

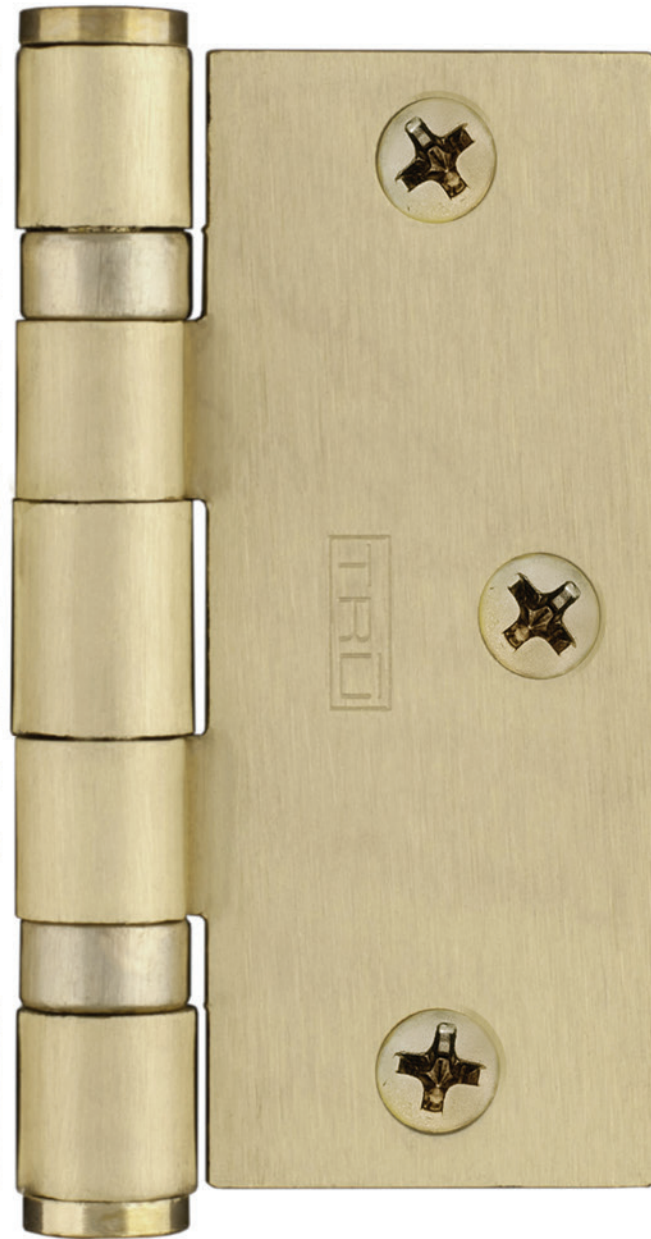
critique

A Ransom Fellowship Publication

2016 Issue 6

MUSIC, POETRY, RESOURCES, AND

**THE HINGE
GENERATION:
MILLENNIALS
AND THE
FUTURE OF THE
EVANGELICAL
CHURCH**



CRITIQUE



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ABOUT CRITIQUE: Critique is part of the work of Ransom Fellowship founded by Denis and Margie Haack in 1982. Together, they have created a ministry that includes lecturing, mentoring, writing, teaching, hospitality, feeding, and encouraging those who want to know more about what it means to be a Christian in the everyday life of the twenty-first century.

Except where noted, all articles are by Denis Haack.

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2016:6 CONTENTS

1

EDITOR'S NOTE

Confidence with Humility

2

DIALOGUE

3

POETRY

Oak Leaf

by Scott Schuleit

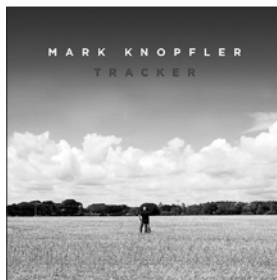
4

TUNED IN

Living on the Margins

a review of the album *Tracker*

by Mark Knopfler



5

RESOURCES

A Story of Justice and Redemption

thoughts on the book *Just Mercy*
by Bryan Stevenson

Music Born of Faith

a look at *Out of Silence* by Arvo Pärt

Just What Are We Doing?

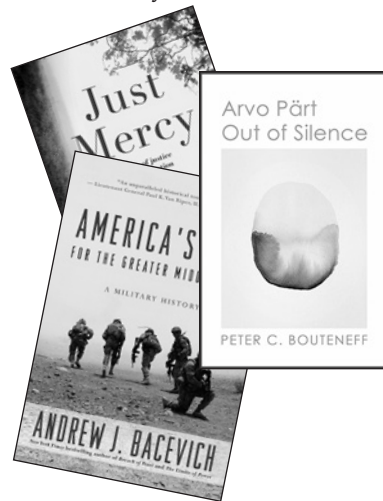
a review of *America's War for the Greater Middle East* by Andrew J. Bacevich

8

READING THE WORLD

The Hinge Generation: Millennials and the Future of the Evangelical Church

by John Seel



BACK COVER

Sneak Peak

a glimpse of our new Web site!

Confidence with Humility



Many of our neighbors are dubious about truth claims, and tend to react negatively to anyone claiming that their beliefs are absolutely true and should be accepted by everyone. To their ears this sounds arrogant, which makes the truth claims seem implausible even if the beliefs asserted happen to be true. Confidently proclaiming what I am certain is true can be bracing when talking with like-minded friends, but such rhetoric doesn't establish a safe place where doubters and seekers feel invited to raise their questions. This doesn't mean—as is often assumed—that no believer can believe confidently, but rather that our confidence as believers must be tempered with humility.

"Humility is not to doubt the truth of one's own beliefs," Timothy Keller observes, "but to recognize the limits of what we can prove to others." Although my beliefs may be true, he goes on, "there is no way to prove them to all rational persons. And that should humble you."

Indeed, it should.

It should also humble us to realize that, even if what we believe happens to be true, our apprehension of that truth remains imperfect and incomplete. "We don't yet see things clearly," St. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:12. "We're

squinting in a fog, peering through a mist." The apostle did not doubt the truth of the gospel of Christ or the fact that we can know it; he was remarking on our limitations in fully comprehending that truth as fallen creatures. That will change in the future, he says, but that time is not yet, and we need to live in this moment, now, not act like we are already in the place of clarity that is yet to come. And that should humble us.

We also do not know how the truth will become alive and real for our neighbor. There is a mysterious relationship between seeking the truth and being open to it. For all sorts of reasons, I may not be ready to hear what I need to hear and what I will someday love hearing—but not now, or here, or from you. For the Christian this mystery is animated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who moves like the breeze, always beyond our seeing and yet always present and at work. Accepting truth requires not impeccable arguments but divine grace. You may be ready to tell me what I need to hear before the Spirit prepares my heart to receive it. Thus the need for humility in recognition that dependence on God in prayer and patient waiting is essential if the truth is to be shared and believed. Insisting that things proceed at my preferred pace and in my timing is unkind, even when motivated by a desire to be kind. "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3). I need to count you as more significant than myself even when you resist the truth I am sharing. And I need to count the Spirit as most significant of all, trusting that his working and timing makes all the difference.

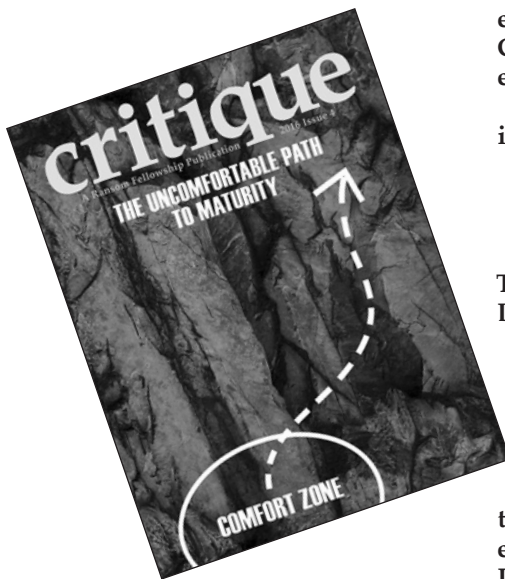
This is why Jesus emphasized humility for his followers. "Blessed

are the poor in spirit," he insisted, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). This does not describe a weak soul, wavering, tentative, and uncertain, but someone who realizes that truth is not an achievement but a gift, best shared in the kind of love that is robust enough to welcome sacrifice.

Humility does not undermine confidence or contradict it, but underscores and enhances it. "In a very real sense," Madeleine L'Engle writes in *Walking on Water*, "not one of us is qualified, but it seems that God continually chooses the most unqualified to do his work, to bear his glory. If we are qualified, we tend to think that we have done the job ourselves. If we are forced to accept our evident lack of qualification, then there's no danger that we will confuse God's work with our own, or God's glory with our own."

And that should make us humble. ■

Source: Timothy Keller in "Civility in the Public Square" in Redeemer Report (October 2016) online (www.redeemer.com/redeemer-report/article/civility_in_the_public_square).



To the editor:
Denis,

Your essay on disequilibrium [Critique 2016:4] is, as my wife Sheryl said, “the best think we’ve read in a long time.” Indeed.

Thanks so much, my friend. Yet another rich gift of wisdom and grace. SDG.

One of my former fellow elders is a descendant of Francis Drake. I shared your essay with him. While he appreciated the essay immensely, he sent me a link about the poem [http://discerninghistory.com/2014/11/francis-drakes-prayer-fact-or-fiction]

Similarly, Karl Johnson, director of Chesterton House was crestfallen to discover that the anecdote about Chesterton we’d been using turned out to be apocryphal. The story was told that, when the London Times asked Chesterton to write an essay on what’s wrong with the world, Chesterton responded on a post card, “I am.” While

everything about the story smacks of Chesterton, it turns out that there is no evidence of the request or reply. (sigh)

I still use the story, but just add that it’s apocryphal. It’s too good not to use.

Gratefully,
Steve Froehlich
Ithaca, NY

To the editor:
Denis,

Good morning.

I just finished your article, the “uncomfortable path to maturity” [Critique 2016:4], and I just wanted to stop and say thank you. I appreciate your words, your thoughts, and your insight. It is a great encouragement to me at this time, and I’m thinking of how I can encourage others in the church and other church leaders. I’m thankful for this disequilibrium that the Lord has brought me, too, at this time in my life, and I thank you for giving me clarity in this moment. As always, I am thankful for your thoughts, your ministry, your intentionality, and your attentiveness to the Lord and the world around you.

May you be richly blessed this day.

Mark Goins
Indianapolis, IN

PS—Thank you for including the Sir Francis Drake prayer.

To the editor:
Denis,

Thanks so much for sending Critique faithfully.

I agreed with your response to the letter from “name withheld” [Critique 2016:4]. Although I am a Protestant pastor, I subscribe to and fully read magazines published by Catholics, Jews, and Humanists. The thinking and writing in them is sometimes

embarrassingly good compared to some Protestant publications. Sometimes I disagree strongly, but that keeps me awake and orients me in my views. Sometimes my views are clarified and enlarged.

God bless you in your life and work, brother.

Much love in Jesus,
Ellis Potter
Switzerland

PS—My second book, *How Do You Know That* is out on Amazon.

Denis Haack responds:

Thank you all for your kind and encouraging words.

Steve: I was aware that it is historically dubious to attribute the prayer to Sir Francis Drake, but neglected to mention that when I published it in Critique. I should have, and hope this serves as an adequate correction.

Mark: The prayer is so good that even though we can’t know who wrote it, I sort of hope it was Sir Francis Drake. His colorful history makes it all that much more attractive.

Ellis: The narrowness of thought among American evangelicals is a great grief, and one reason so many non-Christians doubt the plausibility and credibility of the biblical gospel. I am so delighted to hear your second book has been released—I look forward to reading it. Your first, *3 Theories of Everything* was superb. ■

Oak Leaf

by Scott Schuleit

A poor outline of parched lips.
A blunt spearhead, blood-rusty and brittle with age,
long past its ripeness to pierce someone's side.
The slender fragment of an old map
printed with the topography
of a far, famine-smitten country,
one ancient riverbed running its length
with branching, thread-veined tributaries dry,
brownish-red runnels brittle, blocked
with the petrified dust of sap.

It still retained a dull luster,
embalmed—the glaze of death
over the lineaments of surface,
the underbelly grainy,
lacking in the gift to grasp light.

Stem like a heart, darkened—
a channel drained and withered,
choked with plaque.
Blackish spots like tumors blossoming,
furthering its flowering into decay.

In my fist I grind it,
rubbing the pieces between my fingers,
sifting the chaff,
culling the grist
before scattering it
as if seeds to be sown
over the thistle-rich earth. ■



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"Oak Leaf" was originally published in Christianity and Literature, Volume 55:3, Spring 2006.



Scott Schuleit received an MA in Christianity and culture from Knox Theological Seminary. He is an adjunct instructor at South Florida Bible College.

His non-fiction has appeared in several print and non-print publications, including: Tabletalk, Reformed Perspectives

Magazine, Monergism.com, The Gospel Coalition, and Modern Reformation. His poems have appeared in The Penwood Review, Christianity and Literature, Critique, Crux Literary Journal, and Sehnsucht: The C.S. Lewis Journal. He enjoys the arts, theology, good conversation, and spending time with his wife, Christina.

Living on the Margins



I don't have any way to know this for certain, so it's only a guess, but if I guessed which album I've returned to listen to most over the past year I'd say it was Mark Knopfler's *Tracker* (2015). "Knopfler is to hype what rain is to fire," Graeme Thomson writes online (uncut.co.uk). "Operating a full octave below 'low-key,' by now the primary ingredients of his music—rootsy work-outs, bluesy growlers, wry shuffles, country and Celtic touches—are reassuringly fixed." Best known as singer, guitarist, and songwriter for the band Dire Straits, Knopfler is a gifted musician whose creativity has shaped popular culture far more widely than is commonly known.

Tracker is a lovely album, with effortless melodies and evocative lyrics that spin images of life on the edges of life in a broken world. Knopfler has lived long enough to understand that though no two people live identical lives, we share a common experience that is more significant than the differences.

*She likes a man with a broken nose
Lucky for me, I suppose
Shots coming in like the monthly bills
Soon they'll be saying I'm over the hill*

*Well the bell goes clang and you're on
your own
You take your medicine and go home
You take it like a man, on the chin
And you don't make a fuss when the
towel comes in*

*Now let me go home, got to lay in ice
And I don't want to hear no more advice
Just give me my clothes
Get me out of this place
How many more stitches in my face?
["Broken Bones"]*

I have never boxed, never wanted to, and won't now, but I understand the sense of quiet despair embedded in this song. We have all stumbled backwards from a flurry of blows that are expected but so relentless that we wish, just this once, that we could find a way out.

Knopfler is a storyteller, and listening to *Tracker* feels like rummaging through an old photo album of places lived and visited and wondered at. Nothing feels like he is in a hurry to get through the songs but instead is willing to be unhurried in order to reflect on life, the passage of time, and how, wherever we look, we see persons trying to find a hint of order in a disordered world.

*Where your plans are forever falling
through
And your dreams are movies never shot
And you're someone, a shadow passing
through
Nobody ever knew, so nobody forgot
Your bag has fallen from the carousel
They say one day it could come back to you
Exactly when nobody can tell
In the terminal of tribute to
You've been faking it so long
Now you don't know right from wrong
Or what the future has in store for you
In the terminal of tribute to
["Terminal of Tribute To"]*

The world in which we live, if we stop to see it with clear-eyed honesty, is populated by ordinary people living ordinary lives, each vastly different and yet each the same. People yearning for home, for a place of safety and acceptance, where we can be ourselves, shielded from the vagaries of brokenness.

*A room on the top floor
And the chest all but knackered
Two fingers not working
And the back's shot to hell
It's a lifetime of digging trenches
In the cold and wet weather
And for laying half the roadway
In England as well*

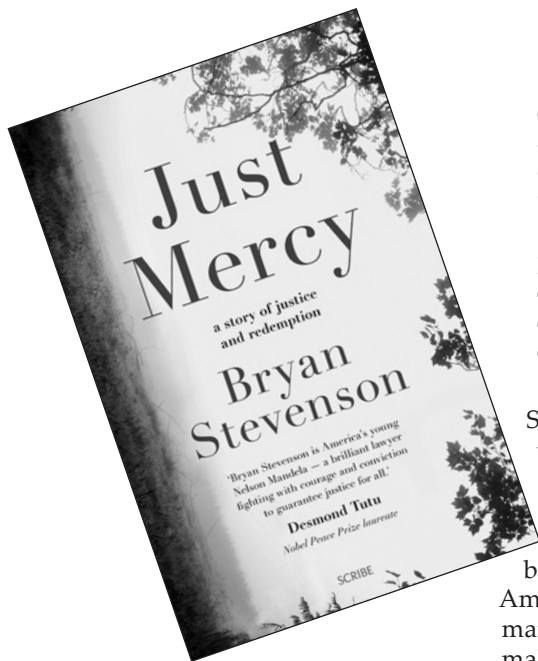
*You'd finish in the one place
It was straight to the next one
And you never could settle
And you were always alone
Just a drifter in limbo
I was best off away, son
Just one of the thousands
Who could never go home*

*That's your mighty man, son
Your mighty man
["Mighty Man"]*

This is the world where we live and where even a glimmer of hope can shine like a beacon if it's true and not lacquered with sentimentality. It's a world where heroism is often discovered in quiet corners, where people keep on keeping on even though prospects don't seem particularly bright. It's a world where the details matter, where beauty can be spun out of ordinary stories, and where being a person of grace might just be the most radical calling imaginable. ■

Album recommended: *Tracker* by Mark Knopfler (2015).

A Story of Justice and Redemption



The title I've chosen for this review is the subtitle of the book *Just Mercy* that I am eagerly recommending to you.

After growing up in a small town in Delaware, Bryan Stevenson attended Eastern College in Pennsylvania where he directed the gospel choir on campus. He graduated in 1981, winning a full scholarship to Harvard Law School, and while there also earned a Masters degree in public policy. While still a law student, Stevenson worked for a time with the Southern Center for Human Rights and was rocked by the experience. In 1989 he founded the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) in Montgomery, Alabama.

The online Encyclopedia of Alabama explains EJI this way:

The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) is a nonprofit advocacy and legal-aid organization based in Montgomery, Montgomery County, that aims to further social justice, expand human

rights, and reform elements of the criminal justice system in the United States. EJI provides legal representation on behalf of condemned prisoners, juvenile offenders, people who might have been wrongly convicted or charged, poor people denied effective representation, and others who may have been denied a fair trial because of discrimination and injustice.

Just Mercy is the story of Bryan Stevenson and EJI. Actually, that's not totally true—the book does tell this story, a story very worth reading, but more importantly it tells the stories of those who have been banished to the dark underbelly of American justice and of a courageous man who has been called to begin to make a difference. *Just Mercy* takes us into death row where we meet prisoners convicted for crimes they did not commit but who, before EJI, had no one to take up their cause.

At a time when American society is so highly politicized that books about judicial reform are automatically assumed to be motivated by some political agenda, right or left, *Just Mercy* is like a cup of cold water on a hot day. Bryan Stevenson is shaped by the deep faith nurtured in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in which he was raised, by a deep conviction that every person has dignity, and that justice should not destroy the poor and powerless because they are poor and powerless. This is a man who believes in the American system of justice deeply enough to work to reform it, calling it back to the best principles of justice and judicial fairness on which it was founded and which it claims to uphold.

It is possible to err in how we view America's system of justice. On one side

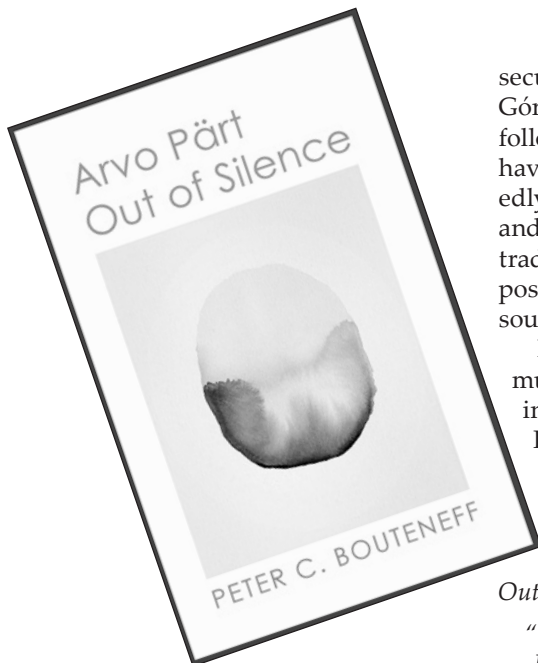
we can see it so pessimistically that we see it as only evil, unredeemable; or we can see it so optimistically that we assume very little real reform is necessary. Bryan Stevenson deals with one case and one person at a time. He has dedicated his life to fulfill the biblical imperative Jesus spoke of when he claimed that those "who are blessed by my Father" were faithful in caring for the needy (Matthew 25:34).

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' (25:35-40)

Just Mercy is a story of justice and redemption, and it needs to be read by Christians who take their faith seriously. Well written, passionate without ever becoming propagandistic, and rooted in a deep commitment to virtue and justice, it is a story that is too important to miss. ■

Book recommended: *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson (New York, NY: Spiegel & Grau; 2014) 314 pages + notes.

Music Born of Faith



Most people have heard the music of Arvo Pärt—even if they are unaware of it. It has been featured in the soundtracks of numerous films including *Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015), *There Will be Blood* (2007), *The Barbarian Invasions* (2003), *Mostly Martha* (2001), *Wit* (2001), and *The Thin Red Line* (1998). In each instance Pärt's music lends quiet reflection, subtle mystery, and a hint of transcendence to whatever it illuminates.

Pärt was born in Estonia in 1935 and, after suffering harassment from Soviet authorities, was allowed to immigrate to the West in 1980. As a child, the family piano had been damaged in the middle of the keyboard and so the young Arvo played with the top and bottom registers. For the last several decades he has composed in a classical minimalist tradition with great beauty and creativity.

At a time of supposedly ascendant

secularism, Pärt, along with Henryk Górecki and John Tavener, have followed a very different path. They have composed music that is unashamedly rooted in a spiritual view of life and reality, and that celebrates the rich tradition that religion brings to the possibilities of music that touches the soul as well as the mind.

Pärt is Eastern Orthodox, and his music is best understood when heard in light of that theological tradition. Peter Bouteneff, a musician and theologian who teaches at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary in New York, helps us hear Pärt's music in light of these deep roots in *Arvo Pärt: Out of Silence*.

"To really understand his music," Nora Pärt has been quoted saying about her husband's work, "you must first understand how this religious tradition [Orthodox Christianity] flows through him." To which Arvo adds, "If anybody wishes to understand me, they must listen to my music; if anybody wishes to know my 'philosophy', then they can read any of the Church Fathers." [p. 16]

Eastern Orthodoxy is a tradition that shares my convictions summarized in the Apostles Creed, but which gives a different shape to Christian doctrine and practice than I am used to as a Protestant. Bouteneff is a helpful guide, writing not for professional musicians or theologians but for interested lay listeners of Pärt's music. Since both minimalism and Orthodoxy may be foreign to us, his exposition opens both understanding and the ability to hear.

Pärt's minimalism embraces both sound and silence, and in this contemplative interaction points beyond itself to something hidden and yet revealed.

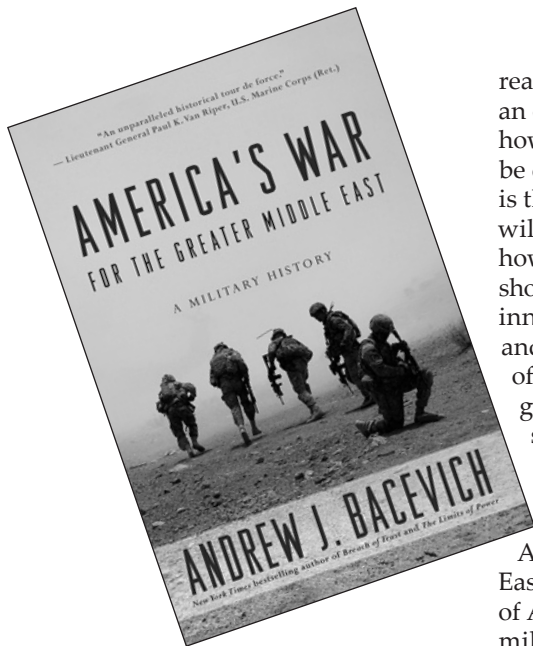
The God of Judeo-Christian tradition is inconceivable and indescribable, and must be approached in silence and darkness—the early Christian writers called this apophysis. Yet it has been given to humans to say something, to him and about him, which they called kataphasis. The great mystical theologian Dionysius the Areopagite (probably from the sixth century) has explored this paradox thoroughly, speaking of God as "nameless, and yet having the names of everything that exists." Dionysius asserts that God, who is beyond being, is found within the "dazzling darkness of a hidden silence." Yet he notes the paradox that, given the way we are created, we must ultimately say something about God—so long as it is in the full cognizance of God's radical otherness and ineffability. The affirmations (words) about God must bear the character of the negations (silences). "Every affirmation...has the force of a negation pointing toward transcendence." The purpose of silence is to generate a right word, a right sound. There is not the one without the other: no silence without sound, and no sound that does not begin or end with, or somehow embody, silence. [129-130]

Pärt has enriched our world and spoken the gospel to audiences that would never darken the door of a church. A musician and Christian, his faith animates his music so that the one is impossible without the other. Thanks to Bouteneff, we can now hear Pärt's music with an understanding that helps us relish the awful mystery that is God. ■

Book recommended: *Arvo Pärt: Out of Silence* by Peter C. Bouteneff (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press; 2015) 195 pages + appendices.

RESOURCE: AMERICA'S WAR FOR THE GREATER MIDDLE EAST

Just What Are We Doing?



Early in *America's War for the Greater Middle East*, Andrew Bacevich relates a simple yet striking fact. "From the end of World War II to 1980, virtually no American soldiers were killed in action while serving in that region. Within a decade, a great shift occurred. Since 1990, virtually no American soldiers have been killed in action anywhere except in the Greater Middle East" (p. 11).

This fact causes some rather obvious questions to spring to mind, questions that Bacevich sets out to answer in *America's War*. What policies guide America's use of military force in the Greater Middle East? What are we trying to accomplish there? Are we making good progress? What do we think we should do next? (The short answers: They are vague and keep changing. We don't seem to know. No. Keep using more military force.)

America's War, subtitled, *A Military History*, is not a happy read. It is an important read, however, for two

reasons. First, more generally, it provides an opportunity to think ;through how American foreign policy should be determined. The usual assumption is that America's national self-interest will be the determining factor. Today however, the argument is made that we should also use military force to protect innocent populations from insurgencies and dictators, and to buttress the work of diplomacy in promoting democratic governance, even if these tasks don't seem to be in our national self-interest. *America's War* allows us to reflect on these (often) conflicting demands. Second, more specifically,

America's war for the Greater Middle East is ongoing, the daughters and sons of Americans are in harms way, and millions of people across a wide swath of geography are barely scratching out an existence in the midst of carnage, death, and oppression. Not caring is not an option because lives matter.

Bacevich, a retired Army officer and professor of history at Boston University, argues that American policy concerning the Middle East is being shaped by a set of widely accepted and largely unchallenged assumptions. They include: Cultural pluralism is a good thing for everyone everywhere and, given the chance, all people will happily coexist with neighbors who champion very different convictions, values, and lifestyles. Military force is "an effective handmaiden to diplomacy," so that the "proper role of armed force was not to supplant diplomacy but to make it work" (p. 173, 174). America, with its liberal secular social values and democratic institutions, is the standard that all people everywhere are eager to adopt and embrace. The religious beliefs, cultural traditions, historical grievances, and tribal or ethnic loyalties of people

are insignificant in the quest to be free from oppressive regimes and the chance to enjoy democratic nationhood. The countries of the Greater Middle East, formed by Western powers at the end of World War II, are now filled with citizens whose primary identity is as citizens of those nation-states. Israel's security is enhanced by the presence of the American military in Arab Muslim lands. And in wars that drag on interminably and try the patience of American voters, drones and special ops units are "the clear weapons of choice" (p. 325).

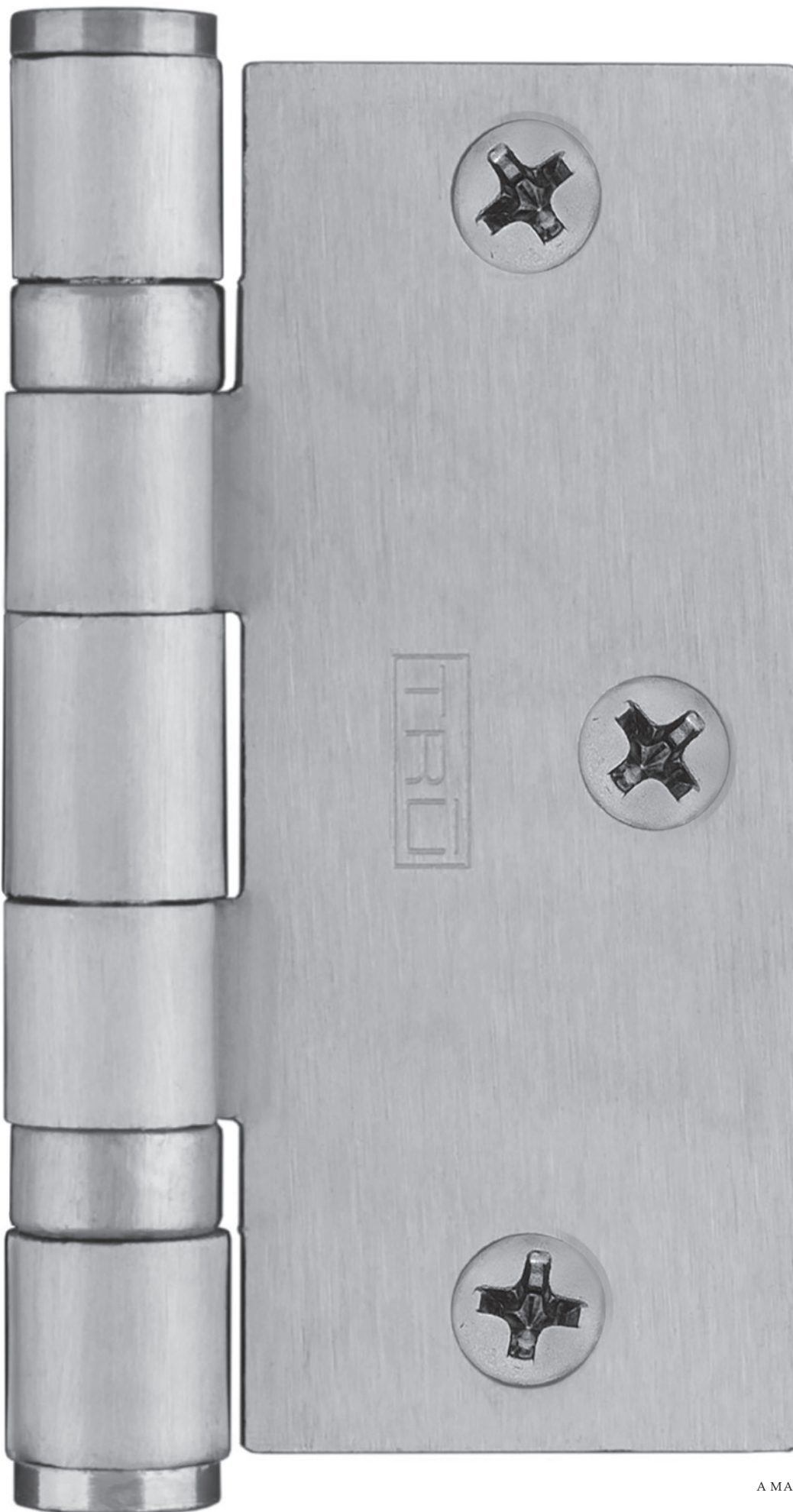
One of the "central ironies" of America's military involvement in the Middle East, Bacevich says, is "the unwitting tendency, while intently focusing on solving one problem, to exacerbate a second and plant the seeds of a third" (p. 52). What is depressing in this story is not merely the destruction and misery that has been inflicted, but that no one seems willing to step back and seriously ask whether the assumptions and principles that are guiding American foreign policy are, in fact, good ones.

Those of us who are committed to praying for and encouraging America to act in ways that promote justice and peace would be wise to use *America's War* as a primer to get us thinking with greater clarity. ■

Book recommended: *America's War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History* by Andrew J. Bacevich (New York: Random House; 2016) 370 pp. + notes + index.

READING THE WORLD

THE HINGE GENERATION: MILLENNIALS AND THE FUTURE OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH



by John Seel

Some people and some generations stand out.

Tom Brokaw celebrated those Americans who came of age during the Great Depression and the Second World War and went on to build modern America in *The Greatest Generation*.¹

Millennials have not fared as well in the popular press. Books about the rising millennial generation are filled with a combination of handwringing and finger wagging: entitled, narcissistic, lazy, absorbed in their technology, and uncommitted are the common judgmental refrains. They serve as the cultural anti-hero to their grandparents.

Researchers refer to those who reached adulthood around 2000 as millennials. Currently, they are the largest single grouping of Americans and the most powerful consumer group, with purchasing power that will exceed boomers' this year—approximately \$1.3 trillion in direct spending. At 24.7 percent of the U.S. population, millennials are 84.4 million strong. Compounding their influence, this generation will receive a trillion-dollar wealth transfer from boomers over the next twenty years. Because of this, they have been the subjects of extensive market research. The cultural significance of their values and frame on reality cannot be overstated.

To view them correctly, think mindset rather than age grouping. Millennials are carriers of a new social imaginary or cultural narrative that is poised to reshape our understanding of human society.² They represent the first post-Enlightenment and post-secular generational cohort. Their perspective potentially overturns 300 hundred years of institutionalized assumptions. Carriers of this new mindset we describe as New Copernicans, modern

explorers who embrace life lived off the edge of the map. Not only are their perspectives different, in my opinion, they are better, a corrective to reductionistic and dehumanizing tendencies of left-brain thinking, which is so characteristic of the Enlightenment. Their views are messier, less fully formed, and at the same time more real and authentic. These cultural black sheep have something important to say to the church.

The chronic negative perception has given rise to the millennial generation rejecting the very term “millennial.” The #hatemillennials is trending among millennials.ⁱⁱⁱ Rarely has a generation been more unfairly maligned and misunderstood. The facts do not justify the negative stereotypes being parodied in “The Great Indoors,” a primetime, family friendly CBS sitcom being launched this fall that’s attempting to capture the workplace dichotomy between the growing millennial workforce and older workers. More than a stereotypical list of characteristic behaviors, millennials represent an entirely new mindset. The Charles Schwab TV spot, “Father and Son,” captures their expectations perfectly.

A father and son are sharing a meal together making small talk when the father asks his son if he’s investing, now that he’s making some money. The son replies that he has done some research, only to have his father tell him that he should introduce his broker. When the son asks how much he charges, the father replies that he doesn’t know. The son becomes a little inquisitive and asks if he receives any fees back if he’s not happy. The father chuckles and tells his son that the world doesn’t work that way, only to have the son respond that the world is changing, a

little grin appearing on his father’s face. Millennials expect that the assumptions of the future will not be the same as the past because they “Think Different.” They expect that the world will change.

Millennials may not be the “greatest” generation, but they may be the “hinge” generation, those Steven Jobs’ 1998 Apple ad spoke of: “Here’s to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the trouble makers, the round pegs in a square holes, the ones who see things differently. They’re not fond of rules and they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, about the only thing you can’t do is ignore them because they change things; they push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do.” Because they “think different,” millennials are the hinge to the doorway to a very different world.

Here we will examine the mindset that animates millennial behavior, the why behind the what. Most surveys only examine discrete behaviors or consumer choices, but fail to grasp the unique mindset that they hold. This shift in the social imaginary, the taken-for-granted assumptions about the nature of the good life, stems from three macro-cultural factors: the disavowal of the Enlightenment project, the acceptance of hyper-pluralism, and the ubiquitous acceptance of technologically-driven social media.

Millennials are the carriers, not the cause, of this shift, which means that this shift involves far more people than a particular age cohort. For them, life is spherical. It is lived in 3D. It is better understood from lived experience than

from abstractions. It is messy, provisional, and intrinsically relational. They reject seeing reality through abstract binary categories: sacred vs. secular, left vs. right, or conservative vs. progressive.^{iv} This is one of the reasons that they are so alienated from the political process. Millennials assume the priority of experience over abstractions, friends over institutions, and community over individuals. Their life experiences do not fit into clean categories or neat systems. Instead they embrace the cross-pressured nature of contemporary life where faith and doubt are held together, because they embody the existential experience of pluralism. All beliefs are now held with a measure of contingency and humility. They reject either/or categories in favor of both/and thinking. They are also decidedly post-secular, refusing to accept the closed reality of metaphysical naturalism and the general assumptions of the secularization thesis (accounts that explain “the secular” as merely the subtraction of religious belief).

Here then are seven characteristics of this emerging social imaginary, characteristics of those I describe as New Copernicans. New Copernicans are secular, open, cross-pressured, experiential, relational, authentic, and haunted.

1. Secular

New Copernicans operate with an immanent frame; that is they assume that their lives can be lived successfully within a natural order without reference to the transcendent. God is not an operative part of their day-to-day assumptions. Philosopher Charles Taylor says that the word “secular” has been used in three different senses:

- Secularism₁ – medieval,

- one-dimensional perspective (1D)
- Secularism₂ – Enlightenment, two-dimensional perspective (2D)
- Secularism₃ – contemporary, three-dimensional perspective (3D)^v

What we are suggesting is that the New Copernican frame shift is the move from Secularism₂ (Enlightenment) to Secularism₃ (post-postmodern). In this view, all perspectives and institutions beholden to an Enlightenment-derived “either/or” perspective and its aspiration for cognitive certainty are both suspect and passé. This is especially true of American institutional evangelicalism.^{vi} Rather than thinking of a “secular” age (secularism₃) as synonymous with unbelief, Taylor suggests that it is now best understood as a different, contested ways of apprehending reality.^{vii} No belief can be held as axiomatic. Every belief is up for debate with a weakened sense of plausibility.

What New Copernicans experience in secularism₃, rather than an antipathy toward unbelief, is a renewed openness and explosion of many modes of believing, all of which are contested and held with a greater sense of contingency. Bestselling author and marketing guru Seth Godin captures this attitude when he notes in his blog, “In a world where nuance, uncertainty, and shades of grey are ever more common, becoming comfortable with ambiguity is one of the most valuable skills you can acquire. If you view your job as taking multiple-choice tests, you will never be producing as much value as you are capable of.... Life is an essay, not a Scantron machine.”^{viii} This also explains why there is so much misunderstanding around the idea of “religious nones.” First, this is a descriptor that is totally rejected by millennials. Second, it is a

descriptor that is typically misunderstood by the media as being evidence of secularism₂ when it represents instead the new frame of secularism₃.

So a secular₃ age does not entail the rise of atheism and unbelief, but instead the rise of cross-pressured belief where belief and doubt are fused comfortably together. There is openness to an “inter-cosmic mystery.”^x One hears this “sloppy” but deeply felt conjunction in the opening lines of Julian Barnes’ novel *Nothing To Be Frightened Of*: “I do not believe in God, but I miss him.”^x It is also seen in Frank Schaeffer’s *Why I Am an Atheist Who Believes in God*. New Copernicans operate within an immanent frame, but one that is at the same time open to the transcendent.

2. Open

New Copernicans reject the Enlightenment notions of certainty, and the assumption that they have a corner on truth. Father Thomas Halik, Czech philosopher priest and 2014 Templeton Prize winner, has described the New Copernican shift in social imaginary as the shift from dwellers to seekers. Halik stated in *The New York Times*, “I think the crucial difference in the church today is not between so-called believers and nonbelievers, but between the dwellers and seekers.” Dwellers are those who are happy where they are, who feel they have found the truth, while seekers are those still looking for answers. Anyone can be an explorer: a Catholic, a Muslim, even an atheist. Halik believes that those in the community of seekers actually have more in common with each other than do seekers and dwellers from within the same faith tradition.^{xi} The shift is between those who have a closed and an open mindset, between

those who have it all figured out and those who continue to learn. This shift makes a great deal of difference in tone, and is a defining cultural fault-line. Settlers whether religious, philosophical, or political will be increasingly culturally passé.

New Copernicans are the poster child of seekers because they hold an open mind, adopt a provisional attitude toward belief and reality, and long for more. They embrace epistemological humility (the starting attitude), follow the scientific method and the explorer’s quest (a process of open inquiry), and maintain a curious metaphysical openness to the laws of life wherever they may be found. They are opposed to what sociologist Peter Berger called “a world without windows.”^{xii} Their seeker perspective is open to the transcendent. They celebrate the journey, the exploration and the quest for new discoveries. They adopt the posture of a humble pilgrim or a courageous explorer rather than an arrogant teacher or know-it-all theologian.

3. Cross Pressured

New Copernicans hold all convictions in a cross-pressured manner. This is the inevitable tension of embracing seemingly competing opposites: faith and doubt, immanence and transcendence, community and autonomy. The unifying conviction is that reality is more complicated than either/or thinking, or black and white categories. It consists of multiple shades of grey. But this both/and perspective, while a more accurate assessment of reality, is at the same time one fraught with existential cognitive dissonance. It is messy, lines are blurred, unease a normative constant. While the cross-pressured nature of belief should not be taken as a

disavowal of absolutes, it is the recognition that the experience of absolutes in practice is always experienced in alloyed forms. Doubt and faith are inseparably fused. Acknowledging this fact is an essential aspect of authenticity.

It is also important to recognize that there is an “explosion of options for finding (or creating) significance.” This means that the New Copernican social imaginary “has opened space in which people can wander between and around all these options without having to land clearly and definitely in any one. In the wars between belief and unbelief, this can be seen as kind of no-man’s-land; except that it has got wide enough to take on the character of a neutral zone, where one can escape the war altogether.”^{xiv} It is only fundamentalists, whether religious or atheist, who fail to acknowledge this cross-pressured experience, this neutral zone that is the common assumption of most people. Ignoring this sensibility will automatically illicit an eye roll and a skeptical disregard. This cross-pressured messiness has a price, but it is also lauded as a kind of superior cosmopolitan knowing. Cross-pressured belief is the secret handshake of the New Copernican sensibility.

4. Experiential

New Copernicans place a priority on lived experience over theoretical abstractions. Rather than easily accepting a theoretical model or philosophical worldview, they would rather muddle through based on their own life experiences. The existential and the phenomenological take precedent over abstractions and theory (worldview instruction has limited value to them). They don’t take their views from books but from experience,

not from authorities but from life. New Copernicans assume an active role in the social construction of their reality. Identity for them is not derived, discovered, but designed. For them life is a perpetual summer road trip, where street smarts is more valuable than book smarts. In practice this means that they would rather muddle through facing a series of uncertain twists and turns rather than having life neatly mapped out at the outset. It is seeking from below rather than from above, where actual life lived trumps disembodied theory. It’s my story over your worldview.

One can think of this as the opposite of Enlightenment assumptions, where cognition takes precedence over embodiment, principle over practice. Learning within the Enlightenment project is typically head, heart, and hand or observation, interpretation, and application. New Copernicans reverse this order: hand, heart, and head. Experiential learning is their priority. New Copernicans process reality by living it rather than talking about it or, worse, reading about it. Theirs is the posture of the pilgrim wanderer, the active coinsurer of meaning.

5. Relational

This experiential priority is shaped by a preference for relational companionship. If there is muddling to be done, it is best done in the company of others. “Hanging out” is never just hanging out, but the means of identity formation and exploring together onramps to meaning. This is where technology and social media come in. They are not an end in themselves, but the means by which to facilitate these connections. YouTube is not merely a technological distraction, but the storytelling channel by which

life is experienced and curated. “Selfies” are not evidence of narcissism as much as the currency of relational experience shared on social media. There is a strong communal relational context to the New Copernican mindset.

Even here there is a heavy dose of cross-pressured drama. New Copernican relationships are fraught with conflict. The ambiguity and confusion of the “hook up” culture sets the stage for longing and loss. Here relationships are messy, and idealism frequently shattered on the altar of broken promises. Lena Dunham’s portrayal of Hannah Horvath on the HBO TV show *Girls*, is a cultural narrative where existential confusion and muddling through is personified—where unemployment, STDs, gender confusion, and serial relational humiliation are *de rigeur*. What we will find in each of these characteristics of New Copernicans is a messy blending of conflicting sensibilities: faith and doubt, longing and loss, secularity and transcendence. What we don’t have here is a sensibility that is neatly tied up in a bow, with clear lines and expected closure. A cloud of uncertainty and insecurity and self-medicated nihilism hangs over this mindset.

6. Authenticity

It should not then be surprising to find a jaded attitude toward simplistic solutions and institutional promises. 3D people are not too amused by 2D perspectives, particularly those found in the church. Having been overhyped, a New Copernican’s first instinct is to see most traditional organizations, cultural ideals, and political promises as steeped in “bullshit.” The counter weight to their latent skepticism is the celebration of authenticity as a premiere relational

value. But authenticity is earned at the local level, from shared experiences, and limited to relational proximity. New Copernicans are highly suspicious of posers. Marketers are told to pay attention to the millennial audience, but not to try too hard.

This means that the only ones who can really speak to millennials are millennials. Non-millennial New Copernicans can be sympathetic allies, but can rarely be seen as authentic spokesmen for their perspective. One is either authentic or one is not, it is not something that can be manufactured. In a media saturated world of hype and manipulation, New Copernicans only reward the genuine article. This means that corporate policies must be based on a genuine commitment to cause by senior leadership rather than tactical manipulation for instrumental or commercial reasons. There is among New Copernicans an idealism that is incarnated in and through genuine relationships. A values betrayal will bear a heavy cost. Here values and relational integrity matter.

7. Haunted

Those New Copernicans who live within secularism₃ assume a secular frame, the absence of God or gods, but simultaneously have a nagging sense of incompleteness. Unlike New Atheists, New Copernicans are open to the possibility of transcendence; they categorically reject reality as “a brass ceiling, but one with skylights open to transcendence.”^{xv} They sense that their immanent frame is somehow haunted by a larger spiritual reality. Jewish psychiatrist Jeffrey Satinover writes, “Jung understood, as few of his contemporaries did—nor do many nowadays—that mere rationalism,

tolerance, and humanism is no match for the awakened pagan soul.”^{xvi} New Copernicans possess this awakened pagan soul, this expectant romanticism, this unquenchable religious longing. The consequence is something Charles Taylor describes as the “nova effect,” an explosion of different options for belief and meaning—from vampires and zombie movies to bells-and-smells high-church rituals. It is for this reason that the assumption that millennials are “religious nones,” a kind of closeted default atheist, is so false.

New Copernican restlessness is real and compels them forward. When this restlessness is translated into work, millennials want a job imbued with a meaningful purpose.^{xvii} They are certain that a life worth living must include a spiritual journey—rarely one within the confines of 2D institutional religion—but an honest engagement with the signals of transcendence that cross their path. They are those who are haunted by the prospect of a larger world that makes sense of their longings for justice, love, beauty, and spirit.^{xviii}

The points of intersections with the transcendent will differ for every person. But those points are what the ancient Celts called “thin places,” the liminal or threshold encounters where there is a narrowing between heaven and earth. Popular culture is filled with discussions of these thin places. Atheist turned Christian Mike McHargue found God in the waves of a California beach.^{xix} It is not uncommon that these religious experiences or encounters with the transcendent are more commonly appropriated through the intuitive rather than the analytical mind. New Copernican’s critique of the left-brained Enlightenment and embrace of the imagination makes them

much more open to a world of magic and enchantment. Bestselling author Elizabeth Gilbert writes, “I’ve spent my entire life in devotion to creativity, and along the way I’ve developed a set of beliefs about how it works—and how to work with it—that is entirely and unapologetically based upon magical thinking. And when I refer to magic here, I mean it literally. Like, in the Hogwarts sense. I am referring to the supernatural, the mystical, the inexplicable, the surreal, the divine, the transcendent, the otherworldly.”^{xx} These composite longings are expressed each summer at the Burning Man Festival, the aspirational cultural zeitgeist event where pagan spirituality and sexuality mix with performance art and social justice utopianism.

What do these characteristics of New Copernicans—secularity, openness, cross-pressured, experiential, relational, authenticity, and hauntedness—mean for church leaders?

FIRST, WE NEED TO STOP TURNING OUR ATTENTION TO THE LIKES OF NEW ATHEIST.

Of the four operating social imaginaries in American culture—closed transcendent, closed immanent, open immanent, open transcendent—the opportunity is not with closed immanent, but with open immanent or New Copernicans. This is the spiritual front line in the battle for the American soul. All our efforts need to be on understanding this sector and preparing our ministers to effectively communicate with them. The missional opportunity is not having debates between close transcendent and closed immanents—evangelicals and New Atheists—but in moving open immanents toward open transcendence.

Here the task is moving people from accepting “myths” to acknowledging “myths that are true”—enabling people to move from Joseph Campbell to Jesus Christ, from Jung to Jesus. This will necessitate a robust understanding of spiritual archetypes and being able to make natural connections to biblical theology. We will not be able to unmask the gods without a greater appreciation and knowledge of these universal myths.^{xxi} This will take a robust, nonjudgmental understanding of secular myths with their variety of neopaganism expressions. It will take a generous understanding of signals of transcendence and common grace.^{xxii} It is significant that the most influential myth writer of our day is Neil Gaiman, whose novel *American Gods* was the centerpiece of the grand hall at Comic-Con this year.

SECOND, THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH WILL HAVE TO MOVE FROM AN ATTITUDE OF DWELLERS TO ONE OF EXPLORERS, FROM A KNOW-IT-ALL TONE, TO ONE OF OPEN LEARNING AND RESPECTFUL HUMILITY.

Walker Percy said that the most important difference between people is between those from whom life is a quest and those for whom it is not.^{xxiii} As long as we portray the sense that we have a corner on truth and that we have nothing to learn from others, the conversation will remain closed. This shift, from closed to open, is temperamentally the most difficult step that the church will need to face. It will require an abandonment of the left-brained Enlightenment bias with its notions of objective certainty. We will need to shift from an apologetic based on reason to one that emphasizes the imagination. Here the neuroscience of Iain

McGilchrist is pivotal, the missiological perspective of Lesslie Newbigin, and the artistic sensibility of Luci Shaw.^{xxiv} This is always a painful process and rarely without scars as depicted in Peter Enns book, *The Sin of Certainty: Why God Desires Our Trust More Than Our “Correct” Beliefs*. Seeing faith in relational categories of trust rather than Enlightenment categories of certainty is indicative of a New Copernican shift. One need not have the litany of doubts raised by Enns to shift toward a more open, humble posture towards one’s convictions. We’d be wise to follow the advice of Mike McHargue. He quotes a friend in his book, *Finding God in the Waves*: “Brené Brown says that the opposite of faith is not doubt. Faith and doubt need each other. The opposite of faith is certainty. When I heard that, I realized, no wonder I was such a screwed-up Fundamentalist. But when I let the doubt just be there, my faith grew.”^{xxv} Without this shift in tone and emphasis, this openness to exploration, meaningful conversations with millennial New Copernicans will be greatly thwarted. One wonders whether it is possible to preach from questions rather than answers?^{xxvi}

THIRD, WE WILL HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE CROSS-PRESSURED NATURE OF OUR OWN BELIEFS.

We will not be able connect with authenticity unless we are able to express the cross-pressure nature of our own beliefs. This means that doubt will need to be given more airtime in church. As long as this remains a taboo topic, New Copernican believers will not be able to identify with the seemingly false pretense of religious experience. When we preach we will need to acknowledge

how strange some of the Bible seems to modern ears. Glossing over these texts with a too-pious-by-half simplistic spirituality will only serve to move doubt to skepticism.

Evangelical pastors have been tempted to become celebrity exemplars of certainty. A benefit of Catholicism is that they do not saint Christians until after they are dead. Protestant beatification often happens as a result of a person’s celebrity status within the church or consumer market while they are still living. Life size cardboard cut outs of the pastor in the church foyer is a bad sign but not uncommon. A.J. Swoboda criticizes this practice. He writes, “We don’t actually allow preachers the space or freedom to teach from the textbook of their wanderings experiences.... Those in my trade have become certainty machines, pumping out a steady stream of safe truths meeting the emerging market of consumer Christians who yearn for cliché more than Christ.”^{xxvii} Contemporary New Copernicans have a highly honed crap detector. We will have to be much more transparent about the nature of belief and the messiness of discipleship if we are to have credibility with their sensibilities. Some evangelicals were shocked by the revelation of Mother Teresa’s long dark night of the soul depicted in her letters.^{xxviii} Yet her struggle would only serve to confirm her authentic belief in the minds of New Copernicans explorers. We must honestly embrace the cross-pressured nature of belief today. It is true of secular seekers as it is true of religious believers. As Charles Taylor notes, in this sense we are all secular now.

FOURTH, WE WILL HAVE TO ADAPT OUR ENLIGHTENMENT-BASED PEDAGOGY TO ONE

THAT PLACES A PRIORITY ON EXPERIENCE OVER ABSTRACTIONS.

Almost all of our seminary training has been based on an “intellectualist model of education” or “worldview alignment,” views where cognitive information transfer has a priority and with it the sermon.^{xxix} This practice, it turns out, is based on an inaccurate assessment of human nature. As James K.A. Smith has pointed out, we are lovers before we are thinkers and our “environments of practice” are more influential than rationalist inquiry.^{xxx} We were all taught Bible study inductive method that followed the course of observation, interpretation, and application or head, heart, and hand. What we must come to see is that a more accurate assessment of human nature, and one that is embraced by New Copernicans, is just the reverse: hand, heart, head or experience, imagination, and then reason. This will take a serious rethinking of our worship liturgy, Sunday school programs, and sermons.

FIFTH, WE WILL NEED TO RECAPTURE THE PRIORITY OF BELONGING BEFORE BELIEVING, OF BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FIRST BEFORE DEMANDING CREEDAL AFFIRMATION.

Even more than providing content, if churches would provide safe places for honest conversations, in effect an alternative to secular third places.^{xxxi} Creating safe places for honest questions is at the heart of the approach taken by Q Place, a non-threatening third place design to facilitate conversations about God, the Bible, and meaning (www.qplace.com). This characteristic among New Copernicans also places a high value on hospitality and hanging out—which is agenda-free relationality.

The church has the tendency to instrumentalize relationships, which is to violate the premise of the relationship. The church does not need “friendship evangelism,” rather it needs “friendship friendship,” agenda-free loving and listening. In this regard, the church will always be approached with justifiable suspicion by New Copernicans because this has been so routinely violated. Attitudes of judgment by Christians—which is presumed by all nonbelievers—make churches and Christians something to be avoided rather than embraced. We have to earn the right to be *present* much less be *heard*. We need to shut up and start giving sacrificial loving.

SIXTH, THE MEASURE OF DOING THIS CORRECTLY IS THE MONIKER OF AUTHENTICITY.

It is not a description that one can use of oneself, but is only an affirmation given by others. Only when there is integrity within the New Copernican frame, an integrity that is not forced, that is agenda free, that is relationally saturated, will one approach the potential of authenticity. This is the gold star aspiration of all who would connect with New Copernicans. Authenticity is not a pose one assumes, but a gift one receives.

SEVENTH, ACTIVE LISTENING AND NON-JUDGMENTAL PRESENCE WILL DIRECT US TO THE ONRAMP OF EACH NEW COPERNICAN'S SENSE OF HAUNTING.

Every New Copernican is on a personal pilgrimage for meaning, a quest to make the world a better place in their special way. This is the place of their spiritual longing, the cracked door to their fear of missing out, their personal

thin place revealed.^{xxxii} We need to learn to ask appropriate questions, to have some sense of the literature and points of cultural concern, and popular cultural vocabulary about each of these onramps: justice, beauty, relationships, and spirit. It is at these points that the conversations will become both personal and animated. These onramps approach an individual's point of ultimate concern. We do not need to close or convince, but it would be great if we could ask the intriguing question that moves them closer to a personal encounter with the Ground of their Concern. We need to honor people's longings, we need to respect people's fumbling with their signals of transcendence, we need to move at their pace in ways that respect their individuality. And perhaps most importantly, we need to show a willingness to learn from their spiritual journey. We are not the expert, guru, or “more spiritual person.” Rather we are merely fellow travelers on a shared spiritual exploration called life. We need to listen to their story and enter into it with gentleness and humility.

There are churches that are reaching New Copernicans. They are dotted all over the Pacific Northwest. They are even found in Brooklyn. The story of St. Lydia's Church is compelling in that it addresses the seven characteristics highlighted here. St. Lydia's is a dinner church, where the entire service centers on a home cooked meal. There are not many places in New York where people can stage a dinner party—St. Lydia's has created a spiritual third place. They lean over backwards to dispel the barriers and hesitations that hip-urban New Yorkers have about church. The *Atlantic* article

written about the church was entitled, “The Secret Christians of Brooklyn.”^{xxxiii} They acknowledge that believing in Jesus is counter-cultural. St. Lydia’s is a progressive church supported by the Lutheran and Episcopal dioceses. They are accepting of all people regardless of their beliefs and backgrounds. Openness is a hallmark of St. Lydia’s. Pastor Emily Scott tells people, “I’m not from a scary church,” by which she means judgmental.

Jeremiah Sierra, who serves on their “Leadership Table,” writes, “As someone with about as much doubt as faith, St. Lydia’s fulfilled a need in me to engage with my faith without requiring consent to any particular dogma. My engagement is more kinetic than intellectual. I accept and give gifts with my hands—the gifts of love and grace in the form of bread and wine, a dish passed full of food, peace passed with a handshake or a hug.”^{xxxiv} What creates community is the weekly experience of preparing a meal together and cleaning up afterwards. It is not meal then worship or worship then meal, but the entire meal is established as the liturgy of worship, a genuine experience of a first century Eucharistic meal. One starts the meal with strangers, one ends the clean up as friends. Friends, Lewis reminds us, do not gaze into each other’s eyes, but do something together. Perhaps the most legitimate measure of membership is when a visitor posts about St. Lydia’s on Facebook for the first time, thereby identifying with the church to their friends. During each service someone tells his or her story, not as a testimony of faith, but as a travelogue update on a long spiritual pilgrimage. Everyone is embraced with respectful listening and acceptance. What one experiences here is a divine

encounter shared in a context of relational acceptance watered by a message of grace. The church is very active in art and social justice issues. Many writers and creative-type people attend. St. Lydia’s is a LGBTQ-accepting church, and they are consequently active in providing care and support for these particular social needs. These efforts reflect their congregation, their location in Brooklyn, and are an authentic onramp to further spiritual seeking.

Urban environments like New York can be extremely lonely places. A “dinner church” is not so threatening and is warmly inviting—beauty, worship, friends, and a home cooked meal. Here is a church that creates an environment for genuine worship, relational connection, and spiritual exploration. It is not surprising that St. Lydia’s does not consider itself as a finished project but an ongoing adventure. Here is what a church by millennials for millennials looks like, one that challenges the status quo but at the same time lifts the historic gospel to new heights. Here is a church that can effectively move people to an open, transcendent perspective and a loving encounter with Jesus.

Poised between the lightning and the thunder, New Copernicans are leading the church in new directions. Many evangelicals who inhabit a closed transcendent perspective will find this uncomfortable. But wise pastors will stop and listen to these new voices carefully. For there is something deeply spiritual and resolutely human about the steps taken. It is best to listen with an open mind and humble spirit. Here’s to the crazy ones who are changing our world. The future of the evangelical church depends on our paying attention. ■

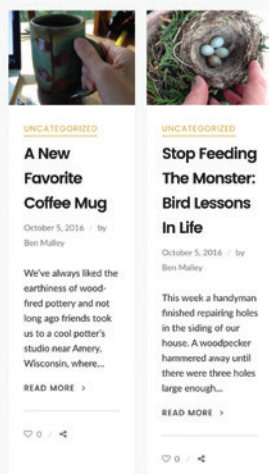
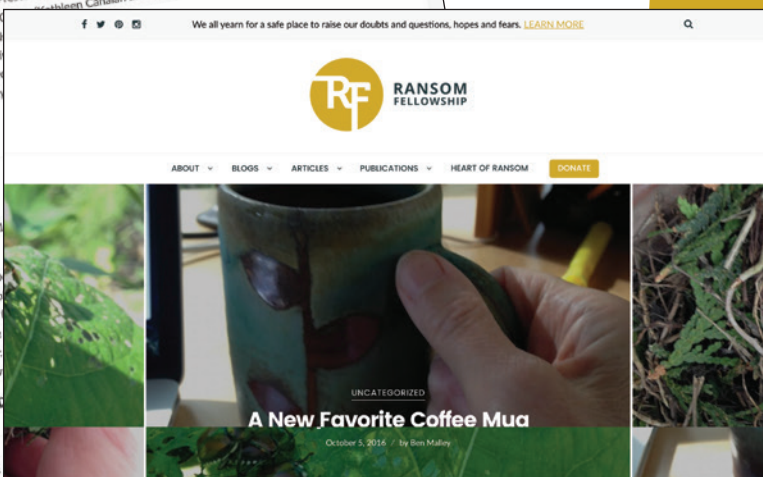
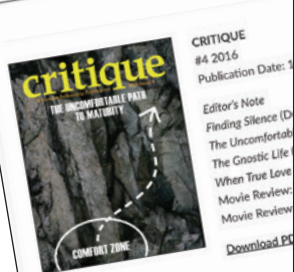
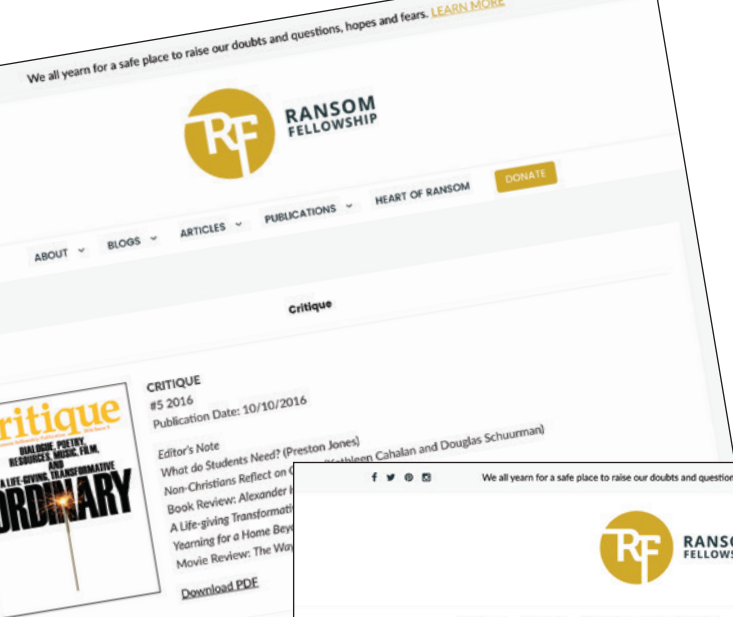




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FOOTNOTES

- i Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (Random House, 2001).
- ii "By social imaginaries, I mean something much broader and deeper than intellectual schemes people may entertain when they think about social reality in a disengaged mode. I am thinking, rather, of the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations.... Because my focus is on ordinary people, this is often carried in images, stories, and legends." Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Harvard, 2007), p. 171-172.
- iii Harry Cheadle, "The Hot New Millennial Trend is Hating Millennials," www.vice.com/read/new-millennial-trend-hating-millennials.
- iv www.windriderforum.info/portfolio_page/episode-three-sphere-thinking.
- v Taylor, pp. 423-535.
- vi Lesslie Newbigin notes, "The churches of Europe and their cultural offshoots in the Americas have largely come to a kind of comfortable cohabitation with the Enlightenment." *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship*, (Eerdmans, 1995), p. 33. See also Peter Enns, *The Sin of Certainty: Why God Desired Our Trust More Than Our "Correct" Beliefs* (Harper One, 2016).
- vii James K.A. Smith, *How (Not) To Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* (Eerdmans, 2014), p. 142.
- viii Seth Godin's blog, "None of the Above," April 8, 2016.
- ix Smith, p. 73.
- x Julian Barnes, *Nothing To Be Frightened Of* (Vintage, 2008), p. 3.
- xi Rick Lyman, "Not All Will Follow This Star in the East," *The New York Times*, July 4, 2014.
- xii Peter Berger, *A Rumor of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural* (Anchor, 1970).
- xiii Smith, p. 62.
- xiv Ibid., p. 73.
- xv Borrowed from James K.A. Smith, personal correspondence.
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ONLINE REDISIGN

Here's a sneak peak at Ransom Fellowship's rebranding and Web site reinvention, with creative work handled by Malley Design (thisismalley.com). While pages are not finalized, these proposed screen shots give us a sense of what's to come, with final launch hoped for by the new year.

We can look forward to a new, clean look with an emphasis on improved visitor access, content organization, and mobile-responsivity. Huzzah!

