wesleyan Holiness Studies Center, "Wesleyan Holiness Studies Center bulletin 3:2 (Summer 1995)" (1995). *Bulletin*. 14.
<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/revitalizationbulletin/14>

This Periodical/Journal is brought to you for free and open access by the Newsletters at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bulletin by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.



Wesleyan/Holiness Studies Center

at Asbury Theological Seminary

BULLETIN

Systematic Theology in the Wesleyan/Holiness Traditions

by David Bundy

Contrary to the common wisdom of a few decades ago, systematic theology as a genre has not disappeared. In most traditions there has, in fact, been a resurgence in attempts to provide an overview of theology reflecting a particular perspective. This genre of systematic theology has a long, albeit sparse, history within the Wesleyan/Holiness traditions. Since our concern here is with the more recent developments,¹ we will start with the works of five remarkable theologians from the middle half of this century: Mary Ella Bowie, Vennard College, *An Introduction to Systematic Theology* (1942); H. Orton Wiley, Nazarene educator, *Christian Theology* (1940-1943); Mary Alice Tenney, Greenville College, *Blueprint for a Christian World: An Analysis of the Wesleyan Way* (1952); Leslie D. Wilcox, *God's Bible School, Be Ye Holy: A Study of the Teaching of Scripture Relative to Entire Sanctification with a Sketch of the History and Literature of the Holiness Movement* (1965); and Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, Trevecca Nazarene College, *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (1972). These writers adequately described the perspectives of the tradition in a systematic manner and were also determinative for the way subsequent Wesleyan/Holiness theologians would develop their craft.²

WESLEYAN/HOLINESS THEOLOGY FROM THE '70S TO THE '90S

In the *American Holiness Movement: A Bibliographic Introduction*, Donald Dayton observed in 1970, that "systematics have not been the forte of the Holiness Movement." Most of the volumes mentioned below do not meet classical definitions of systematic theology, but were efforts to reflect upon the whole from a more limited beginning. The present theological renaissance began with the publication of David McKenna's *The Jesus Model* (1977) in which christology was the organizing focus. This was followed by Laurence W. Wood's *Pentecostal Grace* (1980) which attempted to place Wesleyan/Holiness understandings of grace and sanctification in the ongoing Wesleyan Theological Society debate about the appropriateness of adapting the Acts language of spirituality for Wesleyan concerns. Wood made his argument in dialogue with Barth, Bultmann, Cullmann and Rahner, but with an eye to his Wesleyan/Holiness predecessors.

Systematic in scope, if not in material, was the two-volume work edited by Charles W. Carter entitled *A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology: Biblical, Systematic and Practical* (1983, reprint Schmull 1992). The volumes spanned two generations of Wesleyan/Holiness scholars

including Milton S. Agnew, Wayne E. Caldwell, Eugene E. Carpenter, Wilber T. Dayton, Donald E. Demaray, Ralph Earle, J. Kenneth Grider, D. Michael Henderson, Everett N. Hunt, Wayne McCown, T. Crichton Mitchell, James M. Ridgeway, R. Larry Shelton, David L. Smith, Timothy L. Smith, Richard S. Taylor, R. Duane Thompson, W. Ralph Thompson, Albert Truesdale, and Charles R. Wilson. Although the contributions were of differing value, the work remains a crucial period piece. The same can be said for the five-volume *Wesleyan Theological Perspectives Series* (Warner Press, 1982-1986) of the Church of God (Anderson), to which scholars from many Wesleyan/Holiness denominations contributed. The series covered the classical foci of theology, in systemic if not systematic fashion. Another volume, edited by Charles W. Carter and Wayne E. Caldwell, focused exclusively on ecclesiology, *The Genius of the New Testament Church* (Schmull 1995). The authors, in addition to the editors, were C.L. Bence, H. Garipey, Lee M. Haines, Richard Taylor and R. Jean Cleaveland-Tucker. Charles W. Carter also contributed a volume on eschatology, *Life's Lordship Over Death: A Study of Immortality and the Hereafter from a Wesleyan*

Perspective (1988) which was complemented by Jerry Walls' *Hell: The Logic of Damnation* (1992). Leon O. Hynson, *To Reform the Nation: Theological Foundations of Wesley's Ethics* (1984), made ethics the center of a discussion which ranged from creation to anthropology to ecclesiology and eschatology. Donald W. Dayton, *The Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (1987), offered a history of ideas analysis of the tendencies of Holiness theology during the 19th century which prepared the way for Pentecostalism. Dayton's volume is an important statement of the logic and Tendenzen of Wesleyan/Holiness theology as well as of the place of the tradition in American religious culture. In *Harvest of Humanity* (1984), J.T. Seamands focused on mission theory from a broadly Neo-Evangelical perspective; George G. Hunter III, in *To Spread the Power: Church Growth in the Wesleyan Spirit* (1983), did the same from a more Methodist point of view. In *Liberating the Church: The Ecology of Church and Kingdom* (1991), Howard Snyder reflected upon mission, ecclesiology and ethics along lines reminiscent of William Taylor and E. Stanley Jones. Other important volumes have recently treated the sacraments,

continued on page 3

Recent Dissertations on Wesleyan/Holiness Themes

- Burch, Maxie B. "Doing History from the Inside: An Examination of Evangelical Historiography." Baylor University, 1994. Order No. DA 9429039.
- Cho, David. "The Old Princeton Presbyterian Response to the Holiness Movement in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in America." Westminster Theological Seminary, 1994. Order No. DA 9428276.
- Farkas, Thomas G. "William H. Durham and the Sanctification Controversy in Early American Pentecostalism, 1906-1916." Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993. Order No. DA 9420733.
- Koester, Nancy. "Enlightened Evangelicals: Benevolence in the Work of Jonathan Edwards, Charles Grandison Finney and Samuel Simon Schmucker." Luther Northwestern University, 1994. Order No. DA 9424832.
- Lum, Richard. "W.H. Griffith Thomas and the Emergence of American Fundamentalism." Dallas Theological Seminary, 1994. Order No. DA 9428960.
- Revell, James A. "The Nazaries: Burned-Over District Methodism and the Buffalo Middle Class." State University of New York at Buffalo. Order No. DA 9420209.
- Turley, Briane A. "A Wheel within a Wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association." University of Virginia, 1994. Order No. DA 9425684.

Recent Books on Wesleyan/Holiness Themes

- Clark, George P., ed. *Into the Old Northwest: Journeys with Charles H. Titus, 1841-1846*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1994. \$27.95.
- Conkin, Paul K. *The Uneasy Center: Reformed Christianity in Antebellum America*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995. \$16.95. Considerable material on Methodism.
- Dunning, H. Ray, ed. *The Second Coming: A Wesleyan Approach to the Doctrine of the Last Things*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1995. \$19.95.
- Hardman, Keith J. *Seasons of Refreshing: Evangelicalism and Revivals in America*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994. \$16.99.
- Lippy, Charles H. *Being Religious, American Style: A History of Popular Religiosity in the United States*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994. \$19.95.
- Maffly-Kipp, Laurie F. *Religion and Society in Frontier California*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994.
- Montgomery, William E. *Under Their Own Vine and Fig Tree: The African-American Church in the South, 1865-1900*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1993. \$29.95.
- Noel, Jan. *Canada Dry: Temperance Crusade Before Confederation*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994. \$19.95.
- Oliver, John W, ed. *J. Walter Malone: The Autobiography of an Evangelical Quaker*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993. \$27.50.
- Snarr, D. Neil and Daniel L. Smith-Christopher. *Practiced in the Presence: Essays in Honor of T. Canby Jones*. Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1994. \$18.95. Includes essay by Hugh Barbour on the five varieties of perfectionism among Friends.
- Soper, J. Christopher. *Evangelical Christianity in the United States and Great Britain: Religious Beliefs, Political Choices*. New York: New York University Press, 1994. \$40.00.
- Taggart, Norman W. *William Arthur: First Among Methodists*. London: Epworth Press, 1993. \$10.00.

Recent Articles on Wesleyan/Holiness Themes

- Book, Leslie. "Howard and Pearl Wolgemuth and the Beginning of the Brethren in Christ Church in Cuba and Nicaragua." *Brethren and Christ Life and History* 17 (December 1994): 243-282.
- Bundy, David. "The Historiography of the Wesleyan/Holiness Tradition." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995): 55-77.
- Bundy, David. "William Taylor." In *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of the Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994, pp. 461-468.
- Callen, Barry L. "Daniel Warner: Joining Holiness and All Truth." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995): 92-111.
- Cowan, Raymond Pierce. "Every Noble Cordial to Sin: Early American Methodists Confront Alcohol." *Atlanta History* 38 (Winter, 1995): 5-19.
- Cox, Leo G. "Wesleyan Theological Society: The First Decade." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995): 216-221.
- Dawsey, James M. "Annie Ayres Newman Ransom (1856-1880) and Methodism in Brazil." *Methodist History* 33 (April 1995): 162-172.
- Dayton, Donald W. "Wesleyan Theological Society: The Second Decade." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995): 222-226.
- Dieter, Melvin E. "Primitivism in the American Holiness Tradition." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995): 78-91.
- Enders, Kathleen L. "A Voice for the Christian Family: The Methodist Episcopal Ladies Repository in the Civil War." *Methodist History* 33 (January 1995): 71-83.
- Grislis, Egil. "Menno Simons on Sanctification." *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 69 (April

continued on page 4

Systematic Theology

continued from page 1

Wesleyan/Holiness ecumenism, the importance of the doctrines of personal and social holiness, as well as spiritual formation.³

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IN WESLEYAN/HOLINESS PENTECOSTALISM

The Church of God of Prophecy has produced several systemic statements of belief in works by M.A. Tomlinson, *Basic Bible Beliefs* (1961); R.A. Covey, *These Necessary Things* (1968); James Stone, *An Introduction to Basic Theology* (1971); and most importantly, Raymond Pruitt's *Fundamentals of the Faith* (1981) provided an overview of Wesleyan/Holiness theology as the author developed a rationale for a developmental spirituality. There is a tip of the pen to Fundamentalism as inerrancy is affirmed, but it does not become a controlling hermeneutic of the work. Pruitt demonstrates a keen awareness of the larger theological and philosophical worlds. Church of God (Cleveland) scholars have produced a number of significant volumes. James L. Shay contributed a survey of doctrine for use in the local church, *This We Believe* (1963), as did Ray H. Hughes, in *Church of God Distinctives* (1968, revised, 1989). French Arlington, in *Christian Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective*, has provided the first two of three volumes of a more sophisticated systematic theology (unfortunately without the standard scholarly apparatus). Unlike Shay and Hughes, Arlington distinguished between the variations of the concepts of inerrancy and infallibility when used as creedal formulations about the character of the Bible, noting that the real

issue at stake is the matter of hermeneutics. The volumes reflect a wide awareness of contemporary theology while being thoroughly developmental and Wesleyan. The work of Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy for the Oppressed* (1993) examined the implications of liberation theology for theological education. The theological analysis of Steven J. Land will be mentioned below.

REVISITING MR. WESLEY

Wesleyan studies have provided a forum for discussing central tenets of the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition, often in concert with scholars from the larger Methodist and Pentecostal worlds. There are too many such works to list here, but a few of the most important include Ole Borgen, *John Wesley on the Sacraments: A Theological Study* (1972); Allan Coppedge, *John Wesley in Theological Debate* (1987); Gregory S. Clapper, *John Wesley on Religious Affections: His Views on Experience and Emotion and Their Role in the Christian Life and Theology* (1989); Kenneth J. Collins, *Wesley on Salvation: A Study of the Standard Sermons* (1989); Donald A.D. Thorsen, *The Wesleyan Quadrilateral* (1990); Henry H. Knight III, *The Presence of God in the Christian Life: John Wesley and the Means of Grace* (1992); Richard B. Steele, *Gracious Affections and True Virtue According to Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley* (1994); and Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (1994), concludes with an extensive bibliography on Wesleyan studies including unpublished dissertations and seminal articles.

THE NEW SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGIES

Building upon the above mentioned works and others are a series of "new" systematic theologies that have been published in

great profusion designed to interact both with contemporary theological perspectives outside the Wesleyan/Holiness traditions and with the earlier efforts of Wesleyan/Holiness scholars.⁴

The first to appear was H. Ray Dunning, *Grace, Faith and Holiness* (1988). This was perhaps the first systematic theology to revise the traditional systematic agenda in light of the imperatives of the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition. It drew upon and interacted with a wide range of writers from other traditions and demonstrated Dunning's intimate knowledge of the theological discourse of the Wesleyan/Holiness traditions. It was followed by J. Kenneth Grider's *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology* (1994) which attempted to place Wesleyan/Holiness theology in contradistinction to certain understandings of Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, accepting inerrancy only in matters of faith and practice, in contradistinction to fundamentalists such as Schaeffer, Geisler and Lindsell. It is a clear statement of Wesleyan/Holiness perspectives, aware of the larger theological context, but content to contend primarily with the more fundamentalistic strands of "Reformed" Evangelicalism. As such, the book constitutes a major contribution.

More denominationally focused was Church of the United Brethren in Christ scholar Paul R. Fetter's *Theological Perspectives: Arminian-Wesleyan Reflections on Theology* (1992) which was developed as an

anthology of essays on theological themes with no pretense of being a "systematic" theology although the volume was oriented around the traditional systematic foci. An appendix included creeds and, of particular interest, an official study paper by the Board of Bishops on the gifts of the Holy Spirit which was obviously an effort to respond to the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. It was written from an Arminian-Wesleyan perspective (the order of the terms is significant) rather than a Wesleyan/Holiness perspective.

The most important theologies recently published and potentially durable will probably be those of Steven J. Land and Randy L. Maddox. Land's work *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (1993) includes an analysis of worship and witness in light of pneumatological, ethical and eschatological issues, and firmly based theological and praxis concerns in mission and the affection and an argument that a passion for the Kingdom is ultimately a passion for God.

Maddox, in the tradition of Wynkoop and Dunning, but with a firmer scholarly foundation in Wesley and in scholarship about Wesley, attempts to provide an overview of Wesley's theology with the intent of "recasting the dominant model of theology." His work, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (1994), begins with "responsible grace" and demonstrates the consistency

continued on page 4

The Wesleyan/Holiness Studies Center Bulletin at Asbury Theological Seminary

Bill Faupel
Editor

William Kostlevy
Associate Editor

Systematic Theology

continued from page 3

of this theme throughout the writings of Wesley. Careful attention is given to the internal logic of Wesley's analysis in diverse situations and to the contexts of that analysis. Thus Maddox deals with Wesley's meta-theological convictions concerning revelation and religious authority, Wesley's theological worldview, Wesley's anthropology, the divine grace attendant in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and the divine/human initiative/response throughout the process of salvation. Finally attention was given to the development of Christian character and eschatology.

CONCLUSION

Tenney and Wynkoop, and to a lesser extent Bowie, Maddox and Land have argued that Wesley can serve as a mentor for

those reflecting on how to live in this world as Christians. Wesleyan/Holiness theology is a "practical theology" of grace which serves as a basis for "a passion for the kingdom." The last half century of Wesleyan/Holiness theology has presented, it would seem, a remarkably coherent argument. Land and Maddox will certainly build on their own work and others will develop the themes further. Both have provided solid and stimulating foundations on which to continue the core arguments of the Wesleyan/Holiness traditions.

David Bundy is librarian and associate professor of church history at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana.

NOTES

1. For earlier materials, see D.W. Dayton, *The American Holiness Movement, A Bibliographic Introduction* (Occasional bibliographic papers of the B.L. Fisher Library, 1; Wilmore, KY: 1970) reprinted in D.W. Dayton, ed. *The Higher Christian Life: A Bibliographical Overview* (New York:

Garland, 1985). Apologies are offered in advance to authors of works which, albeit important, were not mentioned here for sake of space. Non-English materials and Indian publications have been saved for another time.

2. Of the authors mentioned above Wynkoop was the most open to dialogue with other theological traditions, Bowie most faithful to the genre of systematic theology and Wiley most influenced by developments in fundamentalism. Other books had different purposes. To focus on systematic materials is not to denigrate the genres of hagiography, biography, sermons, or the single issue volumes, many of which were very important. A popularizing but very influential volume was Donald E. Demaray, *Basic Beliefs: An Introductory Guide to Christian Theology*

(1958). T.M. Anderson edited a volume entitled *Our Holy Faith* (1965) which printed essays by Wesleyan/Holiness authors written over a hundred year period with minimal bibliographic data.

3. Rob L. Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The Place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality* (1991), Charles L. Cooper, *Uniting Wesleyan Denominations* (1992); Vic Reasoner, *The Hole in the Holiness Movement* (1991); J. Harold Greenlee, *What the New Testament Says about Holiness* (1994); and Wesley D. Tracy, et al. *The Upward Call: Spiritual Formation and the Holy Life* (1994).

4. Maxie Dunnam, *This is Christianity* (1994), has made an effort to communicate to a popular audience not unlike that of Demaray mentioned above.

DON'T MISS THE WESLEYAN/HOLINESS STUDIES CENTER CONFERENCE

Methodism & the Fragmentation of American Protestantism 1865-1920

SEPTEMBER 29-30, 1995
AT
ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

More Articles

continued from page 3

1995): 226-246.
Hamm, Thomas D. "The Transformation of American Quaker Narrative Style, 1850-1910." *Quaker Religious Thought* 26 (November 1993): 39-52.
Hunter, George G. III. "Donald McGavran." In *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of the Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis books, 1994, 516-522.
Johnson, Todd E. "The Sermons of Francis Asbury: Reconstruction and Analysis." *Methodist History* 33 (April 1995): 149-161.
Kostlevy, William. "Historiography of the Holiness Movement." In *Holiness Manu-*

scripts: A Guide to Sources Documenting the Wesleyan Holiness Movement in the United States and Canada. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1994, pp. 1-40.
Kostlevy, William. "Wesleyan Theological Society: An Historical Overview." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995): 212-215.
Malone, David B. "The Western Christian Advocate: A Voice in the Wilderness." *Queen City History* 51 (Winter 1993): 23-29.
McGraw, Gerald. "A.B. Simpson." In *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of the Modern Missionary Movement*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994, pp. 37-47.
Noren, Carol M. "Origins of Wesleyan Holiness Theology in Nineteenth Century Sweden." *Methodist History* 33 (January 1993): 112-122.

Randall, Ian M. "Southport and Swanwick: Contrasting Movements of Methodist Spirituality." *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* 50 (February 1995): 1-14.
Robert, Dana. "Arthur Tappan Pierson." In *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of the Modern Missionary Movement*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994, pp. 28-36.
Rokicky, Catherine M. "Lydia Finney and Evangelical Womanhood." *Ohio History* 103 (Summer/Autumn, 1994): 170-189.
Seamands, John T. "J. Waskom Pickett." In *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of the Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994, pp. 348-354.
Sider, E. Morris. "The Anabaptist

Vision and the Brethren in Christ Church." *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 17 (December, 1994): 283-296.
Snyder, Howard A. Wesleyan Theological Society: The Third Decade." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995): 227-231.
Taylor, Richard W. "E. Stanley Jones." In *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of the Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994, 339-347
Whidden, Woodrow W. "Adventist Soteriology: The Wesleyan Connection." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995): 173-186.
Wigger, John. "Taking Heaven By Storm." *Journal of the Early Republic* 14 (Summer 1994): 167-194.