

# A Plague on Both Their Houses: Liberal vs. Conservative Christians and the Divorce of the Episcopal Church USA

Christopher Craig Brittain

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Christopher Craig Brittain offers a wide-ranging examination of specific events within The Episcopal Church (TEC) by drawing upon an analysis of theological debates within the church, field interviews in church congregations, and sociological literature on church conflict. The discussion demonstrates that interpretations describing the situation in TEC as a *Culture War* between *Liberals* and *Conservatives* are deeply flawed. Moreover, the book shows that the splits that are occurring within the national church are not so much schisms in the technical sociological sense, but are more accurately described as a familial divorce, with all the ongoing messy entwinement that this term evokes.

The interpretation of the dispute offered by the book also counters prominent accounts offered by leaders within The Episcopal Church. The Presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts-Schori, has portrayed some opponents of her theological positions and her approach to ethical issues as being 'fundamentalist', while other 'Progressives' liken their opponents to the Tea Party movement.



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