



Hartford Puritanism: Thomas Hooker, Samuel Stone, and Their Terrifying God (Oxford Studies in Historical Theology)

Baird Tipson

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Statues of Thomas Hooker and Samuel Stone grace downtown Hartford, Connecticut, but few residents are aware of the distinctive version of Puritanism that these founding ministers of Hartford's First Church carried into the Connecticut wilderness (or indeed that the city takes its name from Stone's English birthplace). Shaped by interpretations of the writings of Saint Augustine largely developed during the ministers' years at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Hartford's church order diverged in significant ways from its counterpart in the churches of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Hartford Puritanism argues for a new paradigm of New England Puritanism. Hartford's founding ministers, Baird Tipson shows, both fully embraced - and even harshened - Calvin's double predestination. Tipson explores the contributions of the lesser-known William Perkins, Alexander Richardson, and John Rogers to Thomas Hooker's thought and practice: the art and content of his preaching, as well as his determination to define and impose a distinctive notion of conversion on his hearers. The book draws heavily on Samuel Stone's *The Whole Body of Divinity*, a comprehensive exposition of his thought and the first systematic theology written in the American colonies. Virtually unknown today, *The Whole Body of Divinity* not only provides the indispensable intellectual context for the religious development of early Connecticut but also offers a more comprehensive description of the Puritanism of early New England than any other document.

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