

BOOK REVIEWS



Danielle J. Buhuro, *Is There a Heaven for a “G”?* A Pastoral Care Approach to Gang Violence (Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2016), 94 pp.

I highly recommend this book to religious leaders, community pastors, and chaplain educators. The author weaves practical tools with clinical vignettes (almost in verbatim format) to illustrate how the application of basic pastoral skills addresses critical themes and concerns in our communities. Buhuro’s honest and authentic voice comes through in every chapter and patient/family encounter, sounding the theological themes of hope, despair, justice, and reconciliation. This book highlights the power of story, with a focus on the art of listening, and gives a call to action, calling us to authentically engage our men, women, and children impacted by gang violence. Buhuro invites the reader to reflect theologically on the definitions of violence and gangs, challenging the reader’s assumptions and biases. The book’s title, drawn from a line in Tupac Shakur’s “Life Goes On,” captures well the author’s prophetic spirit and call to community engagement. Buhuro’s passion and experience as a pastor, educator, and community leader ground her narrative in empathy and the centrality of relational pastoral care.

The book’s foreword (by JoAnne Marie Terrell) and introduction (by Sharon Ellis Davis) set the stage for a deeper exploration of Buhuro’s pastoral approach to gang violence. Contextualizing the interconnectedness of domestic violence, violence in America, and mass incarceration and criminalization, predominantly in urban communities of color, helps the reader demythologize gang violence and challenge stereotypes and generaliza-

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tions. These two women and Buhuro herself contribute valuable perspectives, integrating theological reflections and faith amidst complex social and cultural systems.

I appreciate Buhuro's focus on self-care, empowerment, and the importance of understanding how racial and socioeconomic structural oppression, both historical and present, impact the importance of advocacy and faith seeking understanding. I recommend that ACPE centers integrate this resource into their curriculum. This practical guide is a must-read for anyone engaged in providing pastoral care. Each chapter builds on narratives, concepts, and questions for reflection that invite deeper exploration and awareness.

Carrie L. Buckner
Alta Bates Summit Medical Center
Berkeley, California