Dr. Dori Baker, an ordained United Methodist clergy and professor at Union Theological Seminary, PSCE, breaks new ground through her theological voice of reclaiming a sacred tête-à-tête about God with adolescent girls in the North America cultural context. Baker defines the purpose of *Girlfriend Theology* this way: "*Girlfriend Theology attempts to address the problems of silenced selves, missing voices and girls in the footnotes*" (p.17). While communicating theological themes with adolescent girls is a needed research, especially in this century where the female image seems to be silenced and perceived with disdain, Dr. Baker offers theological and educational narrative methods that churches, learning institutions, and society should utilize as they embrace the potential image of God as expressed by adolescent girls.

There are eight chapters in this book. Chapter one raises issues related to how adolescent girls should be nurtured through feminist theological education. For Baker, girls are the most silenced group in society and when this group is silenced, there are psychological, political, emotional, as well as spiritual implications. Thus the author argues, “If girls internalize voices that limit their potential to be active agents forming and transforming their world, they are living less than fully human lives” (p.13). This implies that there have been different theologies that have raised concerns of silenced voices in society, but none of these has ever been developed to address the issues affecting adolescent girls specifically. Using her own autobiography of adolescence, in chapter two Dr. Baker proposes seven theological declarations she gathered from stories given by adolescents through inter-religious dialogue and both explicit and implicit conversational life experiences.

In very sensitive stories, chapter three examines how theology impacts the bodies of adolescent girls from different backgrounds. How does the transcendence and immanence of God become realities in the adolescent girl’s life experience? Baker’s articulate approach, even though generalized in nature, addresses the problem specifically through a North American cultural context. Even though the rights of women in the United States are normative, Baker feels that adolescent girls
have somehow missed out benefiting from those rights. Chapter four explores how natural education could be a useful tool and model in examining the lives of adolescent girls. Baker posits that if adult females could be utilized in mentoring relationships, they can help reclaim the potential of adolescent girls even within an oppressive society. The fifth chapter deals with “God-Talk in the midst of violence and death.” Utilizing stories of adolescent girls, the author brings out the value of life in young girls even during moments of violence and death. She argues that “Adolescents today experience violence, both real and vicarious on a daily basis. Girls suffer directly from multiple forms of violence, including sexual assault, domestic violence, and eating disorders” (p.91). Her conviction is that “girlfriend theology can offer a nonpatriarchal male image for God that feminist, womanist, liberation, and process theologians might all endorse” (p.101).

In chapter six, the author explores Mujerista or Hispanic and Asian theologies that provide “critical voices historically excluded from feminist theology” (p.121). Since these theologies, according to Baker, help people to reclaim their potential image of God as God created them, they can also help adolescent girls find alternative paths of operation from other cultural forms and practices. The author states that the female body can be a helpful device as a way of learning and teaching rather than simply seeing it as an object of misuse, violence, and oppression. This very interesting and sensitive chapter asks questions related to adolescent girls’ suffering within an oppressive society. Some of these questions are, “How are they reacting to and resisting dominant culture’s standards of beauty?” “How are their spirits being diminished by the implicit expectations regarding thinness, whiteness, and the other culturally approved addicts of attractiveness?” (p.147) Baker proposes different educational models that help our girls to live beyond cultural expectations and instead live a life grounded upon the image that God created them to bear.

In the last chapter, the author seeks to bring theologies and ethnographic and pedagogical criticisms into conversation with one another. Dr. Baker examines how God at the crossroads of souls relates to the created beings and more especially adolescent girls. Here, she convincingly writes, “This God moves and breathes within us and beyond us. This God reflects our passions and inspires new action in the world. Human bodies-all human bodies-take on new significance” (p.173).