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Review: 'A Catholic Brain Trust: The History of the Catholic Commission On Intellectual and Cultural Affairs, 1945-1965'

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of these films. They are designed to *do* something, and to ignore the fact that they have apparently succeeded would be myopic.

Film and media studies scholars will also perhaps be frustrated by the authors' recurrent evaluation of production values. Lindvall and Quicke are hardly blind to the deficiencies of many Christian films ("Baptists were producing films that congregations found dull and unwatchable" [110]), but, as if to compensate, films sometimes seem to be praised simply on the grounds that they are technically competent. For media scholars, this will seem methodologically unsophisticated. Yet, in many ways the book's methods are admirable: the authors draw on a deep range of archival materials (in particular articles from the *Christian Herald* and documents held at the Regent University Religious Film Archives), discuss numerous rare films in detail, and make use of their own interviews with filmmakers.

Sadly, media historians are largely uninterested in religious media, but for the past fifteen years significant interest has developed in cult, low-budget, and other kinds of "orphan films" that had long fallen beneath the radar. From this perspective, *Celluloid Sermons*, with its tales of Christian exploitation films (*The Monster and the Stripper!*), alternative distribution networks, and technological innovation is invaluable. The book, in sum, should be of great interest to scholars of both media and religion.

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***A Catholic Brain Trust: The History of the Catholic Commission on Intellectual and Cultural Affairs, 1945–1965.* By Patrick J. Hayes.**

Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011. viii + 432 pp. \$75.00 cloth.

Patrick Hayes's history of the founding and development of the Catholic Commission on Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (CCICA) examines an important exemplar of U.S. Catholics' ongoing attempts to organize themselves as an intellectual cohort to bring Catholic influence to bear in national and international debates concerning culture, politics, science, and society. Though the organization continued until 2007, Hayes limits his focus to the Commission's early years, 1945–1965, two decades of enormous change in the nation and the Catholic Church. In his introduction, Hayes describes his work as "the story of the rise and demise of organized

Catholic intellectual life in America in the last half of the twentieth century” (1). The twenty-year story unfolds chronologically in seven chapters. An epilogue reflects on the overarching question: “Whither Catholic Intellectual Life?” Hayes draws from several archive collections, most notably the CCICA collection housed at Catholic University of America.

The first two chapters provide an overview of the CCICA’s founding in the context of post-war America and international efforts to restore a devastated Europe. The founding story highlights John Courtney Murray’s critical role in establishing CCICA’s distinct identity and mission as an organization of elite Catholic intellectuals ready to bring a faith-informed expertise to contemporary issues. At its inception, CCICA founders identified themselves as part of an international Catholic intellectual movement working toward “a just and peaceful world order” (54). The Commission affiliated with Pax Romana/International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs. Among its earliest efforts, the CCICA sought to insert Catholic influence into the guiding principles and activities of UNESCO. The subsequent five chapters survey specific CCICA initiatives. Chapter three examines CCICA’s mostly unsuccessful attempts to relocate displaced European Catholic intellectuals in U.S. academic institutions and more successful individual and organizational efforts to shape the content of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Chapters four and five focus on specific intellectual debates with special attention to individual members’ contributions. In the fourth chapter, Hayes reviews CCICA’s internal debates on and public responses to the Catholic position on Church-state relations. Positions defending a historically informed development in Church teaching are those of John Courtney Murray and Jacques Maritain. CCICA’s articulate opponents of such development include Paul Hanley Furfey and Louis J. A. Mercier. The fifth chapter traces the story behind John Tracy Ellis’s 1955 CCICA lecture, “American Catholics and the Intellectual Life” and the immediate and long-term responses the lecture generated. The sixth and seventh chapters review failed CCICA projects. The sixth examines CCICA executive director, William Rooney’s efforts to secure the production of a *New Catholic Encyclopedia* as a CCICA project. One learns how Catholic University of America rather than CCICA oversaw the project as a money-making venture rather than as a CCICA showcase for American Catholic intelligentsia. The final chapter reviews a series of efforts “under the general rubric ‘environments of respect for learning’” (225). Hayes briefly discusses the short-lived Kerby Seminars (1957–1965) for young Catholic scholars “interested in integrating their scholarship with their faith life” (236). He then considers the CCICA’s limited engagement in academic freedom debates, including, most notably, a 1963 response from executive committee members to Catholic University’s withdrawal of speaking invitations to Murray, Gustav Weigel, Godfrey Diekmann, and Hans Küng.

The concluding sections examine failed efforts to develop a "Registry of Catholic Scholars" (249) and to create a sociological "analysis of American Catholic intellectual (scholarly) life" (254).

The book's strengths are numerous. First, it is a clearly written, well-documented account of the CCICA, including over 120 pages of substantive end notes. Second, it contributes to the growing body of historical monographs on mid-twentieth century U.S. Catholic intellectual life including its transnational dimensions. Familiar figures like Murray, Ellis, Furfey, and Maritain appear as self-consciously Catholic intellectuals fully engaged in the political and cultural debates of American and European society. Third, the book's detailed accounts of specific CCICA debates enrich historical perspectives on divisions among Catholic intellectuals whose influence continues into the twenty-first century. The featured debates on Catholic participation in UNESCO's efforts, developments in Catholic teaching on Church-state relations, and the ongoing quest for defining Catholic intellectual tradition and identifying Catholic intellectuals are especially noteworthy.

The limitations of this text lie in two areas. The first may be a function of writing a history of a small professional organization like the CCICA. The text, at times, reads like an account whose principal audience is Commission members. Individuals and events are occasionally mentioned with little reference to their context or significance. The text provides only scanty analysis of how individuals secured admission to the Commission, the clergy-lay dynamic, or the disciplines represented. The epilogue mentions, with little examination, the low number of women members; even in 1994, they numbered "thirty-seven out of 297" (274). Second, the book does not make clear how it is "the story of the rise and demise of organized Catholic intellectual life in America in the last half of the twentieth century" (1). It is most certainly the story of the CCICA's short-lived attempts to organize a Catholic intellectual apostolate, but it is difficult to see its story in the far-reaching terms as suggested in the introduction and epilogue. The operative definition for "intellectual life," even within the CCICA, remains diffuse and unclear. Perhaps in the final analysis, the book's most valuable contribution is in its account of CCICA's failure to organize or even define Catholic intellectual life. Hayes's history of CCICA suggests that a vigorous Catholic intellectual life exists diffusely among Catholics willing to engage the debates of their own time and place, using the expertise of their own disciplines, grounded in an intellectually informed faith commitment. The book honors those who gave expression to that ideal in the CCICA and should certainly be added to any library collection of American intellectual or religious history.

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