

world to such work. Nevertheless, the book remains a valuable starting point for discussions related to the family and social injustice.

Schemenauer successfully connects moral theology and Catholic social teaching by demonstrating how the family is not only a private reality, but a basic cell of society. His clear and concise language is founded on theological principles but presented in a straightforward manner that is relatable to both scholars and casual readers. Schemenauer remains faithful to magisterial teaching yet offers fresh insights that offer both scholarly and pastoral application. This text can be a source of discussion for social engagement while encouraging families to actively live out the Gospel and Catholic social teaching. While grounded in the Catholic traditions, Schemenauer's insight can enrich discussions in sociology, ethics, and public policy through its perspectives on the importance of family.

NGOC NGUYEN

Marquette University

Political Theology Based in Community: Dorothy Day, the Catholic Worker Movement, and Overcoming Otherness. By Marty Tomszak. Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2023. vii + 265 pages. \$110 hardcover, \$79.20 e-book.

With this work, Marty Tomszak brings the Catholic Worker tradition into dialogue with radical political theology—or it may be more appropriate to state that he reveals how the Catholic Worker movement can move political theology beyond the realm of theory.

Tomszak wants to move political theology, and theology as a whole, toward a space of “admitting weakness and rejecting sovereignty” (1). Though this is a work of theology, it relies heavily on current radical strands of continental philosophy. Tomszak's foundation is giving priority to the Other as a way for individuals to gain self-understanding. He utilizes the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who argued that we discover who we are and uncover the foundations for ethical action in the conversations that we have with the Other. While Levinas imagines sharing intellectual space with the Other, Catholic Worker cofounder Dorothy Day took this one step further by also sharing physical space with the Other.

Building on this, Tomszak explores the thought of philosophers John Caputo and Richard Kearney to showcase the hospitality of Jesus as the way we can connect to the Other and the divine. Hospitality highlights the low Christology of Caputo and Kearney and their focus on divine weakness as opposed to omnipotence. Similarly, the Catholic Worker has advocated that we grow in our relationship with God through our service to and solidarity with the poor. Tomszak finds

that this understanding of hospitality echoes the thought of Emmanuel Mounier and the French personalists, that “the Transcendent is revealed only through persons within the immanent realm of the community—through both the dehumanizing realities of the world and the joy that come through loving the Other” (136).

Tomszak’s radical theology is deeply indebted to the personalism of both Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier, which stressed the dignity of the human person in community against extreme forms of individualism and collectivism. Tomszak believes that low Christology fits well with the personalist’s rejection of political sovereignty, which is reserved for God alone. For Mounier, the nature of the state was limited to such roles as “providing assistance in community organizing, mediating in certain situations of conflict, and providing for the safety of individual persons and communities as they pursue their vocations” (159). Again, the Catholic Worker adds praxis to flesh out the thought of the personalists.

Tomszak concludes by envisioning the implications of his practical political theology for the academy, Church, and everyday society. He underscores the need for the Christian universities to be interdisciplinary and include praxis (e.g., service learning) as part of their general education requirements. For the Church to align with his political theology, it must move away from its current hierarchical model toward the “anarcho-pacifist principles of the Catholic Worker” (198). Additionally, he proposes that nonviolent direct action and mutual aid be adopted by the masses as tools to address socio-political problems in our society.

Although Catholic Worker cofounders Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin were not theologians, Tomszak depicts how their writings and experimentation with personalism provide concrete paths forward for radical political theology. His engagement with the Catholic Worker is compelling, though at times oversimplified. For example, even though the Catholic Worker and French personalism were concurrent movements that were initially unaware of each other, Tomszak repeatedly states that the Catholic Worker was inspired by French personalism. Although the work is steeped in continental philosophy and converses primarily with white interlocutors, Tomszak provides examples of how his political theology project can address the injustices of sexism and racism.

I would strongly recommend this work for scholars with an interest in the Catholic Worker movement or political theology. Tomszak has convincingly shown the relevance of political theology and the Catholic Worker for each other, and he has made an important contribution to both areas of thought. Although Tomszak notes the need to move beyond the space of the academy, the book’s vocabulary will make this a difficult read for those who are not

academics or already familiar with his interlocutors. This work would serve as a valuable resource in a political theology graduate seminar. Lastly, the book boasts an excellent bibliography and index.

LINCOLN RICE

Independent Scholar

Poor Technology: Artificial Intelligence and the Experience of Poverty. By Levi Checketts. Fortress Press, 2024. xxxvi + 281 pages. \$46.00 hardcover.

Although there are exceptions—Mark Coeckelbergh’s *AI Ethics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2020), for example—the ethics of artificial intelligence (AI) generally ask how we can make moral use of the AI that we have. By contrast, Levi Checketts’s readable, detail-packed volume explores the class-biased design decisions that drove AI’s invention, use, and integration into our capitalist economy. Checketts argues that AI developers assume that “intelligence is good and what is good is intelligent” (xxx)—intelligent according to a computational rationality aimed at the efficiency demanded by capitalist competition. This logic further shifts resources and work—not to mention social dignity—from laboring people to the bourgeoisie and upper classes. What might be the effect, Checketts asks, if AI design “took seriously the perspective of the poor” (55) from the very beginning, including their contrasting values and epistemologies?

The introduction and chapters 1–3 set up the contribution of chapters 4–5. Checketts begins by warning that current AI will never fulfill its promise to create a universally flourishing society because 1) cybernetic logic by definition cannot deliver human-like general intelligence and 2) it necessarily, systematically excludes poor people from its benefits. Chapters 1 and 2 show that AI’s founders embraced computational logic ontologically, methodologically, and epistemologically, enshrining a universal standard of knowledge and a deductive method of knowledge production (19), steamrolling all other “forms of understanding and knowledge into a straightforwardly simple mathematical model” (46). Chapter 3’s Marxist analysis reveals that well-off AI developers (63) who benefit from the market and seek to maximize efficiency by reducing the need for labor (74) bias AI’s supposedly neutral, universally true calculations in favor of this aim.

It is impossible to do justice here to chapters 4 and 5, the heart of Checketts’s argument. He makes a social materialist case that precarity entailed by “scarcity or insecurity of necessary resources” to flourish in society (92, 96) shapes poor people’s vision of the world, tastes, survival mentality, spending habits, patterns of extraordinary generosity, wariness toward the bourgeois and upper class,