

tips for dealing with hospitals and service agencies, a picture of life as a parent of a special needs child, and more.

So really, this book could be 10 books—but the truth is that 10 books might not all get read, and there is an undercurrent of urgency here. These are families with little money and no time, often riding a life/death edge. Activism, be it written or otherwise, is a luxury—a necessary luxury, but a luxury nonetheless. Author Miriam Edelson cites the example of a facility faced with closure, whose workers took on unpaid respite care to enable mothers (and yes, it is mostly mothers) to gather and take action to keep the centre open. With a medically fragile child who needs active 24-hour care, and often siblings to care for, too, there would be no other way to take on organized protest.

The medically fragile child is at one end of a special-needs continuum encompassing all children with disabilities, physical and intellectual. The range of special-needs experiences is varied and staggering. Like I said, 10 books. Kudos to Edelson for looking for (and finding) common ground, but sometimes I wished for a narrower focus. Some children with special needs will grow into adults who take action on their own behalf, while others will always need a parent or caregiver as advocate. Specific goals and strategies differ, a fact that came out most clearly in Edelson's

discussion of integrated schooling.

I caught a glimpse of a profound message from these mothers, an invitation to really examine love of life and humanity, to authentically see personhood and joy.

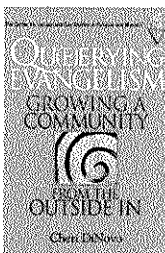
And I only had to read one book to do it. ~

## QUE(E)RYING EVANGELISM: GROWING A COMMUNITY FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

Cheri DiNovo

PILGRIM PRESS, 2005

Review by Lydia Perovic



Fortunately, there's no trace of New Age in DiNovo's book, no can-we-all-get-along Christianity of the amorphous blob-God—the inoffensive, multi-denominational creature of so many

writers of the contemporary Left.

DiNovo's theology is as orthodox as her politics are radical, and she reads the canon of Protestantism side by side with queer theory, feminism, post-structuralism and deconstruction. Not only does this dialogue work, but DiNovo shows it can also be *put to work*: her book is about how the ethics of unconditional hospitality can be practised, what forms evangel-

ism from the outside in can take, and how queer theology can be lived by a queer Christian.

The chapter "Qu(e)rying Morality" is a wonderful provocation, especially to those of us interested in ethics of virtues and the ideas of good. When we dare to assume that *our way is the way* to live morally and godly, we dare to assume God's perspective. Although this is ABC of Protestantism, DiNovo's queer elaboration adds a punch. She argues that human concepts are bound to fall short of ever becoming identical to God's revelation. From this humbled position, it is impossible to condemn fellow human beings whose difference appalls us.

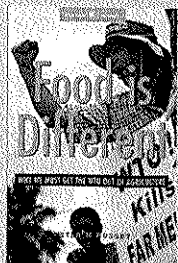
The expectation is to love your neighbour as yourself and to love God, but how do we create criteria to filter the just from the wicked? God is laughing when the human is thinking—or trying to be moral, adds DiNovo to this Jewish proverb.

DiNovo's sermons, like her book, are intensely personal, carefully hermeneutic, moving and witty. While queer and post-modern theologies are now common research interests at seminaries in the U.S. and the U.K., DiNovo is something of an anomaly in Canada. The hope is that there will be an entire noisy school in a few years, where *Qu(e)rying Evangelism* now treads alone. ~

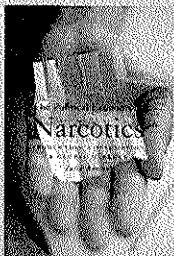
Lydia Perovic is a Toronto writer.

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