



discusses conflicts related to conversion, the nature of sanctification, and gender. Notably she lets the various stories stand as they are, discussing successes but also failures. Her aim is not to offer idealized versions of events, but to place these women into their social and historical contexts and to tell of their experiences, both good and bad. This deeply engaging book will interest audiences ranging from general readers (particularly those with an interest in women and Christianity, or Christianity during the Progressive Era) to students and scholars. It will be valuable in undergraduate or graduate classrooms. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Lower-level undergraduates and above; general readers.—*M. M. Veeneman, North Park University*

51-5549 BX4328 2013-26219 MARC
Reese, Abbie. **Dedicated to God: an oral history of cloistered nuns.** Oxford, 2014 (c2013). 247p bibl index afp ISBN 9780199947935, \$34.95

The spiritually motivated life within the confines of a monastery is foreign to most. Occasionally, the media open the door a crack, providing a scant peek into a contemplative and pious community. Professional photographer Reese widens the crack by opening a window into the Corpus Christi Monastery of the cloistered Poor Clare Colettine nuns. This volume in the "Oxford Oral History Series" is based on 34 interviews conducted with 12 nuns. The largest number, 10, was conducted with the Mother Abbess. Interviews with other nuns range from four to one. The book is divided into three parts and eight chapters. The narrative, a weaving together of the voices of the nuns and the author's writing, unfolds the life of the nuns. Each chapter has a section titled "Called," containing the words of an interviewee. The 24 on-site photos taken by Reese add a more personal quality. Because of limited space in this review, oral history matters are left to *The Oral History Review*. This book belongs in all academic libraries, and certainly would not be out of place in public libraries. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ All levels/libraries.—*J. J. Fox Jr., emeritus, Salem State College*

51-5550 BL820 2013-531 CIP
Renger, Almut-Barbara, author. **Oedipus and the Sphinx: the threshold myth from Sophocles through Freud to Cocteau**, tr. by Duncan Alexander Smart and David Rice with John T. Hamilton. Chicago, 2013. 126p bibl index afp ISBN 9780226048086, \$25.00; ISBN 9780226048116 e-book, contact publisher for price

Renger (Freie Univ. Berlin) offers her readers an alluring interpretation of the ancient Greek myth of Oedipus and the Sphinx. She addresses its reception in Western culture as the experience of transition from ordinary, reasonable life into an unknown and uncertain realm beyond knowledge because its rules and order are impossible to grasp. In both text and vase paintings, the myth focuses on the role of human insight and understanding at the threshold, betwixt and between, as the hero Oedipus confronts the winged figure with a human head and a lion body, with the possibility of self-knowledge and the danger of preservation "against error, hubris, and blindness." Although two modern thinkers, Sigmund Freud and Jean Cocteau, reached opposite conclusions in their analysis of the Oedipus-Sphinx myth, they demonstrated the continuing power of the myth and the crucial role it plays between scientific knowledge and artistic expression. In addition to religious studies scholars, this beautifully written and deftly argued book will appeal to historians, anthropologists, psychologists, and philosophers. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Upper-division undergraduates and above; general readers.—*L. J. Alderink, emeritus, Concordia College*

51-5551 BL65 2012-42703 CIP
The Root of all evil?: religious perspectives on terrorism, ed. by Lori J. Underwood. Peter Lang, 2013. (Terrorism studies, v.3) ISBN 9781433119293, \$72.95; ISBN 9781453910474 e-book, contact publisher for price

This edited volume of essays responds to the claim by Christopher Hitchens and others that religion is the "root of all evil"—a response to contemporary terrorist movements. The essays focus on the sacred texts and ethical teachings of the world's major religious traditions, including Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and New Religious Movements (NRMs), as regards terrorism. The essay on Buddhism contradicts the cultural myth that Buddhism historically has been exclusively a "peace tradition." All the essays find texts that can—and often have been—distorted to support terrorism. The essays are clear, however, that no dominant religious tradition advocates or morally supports terrorism. The case is less clear with some of the NRMs. The last essay, written by Underwood, provides a helpful distinction between constructive and destructive "alterity": the construction of identity in relation to the "other." When identity is constructed in a way that denigrates the other, then violence, including terrorism, is more likely to result. As Underwood notes, however, religion is no more or less likely to construct identity in this way than nationalism or ethnicity. **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Upper-level undergraduates and above.—*C. L. Kammer, The College of Wooster*

51-5552 BX106 2013-13554 CIP
Roudometof, Victor. **Globalization and Orthodox Christianity: the transformations of a religious tradition.** Routledge, 2014. 228p bibl index (Routledge studies in religion, 32) ISBN 9780415843737, \$125.00

This is an immensely learned book. The notes and bibliography of works in many languages themselves offer a praiseworthy contribution. The author's judgments, grounded in this scholarship, discuss Orthodoxy's relations to major topics, including modernity, nationalism, and globalization. His "goal is to compensate for recent tendencies ... to identify the legacies of communism with the cultural features of Orthodoxy" by "connecting the historical stages... of globalization to Orthodoxy and tracing the ways in which Orthodoxy responded to the opportunities and challenges of each successive era." Thus, Roudometof (social and political sciences, Univ. of Cyprus) examines the place of Orthodoxy in the various transformations the Christian world has experienced, from the first century to the present day. He attempts to present Orthodoxy free of the "negative stereotypes" that "too frequently" dominate views of Orthodoxy held in the West. Moreover, the author aims to write "with the goal of rendering the arguments accessible even to nonspecialist readers." In short, Roudometof has undertaken a very difficult task. He concludes that his work is a contribution to a "broader intellectual movement" to "demonstrate the vitality and variation within [the Orthodox] religious tradition." **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Faculty, professionals.—*J. T. Flynn, emeritus, College of the Holy Cross*

51-5553 BL1033 2012-51029 CIP
Veer, Peter van der. **The modern spirit of Asia: the spiritual and the secular in China and India.** Princeton, 2014. 282p bibl index afp ISBN 9780691128146, \$75.00; ISBN 9780691128153 pbk, \$24.95

Van der Veer (Utrecht Univ., the Netherlands) employs what may seem to be simple categories to generate a richly nuanced interpretation of China

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