

American Studies

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Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America by Doug
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American Studies International, Vol. 40, No. 3 (OCTOBER 2002), pp. 61-76

Published by: [Mid-America American Studies Association](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41279926>

Accessed: 25/06/2013 13:59

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Review Essays

Religion and the Therapeutic Ethos in Twentieth-Century American History

Christopher P. Loss

James L. Nolan, Jr., *The Therapeutic State: Justifying Government at Century's End* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), xiv + 395 pp., illus., \$19.00 (paper).

Eva S. Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust: America's Obsession with Self-Fulfillment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), x + 340 pp., \$34.95 (cloth).

Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), x + 500 pp., \$34.50 (cloth), \$18.50 (paper).

As the recent uproar over the Ninth Circuit Court's soon-to-be-overturned decision proclaiming the "under God" clause of the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional demonstrated, Americans care

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American Studies International, October 2002, Vol. XL, No. 3

deeply about religion. Predictably, political pundits were quick to recall that the “under God” phrase was not inserted into the Pledge until 1954, and only then because of McCarthy era communist hysteria. Even so, public opinion has remained in favor of leaving the Pledge—and God—well enough alone.¹ This is hardly surprising: In 1998, 40 percent of the U.S. population reported attending church weekly; 70 percent, meanwhile, reported membership in a religious organization; and still higher percentages of Americans say they believe in God.²

Scholars studying the rise of America’s therapeutic ethos during the twentieth century, however, have had little to say about the concomitant growth of America’s religious culture in that same time. Certainly, some of this neglect is attributable to the secular bias of the academy, to what Garry Wills has described as the chief superstition of the learned class, “a belief that superstition is evaporating.”³ But the more important reason why the therapeutic literature has failed to fit American religion into its frame has to do with the origins of the historiography. In his groundbreaking explication of the “emergence” and “triumph” of “psychological man” and “therapeutic culture,” sociologist Philip Rieff posited that psychological man marked the latest “character type” to dominate Western civilization. Three character types had ruled before: political man, from classical antiquity; religious man, from the Middle Ages; and economic man, the short-lived “transitional type” from the Enlightenment. But it was psychological man—like his father, economic man, “nervous ... anti-heroic, shrewd, carefully counting his satisfactions and dissatisfactions, studying unprofitable commitments as the sins most to be avoided”—who marked, in Rieff’s view, a decisive and irreparable split in the history of Western culture.⁴ Bereft of all obligations beyond the conquest and mastery of his inner life, psychological man and the therapeutic literature he introduced emerged on the scene without any consideration for religious beliefs at all.⁵

The work of Rieff’s closest intellectual inheritors, Christopher Lasch and Jackson Lears, reified his understanding of the therapeutic as a replacement for an earlier religious culture shaped by strenuous moral and ethical demands. Specifically, Lasch and Lears explored the close relationship between therapeutic culture and the culture of consumption (only alluded to by Rieff) and explained how

the narcissistic pursuit of intense experience and feeling good, in Lears' words, provided "the psychological foundation for a streamlined liberal culture appropriate to twentieth-century consumer capitalism."⁶ That is, in depicting the therapeutic as a false consciousness, Lasch and Lears rooted the rise of the therapeutic to the victory of consumer capitalism and to the emergence of psychological expertise around the turn of the twentieth century. Based on this dominant view, the forces of modernity—secularization, immigration, urbanization, industrialization, and professionalization—transformed America's nineteenth-century Protestant culture of salvation through self-denial into a twentieth-century therapeutic culture of psychic self-fulfillment. By this account, the therapeutic replaced America's older, better civically minded religious order.

While questioning little of this received interpretation, subsequent scholars from a diverse array of disciplinary backgrounds have since contributed much to our understanding of the therapeutic by focusing on the widening jurisdiction of discrete therapeutic communities across the twentieth century. Important works keenly attuned to race, class, and gender have linked the therapeutic and the growth of psychological expertise to changes (typically for the worse) in the family, the school, the military, and the law.⁷ These works build upon Rieff, Lasch, and Lears and construe the therapeutic as coercive—as a "knowledge-power" geared toward social control rather than personal emancipation. Historian Daryl Scott speaks for many of these scholars when he states that helping professionals and other "experts who study social groups ... should place the inner lives of people off limits."⁸

Yet for all the scholarly advancement brought to bear by these sophisticated analyses, the commingling of America's religious and therapeutic cultures—except for a few excellent, if less well-known works—has remained largely unexplored.⁹ The three books under review here change that. While none of these works deal expressly with religion and the therapeutic, a deep appreciation for America's strong religious culture is one of the distinguishing features of all three books. In addition to offering important new perspectives on the therapeutic, these books also occasion an opportunity to reflect at greater length upon the past and future uses of religious culture in the ongoing historical study of America's fixation upon the self.

Eva S. Moskowitz's *In Therapy We Trust: America's Obsession with Self Fulfillment* is the first synthesis of the history of the emergence and spread of America's therapeutic culture—and it is a good one. Though Moskowitz's book makes few new discoveries, the new discoveries that she does make should change the way scholars think about the therapeutic. Moskowitz makes her most important contribution in chapter one, where she offers an alternative account of the origins of America's "therapeutic gospel." Respecting the existing scholarly interpretation, Moskowitz acknowledges that the therapeutic was in many ways a response to the challenges of modernity. In a departure from previous scholars, however, Moskowitz reveals that America's budding therapeutic culture was fueled by a slight reconfiguration of—and not simply a departure from—America's deeply held Protestant religious tradition.

The religious underpinnings of America's therapeutic culture lay in the mostly forgotten history of the New England-based "New Thought" self-help movement in the late nineteenth century. Inspired by the radical ideas of the "spiritual scientist," Phineas P. Quimby, New Thinkers challenged the Protestant notion that self-fulfillment and the pursuit of personal pleasure in this lifetime was sacrilegious. New Thinkers did this by articulating a new, optimistic vision of God and by connecting depression and feeling bad to an individual's "ignorance of God."¹⁰ In a departure from the conventional view of God as vengeful and unforgiving, New Thinkers instead imagined a God who was infinitely beneficent and friendly, whose primary function was to aid humans in their effort to attain total happiness and satisfaction in this world. As Moskowitz explains, New Thinkers contended that to feel good was to know God and to be blessed by His graces. By remaking God into a "personal problem solver," then, New Thought helped to reconcile Americans' interest in achieving self-realization without compromising their belief in a higher spiritual power.

How many Americans actually came in contact with the New Thought movement, Moskowitz does not say. But Moskowitz's assertion that "New Thought's effort to call attention to the problem of unhappiness was unprecedented" is borne out by her evidence.¹¹ By the 1890s, the New Thought movement boasted a national organization, the National New Thought Alliance, which maintained local

offices around the country staffed by instructors trained, according to one of the organization's publications, "to assist the individual in the solution of personal problems."¹² While instructors canvassed the land looking for new converts, the more important vehicle of New Thought information dissemination was through books—several of which sold over one million copies—and magazines—many with weekly subscriptions exceeding 100,000. Here and in subsequent chapters, Moskowitz makes the important point that the portability of therapeutic language and practices via the written word (and, later, television) has been most responsible for its rapid spread. Based on Moskowitz's research findings it is difficult to quibble with her provocative claim that prior to either the rise of the psychological disciplines or Sigmund Freud's 1909 Clark University Lectures, "Americans charted their own therapeutic course."¹³

Because the gradual spread and deification of therapeutic culture is the point of *In Therapy We Trust*, Moskowitz does not explore the interconnection between religion and therapy—between salvation and self-realization—beyond the first chapter. Making good use of popular and secondary as well as archival sources, the remainder of Moskowitz's book reviews the emergence of "therapeutic agents" (i.e., psychologists, psychiatrists, and professional counselors) in the early twentieth century, their important role in shaping military and federal mental health policy during World War Two, and their part in the mass diffusion of increasingly vapid therapeutic prescriptions to the wider public in the postwar period, up to and including the present day.

For a synthetic work, Moskowitz's account provides numerous subtle readjustments to the existing literature. In chapters two and three, for example, Moskowitz highlights the divide between the "theory and practice" of therapeutic expertise in the areas of poverty prevention and marriage counseling before World War Two. As Moskowitz explains, due to financial constraints, therapeutic practices were rarely implemented as thoroughly as therapeutic agents would have liked, if they were implemented at all. In schools, mental hospitals and prisons, for instance, the therapeutic regime of power rarely displaced older, punitive forms of patient treatment and care. And in the few instances where the therapeutic took root, such as with the growth of marriage clinics during the 1930s, it did

so at a glacial pace. Before World War II fewer institutions and individuals than usually thought were receptive to therapeutic modes of understanding.

Moskowitz's study of the slow ascent of America's therapeutic culture is noteworthy because it serves to magnify the impact that World War II had on the institutionalization of the therapeutic. Although Ellen Herman makes some of the same points in her book *The Romance of American Psychology*, Moskowitz's chapter four moves well beyond Herman's emphasis on the role of the military's psychological experts by exploring in greater depth the changing culture of military service during the war. In addition to discussing the role of therapy in the treatment of "shell-shocked" soldiers, as Herman does, Moskowitz's analysis also includes an overview of the Army's induction exams, the Army Orientation course, and the Army's Information and Education Branch programming, all of which were created to boost soldier morale in the face of total war. Moskowitz's examination of the lecture contents of the Army's mini-course on personal adjustment, which included a capstone lecture for new recruits optimistically entitled "Healthy Viewpoint Toward Being in the Service," confirms her view that the military employed therapeutic practices outside clinical settings: "The U.S. military made the therapeutic gospel an important element of its strategy, ensuring that millions of Americans, many for the first time, were exposed to its tenets."¹⁴

The heightened reliance of the United States military on the therapeutic translated into a new agenda for the federal government during the Cold War. Citing the 1944 Servicemen's Readjustment Act, which provided veterans with counseling and generous material benefits, and the 1946 National Mental Health Act, which led to the creation of the National Institutes for Mental Health five years later, Moskowitz reveals in chapter five how the federal government "for the first time took responsibility for promoting Americans' mental health."¹⁵ This is Moskowitz's best evidence charting the growing importance of the therapeutic in American life. For it clearly reveals how federal therapeutic policies and programs helped establish an institutional network from which the therapeutic could spread.

In Chapter 6, Moskowitz shifts the direction of her book away from federal therapeutic policies and policymaking toward what

she characterizes as white student and African-American activists' therapeutic protests against the federal government in the 1960s. Here she provides lively sketches of the Black Panther Party, the Counterculture, and the Feminist Movement from a therapeutic frame. On the one hand, I agree with Moskowitz that a desire to "personalize politics" was certainly an important goal of 1960s radicals. On the other, her claim that student activists "fought against racism, militarism, and sexism in the name of human personality" is an undeveloped, if accurate, account of their complex motivations.¹⁶ Emotionally, I can accept her portrayal of the 1960s social protest movements as manifestations of activists' desire for self-realization; but I cannot rationally accept this as the activists' singular motive in a work that purports to be heuristic in orientation.

Chapters 7 and 8 shift the trajectory of *In Therapy We Trust* yet again. These chapters deal strictly with the "popular" manifestations of the therapeutic gospel and mark the logical, if somewhat muddled, conclusion to her study of the spread of America's therapeutic culture. Moskowitz focuses almost entirely on the growth of self-help therapies, encounter groups, twelve-step programs, and confessional-style television shows. Often relying on readers' knowledge of these therapeutic regimes, Moskowitz simply lists one example after another without attempting to explain their importance. Although it is not too difficult to make the connection between Arthur Janov's "primal scream therapy" of the 1970s and *The Jerry Springer Show* of the 1990s, a greater sense of why they matter, what they mean, and how these popular expressions of the therapeutic connect to her earlier discussion of therapeutic policymaking and federal therapeutic programming for soldiers and citizens would have been appreciated. Did the federal government's therapeutic policymaking of the middle-twentieth century contribute to the success of Esalen Institute's pay-per-feel encounter group programming, to the emergence of the "Feel Wheel" board game, or to the birth of dramatic-confrontation television, like Phil Donahue and Oprah Winfrey? Or, alternatively, have the popular and national political expressions of the therapeutic existed in tension all along, one feeding off of the other? This is an important question that Moskowitz's otherwise fine synthetic work is never quite able to answer.

Sociologist James Nolan's *The Therapeutic State: Justifying Government at Century's End* offers a rejoinder to Moskowitz's unanswered question. Unlike Moskowitz, whose understanding of the interplay between therapeutic culture and policymaking is unclear, Nolan argues that America's therapeutic culture has recently moved from the cultural realm of "symbols and codes" to penetrate the institutions of the modern American state.¹⁷ By delineating sharply between the culture of the therapeutic and therapeutic policymaking, Nolan's probing work provides an important new methodological frame with which to study the therapeutic.

Sticking close to his sociological training, Nolan understands the rise of therapeutic culture in functionalist terms, as an "antidote to the difficulty of life in a highly mechanistic world."¹⁸ Following the established therapeutic historiography, Nolan accepts that the forces of modernity stimulated a movement away from a nineteenth-century code of moral understanding based upon self-denial and deference to authorities existing outside of the self, to a self-referential, liberated understanding of the self in the twentieth century.

Nolan's primary interest, however, is not in the emergence of America's therapeutic culture. Rather, he is interested in understanding how that culture has served as a response to the modern American state's "problem of state legitimation."¹⁹ Building upon David Beetham's reworking of Max Weber's conceptualization of the "legal rational grounds" of state legitimation, Nolan argues that the therapeutic has moved from a mere cultural mode of self-understanding to become the primary justification for modern state action, especially the action of state institutions suffering from a lack of public trust. This has occurred, Nolan contends, because as the American state has assumed ever-greater responsibility for the emotional and material welfare of its citizens, it has paradoxically spurred public disenchantment, thus planting the seed for its own deligitimation. Although Nolan does not quite frame his research question in this way, what he really wants to know is whether an expansive federal state can maintain its legitimacy based on therapeutic practices and policies in a liberal democratic political culture traditionally considered anti-statist.

To answer this question, Nolan turns to five case studies on civil case law, criminal justice, public education, welfare policy, and po-

litical rhetoric. All five cases studies support his claim that the therapeutic ethos has penetrated the machinations of state institutions suffering from public disillusionment. But it is Nolan's examination of the legal and education institutional manifestations of the therapeutic that support his contention best. In chapter three, the therapeutic is a solid explanation for the increase in emotional distress tort cases in the last twenty years. The transformation within the legal system from a "parasitic tort" to an "independent tort" standard illustrates the extent to which the courts are willing to entertain and reward emotional, and not simply physical, damage claims.²⁰ How else can we explain a court ruling granting financial remuneration for the emotional pain caused by being locked in an elevator, or the negligent handling of a deceased dog's funeral service? Nolan's examination of Dade County, Florida "Drug Courts" in Chapter 4 is equally persuasive. His discussion of Florida's mandatory drug counseling provision for drug offenders, since duplicated in other states, is revealing evidence of the new emphasis on drug treatment and recovery. Indeed, statistics show that the percentages of inmates enrolled in some type of therapy or counseling program has more than doubled in the last two decades.²¹ The elision of the United States' sanctioning of the death penalty notwithstanding, these examples support Nolan's assertion that therapeutic practices are being deployed by the state, in particular, by those state institutions suffering the greatest legitimacy crises.

Public education is another example of an institution suffering from a recent attack of illegitimacy; and once again Nolan finds good evidence of a therapeutic counterattack. Though Nolan's historical recap of the rise of public education is in places inaccurate (he overstates the degree of federal involvement in public education), his point that public education has in the last decade become thoroughly saturated in therapeutic language and practices is certainly accurate. In a movement away from the values-clarification education of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, state systems of public education in California, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Florida, for example, instruct students in "life coping" and "self-esteem" skills. A recent statute in Wisconsin, meanwhile, directed schools to institute courses on "stress reduction, self-improvement and self-esteem."²² In another boldface example of the ongoing psychologization of the

school, supporters of the self-esteem movement, Nolan reports, have been lobbying Congress to pass national self-esteem legislation for sometime.

While Nolan's case studies are of institutions perhaps predisposed to therapeutic justifications, he presents a fresh interpretation of the therapeutic as a possible source of legitimation by state institutions in crisis. This alone represents a significant scholarly contribution. But Nolan also provides evidence as to why these therapeutic policies have penetrated the nation's legal system and schools, even as he suggests that there exists little evidence that these regimens actually work. First, the therapeutic ethos is difficult to challenge, for it is intimately intertwined with American capitalist values. Therapeutic legislation, Nolan points out, is routinely justified on utilitarian grounds: Counseling, for instance, costs less than incarceration. In a much-needed modification of the false consciousness argument, Nolan underscores the simple actuarial grounds upon which therapeutic interventions are justified. Second, the language of the therapeutic is incredibly malleable, and can be used to justify liberal as well as conservative political positions. Politicians who profess to be "tough on crime," or opposed to self-esteem education, for example, still employ therapeutic language to make their points. In a rebuttal to conservatives who might choose to locate the birth of therapeutic policymaking with, say, Franklin Roosevelt or Lyndon Johnson, Nolan convincingly demonstrates in these case studies that the employment of therapeutic discourse is non-partisan. Although Nolan steadfastly opposes the therapeutic state, he agrees that market responsiveness, coupled with the discursive power of the therapeutic, makes it unlikely that it will be dismantled anytime soon. This worries Nolan. He concludes: "A therapeutic basis of legitimation provides the state with the tools to continue [its] advance still further into the personal lives of citizens."²³

This is hardly a novel observation; Christopher Lasch, among others, has made it before. What is interesting, however, is that Nolan does not leave himself any room to conclude otherwise. Nolan's decision to situate his work firmly and unconditionally within the established boundaries of the therapeutic historiography leads him directly to this point. First, he accepts the view that the therapeutic displaced older, civically oriented, religiously based codes of moral

understanding. He rejects outright the possibility that therapeutic culture could exist alongside, and perhaps even work in concert with, other self-deferential codes of moral understanding. Second, Nolan views the therapeutic as altogether coercive—as a code of moral understanding that places the individual (oftentimes unwittingly) at the mercy of the encroaching forces of the state. As a result, he refuses to entertain the possibility that therapeutic practices might actually benefit some individuals; or that the therapeutic might provide a basis for the creation of real communal solidarity.

Had Nolan chosen instead to leave the therapeutic historiography behind, he could have legitimately (and fruitfully, I think) pursued a research agenda that sought to account for the continued persistence and importance of religiously based “external systems of moral understanding.”²⁴ Because he does not do this, his concluding plea for a return to a theocratic state based on self deference toward external authority—which he readily concedes is “implausible”—sounds at best mawkish.²⁵ Yet, there is no reason why this should be so. Regardless of one’s personal view of religion as a basis of individual, group, or state action, no evidence exists that religion has disappeared, or that state agents’ beliefs are not shaped by their religious views. Scholars of the therapeutic, therefore, must stop acting as though religion does not matter when it clearly does. The central question here is: What is to be gained by comparing the therapeutic ethos with other competing or complementary codes of moral understanding?

Doug Rossinow’s impressive first book, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America*, suggests that there is quite a bit to be gained by such a comparative approach. Claiming to have written the first “bottom-up” history of the new left, Rossinow’s story carefully examines the birth and growth of student radicalism at the University of Texas at Austin during the 1950s and 1960s. For the purposes of this essay, however, what is most intriguing about Rossinow’s work is the way in which he bounds the therapeutic ethos in time and place at the same time that he grounds Texas students’ “search for authenticity” within the larger currents of America’s Protestant evangelical Christian and liberal democratic cultures.

For Rossinow, the motive behind the emergence of the student activist spirit of the 1960s was "alienation." Defined broadly as the feeling of "weightlessness" associated with the stifling conformity of 1950s America, Rossinow argues that students' desire to replace their alienation with the "really-real" feeling of living a meaningful existence prompted them to ask new questions of themselves and of American society. Students in different parts of the country, however, charted different paths toward comprehending and overcoming their alienation. Student activists in northern and western urban centers, such as New York and San Francisco, the typical sites for histories of the new left, sought meaning and motivation primarily in the ideas of Karl Marx and America's "Old Left." But in the conservative, segregated, deeply religious climate of Austin, Texas, Rossinow shows that students there were inspired more by their Protestant Christian upbringings, the reform tradition of the Social Gospel, and the ideas of the Christian existentialist movement. By tying the Texas New Left's radicalism to Christianity rather than left-wing politics, Rossinow proposes that Southern students' radicalism was firmly entrenched within, rather than apart from, America's Christian and liberal democratic political traditions.

Part One of Rossinow's book deals explicitly with the Christian student movement's introduction to the basic ideas of Christian existentialism during the late-1950s. Using interviews, the *Daily Texan* student newspaper, institutional documents from the University of Texas as well as student organizations, Rossinow traces the origins of Texas student radicalism to the University's various Christian student organizations. In particular, knowledge about and reflection upon theological existentialism emanated from three Christian student groups at the University: the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and the Christian Faith-and-Life Community (CFLC). These three organizations constituted the hub of the Texas Christian existentialist movement, and the several hundred students who regularly attended meetings at the Y and CFLC were exposed to the ideas of the German theological existentialists Paul Tillich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Rudolph Bultmann, not to mention those of the "secular" existentialist Albert Camus. Rossinow delves into considerable detail to explain the differences between these existentialists' ideas. But the

central idea that the Christian existentialists' shared, and that most energized Texas's Christian students, was their conceptualization of sin as alienation from God and salvation as personal "wholeness" achieved through a reunion with God manifest in a "Beloved Community."

Y publications available in Austin and elsewhere stressed these very ideas. In one of many illustrative examples provided by Rossinow, he discusses the proceedings of the 1958 National Student Assembly of the Y (NSAY) conference at the University of Illinois, whose official meeting theme was "The Search for Authentic Experience."²⁶ At meetings like this, as well as through informal discussions at the University Y and CFLC, Texas students came to believe that to know God through involvement in a group beyond the self was one way to "breakthrough" to authentic experience. Other scholars, Moskowitz among them, have suggested that the new left's activism was fueled by a deep-seated desire for vital experience; but few scholars have looked to religion as the chief motivating factor, and fewer still have supported this claim in such a convincing way.²⁷

The crystallization of the Texas students' exploration of Christian existentialism first occurred locally. As Rossinow explains, the Y and the CFLC were biracial organizations that worked diligently to overcome the racial tensions within the University community. Having sowed the seeds of radicalization at the University proper, members of the University Y and CFLC were among the first to join forces with the interracial student wing of the civil rights struggle that emerged after the founding of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1960. Involvement with SNCC and other civil rights organizations marked the culmination of Texas students' search for authenticity. In Rossinow's words: "[The students] concluded that personal authenticity was possible only if they could break through the barriers separating black from white."²⁸ For Texas radicals the civil rights struggle was the moral challenge of the middle strata of the twentieth century, and the students who dedicated themselves to the cause discovered a deeply personal and authentic sense of self in it.

Rossinow makes several important contributions to the therapeutic literature in Part One. First, his case study bounds the thera-

peutic pursuit of self-realization in time and place. Rather than a free-floating zeitgeist, the therapeutic is evinced through the use of traditional historical sources and by recounting the ideas and actions of a discrete population in a specific locale. Second, he links the therapeutic ethos to other competing codes of moral understanding. In showing the religious foundation of the pursuit of individual authenticity, Rossinow suggests that the therapeutic has not been the sole basis, much less the dominant basis, of self-understanding in all parts of America in the twentieth-century. For Rossinow, religious belief matters. Finally, Rossinow demonstrates that the search for authenticity is neither incompatible with moral reflection nor political activism. In short, Rossinow's book challenges those scholars of the therapeutic who consider the pursuit of self-realization as unsuited for commitments beyond the self.

Part Two of *The Politics of Authenticity* follows the journey of many of the same activists introduced in Part One. Again, and in meticulous detail, Rossinow traces the movement of Texas student radicals—such as Casey Hayden, wife of Tom Hayden—away from the University of Texas Student Y to the other wings of the growing new left movement. Chapter topics include the rise of the new left, the new left and the Vietnam War, the rise of the counterculture, and the formation of the feminist movement. What Rossinow provides is a learned chronicle of the major events of the new left as told through the lives of the Texas students who experienced them.

Unfortunately, what Nolan is unable to maintain in the second half of his book is the connection among religious ideas, student activism, and the search for authenticity that he develops so well in the first part. As Rossinow himself admits, the Christian existentialist motivations of his Texas radicals, so evident at the Y and in the early civil rights struggle, became increasingly diffuse within the nexus of purely existentialist motivations that fed the various branches of the larger, if increasingly fragmented, new left movements of the late 1960s. But this hardly matters. Well before Rossinow reaches the end of Part Two, he has proved his primary point: Christian and secular existentialism helped Texas student radicals, and the larger new left movement, overcome their "anxiety" to achieve "authenticity."

The books reviewed in this essay represent the latest additions to the growing body of scholarship dealing with the history of the therapeutic ethos in twentieth-century America. In addition to discussing the individual scholarly contributions of each book, I have also attempted to use these works in order to explore what I see as the literature's greatest weakness: Its steadfast commitment to the simply untenable notion that the rise of therapeutic culture signaled the death-knell of older, self-deferential codes of moral understanding, especially that of America's strong religious culture. As we have seen, the authors reviewed here have responded in different ways to this historiographical dilemma. Moskowitz and Rossinow have demonstrated the interplay between religious beliefs and the therapeutic on the one hand, while Nolan has viewed a return to religion as a possible way to overcome what he sees as the anti-communal, coercive tendencies of the therapeutic on the other. Whatever one's assessment of these interpretations and prescriptions, it seems likely that future scholars of the therapeutic will have to take seriously the relationship between religion and the therapeutic. After all, the therapeutic pursuit of self-realization is not the only faith that Americans follow.

¹ According to a *Newsweek* poll, 87 percent of respondents favored including "under God" in the pledge. For more details, see Howard Fineman, "War at Home: 'One Nation,' the Courts and the Pols," *Newsweek* (July 8, 2002): 20-25.

² Theodore Caplow, Louis Hicks, Ben J. Wattenberg, *The First Measured Century: An Illustrated Guide to Trends in America, 1900-2000* (Washington, DC: AEI Press, 2001), 106-107, 115; Garry Wills, *Under God: Religion and American Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 16.

³ *Ibid.*, 15. Extended discussions of the academy's secularism are available in George Marsden, *The Soul of the American University* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Warren A. Nord, *Religion & American Education: Rethinking a National Dilemma* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

⁴ Philip Rieff, *Freud: The Mind of the Moralizer*, 3rd Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959/1979), 356.

⁵ *Ibid.*, especially Chapter 10, "The Emergence of Psychological Man," 329-357; Philip Rieff, *Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith After Freud* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966).

⁶ Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 6; Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of the Consumer Culture, 1880-1930," in Jackson Lears and Richard Wightman Fox, eds., *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983); Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978).

⁷ Robert Neelly Bellah, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Sol Cohen, *Challenging Orthodoxies: Toward A New Cultural History of Education* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999); Ellen Herman, *The Romance of*

American Psychology (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Andrew Polsky, *The Rise of the Therapeutic State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Daryl Scott, *Contempt and Pity: Social Policy and the Image of the Damaged Black Psyche, 1880-1996* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). For an additional collection of essays on the therapeutic culture, see "Therapeutic Culture Wars," *Society* 39, No. 3 (March/April, 2002).

⁸ Scott, xix.

⁹ E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self Realization* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1983); Eugene McCarraher, "Heal Me: 'Personality,' Religion, and the Therapeutic Ethic in Modern America," *Intellectual History Newsletter* 21 (1999): 31-40; Paul C. Vitz, *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Paternoster Press, 1994); Heather A. Warren, "The Shift from Character to Personality in Mainline Protestant Thought, 1935-1945," *Church History* 67, no. 3 (1998): 537-555; Heather A. Warren, "Will It Preach?: Turning Inward in Mainline Protestantism, 1954-1964" (University of Virginia: Paper Presented to the Twentieth Century History Workshop, 2001.)

¹⁰ Moskowitz, 23.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹² *Ibid.*, 18.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 156.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 217.

¹⁷ Nolan, 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 65.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 115.

²² *Ibid.*, 158.

²³ *Ibid.*, 292.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 303.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 306.

²⁶ Rossinow, 93.

²⁷ For another book that places religion at the heart of student activism, see James Farrell, *The Spirit of the Sixties: Making Postwar Radicalism* (New York: Routledge Press, 1997).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.