The urban pulpit: evangelicals and the city in New York, 1880-1930

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Description:
Thesis (Ph.D.)--Georgetown University, 2011.; Includes bibliographical references.; Text (Electronic thesis) in PDF format. This study examines how the rise of liberal and fundamentalist factions of American evangelicalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - a dispute usually assumed to be basically theological - appeared from the perspective of the ministers and congregations of New York City's Protestant churches. I argue that conflict should be understood not as a theological clash but as an exhibition of the resilience of American evangelical culture in the modern age. The rise of liberalism and fundamentalism cannot be understood apart from their interaction with the social and cultural forces of the changing modern city. I investigate the ways evangelicals explained and sought to master a city transforming first into an industrial powerhouse dominated by immigrants and eventually into the hub of a commercial consumer society. The dissertation makes two interwoven arguments.; First, the division of religion in New York City's congregations was the result of varying pastoral strategies. Problems of poverty, industrialization and commercialization were not merely worrying for social or economic reasons; they hampered the ritual acts of evangelical piety centered upon the act of preaching and its relationship to the conversion experience. Both liberals and fundamentalists offered ways to preserve the power of evangelical religious practice, and their disagreements were based on these varying solutions. This is a useful corrective to arguments that the pressures of social reform led liberal evangelicals toward secularization.; The second argument is that the closer one gets to the lived experience of American evangelicals, the blurrier definitions become. Though the terms "fundamentalist" and "liberal" had distinct meanings, evangelicals were equally aware that both lay claim to a way of understanding what it was to be religious derived from their common heritage in American evangelicalism's language and history and methods. Today, despite the popular historiographical perspective that conservatives beat a retreat in the 1920s, many Americans associate the label "evangelical" with a politically threatening subculture premised upon a rather humorless orthodoxy. The dispute over what constitutes "evangelicalism" is a persistent one, both in and outside the academy. Taking practice seriously is a first step toward restoring the movement's rich heritage.

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New York 1880 book. Read 4 reviews from the world's largest community for readers. This is the fourth volume in architect and historian Robert A. M. Ster...
The installation of water, telephone, and electricity infrastructures as well as the advent of electric lighting, the elevator, and mass transit allowed the city to grow both out and up. The office building and apartment house types were envisioned and defined, changing the ways that New Yorkers worked and lived. Such massive public projects as the Brooklyn Bridge and Central Park became realities, along with such private efforts as Grand Central Station. Like the other three volumes, New York 1880 is an in-depth presentation of the buildings and plans that transformed New York from a harbor t Matthew Bowman's The Urban Pulpit weaves a subtler and more convincing story. While some turn-of-the-century New York liberals were ready and willing to abandon historic Christian metaphysics, many more were not so inclined. These liberal evangelicals held as tenaciously to the hope of a Christian city as did their fundamentalist counterparts. Meanwhile, the city's liberal evangelicals sought ways to connect with their increasingly diverse neighbors by emphasizing religious experience over doctrine, as well as by redoubling their commitment to social reform. If for strategic reasons they did not always foreground their evangelical convictions, they nevertheless conceived of what they were doing in terms of a specifically Christian mission to the city. From the Publisher. Great Houses of New York, 1880–1930 presents the stories of the most elegant houses built in New York. With over 300 archival photographs and floor plans and a decade of research, Michael Kathrens profiles New York houses known only for their magisterial presence on the city’s most elegant boulevards, some of which still exist today, including the houses of Otto Kahn (Convent of the Sacred Heart), Andrew Carnegie (Cooper Hewitt Design Museum), James B. Duke (NYU Institute of Fine Art), and Morton F. Plant (Cartier), and Willard D. Straight (home of the banker Bruce Kovner).