this new interpretive trade. This transformation, in turn, gave New Dealers the confidence to treat debt not as a moral destabilizer but as a foundational pillar of American financial life. The Banking Act of 1933 and the National Housing Act of 1934 deputized ratings agencies and real-estate appraisal theorists to adjudicate risk, and enshrined race into an immutable law of accelerated depreciation that sanctioned redlining. Platt's work makes this connection explicit and argues plausibly that such thought was causal to the regulatory state's bureaucratization of racial discrimination in lending.

The New History of Capitalism is, depending on how one dates its origins, at least old enough to drive now, and Platt roots his narrative in that trendsetting paradigm's core thesis: that capitalism is constantly under construction by way of language, law, and power. He details especially well how women's pecuniary experiences were more versatile than the law allowed or Victorian ideologies espoused. Platt's exposing of the accidental agency of reformers and data aggregators in pouring the foundation of a consumer credit society is insightful. This book does not, however, explore the holistic economic impact of shifting personal credit laws on the financial life of everyday families. After all, many Americans repaid loans and managed to advance or maintain their station. That Platt is uninterested in that broader picture is the natural culmination of a line of scholarship skewing toward failure, deadbeats, and misfortune. In that vein, Platt narrates the shifting legal rights of American borrowers in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. In any case, Platt's book is succinct, well-researched, skillfully composed, and deeply conversant in its interwoven historiographies. The author adds to our understanding of family financial life by contextualizing shifting laws on debt and freedom in the wake of abolition. Scholars interested in the histories of debt, progressive legal reform, and family economic life should read it carefully.

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Religious Roots of the Long War on Drugs

Monteith, Andrew. *Christian Nationalism and the Birth of the War on Drugs*. New York: New York University Press, 2023. 304 pp. $89.00 (cloth), ISBN 9781479817917; $30.00 (paper), ISBN 9781479817924.

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As a child of the 1990s, I remember well participating in the antidrug programming that seemed ubiquitous in public schools that decade. From "Just Say No" events (including the very popular monthly skate nights at the local skating rink) to Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) talks in our classrooms and our fifth-grade graduation from this

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program (I still recall our officer's name and thinking how cool her police-issued Chevrolet Blazer was), the War on Drugs was pervasive in schools, media, and politics. I am surely not the only millennial who still knows by heart the commercial jingle that taught us how to write to receive our very own McGruff the Crime Dog comic book. Taking a bite out of crime was every child's duty.

What we certainly did not learn from "Just Say No," D.A.R.E., and McGruff was the political and social history of the War on Drugs, and we learned even less about the intertwined influences of race and religion on its origins. To be fair, neither have most scholars. Of course, most American historians are probably aware of the role of religious activists in the temperance campaigns of the antebellum era and the successful push for Prohibition in the early twentieth century, and many likely have at least some passing familiarity with the racist impacts of criminal prosecutions for drug offenses. However, the deep historical roots of the War on Drugs reach back much further than the tough-on-crime years following the 1960s, and they encompass a complex history of Protestant millenarianism blended with Progressive Era eugenics and imperialism that has largely escaped the notice of much scholarship on the history of drug policy in the United States.

Religious studies scholar Andrew Monteith's *Christian Nationalism and the Birth of the War on Drugs* positions Protestant postmillennialism as the foundation of what would eventually grow into a U.S.-led global fight against illegal drugs. Monteith argues that, although Protestants had long been at the forefront of campaigns against alcohol and drugs in the nineteenth century, in the twentieth century, religious activists learned to secularize their formerly sectarian arguments, which served to broaden their appeal and, ultimately, their international reach. This religiously inspired antidrug movement eventually fused with early twentieth-century eugenicist and imperial ideologies to produce what is commonly thought of as the modern War on Drugs. "Religion crafted the global War on Drugs," Monteith explains, "but religion's position is also quite complex. We aren't looking at race *and* colonialism *and* religion as forces that created the Drug War, for these categories bleed into one another, constitute one another – they are inseparable" (7).

Monteith's narrative opens with the assertion that Protestantism functioned as a hegemonic cultural force in the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Church leaders' position of social dominance allowed them to regard "their transsectarian religious norms as non-problematic truths that all people should embrace" (13). The book proceeds chronologically, from the early years of the Gilded Age into the 1930s. The author begins by reviewing the role that postmillennial Protestantism played in impelling believers to launch campaigns to improve and perfect society through temperance activism – an attempt to prepare the way for Jesus's return. Alcoholism was an affront to God because it imperiled the mind, the place "where salvation manifests … where belief occurs … and where truth resides" (38). These nineteenth-century religious temperance activists, especially those associated with the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), pioneered what Monteith describes as "Scientific Temperance," which played a critical role in "seculariz[ing] religious arguments" (41). The blending of theology, medicine, and economics produced a potent ideology to combat alcoholism. Though explicitly religious arguments may have begun being replaced more and more by secular rhetoric, "[p]ostmillennialism is irremovable from the temperance ethos" (56).

A new understanding of "biomorality," or how "biology shapes or houses morality," was shaped by the earlier influence of Protestant temperance campaigners, such as members of the WCTU, who saw in alcohol abuse not only a moral failing but also a physical and mental one (71). Because addiction was both a moral and a biological concern, they argued, it was right for the government to regulate it as a criminal matter.

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They portrayed addiction as a threat to both individuals and society at large, with American freedom hanging in the balance. On this note, many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century antidrug crusaders began connecting the growing threats to American order to ethnic, immigrant, and racial others. Here is where readers can begin seeing the roots of the modern War on Drugs. It was not just alcohol that was a problem, but also substances such as marijuana, opium, and peyote, which both religious and secular commentators portrayed as instruments of racial and national degradation. The growing calls for more stringent federal legislation to combat drug abuse reached internationally, with Americans such as Episcopal Bishop Charles Henry Brent playing leading roles in urging the League of Nations to commit to global action against narcotics following World War I. In creating what Monteith describes as a "moral panic" over drugs in the early twentieth century, proto-drug warriors promoted the idea that "white civilized leadership, vested in American Anglo-Saxon institutions and values, would be what led to the Kingdom of God" (196).

There is one topic I would have liked to have seen more of in Monteith's excellent book, and that is *non*-Protestant religious reformers' receptions of postmillennialist Protestant arguments against drugs. Catholics and Jews, for example, are mentioned occasionally, but a deeper dive into their own influence on the emerging racial, religious, biomoral, and eugenicist intellectual history of the campaign against drugs would have further enriched Monteith's work. This critique should not be seen, though, as detracting from Monteith's provocative research. He has done important work in providing an original interpretation of the long history of the War on Drugs and in introducing compelling perspectives from religious studies and philosophy into the study of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. *Christian Nationalism and the Birth of the War on Drugs* is enthusiastically recommended for scholars of American culture, religion, politics, and society.