The "Last Things" section is only last in the sequential sense; in many ways it is the most critical. While most sections of this book are clearly directed to the initiate, this section will be worth revisiting over and over again throughout a life filled with confrontations with the degradation of God's good creation. It is a calling to continually live in hope and a concise articulation of what that means.

This book is a valuable tool for Christians seeking to respond in love to a rapidly changing world and the ecological crises before us. It is unfortunate that, like many other well-written and timely books, it will likely not be read by those who could most benefit from it. The opening pages describe the impact of climate change on the well-being of a small community in the Gaza province of Mozambique. For climate change deniers, these could very well be the last pages that they read. Given the title, they may have never picked up the book in the first place. Hopefully, those who do read and embrace the message of discipleship deeply threaded throughout the text will put this book, or its message, into the hands and hearts of those who need it most.

Reviewed by Jeffrey T. Ploegstra, Department of Biology, Dordt College, Sioux Center, IA 51250.

Ethics

TO TOUCH THE FACE OF GOD: The Sacred, the Profane, and the American Space Program, 1957–1975 by Kendrick Oliver. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013. 248 pages. Hardcover; $39.95. ISBN: 9781421407883.

This recent book examines several possible connections between religious thought and the exploration of space, more specifically Christianity and the American space program through the Apollo moon landings and shortly thereafter. Having thought about this topic myself—and dismissed any such connection—I was not expecting much from this work. However, although the book shows that these connections might not be present or robust, it explores the issues with depth and insight.

In considering these connections, we can focus our thinking around a simple question: did religion motivate the space program, or provide a post hoc framework for its interpretation? The former might be seen in a general ethos on the part of key leaders or individuals in the trenches. This motivation is unlikely. Even Charlie Duke, who walked on the moon during the Apollo 16 mission and later became an active Christian evangelist, separates any religious drive from his role in the program (*Moonwalker*; Thomas Nelson, 1990). His religious conversion came later. He was driven, as were many of the astronauts and engineers in the early years of the program, by the need to push boundaries; the motivation was as simple as that. Consider also that the Soviet Union was in space first, and now China has a very active space program—neither of these are known for overt religiosity on the governmental or institutional level (although admittedly we cannot know the inner motivations of the individuals involved). The second part of the question is of more interest and potential relevance: was the exploration of space, driven by whatever motivations, later interpreted through the lens of a spiritual or even religious quest? This is a question explored throughout most of the book.

The book's introduction is an astute, literate, and readable setting of the culture of the time (the 1960s). This material is not fundamentally new, but it is presented with a different emphasis than in other works, and well done. More generally, the author is willing to look past simple answers. For example, the invocation of religious language (Kennedy asks God's blessing at the start of the Apollo program) could well reflect cultural/political views, not religious views in any real sense. The author marshals an impressive array of research exploring many related and some tangential areas, such as the rise of evangelism and a look back to a time when technology was seen as a redemptive force for humanity. The religious question is raised early on: is our quest into space performed in praise of God, or rather does it preclude the need for God since we can now reach for the heavens on our own? This is the essential duality explored here: casting off the need for God through our technological prowess, or coming closer to him through our push into the heavens.

The overall modus operandi of the book is to present an example where religion seemed closely and uniquely connected to the space program, and then show that that connection is illusory, superficial, or transient. This is demonstrated through several key themes: invocation of religious language as a motivating force for human exploration of space, use of religious imagery to interpret the experience of space exploration, the religious experiences of the astronauts themselves, and the marshaling of public support for religious expression in the space program. In each case, it is shown that these connections between space and religion are tenuous at best, and history has shown them to be temporary. This is not to denigrate this approach, for it works well in keeping the reader's attention by connecting with aspects of the program that were publicly visible and easily noted (by those who were paying attention to space through to the mid-1970s). In following these trains of apparent connection, the author brings to bear a wide range of sociological work on American religious and technical culture of the time. Despite the occasional tendency to

academic jargon and convoluted sentences—par for the course in much academic writing—the book serves its purpose well, even for a lay audience (provided that the readership is truly interested in religion and/or space exploration).

The first major theme, the role of religion as a source of motivation for the exploration of space, is a legitimate one in which to couch part of the book's development. By most personal accounts those who were most heavily involved—as administrators, scientists, engineers, or astronauts—were driven by secular and practical reasons. This is something that any engineer would find to be a moot point. Faster, higher, further, the next big thing—these are the drivers for many of those with a technical or adventurous mindset. The heady enthusiasm from being a part of such an adventure is known by anyone fortunate enough to have been involved in something of this stature, and the space program by virtue of its sheer size and visibility particularly lends itself to this sense of grand adventure. But this transcendent feeling on the part of the players is also present in sports and many other activities: the search for something larger than one's self. It is afterward that it may be seen as a religious quest, if so inclined. In fact, it was those left on the ground who seemed most anxious to infuse the endeavor with meaning (spiritual or otherwise)—to little avail, in the long run.

The second theme is the invocation of religious imagery to interpret space exploration—to place it in a larger context and meaning. The impact here is less than clear. Did access to space alter old concepts of the heavens? Was this a voyage to look for God or to destroy him (Norman Mailer poses this very question in *Of a Fire on the Moon*; Signet, 1971)? The question bears on the issue of extraterrestrial beings, UFOs, and the anthropic principle. What does the incarnation mean if there is life elsewhere? What about salvation? Space exploration raised questions, but again it seems there was little lasting change in the debate or in the concepts. (Again, see Mailer.) There was an "anticipation of cosmological effects" more so than actual effects (p. 70).

Theme three is centered on the experiences of the astronauts themselves. As wayfarers in the heavens—humanity's surrogate travelers to otherworldly realms—they were expected to convey back to us the immensity of the experience. But, for the most part, the astronauts were lacking in a language to match the grandeur of the undertaking. Any tendency to connect with larger issues was inevitably limited: they were technologists, not poets. The idea throughout is that they brought back what they took with them, and although there were many occasions to express wonder and awe, these were quickly subsumed by the operational tasks at hand and tended toward the sense of Earth as a protective home rather than one of divine inspiration (with exceptions as noted below).

As support for this idea, it is interesting to observe that for the lunar landing missions of the Apollo program, it is the lunar module pilots, and not the commanders (both of whom landed on the moon in each mission), in whose lives one might see reference to any form of spiritual experience. (A point raised by Andrew Smith in *Moondust*; Harper Perennial, 2006.) For one thing, the lunar module pilots did not have the burden of command. More so perhaps, the commanders were temperamentally better suited not to have any such type of "ephemeral" experience, but rather to concentrate on the immediate needs of the mission. It is telling that of those Apollo astronauts who had the most overt spiritual or religious quests on their return to Earth, none were commanders and all appeared to have had at least some thread of a connection to religious or spiritual sensibilities before their journeys: most notable in this case was Jim Irwin who started the High Flight Foundation ministry, and Edgar Mitchell who began the Institute of Noetic Sciences. Again, in each case, they brought back what they took with them.

The final theme, public support for the space program, shows that people felt a religious component of space exploration was worth protecting, but perhaps due more to a general sense that, among other things, the battle for school prayer had been lost and that government would give in again if not put on alert. This then was not necessarily an effort to protect the religious component of space exploration per se but rather an effort to protect religion in public life.

In the end, Apollo and related efforts of the time were larger in *quantity* but not in *quality* than other events and activities. This explains why there was little-lasting effect on religious thought. It seems that there *should be* a space-religion connection but it is continually seen to be superficial or nonexistent. "The human condition has not been transcended by the passage to new worlds" (p. 134). Travel in space, in fact, resulted in a turn toward Earth, spurring the ecology movement through images such as the iconic Earthrise from Apollo 8 (a point made also by Robert Poole in *Earthrise: How Man First Saw the Earth*; Yale University Press, 2010). "It was the assumption of a cosmic destiny for mankind, not the claims of conventional faith, that now seemed most open to doubt" (p 168).

Overall, the book presents an even-handed view. The author seems to come to the conclusion reluctantly— as have I—that there simply is no fundamental connection between space exploration and religion. On a superficial level, perhaps. Books continue to come out

on this topic: the technology, the politics, the people of the early space program. We continue to see something special in the Apollo program, but that could be because of the other many fascinating aspects, not solely religious or spiritual. In some sense, a program like Apollo (and its precursors) is so large and so unique that it looms in history like a spiritual quest. But in many ways the event—and the entire Space Age of the 1960s and early 1970s—was out of context. (This phrase is used to good effect in Al Worden's recent book *Falling to Earth* [Smithsonian Books, 2011], regarding the personal effort to deal with the return to mundane earthly life after a trip to the moon. The best approach is to place it in perspective as something that had no logical predecessor or successor: *sui generis*.) Fundamental and permanent cultural changes resulting from the space program have been—so far—rare, the ecology movement, as noted, being one possible exception. The fundamental point is that we take from space exploration what we bring to it, a religious connection that is fleeting at best, and exploration that has so far caused more of a turn to Earth than to God.

Reviewed by Mark Shelhamer, Associate Professor of Otolaryngology and Biomedical Engineering, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD 21205.

iDISORDER: Understanding Our Obsession with Technology and Overcoming Its Hold on Us by Larry D. Rosen. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 256 pages, notes, index. Paperback; $16.00. ISBN: 9781137278319.

iDisorder, by Larry D. Rosen, is a short book with an intriguing premise: the extensive use of modern technology causes many people to exhibit symptoms of classical, common, psychiatric disorders. The book systematically goes through these disorders—communication disorders, ADHD, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, narcissistic personality disorder, hypochondriasis, schizoaffective and schizotypal disorders, body dysmorphia, voyeurism, and addiction—and cites countless studies demonstrating how technology enhances or draws out the symptoms of the disorders. As a professor of psychology at California State University, Dominguez Hills, Rosen is well acquainted with these disorders.

Note that the author does not argue that technology causes these disorders. He only argues that technology can cause (or enhance) symptoms that match the symptoms of people diagnosed with these classical disorders. Since the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) does not cite technology and media as contributing factors to these disorders, the author refers to them as "iDisorders."

One of the most accessible and convincing chapters is "Obsessively Checking in with Your Technology ... 24/7" in which the author describes how technology (especially the cell phone) often leads to compulsive behaviors. The author describes how people, including himself, compulsively check their cell phones for new messages, new texts, or missed calls. The chapter contains multiple anecdotes on how individuals get anxious when they travel into an area without cell phone reception. Some even refuse to travel when they know they will be "off the grid" for a time. The chapter relates results of multiple polls and surveys on technology usage during vacations, individuals' "FOMO" (fear of missing out) and "disconnectivity anxiety." The chapter then compares these symptoms to those of classically defined panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder. It ends by giving useful advice on how to deal with an obsessive-compulsive iDisorder. This advice includes using settings on your devices to reduce the number of notifications the device triggers and doing a four-step process of Rethink, Reboot, Reconnect, and Revitalize (p. 58).

The other chapters follow this same pattern. The author defines the symptoms of the classical disorder, relates some anecdotes of how the symptoms are brought out by extensive use of technology (computers, cell phones, tablets, social media, etc.), cites studies and surveys implying a connection between the technology and the symptoms, and finishes with a refreshing section on how to identify, avoid, and/or treat the iDisorder in oneself or someone one knows. Some chapters also contain surveys to help readers gauge their own tendency to having an iDisorder. Each chapter is rife with citations—the endnotes of the book contain twenty-one pages of bibliographic references to journal articles, conference presentations, books, and websites.

The advice for treating an iDisorder is generally quite predictable. First, measure your dependence on the technology (how much time or money is spent using this technology each day) and determine how you feel when you do not have access to your technology. Then, avoid situations which may trigger symptoms of the iDisorder. Use technological tools (e.g., apps or plug-ins) to limit or change your use of the technology. Set aside time intentionally to meet others face-to-face, put away technology, and nurture real-world relationships. Be accountable to others as you try to change your behavior. In some cases, seek help from a therapist.

Rosen is not antitechnology and, in fact, stresses that he is a thorough and early adopter of many technologies. It is refreshing that he uses his own behaviors in some chapters as examples of symptoms of iDisorders (p. 50).

Rosen does not make any Christian or spiritual commentary on iDisorders. However, the book is relevant to Christians because it exposes and addresses the symp-