

# Addenda

A monthly e-mail newsletter from **MARS HILL AUDIO**

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"Fearful lest it be relegated to the position of an isolated sect, Christianity seems to be making frenzied efforts at mimicry in order to escape being devoured by its enemies--a reaction that seems defensive, but is in fact self-destructive. In the hope of saving itself, it seems to be assuming the colors of its environment, but the result is that it loses its identity. . . ."

--Leszek Kolakowski, from *Modernity on Endless Trial*

## New on our desks

### *Religion in America*

The introduction to the Spring 2004 issue of *The Public Interest* explains that "Indeed, the American scene cannot be fully grasped without a consideration of religion's changing role therein. And it may be no exaggeration to suggest that the country's prospects in the new century will be powerfully shaped, at home and abroad, by religious developments." In order to better understand "the American scene," editors at *The Public Interest* have solicited essays from various writers and scholars, including previous **MARS HILL AUDIO** guests [Wilfred M. McClay](#), [Stanley W. Carlson-Thies](#), and [Michael W. McConnell](#). To read more, see [New on our desks](#).

## Guest Profile: Robert A. J. Gagnon

"It was inevitable that the antihomosexual lobby would develop something equivalent to a neutron bomb designed to wipe out the homosexual lobby without (it is hoped) altogether destroying the church."

--Presbyterian biblical scholar Walter Wink from a review of *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics* in the [Christian Century](#) (June 5-12, 2002).

The author of this alleged bomb is Robert A. J. Gagnon, Associate Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. In his review of *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, subtly titled "To Hell with Gays?," Dr. Wink claims that ". . . the Bible has no sex ethic. It only knows a communal love ethic, which must be brought to bear on all the sexual mores of a given society in a given period."

In *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* Dr. Gagnon challenges claims such as Dr. Wink's as he makes the case that the Bible is hardly libertine with regard to homosexual behavior in particular and sexual behavior in general. On Volume 68 (May/June 2004) of the **MARS HILL AUDIO Journal**, Dr. Gagnon addresses some of the common arguments in favor of abandoning the historic Christian position on homosexual behavior, such as the analogy to slavery, the silence of Jesus on the matter, and the Biblical authors' supposed ignorance of the possibility of monogamous, life-long homosexual relationships. Dr. Gagnon helps us to better understand the breadth and depth of the Bible's opposition to sexual encounters outside of marriage, as well as its positive message that the sexual union between a man and a woman in marriage brings together two distinct but complementary halves.

Dr. Gagnon attended Dartmouth College, Harvard Divinity School, and Princeton Theological Seminary, and taught at Middlebury College in Vermont prior to taking his current appointment at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. His main fields of interest are Pauline theology and sexual issues in the Bible. In addition to being a member both of the Society of Biblical Literature and of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, he is an ordained elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Along with Walter Wink's review of *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, you can find extensive information on homosexuality on Robert Gagnon's [website](#). The "Browse the Journal" section of our web pages also contains information on [homosexuality](#).

We expect to send out **MARS HILL AUDIO** *Journal* Volume 68 (May/June 2004) at the end of June.

## MARS HILL AUDIO Turns Ten

The very first of the **MARS HILL** *Tapes* (the **MARS HILL AUDIO** *Journal* since 1999) is dated May 1992, and it was primarily an experiment intended to test the viability of a somewhat novel concept, the "audio magazine." With the second issue, produced nearly a year later and dated March/April 1993, the **MARS HILL** *Tapes* were offered to the general public via subscription.

Using 1993 as the "birth year" makes 2003 the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the **MARS HILL AUDIO** *Journal*. In order to properly acknowledge and celebrate this milestone, the board of directors held a dinner (with the sponsorship of some very generous friends) in honor of Ken Myers last September. Presenting the evening's main address was [D. G. Hart](#), Director of Academic Projects & Faculty Development at the [Intercollegiate Studies Institute](#), co-editor of the [Nicotine Theological Journal](#), and longtime friend of Ken Myers and his family. Dr. Hart's [comments](#) as well as a brief [history](#) of **MARS HILL AUDIO** are now available online.

## From the *Journal* Archives

We like to think that much of what we produce has a timeless quality to it, so that listening to an old issue of the **MARS HILL AUDIO** *Journal* is more like reading a good out-of-print book than reading a newspaper from last month. After listening to [Vol. 22](#) (July/August 1996) of the **MARS HILL** *Tapes* recently, we thought that a number of the interviews are as relevant today as they were eight years ago. In recent weeks there have been significant court decisions pertaining to homosexual marriage and assisted suicide; these matters were addressed with wisdom and foresight by [Hadley Arkes](#) and [Robert George](#) (on homosexual marriage) and [Michael Uhlmann](#) and [Carlos Gomez](#) (on assisted suicide). This issue also includes interviews with [Michael Sandel](#) on the modern understanding of democracy as a morally neutral political system, and [Andrew Delbanco](#) on his book *The Death of Satan: How Americans Have Lost the Sense of Evil*.

If you have Vol. 22 in your collection, we recommend you listen to it again. And if you don't have it, you may purchase it on cassette, as usual, *and also on CD*--the first issue of the *Journal* (*nee Tapes*) to be put on CD retroactively. You may order it using our [online](#) form, by calling us at **1.800.331.6407**, or by mailing your payment to the address below. The cost is \$10 on cassette or \$12 on CD, postage-paid, to any U.S. address (to Canada add US \$3, to an overseas address add US \$10).

## Listener Mail

Things have been a little slow for our [Listener Mail](#) page, so there are no new postings this month. We encourage you to send your submission to [letters@marshillaudio.org](mailto:letters@marshillaudio.org). If you would prefer to mail a letter,

please see our address at the end of this newsletter. If we decide to print your letter we will include your name unless you request to remain anonymous.

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