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## Southern Religion and Christian Diversity in the Twentieth Century

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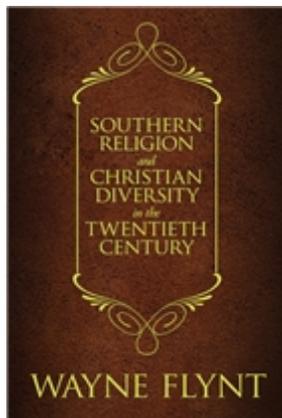
Brothers against brothers, fathers against sons, and Patriots against Loyalists, this was the Revolutionary War. We, as Americans, forget it was our first civil war.

James Madison University Assistant Professor Rebecca Bannon discusses the reconciliation of South Carolina's Patriots with the Loyalists in her book, *From Revolution to Reunion: the Reintegration of the South Carolina Loyalists*. All the states pursued government sanctions and punishments for the Loyalists after the war. South Carolina punished very few of the Loyalists. The Patriots in South Carolina ended up with the "strategy of talking out their rage." They spoke of fierce revenge. Even the female patriots talked of "shedding blood and destroying the Tories". This "talk of revenge" served as "an escapist fantasy that allowed the South Carolina Patriots to release their anger rather than wreak the vengeance they spoke of so frequently." Additionally, the Loyalist petitioned the South Carolina legislature with written testaments from local Patriot community members. These statements spoke of the loyalist "strong character" and their many good deeds. The legislature granted clemency to these Loyalists. Reconciliation was done quickly and without bloodshed. South Carolina and the other states realized it was important to reintegrate the loyalist to strengthen a new national identity. The states supported Christopher Gadsden's direction, "he that forgets and forgives most...is the best citizen." Bannon feels that no reconciliation is without cost. The immersion of the Loyalists into society was so successful that the Revolutionary War as a civil war is a lost memory.

This book would be a good addition for both academic and public libraries. The book is well-researched and is written in a concise and clear style.

Rita Spisak  
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**Southern Religion and Christian Diversity in the Twentieth Century** by Wayne Flynt. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2016. ISBN 978-0-8173-1908-3 (cloth); 978-0-1873-8971-0 (ebook). \$39.95. 400 p.



*Southern Religion and Christian Diversity in the Twentieth Century* is a series of fifteen essays written by distinguished Professor Wayne Flynt. The essays held my interest and spurred my reflection with his storytelling style. Through his words, I saw my hometown in North Carolina, my Baptist Church membership as a child, and remembered my early questions about church politics, segregation, and the role of the women in the church-- who cooked Wednesday night dinners, supervised the nursery, arranged the summer tent revivals, collected Lottie Moon offerings each Sunday, sang in the choirs, but did not stand in the pulpit and deliver a sermon.

Flynt describes the social and religious movements within Southern Christianity as churches of all faiths sought to consider that feeding the physical and personal needs of citizens was as important as feeding the souls of citizens. Through individual congregations, through social agencies, and through ruling boards of congregations, the movement from evangelism to a social gospel became the new Southern Christianity.

Forces that converged between 1900 and 2000 brought great change to congregations and faith disciplines in the South as evidenced by Flynt's extensive research. Particular essays shed light on changes: "Organized Labor, Reform, and Alabama Politics, 1920" (p.69), "Feeding the Hungry and Ministering to the Broken Hearted" (p.96), "Women, Society, and the Southern Church 1900-1920" (p.179), "God's Politics: Is Southern Religion, Blue, Red or Purple?". (p. 393). All speak to the many changes in Christians' congregational diversity.

Highly recommended for seminary and academic libraries. Excellent notes section p.317-363 and Index 370-386.

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