

Kingdom of matthias

Sociology, Communication



Kingdom of Matthias is one of the literary works that gives focus to an important part of American history, the great age of democratic revivals in the country. The book is an attempt to find meaning and relevance in the Kingdom of Matthias.

The authors of the book, Paul Johnson and Sean Wilentz assert that the Kingdom of Matthias cannot simply be called an evangelical movement for a closer analysis of the movement will reveal that Matthias' religious vision does not run in parallel with the new evangelicals of the time. Instead, his religious movement ran largely in contrast and in opposition to the evangelicals of the First and Second Great Awakenings.

The book is the authors' attempt to tell the tale of the national scandal that grew out of the Kingdom of Matthias. The authors weave a tale that integrates the three elements that made the Kingdom of Matthias prominent in American history. That is salvation, sex, and murder.

The said literary piece is enjoyable to read despite its gruesome and eerie topic for the authors were able to turn the story into a novel. By using the lives of several characters, Johnson and Wilentz were able to reveal the facets of the evangelical movement through the lives of the said characters. This was vital to the story for it prevented the book from being a mere historical account of events by giving it a personal touch. Recounting the personal tales of each of the characters enabled the authors to tell the events in a story-telling manner.

The book must also be commended for its ability to relate the events of the past to those of the present. This is vital especially since the book is often

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times used by students who want to see the relevance of what they are reading to their lives today.

However, there are certain cases when the authors were seemingly exhausting the story too much. By doing so, they were clouding the story with tedium to certain extents. For instance, I do not see the need to discuss and expound on the Matthew's brothers involvement in the anti-masonic hysteria in Rochester.

Since the focal point of the book is a evangelical movement, it should be expected that much of the discussion will be centered on the intricacies of the religion and the beliefs it tries to promulgate. However, the authors were not able to give that much focus on the religious beliefs. Instead, the discussion was centered on how the Kingdom of Matthias was at the edge of religious respectability and how its teachings led to the scandal it saw itself in.

Finally, the community played a very relevant role in the novel for the authors defined the lives of the main characters based on how the community reacted to them. In each of the stories that were recounted, the community's role was largely explored. From the denial of certain evangelical movements of the membership of certain characters, to the reactions of the community to the practices of the Kingdom of Matthias, the authors continuously discussed the role and relevance of the community to the story.

Kingdom of Matthias is a historical novel that explores the scandal of the evangelical movement of the same name. It tackles the relevance of how radical evangelism helped shaped the country into what it is today.