

PRISM



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Empowering the faith-based community

Joshua Dubois
talks to PRISM
at the White
House

Running the good race

How one man incarnates Christ among
Mexico's Tarahumara Indians

Tolerate your neighbor as yourself?

Taking love up
a notch, both
inside and
outside the
church

anti-slavery speeches by ambassadors, the same slides in the same education and awareness trainings, even the same stories in hundreds of new books on human trafficking give those of us who have been in the fight for what seems like forever a sense of bone-weary doggedness as we design yet another program, another project, another intervention.

It was with this skepticism that I came to Daniel Walker's book, *God in a Brothel: An Undercover Journey into Sex Trafficking and Rescue*. I expected yet another set of victim stories recounted for no real purpose. What I found instead was an astonishingly detailed account of the protected places and spaces where one set of human beings recruits, transports, harbors, buys, and sells another set; where young women and children are commodified and used—by the traffickers and pimps, by the customers, by the community in collusion—all for profit of one kind or another by the users.

Walker's stories of rescue are inspiring and courageous, and in this book the reader travels with him on missions to Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States as he infiltrates trafficking rings, enters underground criminal conspiracies, and rescues hundreds of females, saving the lives of those trapped in slavery. I found his detailed descriptions—for example, of corruption in communities, word of a raid spreading “faster than fire,” alerting those at work in the black market of bodies to scatter before law enforcement arrived—to be true to life.

Even more courageous, though, is Walker's willingness to examine his own motivations, to describe to us his temptations and his hubris, and to show us the personal toll this work took on him and on his (now ex-) wife, family, friends, and community. Quoting Nietzsche, who says, “He who fights with monsters should see to it that he himself does not become a monster,” Walker summons us when doing this work to remain vigilant at every moment to a centeredness of the soul. With all the ego and empire-building in the current anti-trafficking movement, and in an epic battle against principalities and powers, it is perhaps the hardest thing to do and perhaps the most important of all.

Laura J. Lederer was Senior Advisor on Trafficking in Persons in the Office for Global Affairs for the US Department of State from 2001 to 2009. Today she is president of Global Centurion Foundation (GlobalCenturion.org), an international organization that fights human trafficking by focusing on demand.



Haiti After the Earthquake

by Paul Farmer
PublicAffairs

Reviewed by Tim Høiland

Few would argue with the fact that what followed Haiti's devastating earthquake in January 2010 was one of the most widespread showings of sympathy and humanitarian support in recent memory. What is up for debate, however, is why rebuilding efforts haven't made more progress as we near the quake's two-year anniversary.

In *Haiti After the Earthquake*, anthropologist and medical doctor Paul Farmer affirms that this outpouring of compassion indeed saved countless lives, but he also addresses the deeper problem of what he calls the “history of the present illness”—a history marked by the scars of slavery, foreign occupation, dictatorship, and a slew of disasters both natural and otherwise. Complementing Farmer's writing is a collection of essays by several others—many of them Haitian—which allows for an illuminating range of perspectives.

Farmer, who cofounded the medical organization Partners in Health, writes as one who has lived and worked in Haiti for nearly three decades. His main argument is that Haiti's woes are directly tied to its crippled public sector and that a strengthening of that sector is precisely where Haiti's hopes for a brighter future lie.

The scope of the disaster, Farmer writes, put Haiti and the entire humanitarian community in “uncharted territory,” making it “hard to know how to prioritize anxieties.” He writes, therefore, with measured humility, though he is critical of the so-called “experts” who descended upon Haiti with what proved to be unfounded confidence in their solutions. Further, he argues, Haiti has long been a “republic of NGOs,” with foreign entities filling a leadership vacuum that has done little to strengthen the country's already weak public sector.

Farmer recognizes that it is far easier to identify a problem than to offer a solution, so he devotes an entire chapter to the nation of Rwanda, where Partners in Health also works and where he and his family now live. Not long ago, following the genocide of 1994, Rwanda was considered more or less a lost cause, not unlike Haiti today. It has since been transformed, however, and while foreign agencies and governments have played important roles, it has been the work of Rwandans themselves—led by an ambitious and disciplined government especially committed to massive job creation—that has truly helped Rwanda rise from the ashes.

Because Farmer is a special envoy to the UN, his voice is routinely heard in high places. But here, as elsewhere, he seeks to “echo and amplify” the voices of those who were lost on that fateful day as well as the voices of those who remain. Through a project called “Voices for the Voiceless,” Farmer has worked to represent the perspectives of ordinary Haitians and then to share them with donor governments and agencies in hopes that decisions made at high levels will truly align with the interests of real people on the ground.

Some humanitarian workers and generous citizens may bristle at

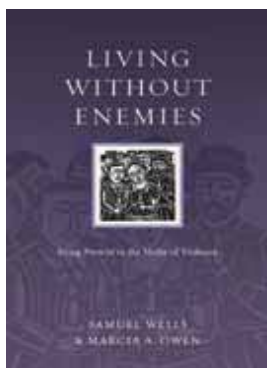


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the idea that NGOs have done long-term harm even while doing immediate good, but we should resist the urge to react with either pride or despair. As one working in the field of relief and development, I believe this book provides an important opportunity to acknowledge the mistakes of the past and to change course, when necessary, to ensure that Haitians truly have the opportunity to build back better.

Tim Høiland is an advocacy journalist, international development worker, and a regular contributor to PRISM. He blogs about the intersections of faith, development, justice, and peace in the Americas at TJHøiland.com.



Living Without Enemies

by Samuel Wells and Marcia A. Owen
InterVarsity Press

Reviewed by Michele Braley

As an advisory board member of a ministry for parents who have lost a child to murder or whose child is imprisoned for murder, I looked forward to learning from the experiences of Samuel Wells, professor of Christian ethics at Duke University,

and Marcia A. Owen, executive director of the Coalition for a Nonviolent Durham, in their book *Living Without Enemies: Being Present in the Midst of Violence*.

The authors provide a thought-provoking framework for examining how we engage with others: working for, working with, being with, and being for. *Working for* is the often automatic, and often ineffective, response to a problem. One person has a need, while the other person has the skills, availability, and willingness to help. These skills are honed and then made available only in specific circumstances. As a social worker, I saw myself in the authors' critical observation that most college-educated people "assume that this is the way it is done: You become very good at what you do, and you spend the rest of your life doing it for people."

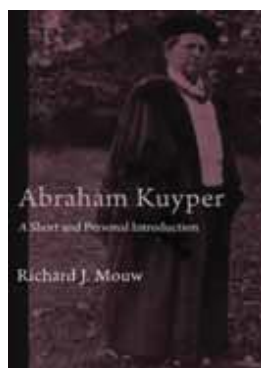
Much of the book is devoted to *being with*, which is more evolved than *working with* or *working for* and "breaks down the separation that assumes we can know the answer without needing to enter into the suffering person's experience." It was the discovery of the power of *being with* that led Owen to the creation of a vigil to honor each person murdered in Durham. *Being with* is not easy, since it requires one to be present without answers and despite fear of the unknown. The authors compel us to be present in spite of the difficulty.

This book is intended to challenge assumptions and make the reader uncomfortable. My discomfort while reading about *working for* will stay with me and push me to continue to rethink how I engage my community. There were other times when my gut-level discomfort left me wondering if it was one of the author's actions that was actually amiss. In an illustration of touch as a component of *being with*, Owen describes her visits with a prisoner named John, who reached out to her when he had no one to visit him. John wanted a hug during their visits, since prison gave him few opportunities for physical touch. Owen wonders if she should continue the visits and tells her husband,

"There's so much potential for real and apparent misunderstanding here." Owen tells the reader that she continues to visit John, but she does not reveal whether she considered alternatives such as introducing others to him for visits.

Through Owen's honesty about her sometimes painful path from *working for* to *being with*, we are invited on a journey of self-reflection about our own engagement with those we view as "the other." While the description of *being with* affirmed my own experiences, I was left wondering whether we are doing enough. After years of vigils in Durham, the organizers continue to be mostly Caucasian, while those who have been murdered are mostly African American and Hispanic. How do we assure that *being with* does not become a fancy term for *being "accepting of"* the status quo?

Michele Braley is a trained facilitator of Victim-Offender Dialogue in Crimes of Severe Violence and is the program manager for a restorative justice program that offers low-level juvenile offenders an opportunity to repair the harm caused by their behavior through a community process instead of court.



Abraham Kuyper

by Richard J. Mouw
Eerdmans

Reviewed by Stephanie Summers

As a college student I was transformed by encountering the "Reformational worldview" inspired by Abraham Kuyper, a worldview that animates the campus ministry of the Coalition for Christian Outreach. At their annual Jubilee Confer-

ence, I became acquainted with the political implications of Kuyper's thought through Jim Skillen, then president of the Center for Public Justice. But it was Byron Berger of Hearts and Minds Books who introduced me to the engaging style of Fuller Theological Seminary President Richard Mouw, through the gift of a book as we packed up after the conference. Like Kuyper's own books, Mouw's *Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal Introduction* is a book designed to be shared among friends.

The book was written as an introduction for the Kuyper-curious, and the title describes the brevity of style but not the depth of encounter with the 19th-century Dutch leader. Mouw asks his reader to consider Kuyper as "an important guide," helping address the ways "evangelicals have been a prominent presence in public life in recent years," acknowledging that "we have not been known for having a coherent theological-philosophical perspective on our efforts to influence the policies and practices of the larger society."

Making judicious selections, Mouw narrows his text to two slim sections. The first includes a Wikipedia-size version of Kuyper's life and a multiple-chapter overview of his "theology of culture," including Kuyper's thinking on the redemptive implications of the cultural mandate for all of life, "pluriformity," sphere sovereignty, political authority, the rights and duties of government, and the place of the