

Freedman is not naïve. Neither the Catholic bishops nor Catholic hospitals are going away anytime soon. However, if the growth of Catholic health care cannot be reversed, it can at least be checked. How? Like many bishops, Freedman thinks Catholic hospitals are far too coy when it comes to their identity. Let them state more clearly and transparently what services they do and *do not* offer. Then let the public decide.

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The Ethics of Tainted Legacies: Human Flourishing after Traumatic Pasts. By Karen V. Guth. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. x + 248 pages. \$99.99.

With her 2018 article on John Howard Yoder, theological ethicist Karen Guth focused our attention on Yoder's "tainted legacy" and the dilemma of what to do with both the harm and goods his life produced. Now she has expanded her analysis to a book-length work of case studies addressing the complex moral legacies of public figures and institutions that have failed to uphold their moral authority. Guth argues that a pedagogy of ethics should engage these "tainted legacies," bringing in feminist and womanist (F/W) authors to highlight neglected but critical aspects of the conversation.

Despite the attention tainted legacies garner in the media, they remain "a distinct moral problem not yet theorized in philosophical and religious studies" (26). These legacies merit serious attention, since they have already bequeathed to us "entire frameworks from which we cannot escape and which we still need" (15). One's moral thought matures through an attentive analysis of the goods and evils present in tainted legacies. Such engagement would not be complete without F/W theologies that call attention to the need to reform structural injustices, especially since the tendency in American public life is to hyper-focus on particular offenders and their punishment.

In chapter 1, Guth defines tainted legacies as "morally injurious remainders of traumatic pasts" (32). The psychological concept of "moral injury" describes the effect these legacies have on individuals and institutions' moral reputation. Chapter 2 moves through five common types of responses to these legacies, which fail to successfully hold in tension both the legacy's moral grievance and its good remainders. Guth instead prefers a "Reformer" view, which examines both the grievous acts and the unjust systems that enabled them. Three case studies demonstrate how F/W theological conversations illuminate neglected but crucial aspects of a reform-oriented analysis. Chapter 3 deals with the artistic work of individual "cultural authorities"

who have sexually abused vulnerable persons. Guth maps this onto the works of Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Renita Weems, revealing “inextricable links between androcentric texts and societal structures” (111). Chapters 4 and 5 move on to “institutional betrayal,” when institutions’ practices are at odds with their moral principles. Chapter 4 considers whether public monuments that can be legitimately interpreted to represent both cultural goods and traumatic legacies should be removed. Womanist interpretations of the Christian cross as a problematic sign of suffering, represented by Emilie Townes, Angela Sims, and Delores S. Williams, can point the debate “beyond the monuments themselves” to the legacies left by racism in American history (164). Chapter 5 analyzes Georgetown University’s responses to its slave-holding past through four womanist criteria: “truth-telling, honoring victims’ agency, the possibility of learning, and reparations” (29). Finally, chapter 6 analyzes John Howard Yoder’s legacy through the same criteria and offers practical guidance on how to incorporate cases of tainted legacies in teaching ethics.

The virtue of Guth’s book is the deftness, compassion, and rationality with which she illuminates the complexity of approaching emotionally charged legacies. Guth’s “Reformer” method resources Christian theology to sustain difficult conversations that will be interdisciplinary, intersectional, and intergenerational (164). To neither downplay the evil nor toss out the good, to perform a systemic analysis that places voices from the margins in dialogue with voices from the mainstream, is very properly the contribution of academic ethicists. Guth invites us to leave no legacy unturned, as she has recently done herself in a 2023 article for the *Journal of Religious Ethics*, analyzing the journal’s own role in promoting Yoder’s work.

While the book opens needed conversations, it tends toward offering criteria for analysis rather than definitive answers. For example, in applying the criterion of “honoring victim’s agency,” a central tenet of F/W thought, Guth concludes that Georgetown fails to heed the specific reparation demands of the descendants of the enslaved (199). She does recognize, however, that the descendants are two hundred years removed from the actual victims and number more than ten thousand. It is not clear what mechanism is in place to fairly determine which descendants can claim agency for the ten thousand or their ancestors. The work of defining “victim” already being complex (footnote 6), it must be further specified in each case. But such is the nature of these case studies: an ethicist applies criteria but may not necessarily close the circle.

This work lends itself well to graduate and faculty-level research on issues of agency, accountability, justice, and moral authority. For educators, it offers cases with potential for rich moral analysis, introducing interdisciplinary sources and the application of F/W

authors to current social issues. Guth wants to challenge “preconceived ideas of ethics as a right-answer generator” (203–204), and hopes her work will guide persons in positions of authority, so that their decisions may contribute to true reform which “goes beyond retroactive repair or rehabilitation to foster ways of enhancing our future flourishing.”

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Who Are My People? Love, Violence, and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa. By Emmanuel Katongole. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press (2022). ix + 222 pages. \$35.00.

Emmanuel Katongole’s *Who are My People? Love, Violence, and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa* is part personal intellectual retrospective of a philosopher-theologian, part ethnography of hope and peacebuilding in the midst of violence, and part scholarly argument about the experience of modernity in Africa.

Katongole’s book is a response to two *kairos*-like questions that arose early in his graduate studies at KU Leuven in the mid-1990s. As they watched news of the devastating Rwandan genocide on the television, a fellow student asked, “Why do you Africans always kill your own people?” (12). While Katongole recalls rebuking his classmate’s generalization—“Not all of Africa is having a genocide” (12), he is nevertheless both troubled by the question and horrified by the violence that engulfed Rwanda and does seem endemic in parts of sub-Saharan Africa. His classmate’s practical question joins another theological one to form the major inquiry of the book. The second question was asked by Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, the former President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, of Rwandan Christian leaders: “Is the blood of tribalism deeper than the waters of baptism?” (1). Together these questions set the agenda for a book that struggles beautifully and at times heart-breakingly with questions of identity, community, violence, and reconciliation.

The book is divided into two major sections. The first, “Who Are My People? Philosophical and Theological Reflections,” reads like scholarly journaling. We are led into Katongole’s own efforts to wrestle, mentally and emotionally, with his identity (or even identities) throughout his journey as an African (born in Rwanda, raised in Uganda) Catholic who has lived much of his adult life in Western Europe and North America. He discusses the impact numerous scholars from Valentine Mudimbe and Ali Mazuri to Stanley Hauerwas and Kwame Bediako have had, not only on his scholarly