

Women in the Mission of the Church: Their Opportunities and Obstacles throughout Christian History. By **Leanne M. Dzubinski** and **Anneke H. Stasson**. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2021. xii + 239 pp. \$25.00 paper.

For historians, it may be difficult to remember a time when the details of the past were unknown. Imagine not knowing the stories of Perpetua, Macrina, or the Beguines! In reality, of course, most people do not know these stories, even faithful Christian people. *Women in the Mission of the Church* aims to correct that oversight.

The strength of this book is its broad scope. Part I covers “Women’s Leadership in the Early Church,” Part II, “Women’s Leadership in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages,” and Part III, “Women’s Leadership Since the Reformation.” Each part has multiple chapters that are topically arranged: for example, “Virgins, Scholars, Desert Mothers, and Deacons” (chap. 2), “Beguines and Mystics” (chap. 5), and “Social Justice Advocates” (chap. 7). Each chapter describes women who lived out their faith in a particular way in their social context.

A weakness of the book—as with all histories this broad in scope—is the lack of detail and occasional misunderstanding of a particular period. In the early church period, for example, Roman culture functions as a foil, providing a backdrop of women’s repression against which Christian women appear countercultural. The authors do not acknowledge the ways that the virtues and leadership of women were consistent with Roman culture.

The utility of the book would be greater had the authors provided a short bibliography for each of the figures or groups listed. This would give students a toehold to probe individual women’s stories more deeply. Although there are footnotes and a bibliography, important primary and secondary sources are missing, at least in the period with which I am most familiar.

Nevertheless, the book meets its goal of introducing readers to various roles of women through the centuries. The authors are not making a veiled argument for women’s ordination or for any particular roles for women in the present. This is a history book, and the authors’ stated desire in the conclusion is that these stories become more widely known. They provide an excellent resource toward that goal.

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Jewish-Christian Disputations in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Fictions and Realities. Edited by **Sébastien Morlet**. Late Antique History and Religion, LAHR Volume 21. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2020 x + 275 pp. \$117.00, hardback.

Like many anthologies of essays, *Jewish-Christian Disputations in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Fictions and Realities* emerged from a conference—or, in this case, two