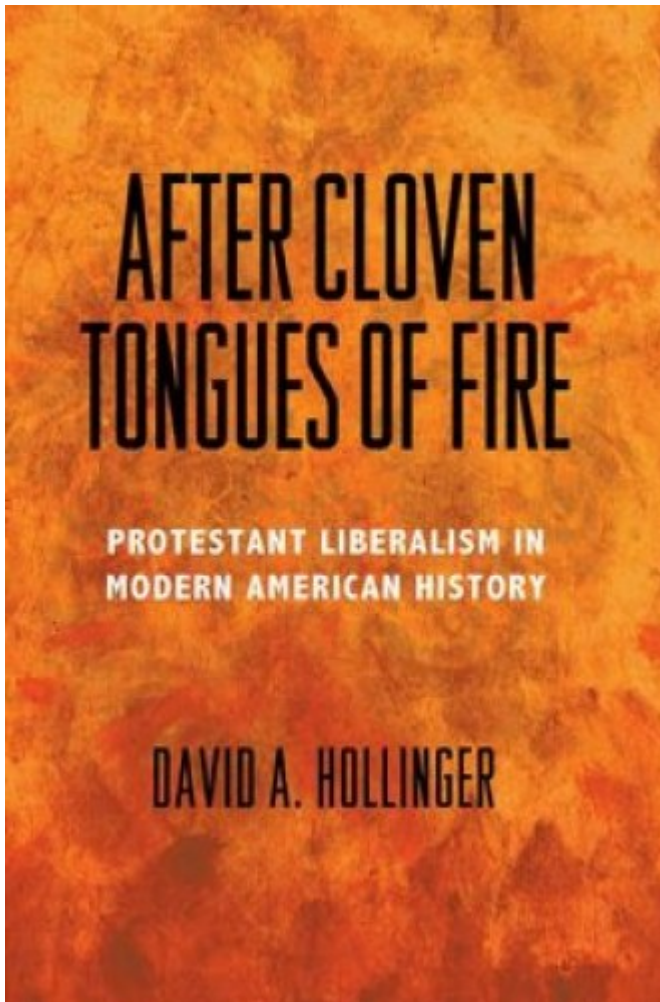


After Cloven Tongues of Fire, by David A. Hollinger

Books in the [June 12, 2013](#) issue

In Review



After Cloven Tongues of Fire

By David A. Hollinger
Princeton University Press

After Cloven Tongues of Fire is a collection of historian David Hollinger's writings on 20th-century American Protestantism. Hollinger is interested both in pinpointing ecumenical Protestant influence on the United States and in tracking signs of its

decline. He chronicles the tensions between denominational leadership and people in the pew, between expansive visions and everyday realities. In Hollinger's view, "liberalizing Protestants" were too successful in their pursuit of a more equitable and unified American society: they reformed themselves almost out of existence. He does not have a problem with that, since maintaining a form of ecumenical Protestantism for the 21st century is not his concern. Instead, he wants us to better understand the influence of Protestantism.