



Mixology and Theology

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Week Four: Manhattan and Modern American Theologies

Mixology: Manhattan

The Manhattan cocktail appeared sometime around 1870 in Manhattan, possibly at the Manhattan Club, but origin stories are disputed. Originally, the Manhattan was made with American rye whiskey. During prohibition most rye distilleries disappeared and Canadian whiskey and bourbon were then used. Rye has made a comeback in recent decades and is often used for Manhattans today. The popularity of vermouth in the mid 19th century led to rise of cocktails like the Manhattan, which is basically an Old Fashioned with sweet vermouth. The Manhattan is usually served in a coupe glass.

Manhattan

2 oz	rye whiskey (or bourbon)	1 oz	sweet vermouth
2 dashes	Angostura bitters	1/2 tsp	Luxardo cherry syrup (optional)

Luxardo cherry for garnish

Fill a coupe glass with ice to chill. Fill a cocktail shaker about 1/3 full with ice. Add rye, vermouth, bitters, and cherry syrup. Shake for 30 seconds, or stir. Discard ice from glass and strain cocktail into the glass. Add cherry for garnish.

Manhattan Mocktail

4 oz	Dr. Pepper	2 oz	club soda
2 dashes	Angostura bitters	1/2 tsp	Luxardo cherry syrup

Luxardo cherry for garnish

In a tall glass, add Dr. Pepper, club soda, bitters, and cherry syrup. Stir just to mix. Add ice and cherry for garnish.

Theology: Modern American Theologies

The 20th century brought vast changes in American theology through a wide variety of voices and issues. I will explore a few of the most influential ones. We should not forget the importance of the development of Black theology in the 20th century, which we discussed last week so I will omit it here.

Social Gospel

The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the rise of the Social Gospel movement, led by Walter Rauschenbusch. It focused on addressing social problems, largely urban, such as poverty, alcoholism, racial inequality, and labor laws. Rauschenbusch was a Baptist pastor in New York City. Rauschenbusch taught that the Christian Gospel is about spreading the kingdom of God through the lives of believers as they brought social change to help those who suffer. His work greatly influenced later 20th century church leaders, becoming a major part of the Christian progressive movement. The Social Gospel movement came to be criticized as holding too positive a view of human progress and moving away from a Christ-centered theology to a merely progressive political ideology.

Fundamentalist-Liberal Divide

During the mid to late 19th century, many changes occurred as modernism became an intellectual force. The rise of biblical criticism among scholars (the practice of examining the biblical text carefully within its historical context) and the questioning of the literal truth of some biblical stories, such as the seven-day creation story or the flood, led some to insist in biblical literalism and inerrancy. A series of publications from 1910—1915 called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth* led to the eventual name *Fundamentalists* for this group of conservatives. As these controversies grew, and other scientific discoveries such as evolution, challenged some traditional Christian viewpoints, the divide grew and is still present in Christianity today.

The liberals, or modernists, focused their theological work on making sense of Christianity within a scientific, rational framework. Liberal theology began to let the truth-claims of science overshadow religion's own truth-claims in an attempt to be seen as rational and acceptable in the academy. Like Rauschenbusch, many liberal theologians held an optimistic view of humanity and the potential for human progress and the ability to bring about the kingdom of God on earth.

Reinhold Niebuhr

Niebuhr was a Reformed theologian and professor at Union Theological Seminary from 1930 to 1960. Early in his career he was part of the liberal theological tradition, including a widespread embrace of pacifism. During the 1930's and beyond, because of the disillusionment toward ideas of human progress after the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles, along with the rise of Nazism, he rejected many of liberalism's claims and he became an early leader in the neo-orthodox movement of Protestantism. He believed in a Christian realism, which understood that sin is a real part of the world and idealism is not adequate to respond to it. He supported the Allies in World War II, and was a proponent in fighting the spread of Sovi-

et communism. He was described at the time at the most influential Protestant theologian of the 20th century by many. His most famous writings include *Moral Man and Immoral Society* and *The Nature and Destiny of Man*.

Paul Tillich

Tillich was a Lutheran theologian from Germany who came to the United States to escape the rise of Nazism in the 1930's. He taught at Harvard and at the University of Chicago. His work is rooted in philosophical existentialism. He sought to show a correlation between Christian theology and existential philosophy. He was highly influential on American systematic theology. His best known works include *The Courage to Be* and his two volume *Systematic Theology*.

Feminist Theology

Feminist theology, along with James Cone's Black theology, was at the forefront of the various liberation theologies that developed from the 1960's onward. Feminist theologians criticized the discipline of theology as being male dominated and for failing to speak to the issues of women's liberation from patriarchy. Issues of women's ordination, gendered language for God, the full humanity of women in God's creation, women's rights, and the need to dismantle the patriarchal structures of the church are central. As we discussed last week, the rise of Womanist theology was a critique of feminist theology's lack of addressing the unique struggles of Black women. Some key early feminist theologians include:

Mary Daly: Daly grew up Irish Catholic and earned multiple doctoral degrees in theology and philosophy, having been influenced early on by Tillich. She began by seeking a feminist reform within the church. She later rejected the notion that the church can be reformed and developed a post-Christian theological perspective. Her works include *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (1973), *Gyn/ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (1978).

Rosemary Radford Ruther: Ruther grew up Roman Catholic in St. Paul. After earning her PhD she taught for 10 years at Howard University where she was greatly influenced by the rise of Black liberation theology. She is well known for her books *Sexism and God-talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* and *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*, among many others.

Phyllis Trible is a highly regarded Old Testament scholar working from a feminist perspective. Trible's work challenges long-held assumptions about biblical interpretations and shows how a feminist reading of many texts is justifiable, while criticizing other texts for their inherent sexism. Her work *Texts of Terror* was an influential look at such texts:

In this book my task is to tell sad stories as I hear them. Indeed, they are tales of terror with women as victims. Belonging to the sacred scriptures of synagogue and church, these narratives yield four portraits of suffering in ancient Israel: Hagar, the slave used, abused, and rejected; Tamar, the princess raped and discarded; an unnamed woman, the concubine raped, murdered, and dismembered; and the daughter of Jephthah, a virgin slain and sacrificed.

There are, of course, too many feminist theologians and biblical scholars to name here, but I want to briefly mention: **Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza**, New Testament scholar and her book *In Memory of Her*, and Sallie McFague, theologian and her book *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age*.

Postliberal Theology: Stanley Hauerwas

I want to briefly mention Hauerwas, who has been highly influential in what is called postliberal theology. Critics of liberal theology point to its loss of a deep, theological rootedness and its accommodation to Western values over against teachings of Jesus. Hauerwas is considered among the most influential theologians alive today. He was from Dallas and went to Southwestern University in Georgetown. He taught for many years at Duke University. He was influenced by Niebuhr early on, but later criticized Niebuhr as being too much of the liberal theology program himself. Hauerwas came to promote pacifism, and though he is a Methodist, has been deeply influenced by John Howard Yoder and the Mennonite peace church tradition. Among his *Ten Theses for Reforming Christian Social Ethics*, the last one gives a good understanding of his approach to Christianity:

The church does not exist to provide an ethos for democracy or any other form of social organization, but stands as a political alternative to every nation, witnessing to the kind of social life possible for those that have been formed by the story of Christ.

In January 2017, Hauerwas wrote an op-ed for The Washington Post in which he argues that US President Donald Trump is an exemplar of American civil religion and distorted theology.

Postmodern Theology: Walter Brueggemann

A close associate of Hauerwas, Brueggemann is the hugely influential Old Testament theologian whose work has helped defined a postmodern approach to biblical interpretation and theology. His 1993 book *Texts Under Negotiation: The Bible and Postmodern Imagination* is highly influential challenge to rational, liberal biblical interpretation. Brueggemann has shown how the postmodern notion of power structures and metanarratives have not only influenced the traditions of interpretation, but are at play in the texts themselves, such as in the multiple viewpoints on the stories of David and Solomon that undermine their power claims. Like Hauerwas, Brueggemann criticizes liberal tendencies to be overly accommodating to the assumptions of Western rationalism and capitalism. He sees the Bible as offering an alternative world view that funds the imagination of the church today to live a different reality.

Queer Theology

Like other 20th century liberation theologies, Queer Theology has shown how LGBTQ+ persons are fully a part of God's creation and under God's care. They bring critical scholarship to bear on traditional interpretations of biblical texts and Christian traditions that reject LGBTQ+ personhood and rights. It seeks to eliminate heteronormative and cis-normative theologies and practices. Patrick Cheng's book *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology* is a current well-known resource. A good article to learn about this ongoing theological exploration is here: https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2929&context=sot_papers