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**From Preachers to Suffragists: Women's Rights
and Religious Conviction in the Lives of Three
Nineteenth-Century American Clergwomen**

Beverly Zink-Sawyer

Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003

246 pages, \$22.55 Softcover

Dr. Zink-Sawyer has made a significant contribution to the rapidly expanding field of women's history within the Christian tradition in her recently published *From Preachers to Suffragists*. Although important works have emerged which cover women Christian activists in such nineteenth-century movements as mission work, settlement houses, abolition and suffrage, Zink-Sawyer has chosen to emphasize the connection between ordained women in white middle-class mainline denominations and the wider suffrage campaign.

In her in-depth analysis of the lives and values of pioneer women preachers, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, Olympia Brown and Anna Howard Shaw, she paints a picture of the painful, often lonely, pilgrimages of these trail-blazers as they struggled against professors, colleagues and parishioners to find their place as ordained clergy in a heavily male-dominated world. We are treated to a combination of biographical richness as well as the values expressed by these women, much of it gleaned from their extensive correspondence. I found myself touched deeply by a number of incidents portrayed in the work: the courage of Antoinette Brown in pursuing theological studies to the point of challenging such evangelical greats as Charles Finney. The poignancy of her journey is underscored by the author's description of the intellectual harassment she received regularly in the classroom, as well the refusal of male colleagues (with some exceptions) to attend her ordination. Zink-Sawyer's portrayal of Anna Howard Shaw shows a woman whose pastoral vocation was repudiated by her family and whose struggle toward ordination was plagued with poverty and rejection. Even at that, Rev. Shaw earned a medical degree as well so that she could serve among the urban poor whose needs were so great. While the author describes the parish experience of the three pioneers, she melds this with the public leadership of the three on the suffrage lecture circuit and how they insisted that their commitment to women's public voice was built on Christian convictions.

Although the author provides the social and political setting for these three ordained women, biography has a way of overwhelming this framework. To be sure, though authors have the freedom to choose their emphases, I think that the work could stand a little more context to give the biographies more life. However, my main critique takes up the issue of style. The book has some of the ponderous quality of a dissertation. More judicious editing would have produced a smoother work that could have been more literarily engaging. In spite of these weaknesses, the over-all strength and value of the book renders it an important work in that field which celebrates the triumph of women on their long and all too often lonely march to justice. I was brought to tears by Zink-Sawyer's portrayal of the blind Antoinette Brown Blackwell being led (at age 95) into the booth by her daughter to cast her ballot in the first American federal election where women had the right to vote.

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**Christian Contradictions:
The Structures of Lutheran and Catholic Thought**

Daphne Hampson

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001

323 Pages, \$90.00 Hardcover

Daphne Hampson has written a book profoundly valuable for ecumenists and others interested in the challenges inherent in ecumenical dialogue. She advances the thesis that structures of thought are of fundamental import for theology, and that an adequate apprehension of doctrine is only possible in relationship to these structures. Hampson concludes that Lutheran and Roman Catholic structures of thoughts are strictly incomparable insofar as a paradigm shift separates one from the other. She proposes that attempts to reconcile differing structures of thought, such as the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999), finally demonstrate this incomparability.

Hampson first explicates Luther's notion of justification. She does a fine job of demonstrating the dialectical character of Luther's