Out of ancient Greek culture, the prophet/philosopher Socrates emerged. In Athens during the experiment in limited participatory democracy, he made a big impression on impressionable young men such as Plato. Tragically, Socrates was brought to trial on trumped up charges, found guilty, and executed. His grief-stricken follower Plato memorialized him as the fictional character named Socrates in his artfully written dialogues.

It has famously been said that all of Western philosophy is a series of footnotes to Plato. Over the centuries, footnotes to Plato have been written by secularists, Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Our American experiment in representative democracy emerged out of the philosophical thought of the Enlightenment (also known as the Age of Reason). As a result, figuratively speaking, we Americans are living footnotes to Plato, including those Americans who have not cultivated a philosophical mind. But in American culture today, we still have a certain number of professors of philosophy in academia who try to make a big impression on impressionable young men and women enticing them to cultivate the philosophical mind.

But a few centuries after the prophet/philosopher Socrates’ tragic death in Athens, a religious prophet named Jesus of Nazareth emerged out of the matrix of the ancient Hebrew religious culture that is now memorialized in the Hebrew Bible. In Jerusalem at the time of the festival of the Passover one year, something happened involving Jesus. As a result, he was brought before the local authorities of the Roman Empire on trumped up charges, found guilty, and executed by crucifixion, as Paula Fredriksen explains in her book *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews: A Jewish Life and the Emergence of Christianity* (Knopf, 1999). But his grief-stricken followers memorialized his life and tragic death by constructing the greatest story ever told with Jesus portrayed as the long-awaited Messiah (also known as the Christ). In American culture today, we still have a certain number of Christians.

Historically in American culture, the tradition of freedom of religion (i.e., no established church) emerged in our experiment with representative democracy, alongside the tradition of free speech (i.e., free political speech) and the tradition of separating church and state.

But political speech involves articulating and expressing political values.

But where do our political values in American culture come from? Do the political values expressed in our founding documents (the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and its Amendments) express the grand total of our political values?
But doesn’t our practice of occasionally voting in new amendments show that as our American culture continues along its evolutionary trajectory we tend to articulate and express evolving new political values?

But does our American tradition of separating church and state mean that only political values emerging from our American state’s official documents, including of course the various amendments, should be discussed in the so-called public square?

This brings me to the American Catholic law professor M. Cathleen Kaveny’s new book Prophecy without Contempt: Religious Discourse in the Public Square (Harvard University Press, 2016). It is ironic that her new book came out at a time when Donald J. Trump is the front-runner for the Republican Party’s presidential nomination in 2016.

Kaveny is the Darald and Juliet Libby Professor at Boston College, a Jesuit university, a position which allows her to teach in both the department of theology and the law school. She did her undergraduate studies at Princeton University and graduated summa cum laude (1984). She holds four advanced degrees from Yale University: M.A., M.Phil., J.D., and Ph.D. In her 1991 doctoral dissertation she focused on the theme of the common good. Her prestige education qualifies her to try to make her mark in life in the prestige culture in American culture. Her educational credentials also contribute to her ethos appeal.

Having her book published by Harvard University Press is prestigious and contributes to her ethos appeal. Because of the prestige of Princeton, Yale, and Harvard universities in American culture today, perhaps I should explain here that each of these universities has a school of divinity, but it may not be in good odor with certain anti-religion secularists in other university units.

In the present essay, my pathos appeal involves the frustration and understandable anger that progressives and liberals feel about the obstructionist tactic of anti-60s radical conservatives in the Congress and in the Republican Party, including of course conservative American Catholic culture warriors. In certain respects this pathos appeal is similar to Kaveny’s pathos appeal in her new book.

As progressives and liberals may know, in the book The Theocons: Secular America under Siege (Doubleday, 2006), Damon Linker delineates how radical conservative American Catholic cultural warriors have conspired in recent decades to bring their anti-abortion religious zealotry and other rash religious views to greater prominence in American culture.

In the book Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America (Oxford University Press, 2006), Philip Jenkins details how the 1973 Roe v. Wade was, for rhetorical purposes, subsumed under anti-60s rhetoric to promote radical conservative candidates and issues in the Republican Party.
In the book *Render unto Darwin: Philosophical Aspects of the Christian Right’s Crusade against Science* (Open Court, 2007, pages 123-148), the American philosophy professor James H. Fetzer uses deontological moral theory (derived from Kant) to construct a cogent argument in favor of legalized abortion in the first trimester.

No doubt there were excesses in the 1960s and 1970s, including the excesses involved in the priest-sex-abuse scandal that began to be reported in the press in the 1980s and subsequently. Even so, anti-60s conservatives have thrown out the baby with the bathwater.

For understandable reasons, anti-abortion religionists are not popular with anti-religion secularists in the prestige culture in American culture – and neither are the conservative American Catholic cultural warriors described by Linker as theocons.

Now, non-Catholics concerned about Linker’s conservative American Catholic cultural warriors should welcome Kaveny’s new book. In the political alignments among American Catholics today, Kaveny would separate herself from her fellow American Catholics described by Linker, himself an American Catholic, as theocons. Unlike them, Kaveny is not a radical conservative. Indeed, she appears to have been prompted to undertake her new book, at least in part, by the intra-church disputes among American Catholics.

Now, unfortunately, on the world stage today, certain radical jihadists have used violence, including violence against their fellow Muslims, to try to advance their theocratic vision of the world. Fortunately, the American Catholic theocons described by Linker have not used violence to advance their theocratic vision of American culture, but certain other anti-abortion zealots have used violence against abortion providers.

Now, in the English-speaking world today, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks in the United Kingdom, who just recently won the Templeton Prize, has addressed the violence of radical jihadists in his deeply informed and accessible book *Not in God’s Name: Confronting Religious Violence* (Schocken Books, 2015).

Even though Kaveny understandably does not focus on religious violence, her scholarly new book is related in spirit to Sacks’ 2015 book inasmuch as both authors address appropriate non-violent ways in which religionists could express what they themselves consider to be their religious views vis a vis the hypothetically secular thought-world.

The hypothetically secular thought-world is a conceptual construct that emerged in print culture in the prestige culture in Western culture. In the prestige culture, this hypothetical conceptual construct replaced the medieval hypothetical construct of a religious thought-world – expressed not only in Catholicism but also in Islam.

In any event, today we have a cultural battle between secularists and religionists in Western culture. In American culture today, religionists decidedly outnumber secularists. However, in the
prestige culture in American culture today, the reverse tends to be the case, including a certain number of anti-religion secularists. In theory, secularists could be neutral about religionists, and vice versa.

In her scholarly new book, Kaveny appears to be neutral about secularists and the secular thought-world. As we might expect a scholarly book to be, her book tends to rely strongly on her logos appeal. As I have indicated above, explicit expressions of contempt involve the pathos appeal. But she argues explicitly for doing without expressions of contempt. This may sound high-minded. It certainly sounds irenic in spirit. But how practical is it?

ARISTOTLE ON CIVIC RHETORIC

Around the time when Athens experimented with limited participatory democracy as a form of government, Aristotle broke with his teacher Plato’s contempt for rhetoric (in favor of philosophy) by writing his famous treatise on civic rhetoric. Civic rhetoric takes place in the so-called public square, to use Kaveny’s imagery.

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle differentiates three different kinds of civic rhetoric:

1. Deliberative rhetoric used in debate in legislative assemblies about possible proposed courses of action to legislate.
2. Forensic rhetoric used in debate in law courts about charges made against someone to be adjudicated by the court.
3. Epideictic rhetoric about civic values involving good values versus values not deemed to be good (also known as “evil”).

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle discusses personal values and the cultivation of virtue. Even though both Plato and Aristotle lived centuries before St. Paul and St. Augustine conspired to construct the concept of so-called original sin, both Plato and Aristotle understood that we are not born virtuous.

We Americans today still have (1) legislative assemblies in which deliberative rhetoric is used and (2) law courts to adjudicate charges made against someone in which forensic rhetoric is used and (3) public occasions for speeches about civic values in which epideictic rhetoric is used.

Aristotle also differentiates three different appeals used by civic orators:

(A) The logos appeal (appeals to rational argumentation).
(B) The pathos appeal (roughly, emotional appeals).
(C) The ethos appeal (roughly, credibility).

In terms of civic rhetoric in American culture today, most Americans would recognize (A) that rational argumentation may still be detected (Aristotle’s logos appeal) and (B) that emotional
appeals to anger, contempt, or patriotism, for example, may still be detected (Aristotle’s pathos appeal) and (C) that the speaker’s (or writer’s) credibility may still be detected (Aristotle’s ethos appeal).

Simply stated, an orator’s or an author’s ethos appeal involves the person’s qualities that positively impress us and compel our attention and interest in whatever she or her has to say. Typically, the person’s positive ethos somehow triggers something in us (in our psyches) that enables the person to pass muster as it were with us as trustworthy and thereby enables us to make a positive archetypal projection on to the person. (In my op-ed piece “Profiling Oppo-Appeals in the Match-up of Donald J. Trump and Hillary Rodham Clinton in 2016” at OpEdNews.com [dated March 6, 2016], I have explained that we may project “shadow” forms of the archetypes on to certain persons.)

But making such a positive archetypal projection on to a person does not necessarily make us uncritical of the person and what she or he has to say. However, as we might expect, experience often shows that our trust was misplaced, because the person and/or what she says do not turn out to be trustworthy. As a result of such disappointing experiences, we have to mourn our loss involving our misplaced trust in a healthy way.

Now, for understandable reasons, the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle was not familiar with the ancient Hebrews. Under the leadership of the prophet Moses, the ancient Hebrews had collectively entered into an experiment in a form of government known as the covenant. But the covenant form of government had evolved over the centuries before Amos and certain other prophets articulated the theme known in American culture today as social justice (also known as distributive justice). Rhetoric about social justice is epideictic rhetoric.

In the ancient Greek culture out of which Plato and Aristotle emerged, a concept of legal justice emerged – for example, in Plato’s Republic. For a philological study of the ancient Greek concept of justice that emerges in Plato’s Republic, see the classicist Eric A. Havelock’s book The Greek Concept of Justice: From Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato (Harvard University Press, 1978).

In any event, Amos and certain other ancient Hebrew prophets (such as Jeremiah) claimed to be speaking for the monotheistic deity of the Hebrews (also known as God). In this way, the ancient Hebrew prophets established their credibility (Aristotle’s ethos appeal) for speaking out to their fellow Hebrews. Characteristically, Amos expresses anger, blame, shame, and contempt (Aristotle’s pathos appeal) as he urges his co-religionists to choose a more elevated path to follow (Aristotle’s logos appeal).

As the example of Amos’ public oratory to his co-religionists can be described in the terminology that Aristotle uses to describe the basic appeals used in Greek oratory. However, for understandable reasons, we Americans today might invoke the admittedly limited experiment in participatory democracy in ancient Athens. We might also invoke the theme of social justice
pioneered by Amos and certain other ancient Hebrew prophets. But for Amos and the other 
prophets who pioneered the theme of social justice, social justice was connected with the 
covenant. Granted, when we Americans today invoke the common good, we are tending 
implicitly toward something like the ancient Hebrew idea of the covenant.

Now, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, mentioned above, has accentuated the theme of the covenant in 
several of his books, including *The Politics of Hope*, 2nd ed. (Vintage, 2000), *The Dignity of 
Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations* (Continuum, 2002), *To Heal a Fractured 
World: The Ethics of Responsibility* (Schocken Books, 2005), and *The Great Partnership: 

QUESTION: Could a secularist theory of covenant be formulated without reference to God or a 
specific monotheistic religious tradition? Arguably the spirit of fraternity expressed in 
connection with the French Revolution expressed something akin to a secular spirit of covenant. 
Tragically, the French Revolution did not work out as well as the American Revolution – nor did 
the various communist revolutions in Russia and China and elsewhere.

Now, in the print culture that emerged historically in Western culture after the Gutenberg 
printing press emerged in the 1450s, printed materials were added to the mix of civic rhetoric. In 
American culture historically, the King James Bible (1611) helped more Protestants access the 
Englished texts of the ancient Hebrew prophets such as Amos. In American culture historically, 
the American Protestant tradition, including lapsed Protestants, helped launch the tradition of 
spirited public address that produced what scholars in American studies refer to as the American 
jeremiad – broadly speaking, prophetic speech.

For a scholarly study of the American jeremiad, see Sacvan Bercovitch’s book *The American 
rhetoric. Typically, all preaching involves epideictic rhetoric about values, but not all preaching 
involves political values such as the political values involved in public-policy issues. Kaveny 
also discusses American jeremiads.

But both Kaveny and Bercovitch discuss texts written by educated Protestants in print culture 1.0 
in American culture. However, in American cultural historically, there were also uneducated 
people, including uneducated folk preachers such as those Bruce A. Rosenberg studies in his 

In David Riesman’s lucidly written famous book *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing 
American Character* (Yale University Press, 1950), he characterizes uneducated people in 
American culture as outer-directed (also known as tradition-directed). By contrast, he 
characterizes educated Americans in print culture 1.0 historically up to 1950 as inner-directed. In 
addition, he characterizes an emerging number of Americans as other-directed, which he as an 
inner-directed person in print culture 1.0 in 1950 does not see positively. But the then-emerging
other-directed people in American culture were not as characteristically inner-directed as Riesman and others were.

Because anti-60s conservatives appear to remember the 1950s with nostalgia, we might suspect that they represent inner-directed people. Conversely, the Americans over against whom anti-60s conservatives stand might represent other-directed people.

In any event, I should also point out here that certain nineteenth-century Roman Catholic popes also excelled at constructing jeremiads. For example, a certain papal encyclical is known as the Syllabus of Errors. Denouncing supposed errors is consistent with the church’s tradition of pronouncing anathemas.

QUESTION: Could a secularist construct a secular jeremiad without reference to God or a specific monotheistic religious tradition? Noam Chomsky, a secular Jew, constructs secular jeremiads regularly using certain widely known secular values. As this example of Chomsky shows, the jeremiad tradition appears to be alive and well in American culture today.


ONG ON THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND CULTURE

In my estimate, the American Jesuit cultural historian and theorist Walter J. Ong (1912-2003) constructed the most cogent account of print culture in Western culture, most notably in his book Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason (Harvard University Press, 1958). The Art of Reason refers to the Age of Reason (also known as the Enlightenment). Ong sees the Art of Reason as irenic in spirit. By contrast, the Art of Discourse is systemically agonistic and polemical in structure.

In Ong’s book The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for cultural and Religious History (Yale University Press, 1967), the expanded version of his 1964 Terry Lectures at Yale’s Divinity School, mentioned above, Ong discusses polemical structures at length (pages 192-286). In Ong’s book Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness (Cornell University Press, 1981), the published version of his 1979 Messenger Lectures at Cornell University, Ong further develops his account of polemical structures.

Briefly stated, Ong sees polemical structures as integrally involved in the evolution of consciousness and culture.

Over the years, Ong made his mark in the prestige culture by publishing eight books with prestigious university presses: two with Harvard University Press (1958a, 1958b), two with Yale University Press (1967 and 1982), three with Cornell University Press (1971, 1977, and 1981), and one with the University of Toronto Press (1986).

Drawing on Ong’s body of work about consciousness and culture, I want to construct an account of our American culture and certain culture wars over roughly the last half century or so, highlighting certain events impacting American Catholics – to contextualize Kaveny’s new book. Anit-60s conservative to the contrary notwithstanding, I want to suggest that our collective American consciousness has evolved over roughly the last half century or so. As a result of our collective evolution of consciousness, the time is ripe for the evolution of our American culture.

Ong himself describes his thought as phenomenological and personalist in cast. However, as rich as Ong’s body of work is, he does not discuss political theory in the kind of detail that Kaveny does. Arguably Ong’s theme of dialogue could be connected with the German philosophy professor Jurgen Habermas’ discourse ethics, as could Kaveny’s theme of religious discourse in the public square.


In Rehg’s more recent book *Cogent Science in Context: The Science Wars, Argumentation Theory, and Habermas* (MIT Press, 2009), Rehg extends Habermas’ discourse ethics into scientific discourse.

The science wars that Rehg refers to are a subset of our ongoing culture wars. Kaveny focuses on certain other aspects of our ongoing culture wars.


Now, I would point out that Kaveny does not happen to advert to Ong’s wonderful essay “Voice and the Opening of Closed Systems” in his book *Interfaces of the Word: Studies in the Evolution of Consciousness and Culture* (Cornell University Press, 1977, pages 305-341). But what Kaveny refers to as prophecy involves the voice of the prophet articulating and expressing in verbal speech (spoke and/or written) something prophetic. (Perhaps I should point out here that there are biblical accounts of prophecies enacted through body language – pantomime -- without spoken words.)
I interpret Kaveny’s words “without contempt” to mean prophecy expressed in an irenic way. Irenic expressions would probably involve what Ong, using systems terminology, refers to as open closure. Therefore, from my standpoint as a student of Ong’s thought, Kaveny could have used Ong’s thought about open closure to help advance her basic argument. In addition, she could have used his thought about consciousness and culture to advance her basic argument. But Ong’s body of work still remains as an under-utilized resource.

In the present essay I have been dwelling on the ethos appeal, which involves the personal credibility of the speaker/orator – and by extension, of the author. The author’s written words symbolize the sound of his or her voice. The written words, and of course the printed words, come to take on a certain credibility associated with the ethos appeal.


But the kind of technologically enabled experiences of immediacies that Ong discusses also occur today not only when we allow newspapers to enter our homes but also when we allow radio and television broadcasts, and email messages and Internet sources to enter our homes. As a matter of fact, thanks to our evolving communications technologies, we Americans today may experience technologically enabled immediacies daily, some of which are more evocative than others.

Now, through the psychodynamics involved in the ethos appeal, we readers may commune with the author’s spirit expressed in the written and printed text, thereby making our reading of the text a more genuinely personal communing with the author who may not be physically present to us – or who may be deceased. At times, such deep communing with the author of a text may involve I-thou communication.

Arguably St. Thomas Aquinas commundered deeply with the long-deceased Aristotle’s philosophical texts, even though Aquinas himself did not know ancient Greek. As a result, we should always refer to Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy, rather than use the shorthand expressions Thomistic philosophy or Thomism.

In Ong’s Jesuit training in philosophy at Saint Louis University, he was educated in what was known as St. Louis Thomism. However, he did not fall in love with Aquinas’ thought, as did certain other Jesuits of his generation.

For example, the Canadian Jesuit philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) fell in love with Aquinas’ thought. As a result of two different detailed studies Lonergan undertook
of Aquinas’ thought, Lonergan communed deeply not only with Aquinas but also with Aristotle, culminating in Lonergan’s philosophical masterpiece *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed. (University of Toronto Press, 1992). In the late 1950s, the Canadian Catholic literary scholar Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980) and a graduate student in English at the University of Toronto named Donald F. Theall (1928-2008) slowly read and discussed Lonergan’s 1957 book *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*.


In Ong’s mature work in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, he characteristically expresses himself in an irenic spirit – not in the polemical spirit of the jeremiad tradition. Moreover, the only pathos appeal Ong uses is his own infectious enthusiasm. As to his ethos appeal, Ong represented himself as polymath with a philosophical mind who was an orthodox Roman Catholic priest. To this day, he is the only Catholic priest ever elected to be the president of the Modern Language Association of America (in 1978).

In return for his irenic efforts to persuade people, Ong received a respectful hearing from many contemporary scholars, but only a few people understood his thought well enough to develop his thesis about consciousness and culture further on their own – as McLuhan does.

For an exploration of Lonergan’s thought that is generally relevant to Kaveny’s themes, see the American Catholic law professor David Granfield’s book *The Inner Experience of Law: A Jurisprudence of Subjectivity* (Catholic University of America Press, 1988).

For explorations of Lonergan’s thought and the theme of communication some of which are relevant to Kaveny’s theme of religious discourse in the public square, see the ambitious anthology *Communication and Lonergan: Common Ground for Forging the New Age*, co-edited by me and Paul A. Soukup (Sheed & Ward, 1993).

No doubt Ong is a tough act to follow, as is Lonergan. I see both Ong and Lonergan as towering philosophical giants. In the book *Interpreting Modern Philosophy* (Princeton University Press, 1972), the American Catholic philosophy professor James Collins (1917-1985; Ph.D. in philosophy, Catholic University of America, 1944) of Saint Louis University points out that “[g]reat philosophers do not suppose that there will be instantaneous understanding and acceptance of their basic method and principles” (page 385). He makes this claim to set up what he then goes on to say about Hegel. But this claim can be extended to the philosophical thought of Ong and Lonergan.
Concerning Ong’s philosophical thought, see my essay “Understanding Ong’s Philosophical Thought,” which is available online at https://hdl.handle.net/10792/2696.

In my own admittedly modest publications (modest in number and substance), I have pioneered the field of Ong studies. In my publications in the field of Ong studies, I see myself as standing on the shoulders of a giant. But I am not myself an intellectual giant. Indeed, by the standard expectations of the prestige culture in American culture today, my academic and scholarly achievements are undoubtedly modest both in number and substance.


In addition, I have co-edited with Soukup five collections of Ong’s essays (1992a, 1992b, 1995, 1999, and 2002) and provided introductory essays in four of those five volumes (1992a, 1995, 1999, and 2002). In addition, I have also contributed essays to four collections of essays by diverse hands about Ong’s thought (1987, 1991, 1999, and 2012) and published numerous articles in professional journals centered on Ong’s thought.

Nevertheless, with or without my help, I do not expect Ong’s thought to become contagious in academia or elsewhere in the near future. On the contrary, I expect that his thought will continue to be over the heads of many academics and other college-educated people – who in turn will see me as simply an Ong enthusiast – and wonder why I’m so enthusiastic about his thought.

In his book Hopkins, the Self, and God (University of Toronto Press, 1986), the published version of Ong’s 1981 Alexander Lectures at the University of Toronto, Ong describes the Oxford-educated Victorian Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889) as admiring the theology of John Duns Scotus (c.1266-1308) almost without bounds (page 106). My admiration of Ong’s thought is similar to Hopkins’ admiration of Dun Scotus’ thought. For a sample expression of Hopkins’ admiration, see his poem “Duns Scotus’s Oxford.” However, as Ong shows, Hopkins was deeply impressed by certain aspects of Duns Scotus’ thought that Ong does not happen to mention in Hopkins’ appreciative short poem.

In any event, both Ong and McLuhan were notable Catholics who contributed to the heady times in the 1960s and 1970s, which conservative American cultural warriors denounced with their anti-60s rhetoric. Various books that Ong wrote and edited and contributed to (1957, 1958a, 1958b, 1959, 1960, 1962, 1967a, 1967b, 1968, 1971, and 1977) contributed to those heady times in both American Catholic culture and in the prestige culture.

For example, in the book Hillary’s Choice (Random House, 1999, pages 48-49), Gail Sheehy reports that on the recommendation of her former Wellesley professor Anthony D’Amato, young
Hillary Rodham (born in 1947), who had been a Goldwater girl in the 1964 presidential election, read Ong’s book *In the Human Grain: Further Explorations of Contemporary Culture* (Macmillan, 1967) in the summer of 1967 and “thought Ong’s book was one of the most important she had ever read” (page 49).

In the intra-church disputes among American Catholics today, I would categorize McLuhan as tending in the direction of the anti-60s conservative American Catholic cultural warriors, but I would not categorize Ong as tending in their direction. However, in terms of then-contemporary issues being debated in the public square, both Ong and McLuhan tended to be apolitical, but McLuhan made it known that he was a pacifist.

In addition to Ong’s and McLuhan’s contributions to the heady times in the 1960s and 1970s, the posthumously published writings of the French Jesuit paleontologist and religious thinker Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) also contributed to those heady times. By the way, Ong was one of the first American Catholics to call Teilhard to the attention of American Catholics (in 1952). Ong never tired of referring to Teilhard.

Historically in American culture, white Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs), and lapsed Protestants, have dominated the prestige culture. Various groups of non-white and/or non-Anglo-Saxon and/or non-Protestants were under-represented in the prestige culture. (On Ong’s father’s side of the family, Ong’s relatives were white Anglo-Saxon Protestants. His Onge [sic] ancestors left East Anglia on the same ship that brought Roger Williams to Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1631.)

Symbolically, the unexpected and narrow election in 1960 of the Harvard-educated Senator John F. Kennedy, an Irish American Roman Catholic, as the president of the United States was a watershed moment in the prestige culture in American culture. Tragically, President Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963.

Because Kennedy’s religion was an issue in the 1960 presidential election, we should note that the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) in the Roman Catholic Church was symbolically another watershed moment for American Catholics. Through different measures, Vatican II inaugurated a more irenic spirit into the church’s official attitude toward non-Catholic religious traditions and toward the modern world. Kaveny wants to advance Vatican II’s irenic spirit in the American context.

By the way, Islam has not undergone anything comparable is scope and impact to Vatican II.

But in the book *The Pope’s War: Why Ratzinger’s Secret Crusade Has Imperiled the Church and How It Can Be Saved* (Sterling Ethos, 2011), former Catholic priest Matthew Fox details how two successive conservative popes (John-Paul II and Benedict XVI) cracked down on various Catholics around the world for alleged thought-crimes. Arguably those two popes reverted to the church’s pre-Vatican II spirit of cultural warriors.
In any event, in the spring semester of 1964, he delivered the prestigious Terry Lectures at Yale’s School of Divinity, the expanded version of which was published as the book *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History* (Yale University Press, 1967).

According to Ong, by 1960, communication media that accentuate sound has reached a certain critical mass. At times, he refers to them collectively as producing secondarily oral culture. For Ong, primarily oral culture goes back to pre-historic and pre-literate cultures, even though it persisted for centuries after the phonetic alphabet emerged. However, he eventually switched from referring to primarily oral culture and started referring instead to primary oral culture – in short, oral culture 1.0. Similarly, he also switched from referring to secondarily oral culture and started referring instead to secondary oral culture – in short, oral culture 2.0. It appears to me that oral culture 2.0 is here to stay.

Thus far over the last half century or so, oral culture 2.0 has transformed print culture 1.0 that Ong writes about in his 1958 book and that McLuhan writes about in his 1962 book, into print culture 2.0. Print culture 2.0 still includes certain key infrastructures that Ong identifies as characteristic of print culture 1.0. But print culture is characteristically more open, thanks in large measure to the influence of oral culture 2.0. To this day, we are still living under the deep influence of oral culture 2.0.

In Riesman’s terminology, mentioned above, outer-directed people (also known as tradition-directed) basically represent oral culture 1.0, inner-directed people represent print culture 1.0, and other-directed people represent both oral culture 2.0 and print culture 2.0.

In any event, in the fall semester of 1964, when I was an impressionable young man of twenty, I took my first English course from Ong at Saint Louis University, the Jesuit university in St. Louis, Missouri. Over the years, I took five English courses from him. To this day, I am deeply impressed by Ong’s thought.

Sadly, the tragic assassinations of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Senator Robert F. Kennedy in 1968 were followed by the police riot at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago.

Also in 1968, Pope Paul VI disappointed many American Catholics when he issued the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* reaffirming the church’s decades-old ban against artificial contraception.

Arguably the biggest watershed moment for American Catholics, however, came when the Supreme Court of the United States issued its ruling in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, legalizing abortion in the first trimester. That ruling prompted anti-abortion zealotry among American Catholics and other Christians.
CONCLUSION

It appears to me that both oral culture 2.0 and print culture 2.0 are here to stay in our contemporary American culture. In Riesman’s terminology, other-directed people are probably more deeply attuned to oral culture 2.0 and print culture 2.0. But anti-60s conservatives appear to be attuned to the inner-directedness characteristic of certain people in print culture 1.0.

However, anti-60s conservatives also tend to be attuned to the polemical structures that Ong sees as characteristic of oral culture 1.0 – and so do the other-directed Americans over against whom the anti-60s conservatives stand. If my observations are basically correct, then we Americans are probably going to experience culture wars for years to come.

At the end of the American Civil War (1862-1865), the victorious President Abraham Lincoln famously spoke in his Second Inaugural Address, which Kaveny quotes, of having malice toward none. No doubt that is a noble sentiment for the victor in war to express.

But it isn’t exactly clear to me at least that our contemporary culture wars involving the 1960s and 1970s have yet resulted in a clear-cut victory for either side. For this reason, it strikes me as premature for Kaveny to invoke President Lincoln’s words at the present time.

No doubt progressives and liberals would welcome the surrender of the anti-abortion zealots on legalized abortion in the first trimester. Figuratively speaking, their surrender could be likened to General Robert E. Lee’s surrender at Appomattox. But the anti-abortion zealots do not appear to me to be ready to surrender just yet.