

ing the race-thinking behind it. Much similar denial of the complex play of ideas makes it possible for Carey to reach his banner-headline conclusion: "The tragedy of *Mein Kampf* is that it was not, in many respects, a deviant work but one firmly rooted in European intellectual orthodoxy." To which one can respond only with the Scotch verdict: Not proved.

Philosophy & Religion

SELLING GOD: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture. By R. Laurence Moore. Oxford. 336 pp. \$25

Americans worship both the Almighty Dollar and, if opinion surveys are to be believed, the Almighty far more fervently than do the citizens of any other Western country. Such dual loyalty seems less incongruous if one considers that one of the sources of America's religious vitality is the absence of an established church. Churches have been forced (or allowed) to compete for souls, much as McDonald's and Burger King vie for hungry mouths. Moore, a Cornell University historian, might say that the link between fast food and religion is more than a useful analogy. Much that we mistake for the secularization of American society, he believes, "has to do not with the disappearance of religion but its commodification."

Since the late 18th century, when the new diversions offered by the nation's growing commercial culture—*theater, cheap novels, and the like*—began to threaten religious authority, church leaders have borrowed commercial methods to spread the Word. One of the first to discover the magic of the marketplace was the Calvinistic Methodist preacher George White-

field (1714–70), whose wildly successful revival meetings in America and in England "turned a portion of the Protestant Christian ministry away from intellectual preparation and instruction toward emotional exhorting," according to Moore. Before long it was an accepted principle in many holy quarters that ministers should borrow methods from the theater to stir up audience enthusiasm. By the 1830s, Walt Whitman could call churches "the most important of our amusements."

The pattern was repeated over and over. No sooner did clergymen denounce the dime novel or television than some enterprising colleague was picking up a pen or daubing on makeup for the cameras.

Moore strives mightily to appreciate some of the benefits of this "commercialized" religion, observing, for example, that the notion of faith as something to be sold rather than imposed promotes religious toleration. But of course it is more interesting to ask what it has all cost. He discerns a general thinning of religion: Spread everywhere in American culture, from self-help manuals to Christian rap music, it seems to be nowhere.

Surprisingly, Moore has relatively little to say about today's televangelists, seeming to regard them as regrettable but inevitable products of a world where denominations must compete. It would have been interesting to get some idea of how "consumer satisfaction" with religion has changed over the past two centuries of "commodification," not to mention how the competition for new souls has affected non-Protestant sects.

Moore reserves most of his criticism for the mainline Protestant churches that embraced the Social Gospel in the late 19th century—the very denominations that most disdained commercial methods. He argues that the Social Gospel was nevertheless the last word in "commod-



ification," a complete theological capitulation to the era's emerging consumerist ethos. Ministers such as Harry Emerson Fosdick eagerly applied the latest business principles to the management of churches and the advancement of Progressive social reform. Ultimately, mainline Protestants were left "with the reputation that they had no faith stronger than what lay in the collection plate."

Only in his last two pages does Moore reveal his ultimate criticism. A commercialized church, he warns, cannot alert Americans to the dangers of needless consumerism—the real meaning of Adam and Eve's story, he says—and to the resulting environmental apocalypse he foresees. If that is so, it would take another book to prove it.

BERTRAND RUSSELL: A Life. By *Caroline Moorehead*. Viking. 596 pp. \$30



In 1961, an 89-year-old Bertrand Russell was sent to jail for protesting the nuclear policies of the British government. He had been the object of controversy before. In 1940, the New York court that overturned his appointment to City College denounced his logic lectures as lecherous, libidinous, lustful, venerous, erotomaniac,

aphrodisiac, irreverent, and narrow-minded. No easy man to live with, he married four times, often wreaking emotional havoc on his wives and children.

Bertrand Russell was also a Nobel Prize-winning philosopher who wrote 83 books, including *Principia Mathematica* (1910), and set the shape of philosophy in the English-speaking world. Though the contrast was rather extreme, both Russells were Russell.

As Moorehead relates in her engaging biography, Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) did not know how to be dull. He brought a philos-

opher's insights to issues ranging from nuclear warfare to the use of cosmetics by schoolteachers, and did so with a literary skill that leaves most other writers green with envy. Even his technical philosophy is full of vivid touches. Moorehead, a British journalist, wisely skirts the impossible task of explaining the foundations of mathematics. Instead, she sticks to what drove Russell to study such things—a longing for the timeless and absolute truth about the world, which he thought lay in logic. She also explains how he abandoned his first and highest love. Ludwig Wittgenstein, his one-time protégé, persuaded him that logic was no more than a matter of human convention; after civilized Europe plunged into World War I, Russell lowered his sights and looked to politics, education, social reform, and more enlightened attitudes toward sex and marriage as the route to human happiness.

Russell's childhood was a gloomy one. His radical parents died when he was a small child, and he was brought up by his elderly grandmother and assorted governesses. Lady Russell tried to keep Bertie pure. She failed. He met and after many battles married Alys Pearsall Smith—like his fourth and last wife, a daughter of Philadelphia and Bryn Mawr. This all fueled his later passion for sexual enlightenment. Paradoxically, Lady Ottoline Morrell, who became his mistress in 1910 and effected his liberation, did not much care for sex with Bertie; it was his mind she fell in love with.

He was amazingly clever and loved Cambridge, but he could never be confined to the academy. He ran for Parliament in 1907 as a women's suffrage candidate, fighting for a seat he could not win in order to stick up for an unpopular cause. In 1916 he threw away his Cambridge career to campaign against the war. Trinity College dismissed him from his lectureship, and in 1918 he was jailed for insulting an ally. (He said the U.S. Army would stay on in Europe after the war to shoot striking workers.)

In the 1920s and '30s he wrote important essays on socialism, the fate of the Soviet Union, appeasement, and the nature of power, but emotional discord bulked larger. In 1921 he married Dora Black, had two children, and opened a school—Beacon Hill. Its finances demanded constant lecture tours in the United States and short