The Liberating Spirit
Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic

“An outstanding Pentecostal social ethic.”
—WALTER J. HOLLENWEGER

ELDIN VILLAFANE
The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic, Eldin Villafane, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1993, 0802807283, 9780802807281, 276 pages. For many years now an overriding passion has motivated my research—the construction of a social ethic for the Hispanic Pentecostal Church in the United States. This social ethic, though, must cohere with the Hispanic American socio-cultural experience as well as be consistent with Hispanic Pentecostalism’s self-understanding of ethics emerging from its experience of the Spirit. This has been the not too modest goal of this book. You, the reader, will be the judge whether I have made some contribution towards the end. - from the Introduction by the author.

DOWNLOAD HERE


Prophetic Pentecostalism in Chile A Case Study on Religion and Development Policy, Frans Kamsteeg, Dec 1, 1998, , 283 pages. From his anthropological fieldwork in Chile from 1991-92, Kamsteeg interprets prophetic Pentecostalism as a multifaceted phenomenon; its particular manifestation in Latin ...

Crisis in Latin America, Emilio Antonio Nà©nez C., Emilio Antonio Nà©nez, William David Taylor, 1989, , 439 pages.

God's Daughters Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission, R. Marie Griffith, Nov 1, 2000, Religion, 275 pages. "Vivid, lucid, and well-written. I came away with a better understanding of how the specific realities of being 'submissive wives' are negotiated, constructed, challenged, and ....

Teologia En Conjunto, Josà© David Rodriguez, Loida I. Martell-Otero, 1997, Religion, 171 pages. Two aspects are fundamental to Hispanic/Latina theology: rich diversity and a collaborative spirit. In this groundbreaking book, Hispanic scholars come together to create a ....

Christian Ethics: Special part, second division : social ethics, Hans Martensen, 1899, , .


Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth, David Stoll, 1990, History, 424 pages. Examines the phenomenal growth of Protestantism in Latin America and how a new politics of redemption is transforming the religious landscape of these countries.

Pentacostalism Origins and Developments Worldwide, Walter J. Hollenweger, Jun 30, 2004, , 512 pages. One of the premier interpreters of Pentecostalism, Walter J. Hollenweger has written what is in many ways a sequel to his magisterial The Pentecostals (1972). This volume ....


Faces of Latin American Protestantism 1993 Carnahan Lectures, Josà© Mà©dez Bonino, Jan 1, 1997, Religion, 158 pages. Only recently have Protestant historians begun to address historical, ideological, and theological questions in relation to the Protestant church in Latin America. In this book ....


The provocative material in this highly successful treatise has captured the attention of theologians, ethicists, and members of the Hispanic community alike. Throughout this compelling study, the author remains driven by a single-minded goal &x2014; the construction of a social ethic for the
Hispanic Pentecostal Church in America that both coheres with the Hispanic American sociocultural experience and remains consistent with Hispanic Pentecostalism's self-understanding of ethics emerging from its experience of the Spirit.

Eldin Villafañe is the Ricardo Tañon Distinguished Professor of Hispanic Christianity, Ethics, and Urban Ministry at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts. His other books include Seek the Peace of the City, The Liberating Spirit, and Transforming the City (all Eerdmans).

For many years now an overriding passion has motivated my research—the construction of a social ethic for the Hispanic Pentecostal Church in the United States. This social ethic, though, must cohere with the Hispanic American socio-cultural experience as well as be consistent with Hispanic Pentecostalism's self understanding of ethics emerging from its experience of the Spirit. This has been the not too modest goal of this book. You, the reader, will be the judge whether I have made some contribution towards the end. - from the Introduction by the author.


St.Paul Curtiss Paul DeYoung Associate Professor of Reconciliation Studies Bethel College, MN,Michael O. Emerson Associate Professor of Sociology Rice University,George Yancey Associate Professor of Sociology University of North Texas,Karen Chai Kim Assistant Professor of Sociology University of Houston

The Liberating Spirit is a noteworthy reflection of two recent trajecto- ries in American religion: the emergence of Hispanics in the study of religion and the rise of Pentecostalism within mainstream theological dis- course. Historically, many Pentecostals have sought to separate them- selves from the social and political affairs of a transient world. The Liberating Spirit argues that Pentecostals should encourage an ethic that engages and addresses the social and political problems confronting Hispanics.

Villafane, a professor of Christian social ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, begins his plea by identifying the characteristics of what he terms the "Homo Hispanicus." According to Villafane, one of the characteristics is "passion" or the idea that "life is to be heroic, and feel- ings/emotions are to be accepted in a wholistic response to life" (15). Other characteristics include the ideas that personal relations are more important than abstract principles or institutions and that "fiestas," which are celebrations, affirm that life is a gift and worth living.

In chapter 2, the author summarizes the social history and role of the Hispanic experience with Catholicism, Protestantism, and Pentecostal- ism. He discusses demographic data and some of the symbols (e.g., the Virgin of Guadalupe) that have been dominant among Latin Americans. Villafaiie also describes how the "Homo Hispanicus" affects Hispanic spirituality. For example, "passion" is reflected in the emotional fervor of Hispanic celebrations, whether they be Catholic Holy Week or Pentecos- tal worship. He also constructs a useful typology of Hispanic churches which measures the degree of autonomy and assimilation to American culture.
The socio-theological interpretation of Hispanic urban reality is the theme of the third chapter. Drawing on the work of Otto Maduro, Renato Poblete, Luther Gerlach and other scholars, Villafaei identifies the central themes of the Hispanic Pentecostal experience, which includes oppression, the leveling effects of glossolalia, and rejection of the gap between the ideal and the real.

The following chapter attempts to show how the scriptural understanding of pneumatology, Christology, and eschatology supports socio-political activism by Pentecostals. Thus, Villafaei cites 2 Thessalonians 2:7, Ephesians 6:12, and other texts to mean that the church is part of the Holy Spirit's mission to confront evil. The Kingdom of God is fulfilled but not consummated, and so the proper view of eschatology obligates us to change the world in which we live. The true view of Christ recognizes that the Incarnation, as a reflection of the balance between the divine and created worlds, urges us not to reject engagement with humanity and culture.

In his fifth and last chapter, Villafaei concludes his discussion by arguing that a Hispanic social ethic can combine the best aspects of Hispanic culture and Pentecostal theology to confront issues such as "abortion, arms control and disarmament, capital punishment, civil rights, the economy, education, energy, . . ." (220). Villafane, however, does not provide any specific positions that Pentecostals should take on most of these issues.

The Liberating Spirit is at its best when it attempts to collect basic sociological data on Hispanic churches in the United States, particularly in the Northeast. Here we learn, for example, that in 1987 there were some 60 Methodist Hispanic churches and 58 American Baptist Hispanic churches in Northeastern states. The field of Hispanic Pentecostal studies is so new that scholars are thirsty for the most basic data we can gather on these churches.

Perhaps the most significant problem is that Villafane does not always carefully distinguish theological claims from claims based on historical, sociological, and anthropological analyses that might be verified by those outside a Pentecostal tradition. Although he sometimes promises to provide "critical" descriptions (133), it is usually not certain whether Villafaei is describing Pentecostals as a sociologist or whether he is describing his own views as a Pentecostal Hispanic.

For example, while Villafane criticizes Pentecostals who might lack "sound teaching in biblical exegesis and hermeneutics" (206), he argues that "In the Law, Prophets, and the Gospel God's justice is demonstrated in God's preference for those whom society has discarded" (105). Is Villafaei speaking from the perspective of a critical scholar or does he regard this as a Christian article of faith? Many secular and Christian feminist critics might argue there are portions of Scripture which explicitly condone or promote the subjugation of women and other marginal groups. In discussing Ephesians 6, he does not confront verse 2 ("Slaves, be obedient to your earthly masters . . .") while attempting to show that the chapter justifies a struggle against human power structures. How would a Pentecostal respond to such challenges from critical biblical scholars in building a social ethic?

But even when speaking from a non-theological perspective, Villafane uses anthropologically outdated and questionable notions of national and ethnic characteristics to construct his "Homo Hispanicus," and thus many of his characterization of Hispanic spirituality are precarious at best. For example, to establish the idea that Hispanics are characterized by "passion," he appeals to Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Spaniards (1928) by Salvador de Madariaga, an author notorious for promoting superficial ethnic stereotypes. But aside from anecdotal evidence, Villafaei adduces

In all fairness, the book must be evaluated from different perspectives. From a "social scientific" viewpoint, The Liberating Spirit has not established the existence of any essential Hispanic or Pentecostal culture or tradition on which to found a unified ethic. The reason is that Hispanic culture and Pentecostalism are probably too diverse already (and perhaps always were). From a theological perspective, the justification for a Pentecostal social ethic, and any supporting biblical exegesis, will probably be accepted only by those that are already convinced of his theological and social agenda. Yet, The Liberating Spirit, is very useful in providing non-Pentecostal scholars with an important insight into recent theological and intellectual trends within a growing Hispanic Pentecostal community.
God in the Wasteland is a companion volume to Wells' earlier No Place for Truth (1993). In that volume he offered an analysis of the cultural factors that Wells believed were responsible for diminishing the place of theology in the American evangelical church. Now, Wells continues his critique and offers what he hopes is the beginning of a prescription for change. He says he has written this book because "the vision of the evangelical church is now clouded, its internal life greatly weakened, its future very uncertain, and I want something better for it. I want the evangelical church to be the church" (214).

The central issues for Wells is the proper relationship between Christ and culture. He opposes any synthesis between the Christian faith and modern culture, whether that of Protestant liberalism or the more recent cultural accommodation of evangelicalism. Evangelicals, he argues, have bought cultural acceptability by emptying themselves of theology, substituting a message of happiness for that of holiness. Commenting on their hollow success which he now believes to be waning, Wells states, "The sea that looked to be a mile wide turned out to be only an inch deep" (18).

Fine. Trade paperback (US). Glued binding. 276 p. In Stock. 100% Money Back Guarantee. Brand New, Perfect Condition, allow 4-14 business days for standard shipping. To Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. protectorate, P.O. box, and APO/FPO addresses allow 4-28 business days for Standard shipping. No expedited shipping. All orders placed with expedited shipping will be cancelled. Over 3,000,000 happy customers.