

and the commission to the church to speak prophetically to the world, holding up against Empire's idolatries God's vision of free and loving community.

— David Crombie

**RAGE AND RESISTANCE:
A Theological Reflection on
the Montreal Massacre.
by Theresa O'Donovan
Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid
Laurier University Press,
2007. Paperback, 160 pp.
\$25.95**

I was surprised by the opening to the appendix of this book: "Here is an invitation" (107). Theresa O'Donovan, associate professor in the Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy at Brescia University College in London, Ontario, has written more than a theological reflection on the events of December 6, 1989. While reading, I was compelled to pause for scribbling in the margins. Upon reading the invitation, I realized how this reflection effectively works *not* to give a final summation of its topic. Her book would be as good company in a methodologically-focussed interdisciplinary studies course as in a pastoral theology seminar. Students would have no problems finding something to write about.

Individual readers will likely discover renewed passion for their own work too.

O'Donovan builds upon Gregory Baum's critical theology and Dorothy Smith's feminist sociology in order to create what she calls strategic theology (102). By giving attention to the actual lives of people, strategic theology is guided by an imperative to effect "necessary change" (59): emancipation from ideological distortion through the formation of counter discourses in word, image, and act. This attention to particularity uncovers not only patterns of dominance, but also the connections among those who are saying "no!" to injustice. O'Donovan unfolds testimonies of those whose singularities resonate with one another (78). They are "practical accounts of *particular* realities" (59), of the "concrete conditions" that disallow blame from being fixed at random (63). In doing so, O'Donovan's theology means to enable an engaged "spirituality of resistance" (94).

December 6, 1989 signifies death for O'Donovan (9), while also providing her "own starting point" in the "'painstaking hermeneutic' of actual Canadian conditions" (17). On that day, Canada — both its institutions and the society — became strange and inhospitable to her.

Her critique seeks out, “how it happens to us as it does” (22). The “us” is the standpoint of women (68), heterogenous by social location and yet as connected by the method of “insider’s materialism” (24) that “looks at society directly” (26). Although this method is not explained, it seems that the “in” side obtains by default when women’s voices were excluded on and after December Sixth. Encircling “us” is a “line of fault” (31-33) by which O’Donovan maps out the hegemonies that “shape and overpower our lives” (33). Just as O’Donovan’s “us” spans particularities, “it” also has this peculiar breadth. “It” was made vivid with the deaths of the 14 women named on page 79, only to continue in what followed. O’Donovan thereby reveals a conflict (16) by whose “lines of fault” (31) critical theologians might discern for whom they should preferentially opt.

O’Donovan acts on Baum’s claim that interruption is a theological category (68). December 6, 1989, remembered as femicide, is made into a “discursive opening” (31) onto personal and social sin (70). “It” demands that Christians examine more, and assume less, about their understandings of God (75).

The actual title on the cover is “*Rage + Resistance*”. I interpret

this as a theological algorithm, since the “+” has an elongated stem. This represents O’Donovan’s refusal to allow “it” the last word (93).

— Nathan Loewen

**C. STACEY WOODS AND
THE EVANGELICAL
REDISCOVERY OF THE
UNIVERSITY**

**by Donald A MacLeod
Downer’s Grove: IVP
Academic, 2007. Pp. 283.
Paper \$25.00.**

Readers who delighted in Donald MacLeod’s earlier (2004) *W. Stanford Reid: An Evangelical Calvinist in the Academy* (which was accorded the Donald Grant Creighton award for the best biography highlighting life in Ontario in the past three years) will find their pleasure augmented in yet another fine biography of a forceful Christian.

MacLeod’s book traces the development of Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship (“InterVarsity” in the U.S.A.), transparently acquainting readers with both brighter and darker moments, the glorious and the shameful (see the discussion of Wilber Sutherland), in the history of the organization. With the judgement that mature historians