

*New Women of the Old Faith: Gender and American Catholicism in the Progressive Era*, by Kathleen Sprows Cummings. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. xvii, 278 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth.

Reviewer Janet Welsh, OP, is director of the Mary Nona McGreal Center for Dominican Historical Studies at Dominican University, River Forest, Illinois. Her dissertation (University of Notre Dame) was about Catholic and Protestant women in the Upper Mississippi River Valley lead region, 1830–1870.

On March 13, 1887, Henry Francis Bowers gathered six men at his Clinton, Iowa, law office to form the American Protective Association (APA), an anti-Catholic organization that claimed that the Catholic church was an antithesis to democracy. The APA contended that Catholics could never be loyal citizens of the United States because they held greater allegiance to the pope. For many Catholics, experiencing anti-Catholicism deepened their religious identity; it also compelled them to demonstrate good citizenship and commitment to the welfare and values of a democratic republic.

Kathleen Sprows Cummings's *New Women of the Old Faith* is an exquisitely written text that examines the lives and works of four Catholic women who lived amid the realities of a changing America, of an American Catholic church defining itself in a new age, and of the growing women's movement during the Progressive Era. Cummings presents a well-researched account of the lives of Margaret Buchanan Sullivan (1847–1903), a Chicago journalist and prolific writer; Bostonian Katherine Conway (1852–1927), editor, public speaker, and avowed anti-suffragist; Sister Julia McGroaty (1831–1901), Sister of Notre Dame de Namur and founder of Trinity College for Catholic Women, Washington DC; and Philadelphian Sister Assisium McEvoy (1843–1939), Sister of St. Joseph, leader in curriculum development and the consolidation of the parochial school system.

Like the "new woman" of the period, all of these women were well-educated professionals who pioneered innovative pathways for women. Unlike the "new woman," however, they never promoted or participated in the burgeoning women's movement of the era; rather, these "new women of the old faith" possessed a far greater allegiance and loyalty to their Catholic identity than to their gender. It was not the bond of sisterhood that motivated their labor but rather the bond of religion that drove their endeavors.

Cummings skillfully demonstrates that the bonds of religion were complicated. She examines each woman's life according to her own distinctive circumstances. All of the women in some measure navigated patriarchal structures and paternal mentalities as they created

new opportunities for American Catholic women. Cummings cautions her readers not to laden the women with twenty-first-century expectations. She presents them as they were — late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century women who accepted the hierarchical structures of their church and found friendship with men who often failed to acknowledge their accomplishments. They also experienced the complexity of gender relationships within their own organizations and religious communities.

*New Women of the Old Faith* deserves careful study and praise from scholars of American Catholicism, gender studies, and U.S. history. Cummings's work is a tour de force for two reasons. First, she contributes to an already rich and growing scholarship that challenges the assumption that Catholic women, as members of a patriarchal church, were incapable of genuine work on the behalf of women. Second, *New Women of the Old Faith* is a ground-breaking contribution to gender studies. Cummings proves that the power of religious identity, often neglected in gender analysis, is a decisive component in understanding women's gender relationships and life work.

Cummings's text is a pleasure to read; each chapter is a "page turner" that will capture the interest of both armchair and professional historians. *New Women of the Old Faith* entices scholars to pursue further analysis of Catholic women as protagonists in the shaping of American Catholicism and the United States.

*Science in the Service of Children, 1893–1935*, by Alice Boardman Smuts. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006. xiv, 381 pp. Illustrations, table, notes, index. \$32.00 paper.

Reviewer Hamilton Cravens is professor of history at Iowa State University. He is the author of *Before Head Start: The Iowa Station & America's Children* (1993).

Alice Boardman Smuts has written an excellent book on a very important subject: the complex history of the launching of the sciences of the child in America. Readers of the *Annals of Iowa* should know that our state played a formative role in this story through the establishment of the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station at the University of Iowa in 1917, the first such scientific research institution in the world. The Iowa Station was, quite literally, the pioneer, the trailblazer, in the field, and Smuts provides an able summary of that history. Readers will find this book engagingly written and absorbing in its content.

What Smuts does, and does well, is to identify and describe the myriad persons, institutions, and movements that came together to create this fascinating interdisciplinary science — child development