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Lillian Taiz. *Hallelujah Lads and Lasses: Remaking the Salvation Army in America, 1880-1930.* Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. 239 pp. $22.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8078-4935-4; $55.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8078-2621-8.

Reviewed by Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards (Department of History and Theology, United Theological Seminary at Buffalo, New York)
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Remaking the Salvation Army

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This engaging book depicts the Salvation Army in the United States as having evolved from an urban, working-class, evangelical and revivalist sect into a middle-class, bureaucratic denomination focused upon social service and self-maintenance. Utilizing a broad array of primary sources, Lillian Taiz combines social and institutional historical approaches in her examination of the Salvation Army during its first fifty years. Unlike other recent studies of The Salvation Army that are more concerned with its religious message and its impact in American society and culture, Taiz describes an organization that ultimately was more affected by the idiosyncrasies of human nature and U.S. culture than a religious organization effecting a long-term, outwardly directed mission. Ultimately, Taiz argues, the Salvation Army in the United States lost the vibrant and unique alternative religious character that animated its founders, and evolved into "a highly centralized organization with a complex bureaucracy" (p. 166) that had much in common with middle-class society in the United States.

From purely social and institutional perspectives, this book accomplishes its stated purpose. It begins with a description of the Salvation Army as a British evangelical missionary effort in the nineteenth-century United States, vividly portraying the organizationÎÒs effectiveness in attracting working-class persons into its ranks. Taiz argues that it was successful in part because it provided a "sacred community" with clearly defined, egalitarian gender roles, "meaningful careers," marriage partners, moral authority and structure (p.9) for those considered to be on the outside of conventional, middle-class, respectable religiosity. She tracks a long-term struggle between hierarchical and democratic impulses within the organization which ended with the eventual triumph of "centralizing authority." This authority was most evident in the top leadership's somewhat arbitrary and highly controversial decision to divide the organization into specialized spiritual and social branches at the beginning of the twentieth century. The spiritual wing was charged with providing Christian nurture to Salvation Army membership, and the social wing was given primary responsibility for conversion of the masses. It was, Taiz argues, Salvation Army bureaucrats and an upwardly mobile second generation of membership that eventually sealed the transformation of a democratic and highly experiential religion into an orderly and decorous denomination, one that was no longer attractive or effectual from a working-class point of view.

Taiz uses available primary sources to support her thesis, including factual data gleaned from the Salvation Army Archive and Research Center and colorful anecdotes from conversion narratives. The book is well organized and quite well written, although some sections are tainted with redundancy, and the unrelenting emphasis upon internal conflict within the organization seems tedious at points. The author's discussion of the religious culture of the Salvation Army in its earliest years is impressive and useful. Her consideration of class, gender and race is an important feature of the book.

Alongside its strengths, the main weakness of this volume is its lack of attention to broader intellectual, theological and historical developments in relation to the social and institutional changes upon which Taiz places her focus. Inadequate regard to theological matters initially appears in the description of John Wesley's understanding of Christian perfection in the first chapter, and continues throughout the book. It leaves the reader wondering whether there was any theological content, rationale or appeal behind some of the momentous changes that so drastically affected the nature of the organization as it evolved in an effort to remain viable in a changing world.

She mentions in passing the social gospel movement and the later Salvation Army's affinity with other forms of social Christianity, but does not venture to explain the historical and intellectual reasons why these ways of thinking were so compelling at the beginning of the twentieth century. Heavily dependent upon the sources of internal criticism against Salvation Army leadership and the effects of external social forces, her interpretation is an important contribution to the literature on the subject. However, it is too narrowly constructed to be deemed definitive with regard to the variety of forces that remade The Salvation Army in the United States during its first half-century.

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