

THE SIXTIES AND BEYOND

Dechristianization in North America and Western Europe,
1945–2000

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*Dechristianization in North America and
Western Europe, 1945–2000*

EDITED BY NANCY CHRISTIE AND
MICHAEL GAUVREAU

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THE SIXTIES AND BEYOND

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Introduction

'Even the hippies were only very slowly going secular':¹ Dechristianization and the Culture of Individualism in North America and Western Europe

NANCY CHRISTIE AND MICHAEL GAUVREAU

The secularization thesis which posited a long-term and inexorable process of religious decline in modernizing societies has, over the past decade, been challenged and revised by a number of recent historians, most notably by Callum Brown and Hugh McLeod, whose work, while differing significantly with regard to the causes of the decline of Christianity, has opened a new interpretive window to the importance of the 1960s. Brown and McLeod also differ as to how one defines the sixties: Brown has identified the period between 1958 and 1963 as the critical turning point in the cultural and social hegemony of religion, as the juncture at which most Britons would no longer perceive their nation and their personal identities to be Christian.² McLeod, on the other hand, has suggested a more capacious chronology defined by the 'long sixties,' bookended by 1958 and 1974. Where Brown has emphasized the crucial importance of rapid changes in the attitude of women towards what they perceived as a morally constrictive church culture, McLeod has considered a wider range of actors, and he, like Grace Davie, have emphasized the need to study not only broader cultural and social changes – the focus of Brown's seminal reinterpretation – but the internal dynamics of church institutional life, viewing them not as outside the 'world' but as integral to social change itself.³ Although Brown's narrative of rapid gendered religious transformation in the early sixties has wider implications for both Europe and North America, his evidence is largely drawn from the British Isles, whereas McLeod adopts a more international perspective, in attempting to discern the commonalities between European and North American religious trends in the postwar world.⁴

In attempting to explain why the sixties, broadly defined, resulted

in a catastrophic exodus from the institutional churches, scholars have considered a number of variables: changes in attitudes among youth to sexuality and morality, the woman's emancipation movement, the impact of radical politics, the wider criticism of authority structures across society, the waning of group and ethno-political identities, and postwar affluence, with its emphasis upon consumer choice and personal satisfaction.⁵ The central question addressed by this volume is to what degree all of these factors resonate equally in various national and social contexts. Can historians adequately find an overarching explanation or set of causal factors which might explain religious decline on both sides of the Atlantic, or must historians focus on a less macro-historical approach, to emphasize medium-range questions, which allow for significant differences between the societies and provide scholars with tools which might allow them to prioritize the importance of different causes at work? If, as Hugh McLeod has rightly suggested, the combined impacts of the civil rights movement in the United States, the Second Vatican Council, and popular theological discussion such as that surrounding the publication of Bishop Robinson's *Honest to God* constituted a 'New Reformation,'⁶ why did this not lead to a general revitalization of religion as its precursor had in the sixteenth century?

More importantly, did these liberalizing currents have an equal impact both within various European countries and in North America? Or did they combine with pre-existing cultural and social predispositions within each country, which ensured a different cultural purchase and subsequent trajectory within these societies? While publications such as those by Robinson, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Reinhold Niebuhr had a great impact upon the public discussion of religion in Britain and Europe, their impact was distinctly muted in both Canada and the United States, where institutional structures remained more fully in the grip of mass religious cultures and consequently theology retained a more orthodox cast.⁷ McLeod is very sensitive to the nuanced differences between rates of churchgoing. In 1960, he shows that the most robust rates of church attendance, between 30 and 50 per cent, were found in Northern Ireland, the United States, Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, and Australia, and that France, West Germany, Austria, and Scotland varied between 20 and 35 per cent, and England and Wales drew a mere 10 to 20 per cent of Sunday attendance.⁸ Did the emergence of alternative models of society and individual conduct which were unleashed, as Brown concludes, with such force after 1958 affect countries with robust churchgoing traditions less than those like

England where institutional erosion had occurred in previous decades? In certain countries, most notably the United States, Australia, Canada, and the Netherlands, the continued cultural authority of religious institutions may have mitigated the impact of political radicalism and fundamental changes in attitudes to morality, which had a tremendous impact in Britain, as Callum Brown has well demonstrated in this volume, and in these countries 'religious crisis' may have been postponed until the 1970s or 1980s.

If the emergence of a permissive society was the central catalyst for secularization and a precipitous decline in church affiliation, it emerged earliest in the United States, notably during the late 1940s,⁹ with little direct impact upon levels of religious belief or churchgoing. Why, in the United States, did postwar affluence, the rise of a possessive individualist ethos, and the impact of the marketplace, with its stress on personal choice, not lead directly to a plummeting in personal identification with religious organizations as it did in various European countries such as Germany and Britain? What other factors were at work? Was it that American churches had historically internalized notions of individualism and free choice, as Nathan O. Hatch has argued?¹⁰ In the United States and Canada, religious pluralism had always been a source of religious revitalization, but in Britain and Europe, with firmer statist religious traditions, the emergence of a more pluralistic religious landscape between 1958 and 1974, as McLeod makes clear, had a distinctly detrimental effect upon Anglicanism, the central 'pillar' – to use a term most associated with the Low Countries – of England as a Christian nation.¹¹ Larger cultural and social changes which had an international resonance have to be balanced with the peculiar aspects of national religious traditions in order to explain both the periodization and the causes of religious decline in terms of both institutional and personal identities.

Moreover, this volume breaks with the now conventional emphasis upon the 1950s as a conservative foil for the 'radical sixties,' by focusing upon significant elements of liberalization in terms of social values during that decade, which foregrounded their public articulation in the sixties. Certainly the notion of 'the religious crisis of the sixties' was paramount among intellectuals in all Western societies, many of whom participated in the elaboration of what we would now call the secularization thesis. Most wrote from a perspective critical of the institutional churches, but this may merely have represented an acute phase of a type of dechristianization in which there was a growing disjuncture

between elites and popular notions of what constituted real religious experience.¹² This was a phenomenon whose roots lay deeper in the cultural and social matrix of the immediate postwar period and its participants, and although they saw themselves as left-leaning liberals, their critique of mass culture and the alienation attendant upon modern culture actually marked them as cultural conservatives. Historians need also to be attentive to the possibility that this may have been merely the discourse of intellectuals and may not have necessarily reflected deeper transformations in societal values on a mass scale.¹³ And here the shadow of the Cold War further complicates the existing narrative. For the political and social ideals championed in the global ideological struggle were in tension with the rise of a distinctive postwar individualism in which the ability of more people to develop their own unique personality through conscious self-development – a power available arguably only to the leisure class and bohemians at the beginning of the twentieth century – was simultaneously trumpeted and lamented by social and political elites, particularly when that individualism led people away from socially disciplining institutions like the church.

Many of the articles in this volume posit that the churches themselves may have been dynamic agents of change. Church institutions may well have continued more or less to articulate a conservative moral message, but many of them were also key producers of ideas of democracy and individualism, and promoted an ideal of ecumenism which highlighted the idea of the religious marketplace. However, the contributors to this volume do not argue that this was a success story for the churches; rather, many churches adopted strategies to mediate the impact of new cultural mores which were not in the end effective in recasting their institutional authority. Here the United States may once again be exceptional, for there the focus of evangelical outreach which had as its chief aim the enlistment of new church members was immensely successful in creating a flourishing spectrum of churches and voluntary organizations, especially those on the religious right. As this volume's contribution by Tina Fetner, comparing the relative strengths of the new religious right in the United States and Canada, so clearly demonstrates, institutional organization does matter in terms of both historical and sociological explanation.¹⁴ In the United States, modernizing one's institutional apparatus while at the same time preserving a traditionalist message was immensely effective in emboldening both the public and private power of the religious right. In contrast, as the article by Leslie Tentler demonstrates, the Roman Catholic Church's

hierarchical structure remained static, but its decision with Vatican II to drastically alter its rituals and patterns of pastoral outreach generally had a negative impact on popular adherence. But the negative outcome of Vatican II was uneven: church attendance actually rose in Italy during the 1980s,¹⁵ a fact which reminds us that not all European countries experienced postwar affluence and cultural change in the same measure; more importantly, the examples of Italy and Spain demonstrate the strong link between church and politics,¹⁶ both on the conservative and radical ends of the spectrum, illustrating that if religion could cleave to other significant group identities – namely nation, political party, or ethnicity, as in Poland and Ireland – its purchase on popular adherence was all the greater. As the contribution in this volume by Stephen Heathorn makes clear, not only was death and its commemoration one of the most important aspects of religiosity often neglected by historians and sociologists alike, but the key factor in the abandonment of Christian language among former soldiers and officials of the British Raj was the change in the constituent elements in their notion of group memory rather than a decline in religiosity itself. It demonstrates that religious belief may not in and of itself have been a critical factor in the decline of institutional Christianity. This leads historians to focus on changes within those areas of culture and society which were not explicitly religious in character. These were, notably, a growing popular suspicion of conventional systems of social regulation, an emerging sensibility which accorded a pejorative connotation to notions of social conformity and group loyalty, the declension in a range of institutions as templates of civic identity, and a growing critique of social hierarchy and authority. These constituted an assemblage of postwar cultural and social mores which were being promulgated by and within the authority structures themselves both in Western Europe and North America, which sought, in the wake of the Second World War, to enshrine notions of democracy and individualism. Once unleashed, however, these new notions of freedom, choice, and personal happiness had unforeseen consequences for organized religion.

Conventionally, historians in Britain, Canada, and the United States have viewed the fifties as a period defined by a general 'return to normalcy' in which traditional gender roles were confirmed by an intense public discourse elevating domesticity and the nuclear family and a world subsumed by a broader affluence which fostered public apathy, political complacency, and a retreat into the privacy of the home.¹⁷ In terms of religious institutions, Callum Brown has argued that the

period between 1945 and 1963 constituted an era in which 'a harsh and vindictive state apparatus' sought to limit a variety of personal pleasures and that state policies were likewise sustained by 'the hegemony of discursive Christianity,' which defended itself behind a barrier of moral Puritanism which resulted in a set of rigidly policed traditional gender boundaries.¹⁸ The heart of the complacency narrative is grounded in a perspective which views a distinct rupture between the culture of the sixties and that of the unrelenting conservative and conformist postwar era in which the principal agent of change lies in the radical sexual and political values espoused by those coming of age in the early sixties. There is much to commend this point of view, for as Brown amply demonstrates, the dominant Christian discourse, especially on questions of sexuality and female identity, was very conservative and puritanical. During the past decade many historians have begun to question this narrative of unrelieved conservative conformity, and have pointed out that beneath the veneer of conservative discourse, which they agree was intense, there was considerable liberalization in terms of both social configurations and personal values: married women were entering the workforce in increasing numbers; gender roles were being subtly revised as the rise of the companionate ideal was shifting marriage and the family in a more egalitarian direction; prior to the development of the pill in 1960 premarital sex was on the rise as were rates of illegitimacy both in Britain and the United States; and notions of permissiveness both in terms of childrearing and the medicalization of 'sinful' behaviours, together with the rise of rock 'n' roll, signalled a sea change in Western values which in many respects remained hidden beneath still powerful authority structures, including the churches, which espoused conventional views in part to staunch the flow of permissive practices.¹⁹

If we accept the parameters of this new narrative, it displaces the agency of change away from baby boom youth to their parents, many of whom were born prior to the Second World War, and it is this generation who were the critical actors in not socializing their children according to the canons of the still hegemonic Christian discourse. Change thus emerged from below, and as Steve Bruce, Hugh McLeod, Mark Ruff, Stephen Brooke, and Patrick Pasture have all observed from a variety of national contexts, the war was responsible for breaking down older structures of sociability (of which the church was central), increased mobility, and accelerated the production of new suburban neighbourhoods in which older systems of social regulations and com-

munity control had been eviscerated.²⁰ In the United States, the notion of a 'subversive consensus' has been advanced by Alan Petigny, who has shown that in various cultural sites such as popular magazines, music, psychology, childrearing, and religion, liberal values had become so well integrated into mainstream culture that even those who appeared to espouse conservative moral prescriptions had to pay homage to new ideals of individual choice, personal pleasure, and moral relativity in order to gain a hearing. However, as Petigny argues, new democratic approaches to cultural knowledge which had emerged during the Second World War had so deeply penetrated the wider American cultural sensibility that youth subversiveness had become part and parcel of 'conformity.'²¹ In terms of religion, in the United States, both Protestant and Catholic churches had thoroughly integrated the new popular psychology, with its emphasis on individual self-fulfilment, which undermined older theologies based on fear and guilt.²²

On a more prosaic level, the war, as Clive Field's evidence illustrates, greatly interrupted patterns of churchgoing because of the demands of war work, the displacement of children, and the destruction of churches, many of which were not rebuilt to serve the growing post-war population.²³ And as historians on both sides of the Atlantic have argued, a sense of ennui with power structures had begun in the fifties, as evidenced by the flatness in terms of new religious vocations in Quebec and in terms of popular piety, which has prompted Eileen Barker to conclude that beneath the outward respect accorded churches represented by the robust levels of Sunday school attendance and churchgoing in the immediate postwar period, there was considerable personal indifference especially among men, who, as a result of their war experience, now preferred to participate in religious life through the discursive realm of radio and television rather than through the institutional church.²⁴ The picture of the fifties which emerges from a range of revisionist work is that it was a decade defined by much greater levels of social tension and cultural conflict than has hitherto been assumed. As Simon Green has noted, the term 'Establishment' was coined in 1959 and reflects the cultural sensibility of the 1950s when even a conservative society like Britain was becoming aware of multi-ethnic immigration, had experienced the liberalization of drink and gaming laws, and had a Conservative government that commissioned the Wolfenden Report to recommend the reform of criminal laws against homosexuality.²⁵ And while for the most part the public face of religion was one of unremitting puritanism, in certain quarters ideas of sexual pleasure and the

emergence of notions of moral relativism,²⁶ especially regarding issues of divorce and homosexuality, had made considerable headway during the fifties, even if, as Bruce contends, they did not reach their full fruition until the 1960s.²⁷ Although many of these liberalizing tendencies were encased in a message of conservative stasis, they nevertheless reflected debate rather than consensus within religious organizations. Certainly many religious groups, and especially the hidebound Anglican hierarchy, were intent on reimposing an interwar moral consensus, which often brought clerics and laity into open conflict; their inflexibility in terms of morality and sexual sin reveals a recognition of the need to shore up traditionalist positions in the face of distinct subterranean social change. As Pat Thane has said of the immediate postwar era, it was a more complex period than the simple articulation of traditional moral codes;²⁸ rather, the fifties can be seen as a period in which social values had altered significantly, even they had not become coordinated in systems of public social ferment and mobilization as was so evident in the 1960s. Indeed, as Christie's article in this volume demonstrates, much of what later became an attack on the mainline churches in Canada as hidebound institutions built upon a sociological perspective which evolved in the United States during the fifties as part of a liberal critique of mass culture and bore little direct relationship to the actual workings of the church establishments.

Another widespread phenomenon of the immediate postwar era which had a decisive long-term impact on the vitality of church attendance on both sides of the Atlantic was the breakdown of denominational boundaries²⁹ brought about by an increase in religiously mixed marriages (a phenomenon viewed warily since the early twentieth century by clerics who well understood their negative impact on church membership), the breakdown of ethnic subcultures, particularly in the United States, combined with a movement among church leaders in many countries to create a more forceful united front among various Christian denominations against communism by espousing a more ecumenical approach to both doctrine, ritual, and church governance. As Mark Ruff has concluded regarding West Germany, many Catholic leaders welcomed the collapse of their long-standing religious subculture because they were now thoroughly integrated into the political and economic governing structures and sought closer collaboration rather than competition with their Protestant counterparts.³⁰ In Canada during the fifties, the trend among religious leaders and religious faculty in Canadian universities was to espouse an ecumenical outreach to Roman

Catholicism and Judaism, and its impact upon Protestantism was that missionizing and evangelical tenets became much more muted,³¹ thus debilitating many Protestant churches who could no longer rely upon new converts to increase church membership. As Wilhem Damberg and Patrick Pasture have noted of Belgium, this movement towards intra-church collaboration also entailed a loss of traditional references to a belief in hell, the devil, and angels within Catholicism in order to make the church less offensive to Protestants, who now were viewed as political allies, but this may well have had a deleterious effect upon more traditional churchgoers.³²

While, as Patrick Allitt has argued in his contribution to this volume, ecumenism also led to the weakening of anti-Catholicism in mainstream American culture in the sixties, it also led to a stronger identification with politics – a feature of many postwar societies. This in turn helped promote the view of secularization as a goal within the churches themselves, in which ideals of absolute truth gave way to notions of moral relativity and led also to a dilution of doctrine.³³ For some time many churches had been sustained by a notion of the church against the world, which acknowledged a large sphere of the secular and a smaller cultural space for the institutional churches. However, when by the later fifties there was a growing backlash against the dominance of neo-orthodoxy in Protestantism, and neo-Thomism in Catholicism,³⁴ the ‘world’ had come to be the dynamic player in the new social Christianity, all of which contributed to the intellectual authority of the secularization thesis among clergymen and social scientists in the sixties. As Wade Clark Roof has observed of the United States, the postwar buoyancy in church attendance occluded denominational adherence,³⁵ but with the postwar referencing not of one’s denomination but of ‘religion’ or ‘Christianity’ in general, critique no longer fixated on the particularities of religion so much as on the whole authority structure of religious belief and practice within Western societies. Laypeople within any church have always felt free to criticize their local clergymen, internal church governance, or the particularities of theology, but by the 1950s, as churches came to resemble one another more and more, where in the past one would search out a new local church, parishioners who disliked their local clergymen now simply dropped out of the church altogether. And if we follow the line of argument of several historians, the people in the pews had much to complain about in the 1950s, as seminaries and colleges increasingly instructed clergymen in more intellectualized forms of theology which tended to alienate ordinary believers

who wanted a more experiential religious message, emphasizing either evangelicalism or devotional Catholicism. All of this generated deep-seated conflicts between clergy and laity, which had at their root a sense that the church was an empty organizational apparatus or simply a set of moral strictures which no longer provided a sense of comfort to the parishioner who sought continuity and ritual alongside a desire for a more modern church.³⁶

On the surface this intensifying alliance between church and politics – seen in Germany, Italy, France, and Belgium, through the creation of Christian Democratic parties – appeared to increase the authority of Catholicism. Similarly, in the United States, the increasing symbolic association in the 1950s between God and country reflected in the pledge of allegiance of ‘one nation under God’ (1953) and the making of ‘In God We Trust’ the national motto (1956) amplified the cultural presence of the churches, but by the sixties, the anti-communistic imperatives which underlay this conjunction between God and America contributed to an increasing sense that ‘religion’ was part of the economic and political establishment, thus bearing little relation to the piety of ordinary Americans. The career of Billy Graham, an international sensation as an evangelist, whose career peaked in the 1950s, is illustrative of the pitfalls of the alliance between church and politics. During the fifties he was deftly able to bring evangelicals and liberals together under the rubric of what Callum Brown has termed ‘crusade Christianity,’³⁷ but by the late 1960s, his personal anti-communism led him to a overly intimate relationship with Richard Nixon, probably one of the most partisan American presidents in recent memory, which undermined the national and international reputation of mainstream evangelicals by rendering religion merely a subset of party politics. Perhaps the best example of how the intersection of religion and politics did not yield long-term dividends is that of West Germany: in the immediate aftermath of the war the Catholic Church utilized its conservative ethos regarding sexual morality as a means to distance itself from its earlier entanglements with Nazism, but by the 1960s, the tables had turned, since as left-wing politics became identified with currents of sexual liberalization an ideological realignment developed which linked sexual repression with Nazism, ending with the churches even more forcefully implicated in the Nazi past.³⁸

In Italy and Spain, the Catholic Church during the fifties and sixties enjoyed a very large presence in public life, largely because of its strong affiliation with the state, but there as elsewhere this connec-

tion established the optic that 'religion' was simply a synonym for the political conservative.³⁹ Yet there is clear evidence, as adduced in the paper of Antonio Cazorla-Sanchez in this volume, that Catholic youth movements and associations were vital sites of liberal and modernizing tendencies within the repressive regime of Francisco Franco's Spain. In many national jurisdictions, defining oneself as a liberal no longer required having any affinity with the churchgoing public; indeed, to demonstrate one's progressive credentials meant associating with liberal humanists, agnostics, or even atheists.⁴⁰ Thus the intense identification of the churches with politics in postwar Germany, Britain, the United States, and even Canada was a double-edged sword:⁴¹ it increased the cultural authority of the churches in the short term, but in the long term it resulted in polarizing religious constituencies so that whereas before the church was inclusive and community was defined by religiosity, now the churches were split along lines of the political left and right, defined by 'secular' rather than religious issues. If, as Callum Brown has argued, the 'bifurcation into extremes of conservatives and liberals'⁴² was the dominant trend within postwar Christianity, then surely its crucial impact was to render theology largely irrelevant to religious identity, which came to be replaced by political party identities,⁴³ a theme pursued by the papers in this volume by Patrick Allitt, Tina Fetner, and Melanie Heath, all of whom show in different ways the process whereby denominational identities became subsumed by secular political ideologies.

Despite the differing constitutional arrangements of church and state in both Europe and North America prior to 1945, the interface between religion and the political order had been episodic and oriented to particular issues of morality and education. In the early twentieth century the church and the state occupied separate spheres of policy priorities. The period between 1945 and 1960 saw the increased polarization between right and left over issues of sexual morality, gender identities, and body ethics in which morality became an arena of the political and forced the churches to relinquish sole ownership of one of its chief pillars. Certainly, it can be argued that the Christian Right in the United States (a designation including considerable numbers of Protestant evangelicals and some Roman Catholics) has continued to be a player and has effectively situated itself at the forefront of issues regarding abortion, homosexuality, and the preservation of the family; however, even here, as Melanie Heath shows, these are issues generated by the state, to which the churches merely respond, largely in a

defensive manner. Even in less polarized jurisdictions such as Canada, Britain, France, and Germany, where laws regarding the politics of the body have been liberalized, the churches since the late 1960s have not been accorded the status of a lobby group with any legitimacy and thus remained sidelined and irrelevant to the polity. In Canada, for example, there was a slow process of decline in the public voice of the churches: the wartime discussions surrounding the creation of a social security state marked the first time in which the mainline Protestant denominations had not been consulted, and the Quebec Catholic hierarchy were consulted only because the federal Liberal Party feared the loss of political influence in this critical constituency.⁴⁴ However, the abortion law reforms of 1969 marked the final instance where a government deemed it necessary to consult the churches before legislating.

Studies of secularization have generally focused on broad social changes such as the impact of industrialization, the formation of specific labour regimes, the change in gender identities, and post-Enlightenment intellectual movements, which highlight rationality and a decline of the miraculous. What is frequently forgotten, but is alluded to by Callum Brown, Hugh McLeod, and Grace Davie,⁴⁵ is the critical importance of changes in the religious socialization of children and youth. Historically there has been a very close interdependence between the church and the family. Certainly it is better known that churches were chiefly responsible for upholding ideals of patriarchy, heterosexuality, gender roles, and the priority of the family as a site of social discipline in which the social and power relations of the family were meant to mirror those of the church and that the family was seen as a principal institution to police sin and moral delinquency.⁴⁶ This symbiosis of church and family, though frequently renegotiated and often resisted by certain social groups since early modern times, persisted more or less intact until the end of the Second World War, when new ideals of gender equality within companionate marriage, more individualistic attitudes towards the behaviour of children and youth, combined with greater numbers of married women in the workforce, and the permeation of the broader political agenda (to fight communism) during the Cold War that democracy must pervade all human relationships, gave greater priority to the private sphere as the source of civic values. Many historians have seen this as a conservative movement, but within this traditional political message arose new and quite radical notions of sexual pleasure, psychological notions of familial relations, new attitudes to leisure, and increased value attached to individual choice. The

churches were not entirely opposed to these developments,⁴⁷ but their own campaigns to exalt the role of youth as the bearers of new ideals of individualism and democratic behaviour had unforeseen consequences in the longer term.

Once the ideal of democracy and its corollary, individual self-fulfilment (which ultimately came to mean sexual fulfilment), were introduced throughout various cultures through a multiplicity of cultural sites including youth movements, the churches, the mass media, and the social sciences, and in politics itself, these helped hasten the breakdown of those older group identities which McLeod has identified as crucial to the more general decline of the institutional church. However, this transformation also critically altered the conventional hierarchy of generations which had historically assured the transmission of religious knowledge and the social reproduction of Christians. There is evidence from within family correspondence that although the ability of parents to replicate their religious ideals was beginning to break down perhaps as early as the late nineteenth century,⁴⁸ the broader cultural power of notions of individual choice only became paramount by the end of the Second World War. As Hugh McLeod makes evident, by the 1950s in Britain, in the midst of a conservative Christian moral discourse, parents were allowing teenagers (and the coining of that term is a very important component of this overall process)⁴⁹ to decide for themselves whether to follow their parents' example of going to church regularly.⁵⁰ In Canada, the clergy within the largest Protestant denomination, the United Church of Canada, made similar recommendations to youth in confirmation classes during the 1960s. Some of the choices of youth may have involved a complete rejection of the Christian morality of their parents and of the church, as Callum Brown's article in this volume argues, but as his earlier work⁵¹ and that of Lynn Abrams in this volume also suggests, the social reproduction of religious values which led to such a drastic declension in churchgoing in the sixties, may well have begun with the parents who did not discuss religion or have any intense religious commitment themselves. However as Abrams make clear, the long-term symbiosis between church and family meant that when children rejected the values of their parents, they automatically also rejected the church.⁵² Some of these changes in parenting, of course, may also have developed because of the increase in mixed Protestant and Catholic marriages that was such a feature of postwar life. However, the breakdown in socialization may largely have stemmed from changing attitudes among mothers as to what was crucial to making a

happy child, which now focused on emotional and psychological satisfaction rather than obedience and morality. In Britain this had started with child-centred parenting among middle-class families in the late nineteenth century. What was new in the postwar era was the spread of this ethic to the mass of society. The context of this was the widespread acceptance of the companionate marriage ideal. The 1940s and 1950s saw a raft of proposals for reforming marriage in a way that stressed gender mutuality and more sexual equality within marriage; significantly this marriage reform was often championed by Christians such as the British National Marriage Guidance Council (today it goes by the name RELATE) and by advocates like Eustace Chesser, Leslie Weatherhead, Helena Wright, Barbara Cartland, Mary Macaulay, and Marie Stopes.⁵³ The work of Michael Snape on men during the Second World War demonstrates that soldiers had already themselves become socialized into a non-institutional type of diffusive Christianity through listening to the radio, which contributed to the fostering of a 'pragmatic and widespread non-denominationalism' and stressed that Christianity 'was above all else a religion of good works and practical service.'⁵⁴ What impact did these male experiences of religion have in the new suburbs, where going to church involved having the (mostly) middle-class male head of the household drive family members to church? Was there a new gender regime in place where the male religiosity (pace Callum Brown) may have dictated family patterns of religious identification? Indeed, there was a considerable quantity of religious discourse in postwar West Germany and in Britain, which exalted male domesticity as the central hallmark of the new democratic culture.⁵⁵

Where in previous generations the churches assumed that the Sunday schools were working hand in hand with familial socialization of children, what had changed by the 1960s, as Paul Post has discerned for the Netherlands, was a complete 'collapse of home liturgy,' the only prayers being perfunctory ones before meals.⁵⁶ These same parents were, as Brown so well demonstrates for Britain, those most anxious to send their children to Sunday school (although one should be cautious about what these numbers may tell us as part of the bulge in the 1950s may simply be a result of the postwar baby boom), but despite robust attendance there were clear changes occurring beneath the surface with regard to how parents understood religious socialization. Many parents who now relied upon psychological experts believed that religious values should not be forced upon children; but once parents placed less emphasis upon the concept of discipline as an end in itself, the social

disciplining role of the church was viewed with growing disfavour. And even among those parents who still believed that children needed a moral value system, they preferred to displace the teaching of religion from the churches to the state to ensure that the non-denominational Christianity of good works and a vague morality unconnected to specific forms of doctrine would be taught. As Heather Laing's contribution to this volume demonstrates, by the late 1940s the church and state had formed an alliance to teach a watered-down religious sensibility, which had a great impact on the general decline in religious knowledge and language in the wider culture and resulted in further displacing the family as the partner of the church. More importantly, it further imbricated the church in a set of educational priorities increasingly set by the political order, even though this was not the intent of the main-line churches themselves. Kevin Flatt's contribution in this volume also shows that this statist movement may also have had a deleterious effect upon the Sunday schools within the United Church of Canada, which had by 1963 shifted decisively away from evangelicalism towards a concept of child-based religion as a series of Bible stories which were not necessarily divinely inspired. These kinds of movements within the churches themselves may explain why the World Values Survey of the early 1990s found in a host of countries a decline in belief in a personal god and a dramatically high proportion of respondents who simply equated religion with moral teaching with little reference to actual belief.⁵⁷ A similar phenomenon occurred in Britain, where the 1944 Education Act, which mandated compulsory religious teaching in primary and secondary schools, may have done its work all too well, for while in the short time it won the continued mass support of parents who welcomed this state initiative as a crucial adjunct to reaffirming moral values, it had a devastating effect upon the Sunday schools,⁵⁸ which, historically had been a cash cow for the churches, especially in terms of missionary outreach. In the 1990s Britain was one of the countries with a relatively high proportion of people – 47 per cent – who stated that religion was important only for teaching moral principles but that these need not be of divine inspiration. Interestingly, in every country which did not have state-controlled religious education – namely Poland, Italy, Ireland, Spain, and Portugal, all of which are also Roman Catholic – people tended to see God as a direct personal force in their lives and were possessed of much greater religious knowledge.⁵⁹

If, as Steve Bruce argues, the failure to socialize and recruit children and youth was critical to the general unchurched of various Western

societies, it is important, as Brown and McLeod have done, to focus upon adolescents and teenagers, but with the caveat that youth need not be rebellious or radicalized in order to have chosen to no longer attend church. Brown is one of the few historians of religion who fully acknowledges that churchgoing need not involve high levels of belief, and that there were many other reasons why people attended church: sociability, cultural conformity, and access to philanthropy. Interestingly, broader changes in youth sociability are not always highlighted in arguments regarding the 1960s, largely because the stereotype of the 'radical sixties' still predominated in both popular and scholarly myth making. While the large cultural disjunctures of the sixties along generational lines should not be ignored, historians should also be attentive to changes that were no less dramatic in their impact but did not involve resistance to authority structures. For example, the introduction of television, though cited by many historians of religion as a factor in declining church involvement, particularly among the elderly,⁶⁰ has not been explored in terms of the fundamental changes it brought as a locus of family togetherness or as a form of leisure.⁶¹ Nor have historians adequately pursued the question of the degree to which television replaced the Sunday school as a means of child care on Sunday morning. Historically, the churches were seen as a place for sociability, and in particular the Sunday school and youth clubs were strategically created by church leaders in order to make the church available to families from cradle to grave.⁶² Such clubs may have previously encouraged couples to marry within the church where they met, but after the Second World War, as youth had higher wages and greater access to employment, they tended to live apart from their families and could meet at alternative sites unregulated by the moral strictures of family and church. Not only would this have encouraged greater premarital sexual experimentation, but it also would have broken the chain of generational transmission of religious commitment to a particular church. In addition the car culture of the fifties would have allowed not only youth, but families, greater access to leisure enjoyment on Sundays; indeed, clergymen commented upon this at length after the Second World War, lamenting that families no longer came to the evening service on Sunday, preferring a drive in the country.⁶³ More devastating was the more general emergence of leisure as the site for personal fulfilment and pleasure for the postwar generations, which made the obligation of going to church seem to be a form of work, an attitude alluded to by several of the Dutch respondents interviewed by Peter Van Rooden.⁶⁴ No less impor-

tant was the increased tendency among women to turn to magazines, which could be accessed in private, for advice rather than to either parents, church leaders, or peers. These subtle but important subterranean alterations in concepts of sociability and leisure, over the long term, may have played a very important role in the decline of church attendance, even though they did not involve any decisive moment of loss of faith. Here is one explanation for Hugh McLeod's notion that people simply floated away,⁶⁵ for as one Dutch woman stated it, 'Trying to believe slowly ebbed away.'⁶⁶

Callum Brown's most significant contribution to the understanding of religious decline has been to introduce gender as a key factor, viewing women as the crucial vector of cultural change during the 1960s.⁶⁷ It is indisputable that large numbers of women exited from organized religion from 1958 onwards in Britain, but what has been at issue among historians is whether women's growing restiveness with the puritanical sexual morality of the mainstream churches was the most critical factor. Brown's case as to why the sexual revolution is critical to explaining women's questioning of the church's teachings is that, as he so powerfully argues, the mainstream churches in Britain became themselves obsessed with issues of sexuality and in fact, 'were getting tied in knots' over the issue.⁶⁸ Piety and domesticity, claims Brown, were so tightly interwoven that any change in women's roles would create a cataclysmic disjuncture that would necessitate a large female exodus from the churches.⁶⁹ Women were thus at the cutting edge of a wider youth revolt and were prominent in challenging all establishment authorities. McLeod has challenged Brown's interpretation, not least because he sees a wide variety of explanations to account for religious decline aside from the sexual revolution, which he contends is too monocausal and does not address other issues relating to the lives of women, namely the rise of second-wave feminism. It is certainly true that women who wished to break with the sexual conventions as laid down by both their parents and the churches may well have been forced to leave an institution because they could no longer abide by the rules. This, however, does not imply that these women lacked a continuing belief in Christian tenets, but simply that they could no longer conform to the moral requirements of the institution. That emancipated women might baulk at the teachings of the institutional church, but that they retained vestiges of religious knowledge, is born out by the work of Sarah Browne in this volume, who finds considerable religious symbols and language in the writings of second-wave feminists during the 1970s.

As the case of Quebec demonstrates, most Catholic women remained faithful even in the wake of the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* of 1968, which disallowed the use of the Pill, but many believed that they could no longer participate in an institution where in good conscience they could not take communion.⁷⁰ Here, the process of liberalization undertaken by the Second Vatican Council, in emphasizing to an inordinate degree the issue of individual conscience, actually resulted in driving many faithful women away from religious practice. Even though the Quebec bishops attempted to soften the impact of the Papal Encyclical this did not staunch the outflow of women both married and single, old and young. In Ireland stricter ordinances concerning birth control actually kept women in church, which raises the question as to whether women left simply over such moral issues or if other factors, such as the fact that women could be ordained in a variety of religious denominations, compelled women to leave an institution which they now deemed to be too patriarchal and undemocratic. Issues such as prohibitions against female ordination have generally been given less attention in the debate over the role of the sixties and dechristianization.⁷¹ Here second-wave feminism was key.⁷² In Britain Catholicism also enjoyed a period of growth until 1975, which calls for a further nuance of Brown's argument, for these statistics on Catholic expansion not only in Britain, but in Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands, raise the question as to whether there were other issues concerning the lives of women that were more compelling. For example, levels of married women in the workforce were distinctly lower in Italy, Spain, and Ireland until the 1980s, when in fact church attendance levels did begin to drop steadily, whereas in the United States, Canada, and Britain, levels of married women working increased from the late 1940s onwards. Certainly one could argue that the Puritanism of British Anglicanism in and of itself created unique circumstances which alienated female parishioners, for there were other factors such as the vast expansion of female higher education, which, while characteristic of North America after 1945, did not play an important role in Britain until the 1960s. Thus in the North American example, the sexual revolution must be viewed in a wider context of women's greater participation in the workforce and increased access to higher education, which not only expanded female horizons, took them away from home and introduced them to new and non-religious intellectual milieus. The fact of higher rates of workforce participation by married women can by itself carry considerable interpretive weight: as working wives were increasingly forced to bear the

burden of the double shift, working for pay and at home, this left little time for leisure activities with either their husband or children, which now had to be shifted to Sundays, thus edging out any claims that organized religion had on her time.⁷³ This might also account for why parents preferred that state schools teach religion as this added no extra constraint upon their weekly time management. What this evidence demonstrates is that many of the women flooding out of the churches may not have been largely single women participating in the new permissiveness of youth culture, but married women who no longer had the time for church activities.

That feminism alone cannot explain shifts in female church affiliation is attested to by the example of American evangelical women: as Sally Gallagher has shown the levels of full- and part-time employment among married evangelical women is strikingly similar to patterns among mainline and liberal Protestant counterparts. Rather than decamping from religious institutions, these women in fact remain wedded to the ideal of the 'natural' conjunction between church and family. While claiming in public to adhere to the church's patriarchal discourse, in terms of actual social practice, the gender roles within their households moved significantly in an egalitarian direction once they entered the workforce in larger numbers. Here discourse did not mirror social practice or personally held cultural values.⁷⁴

There is a large degree of truth to Hugh McLeod's observation that the churches were affected by a broader anti-organization and anti-authoritarian ethos which so characterized postwar societies that sought to enshrine notions of democracy, egalitarianism, and individual freedom in their polities, especially those who during the Cold War saw this as a strategy to combat communism. Labour unions and political parties saw a similar decline in membership during the 1950s and 1960s, but in terms of religion this general phenomenon of a suspicion that organizations would induce political apathy and cultural conformity and suppress individual creativity was compounded by the inability of mainstream Protestantism and Catholicism to adapt to the immense changes in postwar culture. Jeffrey Cox has rightly observed that conformity forms one of the most important drawing cards for the churches, just as it does in other areas of group affiliation, but at the same time, he reminds historians of the critical importance played by 'ecclesiastical entrepreneurship'.⁷⁵ While it is true that, historically, people sought comfort in attending a particular church, historians, especially those writing about countries with strong statist or pillarist

church traditions, often neglect to recognize the degree to which church organizations often had to labour with great difficulty and at great financial cost to get and keep people in the pews. As the notion of social conformity became a negative force in the 1950s and 1960s, churches which had not invested a great deal in membership expansion and outreach began to fail miserably, as there were no mechanisms to attract or interest new members. In Belgium and the Netherlands, the notion of the pillar actually enhanced external conformity to religion until the end of the sixties in Belgium and into the 1980s in the Netherlands, but once this system of traditional rituals failed, there was very little to sustain church adherence, and in fact conformity had now come to mean staying away from 'authoritarian' institutions.⁷⁶ This lack of structural innovation within church denominations was not confined to statist models. In Canada, as the work of Kevin Flatt in this volume makes clear, the decision to eviscerate evangelicalism from the Sunday school curriculum during the early 1960s, had a devastating impact on the United Church: in the first instance it drove conservatives into the arms of more charismatic sects such as Pentecostalism, and in the long term it meant that the United Church had very little means by which to attract new members once these had left. Pentecostalism and the moral majority movement in the United States both illustrate that it was not simply the liberal denominations which were modernist or relevant,⁷⁷ but that the churches which survived were not immediately related to their social message, but to their organizational strategies, a point affirmed by Tina Fetner in this volume. She shows that evangelical organizations were less dense in Canada compared with the rich infrastructure in the United States and that it is this density of interconnections more than any other factors which explains the dynamic cultural force of the religious right in the United States.⁷⁸ While the analysis of aggregate church statistics provides a wide-angle view of religious decline, there is a great need for more local studies, such as that by Mary-Ann Shantz, whose study of the western Canadian city of Calgary compares Anglicanism and the Christian Missionary Alliance to show that Anglicans preferred traditional strategies of religious socialization which relied upon the family as a unified unit, while the Alliance, although on the surface a more 'conservative' religious body, was better able to deploy a language of dramatic conversionism which highlighted the individuality of children and youth, which situated it more effectively within the dominant postwar cultural ethos of individualism. What she makes clear is that evangelism itself was not a remedy to the implosion of

church attendance, but that the more individualistic one's message the more it resonated, especially among youth.⁷⁹ As the work of Flatt, Schafer, and Schantz illustrate, historians should not automatically assume that it was the liberals who were decamping into the arms of secular humanism; rather, too much relevance and tinkering with ritual and doctrine, symptomatic in the rapid introduction of the reforms of Vatican II, had the effect of driving out orthodox church members. Indeed, one of the critical mistakes made by many mainstream religious bodies was that by pursuing what amounted to conflicting strategies in an effort to address what they saw as the juggernaut of secularization, they alienated the core constituency of churchgoers who preferred the standard rituals and devotions. The turn towards a liturgy of love within the Roman Catholic Church may have appeared to be a means to keep the church current, but since this message rested within a persisting structure of church hierarchy⁸⁰ dominated by men, ultimately it served to alienate both liberals and conservatives. As Peter Van Rooden has said of the impact of Vatican II in the Netherlands, those who called for reform then chided the church for the absurdity of group confession and folk masses. Thus a large portion of churchgoers faded away not out of a lack of belief but because the church was no longer seen as comfortable or familiar.⁸¹ From the perspective of some, the campaign for many mainstream denominations to appear relevant by enlisting the churches in secular social and political causes made the churches appear to be on the defensive and, as Grace Davie has concluded, rendered 'the sacred vulnerable.'⁸²

As the above discussion makes clear, historians should not assume necessarily that those leaving organized religion were those who had stopped believing; a great proportion of those who rejected the institutional church did so because its rituals had changed, or they disliked particular local clergymen, or their personal lives made religious participation either more difficult or irrelevant to daily life. There is a general tendency among historians to view the realm of diffusive Christianity as a residual category of real religion, namely that which occurs in the institutional church, whereas it can just as easily be argued that the realm of religious belief outside formal liturgies and doctrines was historically the most pervasive form of religious practice, and what was novel of the Western world was the great success of what Callum Brown has termed the 'salvation machine' between 1800 to 1950. While it must be recognized that ceasing to go to church can have a deleterious effect upon belief in any society, the crucial change following the

Second World War was the absence of social reproduction of religious values within the family. In terms of belief, the sixties was not necessarily a decade of crisis. For example, women in Canada may have rejected the patriarchy of church governance and as a result stopped going to church, but in terms of those who adhered to orthodox notions of Christian belief – namely the divinity of Christ and the doctrines of resurrection, crucifixion, and atonement – in 1993 66 per cent of Canadians surveyed identified themselves as Christian believers.⁸³ In a survey from 2006 there is virtually no statistical difference in religious belief between men and women, with 87 per cent of men and 89 per cent of women indicating belief in a personal God.⁸⁴ By contrast, in Britain in the year 2000, while 93 per cent of respondents described themselves as ‘spiritual,’ there was less of an immediate connection with orthodox Christian belief.⁸⁵ But as Patrick Pasture argues in his contribution to this volume, we should not discount alternative forms of spirituality as simply a diminution or a second-rate form of Christianity, since syncretism had always been a key element of popular religion, and it is only the clerical elite and intellectuals who have disparaged it through espousing the notion of pure forms of Christian truth. Moreover, as Peter Van Rooden’s recent work in Dutch oral history illustrates, the rejection of formal religious authority was not merely a characteristic of youthful rebellion, for many of his respondents were middle-aged women who had left church to embrace Eastern religions.⁸⁶

Historians know all too little of the actual inner spiritual lives of religious people in the past and have largely measured levels of ‘piety’ in terms of conformity to the precepts of organized religion. This in turn has led to false dichotomies between the premodern and modern, and modern and postmodern eras. Perhaps ultramodernity, as Yves Lambert has maintained, can be defined in terms of individual spirituality, a rejection of external controls, religion à la carte, the expansion of evangelical charismatic currents, and an emphasis on this-worldly salvation – a notion which had been promulgated by churches interested in social Christianity. Historians of Dutch and French religion have pointed to the immense rise in religious pilgrimages to argue, as does Alana Harris in this volume, that despite treating religion in a fairly episodic way, parishioners continue nevertheless to see themselves as integrated into a Catholic culture.⁸⁷ As her work and that of Stephen Heathorn in this volume shows, one of the most compelling reasons why people affiliated themselves with churches and believed in a higher power was because of fear of illness and death. Certainly clerical elites well under-

stood this for, from the early modern period and up to the late 1950s, the theology of fear remained a potent element especially in Sunday schools and Catholic catechisms in order to persuade the young into early conversion and a lifelong commitment to their churches. The importance of death to religiosity would also explain why churchgoers are often older and female, since many women would have already lost a spouse. Certainly the research of Michael Snape on soldiers in the Second World War in the United States, Britain, and Canada shows how fear of death fostered an intense piety, but one that did not automatically lead to church attendance.⁸⁸ As Heathorn's contribution to this volume suggests, what has emerged since the 1960s is a new kind of civil religion where religious beliefs shade into concepts of memory as a means to provide continuity between the worlds of the living and the dead.⁸⁹ Jaak Billiet and Karel Dobbelaere maintain that the belief in life after death remains well anchored in the Western world but more significantly have shown that even in eastern bloc countries in which state policies under communism actually succeeded in dechristianizing large segments of the population, religious funerals remain very popular to this day.⁹⁰ It is certainly not inconsequential for explanations of religious decline that the end of the Second World War saw the emergence in several Western countries of a universal welfare state including health and hospital care, the development of antibiotics in the fifties, and the mass inoculation of children against a wider set of childhood diseases, including polio, combined with greater affluence, all of which served to push the theology of fear, and thus churchgoing, to the margins.

As the rise of diffusive religion indicates, perhaps the most potent explanation for the difficulties of organized Christianity in the postwar era on both sides of the Atlantic was the growing centrality of precepts of individualism, involving a broader rejection of external authorities including churches among many other institutions, and an emphasis on choice, in which the terrain of the personal remained a paramount cultural objective of an ever larger proportion of people, both male and female. Historians generally think of the challenging of authority to be a feature of youth culture of the sixties, which in large part it was, but what is important for the overall narrative of dechristianization is that this spirit of individualism which embodied this short phase of youth radicalism had a much longer trajectory both backward into the past and forward into the 1970s and beyond. Probably one of the most

prominent features of the modern world is the enshrining of the individual, the personal, and the private whereby the concept of authority flows from within the self. Thus churches which exalted the communal and had statist polities have fared relatively poorly in this changed climate, whereas those with an emphasis on individual conversionism, namely Pentecostals and a range of American evangelical sects, continue to enjoy relatively robust growth.⁹¹ The fortunes of specific denominations have been dictated less by a failure of belief systems than by factors other than faith itself – namely shifts in ritual practice and organizational outreach, unforeseen consequences of political alliances, and most importantly, changes in family structures and attitudes to daily life have had a catastrophic effect upon the intergenerational transmission of religious knowledge. Where the period from 1945 to 1970 saw a precipitous decline in church attendance, as part of a broader cultural questioning of authority, the era from 1970 to the 1980s, particularly in Western Europe, marks a distinct decline of religious belief. The elucidation of whether there exists a causal connection between these two phenomena in addition to more finely tuned comparisons between the religious paths of Western Europe and North America will provide an exciting terrain of endeavour for scholars of religion during the coming decades.

NOTES

We are especially grateful to Stephen Heathorn, Hugh McLeod, and Till Van Rahden for their suggestions and comments upon an earlier version of the Introduction.

- 1 Martin Amis, *The Pregnant Widow: Inside History* (New York and Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 23–4.
- 2 Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation, 1800–2000* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009; first edition, 2000), 170–92.
- 3 Hugh McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 19.
- 4 Hugh McLeod, 'Dechristianisation and Rechristianisation: The Case of Great Britain,' *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 11, no. 1 (1998): 21–33. Since the publication of McLeod's *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s* in 2006 and the

second edition of Brown's *The Death of Christian Britain* in 2009, there has been a spirited debate between these two scholars as to whether accelerated religious decline should be identified as more characteristic of the 'early sixties' or 'later sixties,' and, according to Brown, whether a 'culturalist' approach, stressing as the dynamic factor the decisive choices made by young single women, or longer-term 'intellectualist' factors best explains this development. See Hugh McLeod, 'The 1960s,' in Ira Katznelson and Gareth Stedman-Jones, eds., *Religion and the Political Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 254–74; Callum G. Brown, 'Gendering Secularisation, Locating Women in the Transformation of British Christianity in the 1960s,' in Katznelson and Stedman-Jones, eds., *Religion and the Political Imagination*, 275–94. For 'culturalist' vs. 'intellectualist' approaches to the religious chronology of the 1960s, see Brown's lengthy review of McLeod's work, 'What Was the Religious Crisis of the 1960s,' *Journal of Religious History* 34, no. 4 (December 2010): 468–79; Brown, 'Sex, Religion and the Single Woman c. 1950–75: The Importance of a "Short" Sexual Revolution to the English Religious Crisis of the 1960s,' *Twentieth-Century British History* (Online Advanced Access, 1 December 2010): 1–27. The most thoroughgoing 'intellectualist re-reading of twentieth-century British religious history has been provided by S.J.D. Green, whose recent *The Passing of Protestant England: Secularisation and Social Change c. 1920–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 303–16, relentlessly assails Brown's chronology, in particular. According to Green, beneath the relatively stable demographic figures of church membership that prevailed between 1900 and 1950, there occurred major shifts in 'the relationship of membership to adherence and authority' that significantly diminished the presence of the British Protestant churches in particular. One of the most significant elements of this religious decline was the loss of the public sense that Britain constituted a 'Protestant nation' founded upon 'puritan' social values. This, Green suggests, had been irretrievably weakened by 1940 and had largely disappeared by 1960.

- 5 McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*; Patrick Pasture, 'Christendom and the Legacy of the Sixties: Between the Secular City and the Age of Aquarius,' *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 99, no. 1 (2004): 82–117; Patrick Pasture and Leo Kenis, 'The Transformation of Christian Churches in Western Europe: An Introduction,' in Leo Kenis, Jaak Billiet, and Patrick Pasture, eds., *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe, 1945–2000* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 7–19; Loek Halman and Veerke Draulans, 'How Secular Is Europe?' *British Journal of Sociology* 57, no. 2 (2006): 263–5. For an interpretation that focuses largely on changing

social mores, see Callum Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2006).

- 6 McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the Sixties*, 83–101.
- 7 In this volume the article by Nancy Christie on Pierre Berton shows that both the negative and positive respondents to Berton continued to view Canada as a Christian nation. More interestingly, the public discussion of the now famous Harry Crowe affair, which involved the firing of a professor of history at United College in Winnipeg, revolved around the notion of academic freedom, and there continues to be little awareness that the real point at issue was that Crowe had described Christianity as a ‘corrosive force.’ On the notion of academic freedom during this period, see Catherine Anne Gidney, *A Long Eclipse: The Liberal Protestant Establishment and the Canadian University, 1920–1970* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004), 93. Canada may also not fit Callum Brown’s paradigm of youth revolt against sexual conventions. In a recent review of Martin Amis’s *The Pregnant Widow*, Graydon Carter ruefully observed that Canada in the sixties was a society ‘where even post-marital sex was gently frowned upon’ and that ‘the sexual revolution was something that happened to someone else, somewhere else, most probably in that enchanted far away Gomorrah called the United States.’ See Graydon Carter, ‘That Summer in Italy,’ *New York Times Book Review*, 23 May 2010, 1.
- 8 McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*, 51.
- 9 For a flawed but perceptive revisionist assessment of postwar America, see Alan Petigny, *The Permissive Society: America, 1941–1965* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- 10 Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).
- 11 Hugh McLeod, ‘The Present Crisis in Historical Context,’ in Kenis et al., eds., *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe*, 32; Kenis and Pasture, ‘Introduction,’ in *ibid.*, 17; Jon Butler, ‘The American Exception? Secularisation and Religion in the United States, 1945–2000,’ in *ibid.*, 160–1.
- 12 Mark Freeman, ‘“Britain’s Spiritual Life: How Can It Be Deepened?” Seebohm Rowntree, Russell Lavers, and the “Crisis of Belief,” ca. 1946–54,’ *Journal of Religious History* 29, no. 1 (February 2005): 25–42; Michael Gauvreau, *The Catholic Origins of Quebec’s Quiet Revolution, 1931–1970* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005); Nancy Christie, ‘“Look Out for Leviathan”: The Search for a Conservative Modernist Consensus,’ in Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, eds., *Cultures of Citizenship in Post-War Canada, 1940–1955* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s Uni-

- versity Press, 2003), 63–94; Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 17. On this theme, see also the Christie article in this volume.
- 13 See the essays in Bob Moore and Henk von Nierop, eds., *Twentieth-Century Mass Society in Britain and the Netherlands* (Oxford: Berg, 2006).
 - 14 For further discussion of this theme, see Tina Fetner and Carrie B. Sanders, 'The Pro-Family Movement in Canada and the United States: Institutional Histories and Barriers to Diffusion,' in David Rayside and Clyde Wilcox, eds., *Faith, Politics, and Sexual Diversity in Canada and the United States* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 87–100.
 - 15 Karel Dobbelaere and Jaak Billiet, 'Late 20th-Century Trends in Catholic Religiousness: Belgium Compared with Western and Central European Nations,' in Kenis et al., eds., *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe*, 115.
 - 16 See John F. Pollard, *Catholicism in Modern Italy: Religion, Society and Politics since 1861* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 118–19. In Italy, the Christian Democratic party exerted a de facto hegemony in government between 1948 and 1984, in which for many the Italian state became an arm of the Roman Catholic Church. See the article by Antonio Cazorla-Sanchez in this volume for an analysis of the Spanish situation in which the Catholic Church both was imbricated in Franco's authoritarian regime and served as a crucible of oppositional ideologies to his government between 1950 and the mid-1970s.
 - 17 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Family and Schooling in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).
 - 18 Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, 200–1, 211–12.
 - 19 For this new revisionist interpretation, see Joanne Meyerowitz, ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945–1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994); Jessica Weiss, *To Have and to Hold: Marriage, the Baby Boom, and Social Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Leslie Tentler, *Catholics and Contraception: An American History* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004); Dagmar Herzog, 'Desperately Seeking Normality: Sex and Marriage in the Wake of the War,' in Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann, eds., *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe During the 1940s and 1950s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 161–92; Hugh McLeod, *The Religious*

Crisis of the 1960s, 57. Many revisionist historians have emphasized that gender relations were being revised in the fifties, especially with regard to the role of men in both the workplace and the family.

- 20 See Steve Bruce, 'Secularisation in the UK and USA,' in Callum Brown and Michael Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World: Essays in Honour of Hugh McLeod* (Farnham UK: Ashgate, 2010), 210; McLeod, 'The Present Crisis in Historical Context,' in Kenis et al., eds., *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe*, 33; Wilhelm Damberg and Patrick Pasture, 'Restoration and Erosion of Pillarised Catholicism in Western Europe,' in *ibid.*, 60; Stephen Brooke, 'Gender and Working Class Identity in Britain during the 1950s,' *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 4 (Summer 2001): 773–95; Mark Ruff, *The Wayward Flock: Catholic Youth in Postwar West Germany, 1945–1965* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Ruff, 'Catholic Elites, Gender and Unintended Consequences in the 1950s: Toward a Reinterpretation of the Role of Conservatives in the Federal Republic,' in Frank Biess, Mark Roseman, and Hanna Schissler, eds., *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity: Essays on Modern German History* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007), 254–7. Ruff has concluded that the decline in churchgoing in Germany began in the 1950s. See Mark Edward Ruff, 'A Religious Vacuum? The Post-Catholic Milieu in the Federal Republic of Germany,' in Michael Geyer and Lucian Hölscher, eds., *The Presence of God in Modern Society: Transcendence and Religious Community in Germany* (Walstum Verlag, 2007), 351–79.
- 21 Petigny, *The Permissive Society*, 52, 21, 53–63, 179, 187–8.
- 22 R. Scott Appleby, 'Decline or Relocation? The Catholic Presence in Church and Society, 1950–2000,' in Leslie Woodcock Tentler, ed., *The Church Confronts Modernity: Catholicism since 1950 in the United States, Ireland, and Quebec* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 208–35.
- 23 Clive D. Field, 'Puzzled People Revisited: Religious Believing and Belonging in Wartime Britain, 1939–45,' *Twentieth-Century British History* 19, no. 4 (2008): 457–9. Field argues that even during wartime religious views were interconnected with a range of other views.
- 24 Eileen Barker, 'The Post-War Generation and Establishment Religion in England,' in Wade Clark Roof, Jackson W. Carroll, David A Roozen, eds., *The Post-War Generation and Establishment Religion: Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 12; Kevin J. Christiano, 'The Trajectory of Catholicism in Twentieth-Century Quebec,' in Tentler, ed., *The Church Confronts Modernity*, 27–9; Michael Snape, *God and the British Soldier: Religion and the British Army in the First and Second World Wars* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005); Michael Snape, 'War, Religion and Revival:

- The United States, British and Canadian Armies during the Second World War,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 135–58.
- 25 S.J.D. Green, 'Was There an English Religious Revival in the 1950s?' *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society* 7, no. 9 (2006): 523.
 - 26 For Britain, see the intriguing new work by Simon Szreter and Kate Fisher, *Sex before the Sexual Revolution: Intimate Life in England, 1918–1963* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Based upon a wide-ranging series of interviews with men and women whose experience of marriage spanned the interwar and postwar years, the authors argue, concerning the 1950s, that there was a growing idea of marriage as a type of 'team-work' especially in childrearing, joint leisure, and household management (42). More significantly, the authors challenge what they term 'master-narratives' that move from an era of repressed to open sexuality (48–9). A key finding, which serves to nuance Brown's assumption of a 'short' sexual revolution between 1958 and 1963, is that there was a 'slow thaw' in ideas of sexuality after 1940, with increasing emphasis among couples regarding mutual sexual pleasure. However, the authors admit that this development may have created tensions and dissatisfactions between couples (42–3), which possibly could have led to a wide-ranging cultural discourse of sexual liberation in the 1960s.
 - 27 Bruce, 'Secularisation in the UK and USA,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 217; Stephen Brooke, 'Bodies, Sexuality and the "Modernization" of the British Working Classes, 1920s to 1960s,' *International Labor and Working Class History* 69 (Spring 2006): 104–22; Nancy Christie, 'Sacred Sex: The United Church and the Privatisation of the Family in Post-war Canada,' in Nancy Christie, ed., *Households of Faith: Family, Gender, and Community in Canada, 1760–1969* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 348–76; Michael Gauvreau, 'The Emergence of Personalist Feminism: Catholicism and the Marriage-Preparation Movement in Quebec, 1940–1966,' in *ibid.*, 319–47.
 - 28 Pat Thane, 'Family Life and 'Normality' in Postwar British Culture,' in Besel and Schuman, eds., *Life after Death*, 193–210.
 - 29 On this theme, see Appleby, 'Decline or Relocation?' in Tentler, ed., *The Church Confronts Modernity*, 214; Bruce, 'Secularisation in the UK and the USA,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 210; Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, 202–3; Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 51–2.
 - 30 Ruff, 'A Religious Vacuum?' in Geyer and Hölscher, eds., *The Presence of God*, 353.
 - 31 Gidney, *A Long Eclipse*, 126–32. This is not to argue that anti-Catholicism

disappeared from the Canadian cultural scene but that it found new, more subtle outlets.

- 32 Damberg and Pasture, 'Restoration and Erosion of Pillarised Catholicism in Western Europe,' in Kenis et al., eds., *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe*, 72.
- 33 Patrick Pasture, 'Christendom and the Legacy of the Sixties,' 93; James C. Kennedy, 'Recent Dutch Religious History and the Limits of Secularization,' in Erik Sangers ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods: Secularization and Transformation of Religion in the Netherlands since 1950* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren 2005), 30–2. On the shift towards moral relativity in the United Church of Canada because of its embrace of neo-orthodoxy, see Christie, 'Sacred Sex,' in Christie ed., *Households of Faith*, 365–6.
- 34 For critiques of these interwar theologies, especially in the North American context, see Gary J. Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Crisis, Irony, and Postmodernity 1950–2005* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2006), 269–324, 395–450; Florian Michel, *La pensée catholique en Amérique du Nord: réseaux intellectuels et échanges entre l'Europe, le Canada, et les États-Unis, années 1920–1960* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2010).
- 35 Wade Clark Roof, 'Conclusion,' in Roof et al., eds., *The Postwar Generation*, 253.
- 36 On the conflicting messages of the postwar churches, see Peter Van Rooden, 'The Strange Death of Dutch Christendom,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 175–96; Leslie Tentler and Michael Gauvreau in this volume.
- 37 Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain*, 197. On Graham, see also Alana Harris, "'Disturbing the Complacency of Religion"? The Evangelical Crusades of Dr. Billy Graham and Father Patrick Peyton in Britain, 1951–54,' *Twentieth Century British History* 18, no. 4 (2007): 481–513.
- 38 Dagmar Herzog, 'Memory, Morality and the Sexual Liberalization of West Germany,' in Biess et al., eds., *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity*, 280–89; Matthew D. Hockenor, 'The German Protestant Debate on Politics and Theology after the Second World War,' in Dianne Kirby, ed., *Religion and the Cold War* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 37–49.
- 39 Jos Becker, 'Church Membership Investigated 1950–2002,' in Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 67.
- 40 On this theme more generally, see Dagmar Herzog, 'The Death of God in West Germany: Between Secularization, Postfascism, and the Rise of Liberation Theology,' in Geyer and Hölscher, eds., *The Presence of God in Modern Society*, 431–66. On the way in which the liberals in Canada co-opted the evangelical right, which forestalled a greater polarization like that in

the United States, see George Egerton, 'Trudeau, God and the Canadian Constitution: Religion, Human Rights and Government Authority in the Making of the 1982 Constitution,' in David Lyon and Marguerite Van Die, eds., *Rethinking Church, State and Modernity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 94–6.

- 41 Ruff, 'Catholic Elites, Gender, and Unintended Consequences in the 1950s,' in Biess et al., eds., *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity*, 253–4; Hugh McLeod, 'Introduction,' in Hugh McLeod and Werner Ustorf, eds., *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1; Dianne Kirby, 'Religion and the Cold War – An Introduction,' in Kirby, ed., *Religion and the Cold War*, 3–4; John Pollard, 'The Vatican, Italy and the Cold War,' in *ibid.*, 103–17; George Egerton, 'Between War and Peace: Politics, Religion and Human Rights in Early Cold War Canada, 1945–50,' in *ibid.*, 163–76; Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State between the Wars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 2–3.
- 42 Brown, *Death of Christian Britain*, 229.
- 43 On the larger theme of the 'unholy alliance' between churches and political institutions, see Lucian Hölscher, 'Europe in the Age of Secularisation,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 197–204.
- 44 On the politics of wartime social security, see Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State: Family, Work and Welfare in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000). These changes were not simply dictated by the state, as the churches themselves had begun to draw away from 'the world' at the beginning of the war. See Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900–1940* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996).
- 45 Callum Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain*, stresses the continued importance of Sunday school during the fifties. McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*, 47–8, 203. Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945*, 29.
- 46 Two volumes which foreground religion and social discipline in Canada are Christie, ed., *Households of Faith*; Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, eds., *Mapping the Margins: The Family and Social Discipline in Canada, 1700–1975* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004).
- 47 See Brigitte Caulier in this volume, who shows how even in traditionalist Roman Catholic religious circles there was a definite shift during the 1940s and 1950s away from memorization of the catechism towards individual interpretation and experience.
- 48 Nancy Christie, 'Proper Government and Discipline: Family Religion and

Masculine Authority in Nineteenth-Century Canada,' in John Arnold and Sean Brady, eds., *Masculinities in History* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). Despite a discourse on patriarchal control in family life flowing from the churches, familial evidence from the Buchanan family, who were commercial liberals, shows they had great difficulty in urging their children to attend church. Historians need to explore the breakdown in notions of Providence in succeeding generations to explain the decrease in adherence to religious tenets. Hannah Lane shows high levels of individual choice in the nineteenth century as well. See Hannah Lane, 'Tribalism, Proselytism and Pluralism: Protestants, Family, and Denominational Identity in Mid-Nineteenth-Century St. Stephen, New Brunswick,' in Christie, ed., *Households of Faith*, 103–37.

- 49 On the concept of the teenager in the 1950s in Canada, see Michael Gauvreau, 'The Protracted Birth of the Canadian "Teenager": Work, Citizenship and the Canadian Youth Commission, 1943–55,' in Christie and Gauvreau, eds., *Cultures of Citizenship in Postwar Canada*, 201–38. The 'modern' ideal of the teenager was being fostered by the churches, the government, and the YMCA.
- 50 McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*, 31.
- 51 Callum G. Brown, 'Women and Religion in Britain: The Autobiographical View of the Fifties and Sixties,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 165–9. Brown shows that of his sample 169 mothers had no personal religious belief, which suggests that lack of socialization along with youth rebellion against church moral strictures were at work to explain declining church attendance in the sixties.
- 52 For a similar process at work in the Netherlands, see Van Rooden, 'The Strange Death of Dutch Christendom,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 185.
- 53 Angus McLaren, *Twentieth Century Sexuality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), esp. chapter 3; M.E. Melody and Linda M. Peterson, *Teaching America about Sex: Marriage Guides and Sex Manuals from the Late Victorians to Dr. Ruth* (New York: NYU Press, 1999); Marcus Collins, *Modern Love: Personal Relationships in Twentieth Century Britain* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 90–133.
- 54 Snape, *God and the British Soldier*, 243–4.
- 55 Herzog, 'Desperately Seeking Normality,' in Bessel and Schuman, eds., *Life after Death*, 161–92; Brooke, 'Gender and Working Class Identity,' 773–95.
- 56 Paul Post, 'Ritual-Liturgical Movements: A Panoramic View of Ritual Repertoires in Dutch Catholicism after 1950/1960,' in Sangers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 80.

- 57 Mattei Dogan, 'Accelerated Decline of Religious Beliefs in Europe,' *Comparative Sociology* 1, no. 2 (2002): 135–6.
- 58 For the 1944 Education Acts in Britain, see Grimley, *Citizenship, Community and the Church of England*, 203–4; Green, 'Was There an English Religious Revival?' 530–1; Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918–1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- 59 Dogan, 'Accelerated Decline of Religious Beliefs,' 136–7.
- 60 Post, 'Ritual-Liturgical Movements,' in Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 81; Pasture and Kenis, 'Introduction,' in Kenis et al., eds., *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe*, 12.
- 61 Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
- 62 On this theme, see Nancy Christie, 'Young Men and the Creation of Civic Christianity in Urban Methodist Churches, 1880–1914,' *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 17, no. 1 (2006): 79–106.
- 63 Christie and Gauvreau, *Full-Orbed Christianity*, 352n1.
- 64 Van Rooden, 'The Strange Death of Dutch Christendom,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 187.
- 65 McLeod, conclusion in this volume.
- 66 Van Rooden, 'The Strange Death of Dutch Christendom,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 187.
- 67 This important theme has been developed in two broadly synthetic volumes: Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*; Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain*.
- 68 Brown, *Religion and Society*, 251.
- 69 Brown, *Death of Christian Britain*, 200.
- 70 Quebec Catholicism after the 1960s provides a significant paradox that is highly interesting to historians of transatlantic secularization. On the one hand, there was a marked (some would say catastrophic) decline in weekly church attendance from about 85 per cent in 1965 to 42 per cent a decade later, a decline that has persisted into the twenty-first century, with Quebec displaying the lowest levels of church attendance in North America. As well, the number of religious marriages declined precipitously, though interestingly, so did *all* marriages, with many couples opting for less institutionally sanctioned arrangements. However, levels of private belief remain high and relatively stable, with 60 per cent of Quebec respondents reporting praying at least once a month. More surprisingly, in 2001, 83.5 per cent of Quebec people claimed that their affiliation was Roman Catholic. This has led a number of observers to point to the paradox of the strength of a 'cultural Catholicism' within an overall setting of declining

- measurements of institutional involvement. For an analysis, see E.-Martin Meunier, Jean-François Laniel, and Jean-Christophe Demers, 'Permanence et recomposition de la "religion culturelle": Aperçu socio-historique du catholicisme québécois (1970–2006),' in Robert Mager and Serge Cantin, eds., *Modernité et religion au Québec: Où en sommes-nous?* (Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2010), 79–128.
- 71 Ann-Marie Korte, 'The Affirmation of Women's Religious Leadership: A "Modern" Issue?' in Kenis et al., eds., *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe*, 194–205.
- 72 For Quebec, see Diane Gervais, 'Morale catholique et détresse conjugale au Québec: La réponse du service de régulation des naissances Sérénia, 1955–1970,' *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 55, no. 2 (Automne 2001): 185–215; Gervais, 'Les couples aux marges du *permis-défendu*. Morale conjugale et compromis pastoral à Montréal dans les années 1960,' *Études d'histoire religieuse* 70 (2004): 23–38. For national differences in the Catholic reception of the encyclical, see Tentler, 'Introduction,' in Tentler, ed., *The Church Confronts Modernity*, 17; Appleby, 'Decline or Relocation?,' in *ibid.*, 217.
- 73 Karel Dobblaere, 'The Surviving Dominant Catholic Church in Belgium: A Consequence of Its Popular Religious Practices?' in Roof et al., eds., *The Postwar Generation*, 184.
- 74 Sally K. Gallagher, *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Rutgers University Press, 1973), 134, 177. We thank Melanie Heath for suggesting this important book. On the way in which new social values are promulgated within traditionalist institutions in the United States, see Petigny, *The Permissive Society*, 136–55.
- 75 Jeffrey Cox, 'Towards Eliminating the Concept of Secularisation: A Progress Report,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 21–3. Like Cox, Hugh McLeod maintains that it is extremely important to view the churches as part and parcel of the wider social world, as integral to modernity, so that historians do not fall into the secularist trap of simply viewing them in conflict with it. See McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*, 176.
- 76 On this point, see Dobbelaere, 'The Surviving Dominant Catholic Church in Belgium,' in Roof et al., eds., *The Postwar Generation*, 190.
- 77 Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 121–5.
- 78 For a similar argument in the context of Britain, see Nancy A. Schafer, 'Exporting a U.S. Gospel of Health and Wealth: An American Evangelist in Europe,' in Hans Krabbendam and Derek Rubin, eds., *Religion in America: European-American Perspectives* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2004), 275.

- 79 Mary-Ann Schantz, 'Centring the Suburb, Focussing on the Family: Calgary's Anglican and Alliance Churches, 1945–1969,' *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 42, no. 84 (Nov. 2009): 423–46.
- 80 Ruff, 'Catholic Elites, Gender and Unintended Consequences,' in Biess et al., eds., *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity*, 260; Pollard, *Catholicism in Modern Italy*, 146; Alana Harris, "'The Prayer in the Syntax'? The Roman Missal, the Book of Common Prayer, and Changes in Liturgical Languages, 1945–1980,' in Jane Garnett, Mathew Grimley, Alana Harris, William Whyte, and Sarah Williams, eds., *Redefining Christian Britain: Post-1945 Perspectives* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 37–8; Barker, 'The Postwar Generation and Establishment Religion in Britain,' in Roof et al., eds., *The Postwar Generation*, 14. It could be also that as clergy aged and the profession no longer attracted the best and the brightest that religious services did indeed appear boring. This was the contention of Pierre Berton, whose work is discussed in this volume by Nancy Christie.
- 81 Van Rooden, 'The Strange Death of Dutch Christendom,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 189.
- 82 Davie, *Religion in Britain Since 1945*, 35; Jose Casanova, 'Immigration and the New Religious Pluralism: A European/United States Comparison,' in Thomas Banchoff, ed., *The New Religious Pluralism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 63; Green, 'Was There an English Religious Revival?,' 538.
- 83 G.A. Rawlyk, *Is Jesus Your Personal Saviour? In Search of Canadian Evangelicalism in the 1990s* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 62–3.
- 84 Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *Christian Churches and Their Peoples: A Social History of Religion in Canada, 1840–1965* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010). In 1996 only 25 per cent of Canadians attended church regularly, but fully 85 per cent believed in a personal God. See David Lyon, 'Introduction,' in Lyon and Van Die, eds., *Rethinking Church, State, and Modernity*, 6. Canada would therefore fit Grace Davie's concept of believing without belonging. See Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945*.
- 85 Anton Van Harskamp, 'Simply Astounding: Ongoing Secularization in the Netherlands,' in Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and their Gods*, 50. By contrast, James Kennedy argues that while decline in churchgoing has made religion less ethical in its emphasis, personal religion has become more spiritual and more individualistic. See Kennedy, 'Recent Dutch Religious History,' in *Ibid.*, 38.
- 86 Van Rooden, 'The Strange Death of Dutch Christendom,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 188.

- 87 Yves Lambert, 'New Christianity, Indifference and Diffused Spirituality,' in McLeod and Ustdorf, eds., *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe*, 74–6; Jean-Paul Willaime, 'Religious and Secular France between Northern and Southern Europe,' *Social Compass* 45, no. 1 (1998): 155–74; Paul Post, 'Ritual-Liturgical Movements,' in Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 83, 86–7.
- 88 Michael Snape, 'War, Religion and Revival,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 136–57.
- 89 On a similar theme, see Jean-Paul Willaime, 'Religious and Secular France,' 169; Linda Woodhead, 'Implicit Understandings of Religion in Sociological Study and in the Work of Hugh McLeod,' in Brown and Snape, eds., *Secularisation in the Christian World*, 35.
- 90 Dobbelaere and Billiet, 'Late 20th Century Trends in Catholic Religiousness,' in Kenis et al., eds., *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe*, 118; Daniele Hervieu-Leger, 'The Case of French Catholicism,' in Roof et al., eds., *The Postwar Generation*, 161; Thomas Kselman, 'The Dechristianization of Death in Modern France,' in McLeod and Ustdorf, eds., *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe*, 158.
- 91 In an observation that serves to reinforce this conclusion, Ira Katznelson and Gareth Stedman-Jones have noted that in the European context, while the 1960s may have been a decade of fundamental religious change, in no European state has there been a complete separation of church and state. Europeans may display low levels of church attendance and reject the notion that the church should decide their values, but their behaviour and significant components of their public identities remain Christian. See Katznelson and Stedman-Jones, 'Secularization, Religion, and the Roots of Innovation in the Political Sphere,' in Katznelson and Stedman-Jones, eds., *Religion and the Political Imagination*, 17.

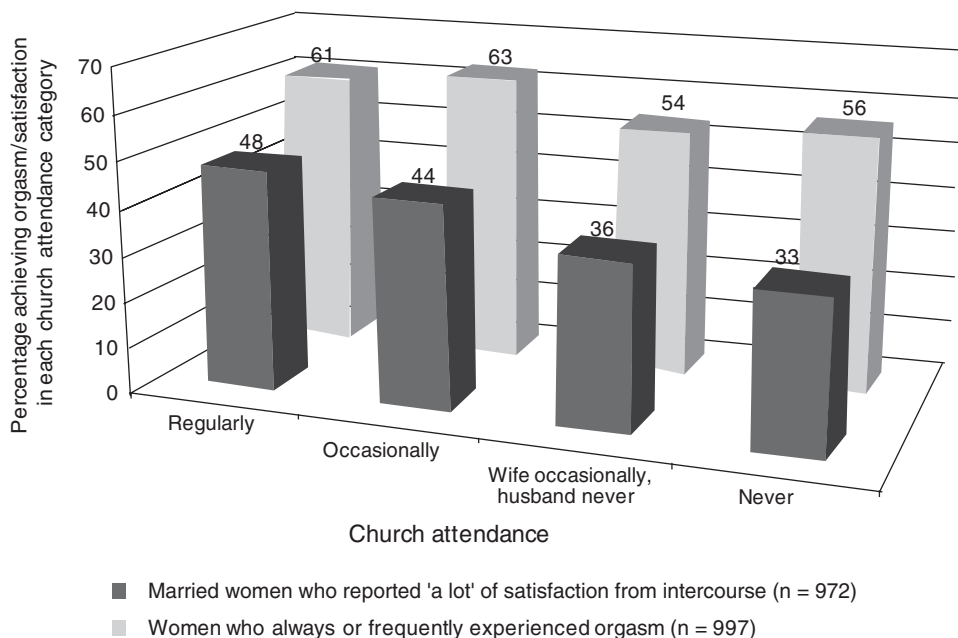
1 Gender, Christianity, and the Rise of No Religion: The Heritage of the Sixties in Britain

CALLUM G. BROWN

Between 1950 and 1975, leading British social investigators were convinced of the possibility that sex and religion were linked. They investigated the connections between the two to an extent, and with a degree of detail, unmatched before or since. For example, in 1954 Eustace Chesser, a psychiatrist from Edinburgh, studied the relationship between level of church attendance on the one hand and female orgasm and female sexual satisfaction on the other (see figure 1.1). Using over 900 female responses on sex from a larger survey of more than 2,000 women in England, he seemed to show that there was a positive linkage between orgasm and family churchgoing, and an even more pronounced relationship between a woman's overall sexual satisfaction from intercourse in marriage and the level of family churchgoing. For Chesser, this backed up other data that showed that happiness in marriage was higher where both husband and wife attended church frequently or occasionally. The statistical technique of correlation (which Chesser did not use) backs up his argument; this shows that the link in his survey data between churchgoing and orgasm produces a positive correlation coefficient of 0.7372, which is a strong relationship; but this relationship becomes extremely strong between churchgoing and sexual satisfaction, achieving a correlation coefficient of 0.9850. However this connection might be explained, and however significant it might be, the fact that Chesser investigated this is indicative of a significant trend at mid-century within social investigation. Concern with the changing nature of religion and morality in British life was being investigated through recourse to the expanding exploration of the sexual life of the people.

Chesser's study in the mid-1950s was distinctive for the extent to

Figure 1.1 English women's church attendance, frequency of orgasm, and degree of sexual satisfaction, 1954



Constructed from data in Eustace Chesser, *The Sexual, Marital and Family Relationships of the English Woman* (London: Hutchinson's Medical Publications, 1956), p. 280.

which he put women centre stage in the study of British social life, habits, and morality. He recognized that it was women, rather more than men, whose lives were changing in mid-century, and whose routine gender rules of life had been under the greatest pressure through war and the breakdown of 'previously accepted norms.'¹ Yet, in many ways, his study was focusing on what was failing to change in England of the mid-1950s. He was concerned with poor-quality parenting, corporal punishment, emotional suppression, sexual ignorance, inequality of knowledge and power between men and women within marriage, and men gaining more sexual satisfaction than women. For instance, he found in surveying 2,155 women in marriages where birth control measures (including safe-period and withdrawal) were practised that women controlled the precautions in only 19.8 per cent of cases.² To