

the reader seeking to know the Christian basis for reconciling conflict. The most powerful expression was the pathos accomplished through personal and biblical narratives. He drew me into the suffering and the pain of conflict at a level I do not often experience. His values, beliefs, and understandings were implicit in the stories and drew me imaginatively into the life and ministry of which he writes.

My criticism has to do with what was omitted. The introduction implied a promise to study several biblical narratives, but in reality (likely due to editorial and publishing limitations) only one Old Testament narrative was analyzed in detail while New Testament narratives were painted in rather broad strokes. I wished for more and believe that the book might have been richer with additional narratives and analysis similar to the one dealing with Esau and Jacob.

I recommend this book to all who would have a deeper understanding of the work of peacemaking and reconciliation. I believe this volume, in company with methodology books such as Furlong's (2005) or Cosgrove's and Hatfield's (1994) contribution to conflict and the systems that support it, would provide an effective knowledge base for educating a congregation or corporate religious community in the art of peacemaking and reconciliation.

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Poirier, Timothy L., ed. Roland Karlman, annotator. *The Ellen G. White Letters & Manuscripts with Annotations, 1845-1859*. Volume 1. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2014. 935 pp. + 11 pp. Bibliography + 2 pp. List of Correspondents + 38 pp. General Index. Hardcover, \$44.99.

Significant literary and historical figures have published editions of their unpublished writings. I have scores of them in my personal library. This volume is the first of a projected series of volumes that hopefully will help to provide the literary and historical context for Ellen G. White's unpublished writings. As such, this is a watershed moment in Ellen White studies and the most significant contribution to Ellen White studies by the Ellen G. White Estate in over three decades (since the 1982 prophetic guidance workshop). At the same time, two new other major reference works on her life and ministry: *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, eds. Denis Fortin and Jerry Moon (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2013) and *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet* eds. Terrie Dopp Aamodt, Gary Land, and Ronald L. Numbers (New York,: Oxford Univ. Press, 2014) showcase that Ellen White studies have reached a critical mass, and perhaps even a tipping point, in which scholars both within and outside Adventism are increasingly recognizing the significance of her life and including her within the rich tapestry of American religious history.

Perhaps no better person is in a position to edit this new series than Timothy L. Poirier, the archivist and vice-director of the Ellen G. White Estate. Since his youth he has carefully studied her life and writings and overseen the White Estate archives, allowing access to specialists in the field

for more than three decades. The volume is complemented with a host of other people who helped with this herculean task: Most significant is Roland Karlman, a veteran Adventist minister and scholar, who directed the Ellen G. White Estate Research Center at Newbold College for many years. The next volume of the series is already in production and is being annotated by Stanley D. Hickerson, a lifelong collector, genealogist, and storyteller of Adventist history.

The volume contains a welcome assortment of helpful introductory articles: a biographical summary of Ellen G. White's life (13-25), a chronology of key dates (26-28), and an essay by Poirier on the literary relationship between her published and unpublished works (29-31). He notes that by about 1895 Ellen G. White received instruction to "gather up the fragments, let nothing be lost" (Letter 161, Dec. 20, 1900) with regard to her unpublished writings. As a result, the White Estate has approximately 3,000 letters and 5,000 manuscripts that aggregate to approximately 50,000 pages (29). Within this literary genre, it is significant that typewriters (calligraphs) were not used by her literary assistants until 1885. The amount of unpublished writings increases significantly after 1885, with the earliest handwritten letter extant dating to 1847 (with both a transcription and photographs of the incomplete document available, 124-132). Thus before the 1880s, unless the recipient saved the letter, there are few handwritten documents still extant (less than 20 still exist). Poirier explains: "As they [the unpublished writings] typically contain no instruction for the church generally, they have largely remained unpublished in book form up to this time, except as cited in biographical or historical works" (30).

Of the introductory essays, the one by Alberto R. Timm (associate director of the White Estate) on "Interpreting Ellen G. White's Letters and Manuscripts" (32-40) is an extremely crucial interpretative piece. While her books "tend to deal with universal principles . . . when one moves from these books into Ellen White's personal correspondence, the reader encounters particulars of time and place that are foreign to the world we live in today" (32). He observes the broad nature of her writings. He argues for the whole inspiration of the prophetic messenger, and argues against "degrees of inspiration." He argues for the inspiration of inspired, personal letters, in a way that is similar to the Pauline letters to Philemon, Timothy, and Titus. At the same time he cautions that she obviously addresses many "common" subjects with no expectation that the recipients should think she received divine instruction regarding them" (33). Thus "it is more the nature of the subject addressed than the literary category of the writing that should guide us on the matter of inspiration and authority. The challenge is that it is not always easy to identify when she dealt with common matters from a noninspired perspective and when she addressed them in an inspired way." The only trustworthy way to accomplish this, he argues, would be to have another prophet make such a distinction, and since none of the prophets did so, such a distinction "is not critical for accepting and understanding the essence of Ellen White's prophetic messages" (34). Such inspiration,

whether exhibited in Ellen White's published or unpublished writings, is of a trustworthy nature. Such a messenger therefore is not infallible (Timm references "orthographical or grammatical mistakes" and "other kinds of language imperfections") but in primary substance is correct. Obviously a priority was given to her published writings during her lifetime. Similar to many other Adventist historians, Timm argues for the importance of context (35-36) as well as the historical, grammatical, and thematic hermeneutical levels of interpretation (37-38). He urges against interpretative extremes: on a continuum between the "traditionalist" versus the "culturalistic" approaches. A balanced approach ultimately will recognize "the inspired message" that does not allow "literary and hermeneutical technicalities to take the place of personal commitment to the inspired message" (39).

Another extremely helpful essay by Merlin D. Burt concerns "The 'Shut Door' and Ellen White's Visions" (41-61), the object of one of the most perennial criticisms used against the prophetic ministry of Ellen G. White. Since this volume deals with the early prophetic ministry of Ellen G. White, such an interpretative essay is extremely useful. In doing so he challenges interpretative positions put forth by recent scholars in *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet* who see her view of the shut door as a convenient excuse for revisionism. Instead, he argues that there is a difference from the views of Samuel Snow and Joseph Turner, who argued that the close of probation had occurred, versus other Millerites such as O.R.L. Crosier, Emily Clemons, and Ellen White, who "believed that Jesus had begun a final extended atonement as high priest on October 22, 1844." Some within this latter and more moderate category came to be known as the "Bridegroom Adventists." Such a more moderate stance "suggested a continuation of probation" (56). What was at stake theologically increased with the adoption of the seventh-day Sabbath and the role of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. By 1848 to 1849 "Sabbatarian Adventists began to emphasize the open door into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, and the term *shut door* was redefined to mean something very different from a shut door of probation. It came to represent the validity of the 1844 experience that Sabbatarian Adventism had embraced." As for Ellen White, "the tenor of her statements and those closely connected with her suggests that for a time she continued to believe that evangelistic work for the unconverted world had ended. Her visions did not require this understanding, however, and theologically led to a more open view" (57). By 1852 the issue of the shut door was resolved. Thus, Ellen White's "first visions pursued a theological path away from previous misconceptions received from William Miller." Burt observes that revelation and inspiration do not "automatically confer infallibility of understanding to inspired messengers." At the same time, the message is communicated in a "trustworthy and accurate manner" (58).

Also helpful is an overview, presumably by Roland Karlman, that highlights the "annotation and editorial methodology" (62-65). Historians will want to pay particularly close attention to this essay. A sampling was done that confirmed, for the editors, that "transcripts made by her secretaries under

her direction and [...] those made after her death” are therefore reliable. They used a method of “expanded transcription” in order to improve readability, with corrected spelling, punctuation, etc. It was decided against “an entirely new transcription” due to “prohibitive cost.” For historians this places the whole project into question, because the White Estate plans in 2014 to electronically release on its website all of her unpublished writings (as they have transcribed it). The lack of a critical textual edition essentially means that one of the most valuable aspects of such a critical edition of Ellen White’s unpublished writings remains undone, and will necessitate that serious scholars of Ellen White’s unpublished writings do research with the original manuscripts. Since the Ellen G. White Estate Branch Offices and Research Centers retain on file these same transcriptions, it will further necessitate that all serious researchers will need to go to the White Estate headquarters at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This in turn raises a whole host of questions, including what role the White Estate, especially its Branch Offices and Research Centers, will play in the future. Certainly they will have a much more interpretative and promotional value within the denominational hierarchy. Furthermore, it also raises the question: When there are variations, which version will become the authoritative version? Part of the reason I question the reliability is that over a decade ago I discovered five previously unknown Ellen G. White letters in the Smith/Bovee Collection (#146) in the Center for Adventist Research at Andrews University. Those letters were subsequently included within the corpus of the unpublished writings database. My initial description, including areas that were unclear, was smoothed over. Some of the terms and words were changed. While this did not have any significant theological implications, for the serious researcher, some of the original terminology, especially her specification of clothes and other items relevant to her personal life, remain of significant interest. Thus, this anticipates a question raised by Ron Graybill three decades ago, about which edition of transcriptions of her unpublished writings would therefore remain the authoritative one for studying her life. By default, while the historical apparatus is helpful for providing the immediate historical context, the volume falls short of what could have been a much greater contribution. The White Estate Board should have perhaps considered, in addition to hiring one full-time annotator, incorporating many more Adventist historians outside of the White Estate who could critically examine and contribute to the project. This would help to alleviate the objection of cost while at the same time speeding up the project. Since the first volume took well over a decade to produce, and only covers a small fraction of her unpublished writings, unless the level of production increases, at the current pace the project will take over two centuries to finish.

After this come a “List of Illustrations” (66), a “Chronological Index” (67-76), a “Numerical Index” (77-83), and the actual unpublished letters and manuscripts (85-775). Of particular note is the first time that portions of Ellen G. White’s 1859 diary have been published in their entirety (579-661). A particularly nice feature is the collection of photographic images of

actual pages of her diary (cf. 600-601) and the earliest original handwritten letter (129-132). The best feature of the volume is the rich historical context that identifies various persons and the context relating to various historical circumstances in each of these letters and manuscripts. This is furthermore enhanced with a collection of “Biographical Sketches” (779-913) that augments what was done in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2013). This volume has several additional biographical entries that make it a worthwhile reference tool. Of course, this raises the question of whether future volumes will have a similar biographical section or only pertinent additions related to each volume.

At the end are two appendices. The first covers the unauthenticated visions attributed to Ellen White (914-916), and the second, an essay by Merlin D. Burt on “Ellen G. White and Religious Enthusiasm in Early Adventist Experience” (917-935). In this latter essay Burt contrasts Ellen White with the wide variety of fanatics present after the Great Disappointment including “spiritualizing, extreme literalizing, extreme sanctification, and mesmerism” (934). “She was opposed by the fanatics themselves as well as by the broader Adventist leaders for associating with those of a fanatical disposition” (ibid.). Although her experience “frequently included expressions of religious enthusiasm,” they were much more restrained within the context of “shouting and prostration” and transitioned after 1850 away from undue excitement. “Ellen White’s fully developed teachings on the subject of charismatic-like experiences,” he goes on, “instructs believers that while they should be open to the Holy Spirit working in surprising ways, they should not *seek* or *rely* upon physical and emotional exercises. She repeatedly pointed to the Word of God as the solid foundation of the Christian’s experience, and to conformity to its teachings as the safest evidence of the Spirit’s presence” (935).

Finally, at the end are a helpful bibliography of works cited (936-946), a list of correspondents (947-948), and a general index (949-986). It is also helpful to note that inside the front and back covers are maps of New England and the American Midwest that highlight places important to Ellen G. White’s world. All of these help to enhance this reference tool.

The publication of this volume, in light of the recent publication of *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia* and *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet*, raise some basic interpretative issues. The Israel Dammon incident, a key interpretive lens for viewing Ellen White’s life and ministry according to this latter volume, is only briefly referenced (127-128) with a footnote to James R. Nix’s paper on the topic. The publication of this volume, in light of the importance placed on this episode by recent historians, at the very least should have warranted a much more extensive discussion of the Dammon trial in this volume. At the same time, while the volume is rich in historical apparatus in identifying persons, places, and any issues that pertain to theology, it is surprisingly weak in historical contextualization. While the Oxford volume begins with an essay comparing Ellen G. White with Queen Victoria, the notion of Victorian culture is not even mentioned at all in this annotated volume. Likewise, the notion of the “cult of domesticity,” which

defined the roles of men and women during antebellum America, is likewise also apparently overlooked. Another example is that the volume mentions that Ellen White frequently mentions the term “Glory” at the beginning of her visions (14), a revivalist phrase that was commonly used during the Second Great Awakening. Stronger ties between religious revivalism and its influence upon Ellen White’s life and thought could have been drawn. The volume covers material during the critical period of time leading up to the American Civil War, but the issue of race relations is not mentioned. Why not? If Ellen G. White and other early Sabbatarian Adventists were such ardent abolitionists, then why did this not filter into her unpublished writings? History is more than simply identifying facts (the work of a chronicler); a historian also interprets. While it is very clear from this volume, at least for the White Estate, that her prophetic authority is understandably the central issue, there are many other social, economic, and cultural interests that could enrich this volume. This window into the world outside of Adventism could shed rich interpretative light into her life and thought. The lack of this historical milieu is therefore perhaps the greatest weakness of the volume. Despite such weaknesses, including a handful of typos, this volume will be a rich treasure for scholars of Ellen White. A careful reading of these unpublished writings, especially her 1859 diary, will give rich insight into the more personal aspects of life as a prophet.

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Rice, Richard. *Suffering and the Search for Meaning: Contemporary Responses to the Problem of Pain*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014. 170 pp. Paperback, \$18.

Richard Rice is professor of religion at Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, California. He is the author of several books, including *God’s Foreknowledge and Man’s Free Will* and *Reason and the Contours of Faith*.

Although much has been written on the topic of theodicy, Rice’s contribution is original and stimulating in that it offers a modest yet insightful overview of several of the major theodicies, along with a proposal for a *practical theodicy*. While the cover, length, and style of the book are reader-friendly, this does not by any means reduce Rice’s work to light reading. Instead, the book shows the work of an experienced philosopher and teacher who has well learned the art of simplifying complex matters without subtracting from their depth and meaning. In this sense, Rice is sharing with the reader the result of years of synthesizing.

Further, I find the author to be well balanced in his use of sources, both academic and popular. Against an avalanche of existing theodicy-related resources, he manages to make reference to key sources from philosophy, theology, and contemporary history.