
In the Australian independent film, *The Nostradamus Kid* (1993), two friends in the 1960s—one exploring his maturing religion, the other an atheist poet—reflect on the metaphysical questions awakened by the looming Cuban Missile Crisis. The faithful questioner wonders about the meaning of it all, but the poet gruffly shuts him down: we don’t need a theology, we need a plan of attack!

Echoing that conclusion, Sharon Delgado’s *Shaking the Gates of Hell* (2007) is not a guide for the spiritually perplexed; it is a manifesto for preemptive action. But unlike what preemption has come to mean post-Iraq, Delgado stacks up so much evidence for a moral war on corporate globalization that George Tenet should stop by for a slam-dunk tutorial. Quoting Walter Wink almost as much as Jesus Christ, Delgado drives a theme of bottom-line feeding corporate power as the cause of so much recent cultural and environmental destruction. These international Powers, as she less ontologically than strategically capitalizes, link our prison-farming-military-financial-educational-health-mining-energy-retail into a massive industrial complex that strips life of value. She hammers the point home:

> Although individuals within a corporation may be ethical, the corporation, like a machine, is impersonal; it does not have a conscience. Its only ‘conscience’ is the bottom line. It is designed to bring profits to stockholders, regardless of the social or environmental costs (137).

Documenting the causes and effects of this “golden straightjacket” makes up the first two-thirds of the book as Delgado reveals how this beast of corporate globalization works to undo Creation. It is an ironclad indictment of the recently intensified—under the Bush Administration—reign of corporate globalization over environmental destruction. It is in the face of this IMF, World Bank, WTO hellishly gated-community that Delgado calls for a faith-led shaking. This plan for action includes bolstering the Christian community as an alternative culture of value beyond profit, building a majoritarian political base and nonviolent protests. Drawing on the Earth Charter and the International Forum on Globalization, she mixes in the hope of Moltmann that a better world means an always more...
sustainable earth. The clash of Empire and Earth is particularly evident as Delgado echoes the blessing and curse rhetoric of Joshua in the Promised Land. In this book, she throws down the global gauntlet, “choose you this day whom you will serve.”

_Shaking the Gates of Hell_ is not easy reading, and not just because of the unrelenting moral message. The clusters of organizational names and acronyms on both sides of the fight do give this offering a field-manual feel. Softening at times, Delgado, a United Methodist minister in California, weaves together stories of her grandchildren with tales of being arrested first in 1982 at a nuclear test site and more recently in 1999 and 2003 protesting the WTO. But at times her argument feels like more of a war story than a 21st century call to arms. Like a veteran who sees strong traits of her first enemies in every subsequent conflict—and often uses this to employ the same tactics—the reason to shake rings nostalgic at times. “I have become convinced that there is nothing like nonviolent direct action to boost these very necessary activities to a whole new level of effectiveness” (242). She then quotes Martin Luther King Jr., but not any of the millions who marched around the world in opposition to the Iraq war. Even granting unintentional hyperbole, this begs the question, why never mention activist created media and online organizing tools? These days, a growing number of people will see a thoughtfully articulated protest video on YouTube, or write a blog post that nudges a reader or three thousand. Certainly there should be plans for both in a consciousness-raising attack.

Skipping from war to global warming to genetic engineering to toxic food, _Shaking the Gates of Hell_ reads at times like the back catalog of _Mother Jones_ condensed into book form, seasoned with scripture. The copious endnotes bares out this eclectic approach, and while in the hands of a nimble prophet this story of the interrelatedness of all life becomes winsome, Delgado’s declarative, didactic prose might defy more than just the unbelievers. That said, there is no doubt that Delgado makes a factual case. But for those who don’t already know Njoke Njoroge Njehu, Tim Costello, or even Bill McKibben, the arguments might not compel, and I worry that this book won’t reach beyond the choir. Furthermore, it offers little beyond the marrying of others’ theology to an anti-corporate argument. A truth, yes, but one that looks more Code Pink than red meat to exactly the moderate Christians needed on the political side of those who care about Creation.