

Clio or St. Luke ?
When the Evangelist becomes the Historian: A Former Evangelical's
concerns about contemporary Evangelical Historiography.

Part One: The Categories of Evangelical Historiography

Part One of A Three-Part Paper by Neville Buch

First Produced For A Staff-Student Seminar
Department of History
University of Queensland
St. Lucia, Qld. 4072

29th April 1993

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Part One: The Categories of Evangelical Historiography

In the Preface to the 1980 edition, E.P. Thompson explains that his *The Making of the English Working Class* "is structured by a double-sided critique: on the one hand, of the positivist orthodoxies then dominant in the more conservative academic schools of economic history...; on the other hand, of a certain 'Marxist' orthodox...".¹ Thompson concludes the preface by saying that his book stands as hypotheses which "must never be petrified into orthodoxies".² As a Marxist historian, Thompson knew what it is like to be surrounded by colleagues who have allowed their historical writing to be constrained by ideological orthodoxy. It is the same feeling that a historian in the field of religious history has when confronted with Evangelical historiography. This article will, hopefully, explore this point as it explains what Evangelical historiography is, how it evolved in the British, American and Australian context, and its relationship to contemporary Evangelicalism.

What is "Evangelical Historiography" ? Is it history written only by those historians committed to an Evangelical theology, or is it history written by any historian who is examining the phenomenon of Evangelicalism ? Is it a particular theological interpretation of history, or is it a historical interpretation of a particular theology ? These questions, unfortunately, have yet to be answered by those who have self-consciously engaged in what has been called "Evangelical Historiography". What Evangelical historiography clearly is, is a sub-species in the academic enterprise of

¹ E.P. Thompson. *The Making of the English Working Class*. Middlesex. Penguin Books. Rev. Ed. 1980. (1963). p. 14.

² Ibid. p. 16.

religious history. If were not for the development of this academic sub-discipline, referred to as "Religious History", Evangelical historiography would not exist. What is meant by religious history, is usually the history of Western Christian traditions. It is not that other religious traditions are consciously excluded, it is merely that the majority of religious historians in our europeanised universities focus exclusively on such traditions.

Evangelical historiography can be said to be a sub-species of religious history because its formation is to found in groups of religious historians who have an affinity with the Evangelical tradition. This Evangelical tradition can be dated from the rise of the Evangelical Party in the seventeenth-century Anglican Church. If it can said that Protestantism set itself apart from the rest of Christendom at the Reformation, Evangelicalism, from the seventeenth century onwards, set itself apart from the rest of Protestantism. Evangelicalism saw itself as the unique defender of Christian orthodoxy, an orthodoxy that centred on a Pauline-Augustine pietistic view of salvation, in an age that frequently threatens such orthodoxy. Thus Evangelicalism had a distinctive view of religious history, where a pure unadulterated form of Christian faith is said to have been passed down from the Gospels, particularly St. Luke who is seen as the first historian of the faith, and St. John who is the first Evangelical theologian, with St. Paul, who becomes the authoritative interpreter of the Gospels; followed by St. Augustine of Hippo, who developed the Pauline interpretation of the Gospels into a Christian historiography, and developing through an invisible community of faith which struggles against the Romanist hegemony, arriving at the great liberators of the Reformation, Luther and Calvin, who sets the world free from the Roman heresy; finally, to the Evangelical Reformers themselves who constantly fought against the evils of skepticism, atheism, unredeemed Church life, and anything that does not conform to Evangelical doctrine.

A comparison can be made between this orthodox Evangelical view of history, and the orthodox Marxist-Leninist view of history; as indeed the comparison between the missionary zeal of Evangelicalism and that of militant Marxism has not escape the attention of a number of scholars. The rationale of Evangelical doctrine, like doctrinaire Marxism, is maintained by dividing the world into the unredeemed and redeemed. In Marxism, the division is between the capitalists and the workers. In Evangelicalism, spiritual experience precludes right thinking. For Marxism, class-consciousness precludes right thinking. Thus Evangelicalism can safely rationalise any outside or internal threat to its orthodoxy. If there are Christians who exist outside the understanding of Evangelical doctrine, it is because they are unredeemed. They are not true Christians, born-again Christians, spirit-filled Christians, they are rather carnal Church goers, and therefore, have not real understanding of the Christian faith. According to Evangelicalism, only those who have come through the rite of conversion can possibly comprehend what the true history of the world is about.³ If by chance, a converted soul does begin to question the soundness of Evangelical thought, then their spiritual state is brought into question - "You have been neglecting your Quiet-time, dear Brother/Sister, don't waste your time with your self-centred concerns, but turn to Jesus Christ who is in you through the Holy Spirit".

³ C. Gregg Singer, former chairman of the History Department, Catawba College, Salisbury, North Carolina, states: "The unbelieving historian cannot at any point know the mind of Christ as to the meaning of this world and the facts of history" in C. Gregg Singer. "The Problem of Historical Interpretation" in Gary North (Ed). *Foundations of Christian Scholarship*. Essay in the Van Til Perspective. Vallecito. Ross House Books. 1979. p. 69; Kenneth Scott Latourette, Professor of Missions and Oriental History, Yale University, states "From the Christian [meaning Evangelical] standpoint, the usual historian has an entirely distorted view of history and misses the most important features. This, may we add parenthetically, may be true of those who deal with ecclesiastical as well as with political, economic, or intellectual history. Even when the historian gives attention to the events which the Christian understanding deems most significant he may miss their real import". Kenneth Scott Latourette. "The Christian Understanding of History". *American Historical Review*. Vol. 54. No. 2. January 1949. pp.267-268.

The above description of Evangelicalism is, perhaps, more of a caricature than what always happens. Certainly the Evangelical-believing historian is, usually, part of a class of Evangelicals who operate in a far more sophisticated fashion than the Evangelical caricature. Evangelical scholarship is, generally, much more intellectually engaging than what is seen in militant fundamentalism. However, this caricature is still very much a reality, and has a subtle influence in Evangelical scholarship. For these Evangelical historians, have a dual role. They are on one hand, serious academics who write at a high level of scholarship. On the other, they are powerful apologetical symbols within the Evangelical sub-culture. They write insightful papers and books published within the academic community, while at the same time, they write apologetical tools produced by Evangelical publishing houses. They represent the academic search for theoretical and empirical understanding. They represent an apologetical agenda that seeks to undercut the very same theoretical and empirical understanding. There are three major groups of religious historians that can be identified in the formation of Evangelical historiography.⁴

The first group that can be identify is the Historian's Study Group, later to be known as the Study Group on Christianity and History (SGCH), formed sometime in the 1960s. This is a group in the United Kingdom, in England specifically, that says it attempts to examine the relationship between Christianity and the study of history. The chairman of SGCH has been Dr. John Wolffe, a lecturer in Religious Studies at the Open University. In 1991, its membership was at around 130. On the surface, it appears to be a broadly-based organisation. However, the SGCH produces papers on this supposedly broad examination through its periodical, *Christianity and*

⁴The following information that identifies the four groups of religious historians interested in Evangelical historiography comes from Brian Dickey. *Christianity and History: An International Newsletter*. No. 1. April 1991.

History Newsletter, which is suspiciously published by the University and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF), a student group that is part of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship's international Evangelical network. Further enquires reveal that the postal address for SGCH membership is the same postal address for Inter-Varsity Press and the Professional Group Secretary of the UCCF (38 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GP England).

Alarm bells should now be going off for any historian of contemporary Evangelicalism. For such historians would know that one of the strategies of contemporary Evangelicalism is to evangelise through professional associations. It is possible that not all SGCH members are necessarily Evangelical believers, but the driving force within the SGCH is Evangelically based. The problem is one of language and meaning. When the organisers of the SGCH talk about "Christianity" they have something specifically in mind. One of the specific aims of the SGCH is "To promote academic historical thinking and writing based on *biblical* Christian principles".⁵ The word "biblical" is loaded with Evangelical meaning. It is a symbolic word that denotes for the Evangelical something that is orthodox and trustworthy. Something that is biblical is distinct from what is not biblical because it has the authority of the bible. It is comparable to the Catholic use of the Imprimatur. To become a member of the SGCH, a person has to sign a declaration stating:

I declare my faith in Jesus Christ as my Saviour, my Lord and my God, whose atoning sacrifice is
the only and all-sufficient ground of my salvation; and
I will seek both in life and thought to be ruled by the clear teaching of the Bible, believing it to be
the inspired Word of God".⁶

If there was still any doubt that the SGCH is an Evangelically based organisation, these

⁵Membership Form. *Christianity and History Newsletter*. No. 8. July 1991. My emphasis on the word "biblical".

⁶Ibid.

doubts vanish when one considers that a SGCH conference in November 1991 was called "Evangelizing the Past and the Future". An ink-sketch that appears in an advertisement for this conference has, what appears to be, an Open Bible surrounded in bright light that shines toward a mass of people cloaked in darkness.⁷ Those initiated in the rites of Evangelicalism would understand this powerful imagery.

In 1977, a Scottish sister organisation to the English-dominated Study Group on Christianity and History emerged. It has operated as autonomous body from the English group under the umbrella of the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship. It is based at the University of Stirling, and is largely run by Dr David Bebbington. Bebbington is known to many Evangelical believers through his apology for "Christian historiography", *Patterns in History*, published by Inter-Varsity Press in 1979.⁸ His academic face, however, is that of a historian of nineteenth-century Britain, working in the Department of History, Stirling University. Thus Bebbington is good example of the dual role of Evangelical historians.

Rarely does anything happen in Evangelicalism without the Americans "getting into the act and taking over". In 1978, the Conference on Faith and History (CFH) was established in the United States. Note the broad reference of its title, "Faith and History". Again there is attempt to appear broadly based. In 1991, the CFH membership was that of 612. It is organised largely through Dr Richard (Dick) Pierard, based at the Department of History, Indiana State University. The journal of the CFH, *Fides Et Historia*, is edited by Professor Frank C. Roberts at the Department of History, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is assisted by Professor

⁷The History Students' Day Conference. "Evangelizing the Past and the Future". *Christianity and History Newsletter*. No. 8. July 1991.

⁸David Bebbington. *Patterns in History*. Leicester. Inter-Varsity Press. 1979.

Russell K. Bishop at the Department of History, Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts. One of the leading historians that has emerged from the CFH movement has been Professor Mark Noll, McManis Professor of Christian Thought at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. Once we move beyond the title and rhetoric, we discover that the CFH is an Evangelically-based organisation; as the historian of contemporary Evangelicalism will tell you that Calvin, Gordon, and Wheaton colleges are part of the intellectual training ground for the American Evangelical community.

Evangelical-believing parents send their Evangelical-children to Calvin, Gordon, and Wheaton, to become Evangelical-believing scholars.⁹ It is part of an insidious American Evangelical sub-culture where a believer can go through the whole of life, from birth to death, never touching the doorway of secular thought. Many of the New Evangelical historians, in the United States, have had some exposure to secular learning.¹⁰ A few have earned their degree, and taken up teaching positions, at secular universities. Nevertheless, even with a more secular education, American Evangelical historians represent religious backgrounds that are narrowly confined to the Evangelical tradition, as the summary, below, of the backgrounds of the leading American Evangelical historians shows:

⁹ These American Evangelical colleges have established a sub-culture that is often fosters anti-modernity and anti-secularity. Wheaton College is considered to be the leading Evangelical college in the United States, and possibly in the world. A revealing account of Wheaton College's founding ethos can be located in Richard S. Taylor. "Religion and Higher Education in Gilded Age America: The Case of Wheaton College". *American Studies*. Vol. 22. No. 1. 1981. An Evangelical history of Wheaton College is found in Paul M. Bechtel. *Wheaton College. A Heritage Remembered 1860-1984*. Wheaton. Harold Shaw Publishers. 1984. For a discussion of the historiography of Evangelical colleges, see James Findley. "Agency, Denominations and the Western Colleges, 1830-1860: Some Connections between Evangelicalism and American Higher Education". *Church History*. Vol. 50. 1981.

¹⁰ Leonard Sweet states "With the exception of Marsden, each of these historians spent the bulk of his formative years not in parochial Christian schools but in the public school system (Marsden's ratio of parochial to public was seven years to four)". Leonard Sweet. "Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves: The New Evangelical Historiography". *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. Vol. 56. 1988. p. 401.

Joel Carpenter was brought up an independent Baptist, and is now orthodox Presbyterian. Harry Stout was brought up an orthodox Presbyterian, and is now Presbyterian. Nathan Hatch was brought up southern Presbyterian (his father was an English Bible and psychology teacher at Columbia Bible College), and is now Christian Reformed. George Marsden was brought up an orthodox Presbyterian (his minister father was executive secretary at Westminster Seminary), and is now Christian Reformed. Mark Noll was brought up a conservative Baptist, and is now orthodox Presbyterian. Grant Wacker, was brought up Assemblies of God, and has recently joined the United Methodist Church.¹¹

Here we have only two examples where Evangelical historians have shifted into more broader denominations which accommodate both Evangelical and Liberal Protestant traditions (Stout into mainline Presbyterian Church, and Wacker into the United Methodist Church). The examples of the other four historians remain in Evangelical-controlled denominations. The fact that the majority of Evangelical historians have been raised in Evangelical homes, operate from Evangelical historical associations, teach at Evangelical colleges, go to Evangelical churches, means that they are not going to be sympathetic to Christian spirituality that is outside the control of Evangelical theology.¹² Hence, when Evangelical historians represent themselves as spokes-people for "Christianity", as in the titles "Study Group on Christianity and History" and "Conference on Faith and History", there is a level of dishonesty.

With greater financial and demographic resources, American Evangelical historiography has provided a incredible explosion of academic publication, and therefore has reserved the right to lead current trends within Evangelical historiography. In April 1992, a conference was organised by the American organisation, Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals (ISAE), entitled

¹¹Sweet. *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves*. p. 401.

¹²Of the Evangelical home life of these historians, Sweet writes "They all knelt at family alters. They were put to bed not just with once-upon-a-time stories, but with once-before-time Bible readings and once-in-time family prayers. their home environments were heady with theological inquiry and heavy with moralism, a powerful combination that has spurred intellectual endeavour and creativity throughout history and has even spawned households of children driven to become intellectuals (e.g. the Wesleys and the Edwards)". Sweet. *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves*. p. 401.

"Evangelicalism in Trans-Atlantic Perspective" and held at Wheaton College. The conference was funded by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trust, a Trust that represents the coming together of American conservative religion, and American capital. It was envisaged that there would be a formation of an international umbrella association at this conference.

Australia is not to be left out of the picture. In 1987, the Evangelical History Association (EHA) was formed, based then at the University of Sydney.¹³ The president of the EHA is Dr Stuart Piggin. In 1991, its membership stands at 140. At least, the Australians could be honest and call it for what it is, an Evangelical History Association, but there are still other questions about the level of honesty in the Evangelical's organisational approach. The journal of the EHA, *Lucas*, is produced by Dr Mark Hutchinson, the Director of the Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity (CSAC) at Robert Menzies College, Macquarie University. The same people who organised the EHA seem to be the same people who have established the CSAC. There is, at least, a strange ambiguous relationship between the EHA and the CSAC. One has to suspect the term "Christianity" in the title "Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity" when it is connected in some way with an organisation for Evangelical historiography. As has been mentioned in the English context, the term "Christianity" means something specific in the Evangelical mind. It does not mean ecumenical Christian thought, it means the true spiritual faith as opposed to a presumed formalistic expression. The Evangelical tradition has always assumed that it alone has the true spiritual faith, while other Christian traditions may have something of spirituality, but is largely lost in shifts away from Evangelical orthodoxy.

¹³Notification of the formation of the EHA appeared in the *Australian Historical Association Bulletin*. No. 58. May 1989.

A major problem of language exists then, when the Evangelical speaks in the wider field of religious history. Take for example, a paragraph from a brochure for a CSAC and Catholic Institute of Sydney conference to be held on 14-16th July 1993 at Robert Menzies College. It reads:

Since the 1970s, there been many conferences in Australia which have reflected on Australia religion. Very few, however, have reflected directly and solely on the influence and impact of *the Christian movement* in Australia. The effects of this has been to dilute the networks shared by scholars of *the Christian movement* among the more general scholarly community. While this has had the positive effect of making scholars aware of a variety of social science methodologies and approaches, there have appeared few *strong* "centres" of *strong* scholarship informing "traditions" of writing and thought.¹⁴

One is immediately hit with a sense that something is not right here, but it is hard to put your finger on what it is. At closer examination, one wonders what the difference is between Australian religion and something called "*the* Christian movement" in Australia. To the Evangelical mind, there is a difference between religion and his Christianity. The Evangelical has brought up to believe that his/her true Christianity is never a religion, and therefore, escapes the sort of critiques that can made be made about religion generally. The phrase "*the* Christian movement" is an Evangelical nonsense. Evangelicals like to use the term "movement" because it denotes something that is dynamic, and continuing without change, but it is impossible to talk of the Christian religion as one ("the") unchanging movement. Most religious historians (including Evangelical historians) would talk of various movements, that ebb and flow, throughout the Christian religion. It is suspect that the use of the phrase "*the* Christian movement" is indicative of a subtle Evangelical apologetic agenda. One also suspects what is meant by "few *strong* centres of *strong* scholarship". Are we to read for the word "strong", that which is ideologically-sound ?

Ideology is the key word. Evangelical historiography has to be

¹⁴Brochure - "Studying Australian Christianity" 14-16 July 1993. Attached to *Lucas* No. 14. December 1992. My Emphasis.

understood in terms of an ideological shift that first occurred in American Evangelicalism. One might say that Marxist historiography needs to be understood in terms of the ideological shifts that have occurred in European Marxism. Neo-Marxism became the new interpreter of Marx over and against the old orthodox of Marxist-Leninism, in much the same way that Neo-Evangelicalism became the new interpreter of the Evangelical tradition over and against the old orthodox of Fundamentalism. To comprehend this ideological shift in contemporary Evangelicalism, one needs to understand the relationship between "fundamentalism" and "evangelicalism", and to clarify the meaning of these terms in their usage. This problem has been partly explored in the British context, with a debate over the label "fundamentalist" that ran between the publication of J.I. Packer's *"Fundamentalism" and the Word of God* in 1958, and James Barr's *Fundamentalism* in 1977.¹⁵ Packer pointed out that the term "fundamentalism" had little meaning for English Evangelicalism. Evangelicals do not like being labelled with what is simply a derogatory term. Barr, however, points out that whatever term the Evangelical wish to use, or not to use, to describe themselves, they still represent theological fundamentalism.

The debate over the fundamentalist-evangelical labelling has come about because of shifts within the history of Evangelicalism. If we can talk about a broadly conservative orthodox Protestantism, we can see that this category is made up of various religious traditions, such as the Reformed and the Holiness traditions, and these traditions are linked by their adherence to what they see as an Evangelical orthodoxy. Of course, all those who describe themselves as "Evangelicals" define this orthodoxy slightly differently according to the theological dogmas of their particular traditions. In

¹⁵ J.I. Packer. *"Fundamentalism" and the Word of God*. Some Evangelical Principles. London. Inter-Varsity Fellowship. 1958; James Barr. *Fundamentalism*. Philadelphia. Westminster. 1977.

the twentieth century, conservative Protestantism, in confronting modernity and secularity, shifts in two opposite directions. One part of conservative Protestantism shifts deeper into conservatism until it ends up in a radical reactionary position. This is the position of American Protestant Fundamentalism, and parallels the same reaction to modernity that is seen in Islamic and Hindu anti-West Fundamentalism, and Catholic anti-Vatican II Neo-traditionalism. However, not all conservative Protestants completely repudiated modernity or secularity. Many conservative Protestants have taken on board various notions of modernity and secularity, particularly the notion of religious pluralism, without compromising their Evangelical orthodoxy. Thus conservative Protestantism has seen an opposite shift towards greater religious liberalisation without going into liberal Protestantism or Neo-Orthodoxy.

What this means is that there is a large spectrum of beliefs in the broad category of conservative Protestantism. One tradition within Protestantism, however, has dominated the thinking of religious conservatives, and has been, in fact, responsible for the evangelicalisation of Protestantism. It is what could be referred to as the Evangelistic tradition, which extends back to the American and British Evangelical Alliance in the nineteenth century, and to itinerant revivalists of the eighteenth century. It is primarily represented in the American group, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). The Evangelistic tradition emphasised interdenominational effort for evangelism. Its moderate Calvinism, or Arminianism, distinguishes it from the Reformed tradition, while its scholasticism distinguishes it from the Holiness tradition. All three traditions are historically linked in the evolution of conservative Protestant thought, but each came to represent a distinctive thrust in American Protestantism. In the United States, the Evangelistic-Revivalist tradition emphasised the conversion of the sinner, the Reformed tradition came to emphasise the authority of the Bible, and the American Holiness movement emphasised the importance of the sanctified

(empowered) life. What has happen in the twentieth century, is that the American Evangelistic tradition, or contemporary Evangelicalism, has largely incorporated the other two traditions. Thus there has been an evangelicalisation of the Reformed churches and the heirs of the Holiness tradition, the Pentecostal churches. In age of increasing secularity, notions of conversion and revival (mass conversion) has become paramount above the distinctions of traditions.

With global Americanisation, British and Australian Evangelicalism has followed in the American pattern. Therefore, what has held the large spectrum of beliefs together, in conservative Protestantism, worldwide, has been this notion of Evangelical theology that there are two types of human species, the unredeemed or unconverted, and the redeemed or converted, and the ultimate aim of life is to help the former become the latter. This notion has resulted in the religious phenomenon of Born-Againism. It could be said that Americanised Revivalism, a tradition in itself, has been an all embracing phenomenon that has its expressions in the Reformed, Holiness, and Evangelistic traditions. This emphasis on revivalism can be seen in what has been called Neo-Evangelicalism, the resurgence of Evangelical Protestantism in the second half of the twentieth century.

In the post-1945 period, Neo-Evangelicalism became the dominant force in conservative Protestantism. In the 1940s, a group of American fundamentalists in the Evangelical tradition sought to bring about an intellectual renaissance within orthodox Protestantism. They had despaired the anti-intellectualism that characterised American fundamentalism in the first half of the twentieth century, and which had prevented Evangelical orthodoxy from being taken seriously. These neo-evangelical scholars were Harold Lindsell, Carl Henry, George Ladd, and Edward Carnell, who established Fuller Theological Seminary as the leading Evangelical educational centre.

With the power and influence of the NAE, and Billy Graham's organisation, the Neo-Evangelical scholars helped to shift contemporary Evangelical community away from the pietistic social fundamentalism that had characterised American rural populist revivalism, and towards intellectual respectability.

The problem for Neo-Evangelicalism is that, although it repudiated the anti-social characteristics of the more militant fundamentalists, it still maintained the same theological fundamentalism of their fundamentalist forbears. Hence Barr's critique is basically correct. However, what has created confusion and flux in contemporary Evangelicalism is that the left-wing of Evangelicalism in the 1960s began to break away from the more rigid tenets of theological fundamentalism. The doctrine of biblical inerrancy which was seen as the cornerstone of theological fundamentalism was now undermined by those who saw such beliefs as no longer necessary for Evangelical orthodoxy. Those who made such pronouncement were labelled "the Young Evangelicals" since they were generally the children of the Neo-Evangelical parents. They had inherited their parent's liberalisation of the Evangelical tradition, and pushed it much further than their parents approved of. Thus there are three generations present in the contemporary Evangelical's conservative-liberal spectrum - the militant fundamentalist grandparents whose heritage is still being played out by the Neo-fundamentalists, such as Jerry Falwell in the United States, Ian Paisley in the United Kingdom, and Fred Nile in Australia; the Neo-Evangelical parents whose leading advocates are Charles Colson in the United States, John Stott in the United Kingdom, and the Archdiocese of Sydney in Australia; and the Young Evangelical children who is represented by Jim Wallis in the United States, Adrian Plass in the United Kingdom, and John Smith in Australia.

We now have a situation of not only incredible flux in the possible

meaning of the term Evangelical, but a situation where the pronouncements of some leading Evangelicals resemble closely the thinking of liberal theologians, such as Bonhoeffer, Tillich, and De Charin, (which would have been unthinkable in the Evangelical tradition fifty years ago), while others resemble the tripe of the fundamentalist demagogues, such as Billy Sunday, John R. Rice, and Edgar Bundy.¹⁶ In examining Evangelical historiography, it has to be remembered the very complex understanding implied in the term "Evangelical".¹⁷ An Evangelical historian could approach history from the perspective of the Reformed or Holiness perspective, from a conservative or liberal perspective, from a militant fundamentalist or left-wing evangelical perspective. Understanding these variations in contemporary Evangelicalism helps to map out the evolution of Evangelical historiography, and will give a better understanding of the problems that exist.

The evolution of Evangelical Historiography has seen two major stages in the twentieth century - Old Evangelical Historiography and New Evangelical Historiography.¹⁸ By New Evangelical Historiography, it is meant the scholarship that followed on after the Evangelical liberalisation that occurred in the 1960s. By Old Evangelical Historiography, it is meant the scholarship that predated, or resisted, that

¹⁶Mark Noll claims that academic success of the Neo-Evangelicals in the 1940s "has created a fluid situation where boundaries are not as clear as they once had been". Mark Noll. *Between Faith and Criticism*. Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America. San Francisco. Harper & Row. 1986. pp. 162-163; Noll's statement is cited by Sweeney in the context of Evangelical historiography. Douglas A. Sweeney. "The Essential Evangelicalism Dialectic: The Historiography of the Early Neo-Evangelical Movement and the Observer-Participant Dilemma". *Church History*. Vol. 60. 1991. p. 72.

¹⁷Dayton even doubts the usefulness of the categorical use in the term "Evangelical. Donald Dayton. "Some Doubts about the Usefulness of the Category 'Evangelical'" in Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnston (Ed). *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*. Knoxville. The University of Tennessee Press. 1991. pp. 245-251.

¹⁸Appendix 1 sets out the variations in Evangelical historiography using the leading examples of American Evangelical historians.

process of liberalisation. In relation to issue of theological liberalisation, historians between the Old and New Evangelical historiography can be more specific classified according to their particular style of Evangelical theology - Classic Fundamentalism, Neo-Evangelicalism, and Young Evangelicalism.¹⁹ Evangelical historiography, old and new, can be further classified according to the perspective of a particular tradition, such as Reformed, Holiness, or Evangelistic, within Evangelicalism.²⁰ Two American scholars, Donald Dayton and Douglas Sweeney, have already noted the differences in perspective between Evangelical historian from the Reformed tradition, and those from the Holiness tradition.²¹ Dayton and Sweeney see the difference in terms similar to the distinction between "History From Above" and "History From Below".²² The Evangelical historians from the Reformed tradition, which dominate the New Evangelical historiography, present the "History From Above", a heavily academic examination of the leading theologians. The Evangelical historians from the Holiness tradition see themselves presenting the "History From Below", a "people's history" that is often ignored when more conceptual considerations take precedence. Whereas Dayton and Sweeney only address two categories, it is important not to leave out a

¹⁹Appendix 2 defined the differences of theological perspective between these three styles of Evangelical theology. Quebedeaux distinguishes Classic Fundamentalism into two parts, Separatist and Open. Separatist fundamentalism was the procurer to Neo-Fundamentalism, while Open fundamentalism was the procurer to Neo-Evangelicalism. Although Quebedeaux's sub-division is valid, the distinction becomes less significant in comparison to the large theological framework. There is also the tendency to overemphasis the "openness" of Open fundamentalism which could be just as separatistic at different times. Richard Quebedeaux. *The Young Evangelicals*. Revolution in Orthodoxy. New York. Harper & Row. 1974. pp. 25-28.

²⁰Appendix 2 summaries the distinction between these three traditions in three short phrases.

²¹Douglas Sweeney describes Evangelical historiography according to the Reformed and Holiness models. Sweeney. *The Essential Evangelicalism Dialectic*; Donald Dayton also makes the distinctions in Evangelical historiography between the Reformed and Holiness traditions. Donald Dayton. "Yet Another Layer of the Onion: Or Opening the Ecumenical Door to Let the Riffraff in". *The Ecumenical Review*. Vol. 40. No. 1. 1988.

²²Dayton. *Yet Another Layer of the Onion*. p. 94; Sweeney. *The Essential Evangelicalism Dialectic*. p. 74.

third category of Evangelical historians, those from the Evangelistic tradition. These historians are, not necessarily, concerned with the place of the theologian, nor the place of the religious grassroots ("the people"). The main concern of the Evangelical historian from the Evangelistic tradition is, foremost, the place of the evangelist. The evangelist is, in a sense, a mediator between the theologian and the grassroots.

Evangelical historiography, therefore, can mean different things. It has a number of organisational bases in Britain, United States, and Australia. It ranges over the conservative-liberal spectrum, as well as, the various conservative Protestant traditions. However, it generally been, recently, dominated by the New Evangelical historiography that has come out the Young Evangelical movement, and is divided among Reformed, Holiness, and Evangelistic historians. Two other articles written by this writer will help to expand the subject of Evangelical historiography.²³

²³Part Two: The Nature of An American Evangelical Historiography, and Part Three: The Problems in Evangelical Historiography.

Appendix 1

The Variations in Evangelical Historiography: The American Example

The Old Evangelical Historiography

	Reformed	Holiness	Evangelistic
Classic			
Fundamentalist	@ Gordon H. Clark @ F.A. Schaeffer	George Dollar	
Neo-Evangelical	John Woodbridge David Wells @ John W. Montgomery @ Ronald Nash		K.S. Latourette J. Edwin Orr ~ John Pollock

The New Evangelical Historiography

	Reformed	Holiness	Evangelistic
Neo-Evangelical/ Young Evangel. Joel Carpenter	George Marsden Mark Noll Leonard Sweet Donald Bloesch Nathan Hatch Harry Stout Bernard Ramm James D. Hunter * Dan Fuller	Timothy Smith Donald Dayton + D. Moberg Douglas Frank Grant Wacker Paul Bassett Daniel W. Howe	Robert Linder + Quebedeaux R.V. Pierard

Within the Mennonite tradition - # John H. Yoder, C. Norman Kraus.

@ Philosophy specialists who write history.

+ Religious Sociologists who write history.

~ Biographer.

* Ancient History specialist.

Studies in Religion/Theology specialists who write history.

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Appendix 2

Statements that Indicate the Variations in Contemporary Evangelicalism

The Americanised Evangelical Traditions

Reformed - The centre of Christianity is the authority of the Bible

Holiness - The centre of Christianity is the sanctified (empowered) life.

Evangelistic - The centre of Christianity is the conversion of the sinner.

The Three Generations of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century

Classic Fundamentalism -A belief in biblical revelation requires that the doctrine of biblical inerrancy is accepted in total, and this does not compromise a literal interpretation of biblical history. The result is a rejection of modern historical methodology because biblical revelation has to be proven from the historical records.

Neo-Evangelicalism -A belief in biblical revelation requires that the doctrine of biblical inerrancy be accepted, but this must be maintained with "intellectual credibility" through scriptural harmonisation, which may compromise a literal interpretation of biblical history. The result is a partial acceptance of modern historical methodology since literalism can be compromised as long as it does not question the historical truths of biblical revelation.

Young Evangelicalism -A belief in biblical revelation does not require that acceptance of the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. The result is a full acceptance of modern historical methodology by holding a belief in biblical revelation existentially, outside the conclusions drawn from historical knowledge.

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