

sought African Americans of “superior quality” who could fit in, adjust, and integrate—and over time vanishingly few suburbs were solely white. The problem that careful observers identified early in the open housing movement, though, was a “tipping point” at which whites deemed an area “too black.” Integration, especially when the local schools enrolled more than a handful of African American students, was a temporary accommodation followed by white exodus. Many schools shifted from almost exclusively white to racially segregated in a matter of years, with black middle-class families also exiting. In the 1960s, prominent voices, including the Church Federation of Greater Chicago, explicitly advocated quotas on black move-ins to allow neighborhoods and schools to stabilize. Liberals such as Herman Kreitzer and dogged black pioneer families succeeded in getting to the other side of “the wall,” but then the wall shifted further out into the ever-expanding suburbs, a process of resegregation that continues to this day.

Yet as K'Meyer details, instead of addressing this process of resegregation, in the late 1960s, the AFSC shifted to housing concerns within inner-city communities. Tenant organizing emerged as a nonviolent way to increase power and self-determination in black neighborhoods. Integration fatigue had set in, and frustrated advocates decided that if poor African Americans could not get out of the ghetto, they should own and control their surroundings. The rising Black Power zeitgeist clashed with AFSC principles, however, as Quakers in the movement were dismayed by militant ultimatums and charges that white allies were neo-colonizers. Race nationalism proved a poor fit with AFSC beliefs.

To Live Peaceably Together is not a trendy work in this era of Afro-pessimism, “equity in place,” and voluntarily segregated charter schools. K'Meyer's examination of a predominantly white faith-based group seems purposely old fashioned, and she concludes that what mattered most was the steely persistence demonstrated by the Friends and other open housers. Proponents of integration have been on the defensive for decades; meanwhile, the research on the detrimental effects of racially segregated concentrated poverty and the resulting inequalities continues to pile up. If living together peaceably is not the answer, what is?

Will Cooley

Metropolitan State (Saint Paul, Minnesota)

doi:10.1017/S0009640723000495

***The Life of Cardinal Humberto Medeiros of Boston: Whatever God Wants.* By Richard Gribble, CSC. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2021. ix + 353 pp. \$120 hardback; \$45 ebook.**

Richard Gribble's books include biographies of Nelson Baker and James Martin Gillis. With this biography he moves into the post-Vatican II era.

In 1931 Humberto Medeiros's family emigrated to Massachusetts from the Azores, where Humberto's father Antonio had gone to seek employment. After a secondary education delayed to provide for family needs, Humberto went to the Catholic University of America (CUA). Ordained in Fall River in 1946, Medeiros was sent back to CUA to earn a doctorate in theology. Gribble's foray into Boston's archdiocesan archives illustrates a prominent theme in the young priest's sermons: a Christ-founded church existing to help

members escape sin by obedience to divine commandments. Those archives also demonstrate that Medeiros, a Vatican II *peritus*, worked to promote renewal, urging parishioners to sign a pledge to learn and practice the Council's teachings. Gribble's synopsis of Medeiros's reactions to the conciliar proceedings constitutes a valuable contribution.

The turning point in Medeiros's career came in 1966, when Paul VI appointed him the first bishop of the new diocese of Brownsville. Medeiros was sent to an area in which he had no previous experience, to a local church possessing far fewer material resources than Catholic dioceses in the northeastern U.S. He championed lay participation in the church's apostolate by founding the Visitors for Christ, in which lay groups went to homes in Brownsville to assist with religious education and outreach to the homebound. He defended magisterial authority, instructing that a letter supporting *Humanae Vitae* be read at all diocesan Masses during the summer of 1968. Medeiros denounced economic inequality, which in South Texas correlated closely with the racial divide between whites and Mexican Americans. During his short tenure in Brownsville, Medeiros was thrust into the center of a farmworkers' strike in the Rio Grande Valley. Gribble describes tension between Catholic activists who openly sided with strikers' demands and Medeiros, who tried to combine general support for the poor with neutrality regarding specific planks of the farmworkers' platform. In working with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Latin American Bureau, Medeiros insisted Latin American bishops maintain administrative autonomy in allocating funds received from dioceses in the U.S.

Medeiros's success brought him to the attention of a committee formed to recommend a successor to Cardinal Richard Cushing. Gribble follows J. Anthony Lukas in speculating that Cardinal Wright persuaded the curia to appoint an orthodox bishop known for breaking down ethnic boundaries—a job description that fit Medeiros—though Gribble thinks definitive reasons for the Vatican's choice remain unclear. What is clear is that upon his appointment as bishop in Boston, Medeiros inherited a diocese riddled with tens of millions of dollars of crippling debt. Some opposition to this Portuguese-American leader was clearly rooted in racism. Medeiros's cautious leadership did not stanch social and racial hemorrhaging in the 1970s Boston Church. His Visitors for Christ program, a model in Brownsville, was ineffective in a large city; the archdiocesan Commission on Human Rights disbanded after members grew dissatisfied with the slow pace of social justice outreach.

Medeiros's personal charisms were no match for low clerical morale. Gribble is blunt: "History shows that at times a more confrontational style would have aided him in his role as archbishop" (165). The list of problem priests on the docket was formidable: Robert Drinan, Leonard Feeney, Paul Shanley, John Geoghan. Medeiros's advice to Pedro Arrupe to order Drinan, a supporter of abortion rights, to step down from the U.S. House of Representatives was ignored. Shanley and Geoghan presented greater problems. In 1979 Medeiros barred Shanley from his ministry to youth and gay men after being informed that Shanley spoke approvingly of sexual relationships between men and boys at a local conference. He assigned Shanley to parochial ministry in Newton, where Shanley went on to abuse boys. Medeiros's failure to remove Geoghan marks a low point. Gribble asserts in hindsight that "Medeiros' response in both cases was inadequate" (186).

Medeiros's relations with Boston's Catholic laity were just as fraught. His preferential option for the poor in education ran into the reality of a sharply declining number of schools. No matter how much he preferred to talk with catechists about religious education, racial strife boiled over on the issue of busing. Medeiros endorsed the integration that school busing sought, but by the mid-1970s he was backtracking, telling the press, "I am opposed to busing and always have been" (209). Medeiros refused to allow

parochial schools to become a redoubt for white families fleeing public schools. More conflict arose with his sponsorship of low-income housing projects, culminating in a group of suburban parishioners from Scituate suing the archdiocese in 1978. Though the archdiocese prevailed in court, Medeiros quixotically agreed to have the case heard again by a tribunal, which sided with the parishioners. The project was scuttled.

Indeed the composite portrait Gribble paints yields sharp contrasts—a leader committed to social justice but convinced that secularizing society was in the throes of moral decline, and who recognized the post-conciliar era would be marked by uncertainty; a bishop committed to serving the poor whose desire for consensus frustrated equitable sharing of material resources. Gribble renders judgment: “He had to contend with the divide between those who are fundamentally conservative in their religious perspective and those who are basically liberal” (228).

In an understatement Gribble writes, “His legacy was in many ways crafted within the context of conditions beyond his control” (318). The tone of the biography is set by the social context surrounding Medeiros—one of decline and division in which more than piety was required. Medeiros clearly had organizational talent, but he was not strong in standing up to those Catholics dedicated to preserving a white-dominated Catholic pre-Vatican II enclave. Gribble’s well-researched volume provides a complicated assessment of a bishop caught between pre-conciliar and post-conciliar worlds. Unfortunately, the volume is marred by typographical errors throughout. Despite this shortcoming the book is recommended for scholars specializing in the histories of the U.S. Catholic Church during the 1970s, post-conciliar race relations in the Church, and Catholicism in Boston.

Christopher Denny
St. John’s University—NY
doi:10.1017/S0009640723000197

***Bad Faith: Race and the Rise of the Religious Right.* By Randall Balmer. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2021. xix + 120 pp. \$16.99 hardcover.**

At only eighty-eight small pages of text with generous spacing and wide margins, *Bad Faith: Race and the Rise of the Religious Right* is a book many readers could plausibly finish in one sitting. This is no virtue; its pithiness only compounds the book’s weaknesses. *Bad Faith* puts forth a provocative thesis, arguing that racism, not abortion, was the primary catalyst in forming the Religious Right. Unfortunately, substantiating such a bold claim demands far more evidence and historiographic engagement than its author, Dartmouth College professor Randall Balmer, provides in this slim volume. Absent such evidence and engagement, readers are instead too often made to settle for anecdotal recollections and unsupported assertions in Balmer’s attempt to demonstrate that “the real roots of the Religious Right lay not in the defense of a fetus but in the defense of racial segregation” (65). To be sure, Balmer’s memories and claims are crisp and engaging—the hallmark of many of the esteemed scholar’s prolific writings. But, in the end, all of Balmer’s literary prowess cannot rescue *Bad Faith* from the book’s problematic framing and reductionist conclusions.