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Trying to Capture, Cautiously, the O'Malley Style

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Abstract

John W. O'Malley, S.J. has proffered and used the concept of style so as to name something other than content that is needed in order to understand argument or research. In a way, style is to contemporary argument what rhetoric was to grammar. This essay attempts to capture what O'Malley means by style, but also, and more importantly, seeks to describe or capture O'Malley's own style. By employing the different formats that *Jesuit Higher Education: A Journal* offers, the essay tries to highlight the relevance and richness of style in communicating the self to the other. In a word, style is the bridge that makes an argument understood, recognized, and remembered. O'Malley makes sure in both his own writings and his style that we never forget the necessity of style for living out our vocations as researchers, teachers, mentors and colleagues.

Introduction

Jesuit Higher Education: A Journal is the proper place to capture, cautiously, John O'Malley's own sense of style. The Journal offers four fundamentally different formats that are differentiated by style: Reflection, Scholarship, Praxis, and Perspective. To highlight the richness of style and O'Malley's interest in it, I will use each one to develop and convey O'Malley's own style.

First, under the format of **scholarship**, I begin this essay in a more detached way so as to raise up key elements of style that O'Malley proposed. Then, as a **reflection**, I introduce O'Malley's own style by describing it in a first-person narrative of my many years of knowing O'Malley as teacher and then friend and colleague. Here we can attend to not only what he says on style, but how he embodies it and lives it. Then, through **praxis**, I revisit an interview that O'Malley gave three years ago in which he offered eight pithy points for a responsible style of scholarship as descriptive of his own "method." Fourth, I return to a more personable, embodied **perspective** on O'Malley's style which Catherine Clifford captures well when she quotes O'Malley's claims about the first Jesuits, that their way of proceeding "was the style—not a set of mannerisms and not superficial affectation. It was the manifestation of the character and the deepest values and sensibilities

of the organization. *Le style est l'homme même.*"¹ There I finish my attempt to capture O'Malley's style.

Scholarship: O'Malley's Argument on Style

Before being invited to contribute to this volume, I invoked O'Malley's "style" in my 2021 presidential address to the Society of Christian Ethics (SCE), entitled "Social Trust and the Ethics of Our Institutions."² I argued that the style of our guild's way of proceeding needed to be more engaging, diversified, and experimental than the usual default of a forty-five minute scholarly lecture. I argued, in particular, that given our national global climate and the precarity of our social trust that we needed to not only think more effectively of ways to build bridges for a more trustworthy society but that we needed to speak more effectively and humanely through a style that conveyed a hospitable interest in others who do not think alike. After forty years of familiarity with the O'Malley style, I thought my guild should do an examination of conscience regarding the somewhat normative style of the SCE lecture.

John O'Malley has written extensively on the Councils of Trent, Vatican I and Vatican II as well as the Society of Jesus.³ His interests have largely been on reform movements.⁴ His first major work was the award-winning study of the rhetoric, style,

and substance of sermons delivered in the papal court in Renaissance Rome that set the stage for modern Catholicism.⁵

Besides wanting to know what was said in those courts and councils, O'Malley became interested in how it was said and what matter it made. The first interest, which was about the type of rhetoric used, he later identified as "style." The second interest was about impact.

Later in *Four Cultures of the West*, O'Malley created typologies so that we would understand that what someone wrote depended on how they wrote it.⁶ Here the question of style and its relation to argument and context erupted in variegated ways in the thought of O'Malley. In a way, style would be to argument what rhetoric was to grammar; and context would become the culture for both argument and style. He thinks of cultures as embodied collectives of style. As he writes: "cultures ... I mean especially configurations of patterns of discourse and thus expressions of style in the profoundest sense of the word. Le style, c'est l'homme."⁷

He outlined the cultures of each with Aquinas's Scholasticism described as both academic and professional, Luther as prophetic and reforming, Erasmus as humanist and poetic and the fourth, an appreciative nod to art and its use of images rather than words. These styles or ways of proceeding emerge from these cultures, sometimes as responses and sometimes in conflict with previous cultures.

O'Malley's favorite work is *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome*, and rightly so.⁸ It is there that all his key contributions, including "style," are incipiently present. Still, *Four Cultures* provides a way of understanding not only the function of rhetoric or style in understanding history, but even more significantly in understanding its function in other forms of life, like politics, ethics, theology, philosophy, and arts. Moreover, he established style as being embodied in persons and encultured in societies, if you will, whether in scholasticism, humanism, the Reformation, or elsewhere.

In *Four Cultures*, O'Malley's influence went beyond the historical. It provided a foundational, epistemological challenge to those who think that

the argument itself wins on its own interior logical matter, independent of its formal presentation or style.

Still, O'Malley was more interested in the style of each; without ignoring the social context that engendered these theologians and their work, he showed greater interest in the way they communicated their particular claims. Style was much more descriptive of the way these theologians and religious leaders taught and how they communicated the values inherent in the lessons being taught. From them, in a way, we better appreciate their cultures.

Finding the right style is integral, then, to the process of delivering the research; it basically concerns the method and sometimes the media used to achieve the ends of one's teaching. This has been a long-standing interest of the academy, caught, for instance, by the now common-sense adage from 1896 that "form follows function."⁹ It echoes to classical education's insistence that the grammar or content of the tradition was not enough for learning; rhetoric, the study of how to communicate wisdom and truth, was always to be taught alongside grammar.

Scholasticism develops out of Abelard's famous *Sic et Non* where he considered over 150 theological theses that each had a pro and a con. Aquinas, like scholastics before him, needed to make sense of a tradition that had as many contradictions as it had categories, and found in the interrogative style of the *Summa* a way of acknowledging that there was always a "sed contra," and that no matter what position you took, you still had to address the objections. Aquinas's style was analogous to a scientific investigation seeking truth and whatever stability it could offer in the midst of debate. The investigative style helped to give a coherence to a fairly debatable understanding of the tradition; engaging the questions rather than alienating them, or singularly accepting one over another, would never give the fragmented, divisive tradition its needed integration. The *Summa Theologiae* was an experiment in style to meet that urgent need of answering Abelard's challenge: how do we make sense of a tradition which to that point had not resolved its disagreements?

Erasmus's humanistic interests were highly experimental in its pursuit of style. By accompanying the pilgrim, Erasmus endorsed agency and a wild array of styles: from the epistle to the treatise, from the colloquy to the handbook. Erasmus's *Enchiridion*, a word that means both dagger and handbook, was designed to be carried by the vigilant pilgrim needing a guide along the pathways of discipleship. Like the *Enchiridion*, Erasmus's style was "accompanying," meant to be directive and inclusive and rhetorically diverse and experimental.

Luther's breaking open of the word as a prophetic challenge finds in the sermon, above all, a way of allowing Christ to interrupt our lives. Luther brings an immediacy to the word and sees in the concrete ordinary the time for conversion from sin. Rather than the complex and diverse formulae used by Erasmus or the methodic, repetitive, investigative inquiry of Aquinas, Luther presents the simple call to accept the grace of Christ in the here and now as dramatically urgent.¹⁰

Then there's the fourth culture, art, which, as he remarks in his autobiography, is unlike the first three forms of communication which are all "verbal." The fourth, he writes, is "mute." He adds: "Understanding them helps us understand the past but also the present. To put the matter vulgarly, the cultures help us understand 'where people are coming from'."¹¹

The styles of engagement were very diverse: one to establish platforms and order for faculty and students alike; another to accompany pilgrims on their passage; the other to destabilize complacency and confront the kenotic; and the last to engage in an altogether different mode.

In a 2003 article on "The Style of Vatican II," O'Malley offered his most eloquent expression of style:¹²

What made Michelangelo a great painter was not what he painted but how he painted—his style. My "how," my "style" better expresses who I am than my "what." The "what" of John O'Malley—priest, historian and so forth—is important, but style is the expression of my deepest personality. "The style is the

man." Style makes me who I am. "What *kind* of person is John O'Malley?" Kind and considerate, or cunning and contrived? That is a question about style. If I am loved, I'm loved for my how; and if I get to heaven, I will get there because of my how.¹³

Still, Catherine Clifford reminds us that the style is not simply the person. Referring to the first Jesuits, she writes: "If they eschewed the classical forms of rhetoric, they nonetheless embraced the fundamental impulse to adapt to the world of their hearers."¹⁴ Style is the how of the person but it is also the communication bridge between people, in some instances, between the teacher and the student, between performer or writer and audience. Style is the how of communicating oneself. While it emerges from the depth of oneself as O'Malley argues in most instances it is so the self can communicate. Style is always about making the message receptive. That is what Aquinas, Erasmus, and Luther and others are doing through style: getting seen and heard.¹⁵

The function of style is, then, to connect experientially. It is why the emphasis on the pastoral style in the Second Vatican Council is precisely so that the church can be connected to the world and to its people.

Style is the person, but one who looks for her message to be experientially engaged.

Reflection: Knowing the Man

I first met John O'Malley in 1979. It was the year we both arrived at Weston Jesuit School of Theology, he to teach, I to study. We were also both assigned to the same Jesuit community, 39 Kirkland St. The community lived on two floors of an apartment building owned by the Episcopal Divinity School. Among the eleven living there when we arrived were the Patristics scholar Brian Daley, Michael Garanzini, Jeffrey von Arx, and Herbert Keller. It was a very extroverted community, known for hosting many guests. In time, our community became known as "Club 39," a name we bore proudly.

In 1979, I was a Jesuit scholastic moving from regency at Canisius High School in Buffalo to

theology studies. As I met the Jesuits returning for studies, or like me, beginning them, I heard multiple stories from those who knew O'Malley. He was universally well regarded by scholastics. To this day, I remember the regular comments: he finishes his lectures with the clarity and punctuality with which he begins them and brings history to life and is never boring!

That fall, I took his course on medieval and renaissance history. He taught not only so that we would understand, but so that we would remember. He wanted us to remember so that we in turn would use the insights in our own ministry. O'Malley taught us so that we would use what we learned; that is why he wanted to help us remember what he taught. I recall, easily, the unforgettable lecture on the papacies of Gregory VII and Innocent III, papacies whose style would indelibly influence the church for the entire second millennium. In fact, even as I write this, he has just published an article on this very claim; that knowing these two popes from centuries ago is a key to appreciating why power is so constitutive of our contemporary papacies.¹⁶ Learning history, we can learn how to advance it or how to undo it. It has practical significance and therein possible impact. O'Malley helped us to see that what we learned could help us work for the church we wanted. There was great utility in his style of teaching.

In those classes O'Malley impressed on us the "so what" question, where he emphatically coaxed writers and readers to use history. Even today he baits us: now that we know this material, what will we do with it? His style here was not simply interrogatory; it was generative, getting us to instrumentalize history because without it we would not be able to respond to it in the first place.

It is important to say that the preeminent style of O'Malley in the classroom was not that he was entertaining, though he was; rather he was above all, very human, rather vulnerable, in that sense of being very open and exposed to the other so as to be capaciously responsive.¹⁷ He confessed his own way of discovering and understanding the material he was teaching: they were confessions of a great historian and historiographer. In both his person

and his teaching, he made history humane, accessible, and, well, memorable.

Besides the collective engagement, O'Malley's style was also interpersonal. After I took his first midterm, John contacted me by phone to tell me that I had done extraordinarily, even memorably well, so much so that he wanted me to understand that I had a talent that needed to be developed. It was a game-changer in my life. O'Malley's encouragement provided me with a pathway to learn from him and to go on to do studies in Rome with two other remarkable mentors, Josef Fuchs, S.J., and Klaus Demmer, M.S.C. I should add, O'Malley was never forgetful of his style. After Georgetown University President John DeGioia hosted a party for John's ninetieth birthday, I walked John back to the Jesuit community. "Do you remember that call I made in 1981?" he asked me. "I never forgot it, John. It changed my life," I said. He smiled.

Later at Weston, O'Malley began teaching a course called "Aquinas, Erasmus, and Luther." Here he began constructing the foundations of his *Four Cultures*. O'Malley saw Weston Jesuit as his lab where he could try out his theses with students who would use his materials for academic and pastoral purposes. We were not lab rats but rather collaborators in his projects, young lab assistants, if you will. He brought us on board to his projects. I cannot express how exciting it was to hear him engage us in the appreciation of these three fundamentally different cultures. We loved the O'Malley lab.

In time O'Malley's influence diversified from theology into the worlds of art and of the Jesuits. Let me recount a story about each, offering further insights into his style.

O'Malley was invited to respond to the art historian Leo Steinberg's now famous argument, "The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion," delivered at Columbia University's Lionel Trilling lecture on November 19, 1981. Steinberg's thesis was that Renaissance artists often highlighted the genitalia of Jesus and did so to demonstrate the fullness of Jesus' incarnation. Among many motifs, he noted that in the visit of the Magi by artists like Domenico Ghirlandaio, the wise men are often gazing at the

infant's groin and in several representations of Giovanni Bellini's Madonna and Child, the child's genitalia can be seen behind a transparent veil in the Virgin's presentation of her son. Additionally, in some depictions of his crucifixion, blood drips from beneath Jesus' loin cloth so that the first wound of Christ, from his circumcision, blends into the blood coming from the final wounds of Christ.

Before receiving the invitation, Steinberg had written O'Malley that he read and enjoyed *Praise and Blame* and asked O'Malley to send him the papal court sermons from the feast of the circumcision.¹⁸ When O'Malley received the invitation from Columbia, he accepted, seeking to learn what Steinberg would propose. Though another art historian, Julius Held, was invited to comment as well, O'Malley was there to provide the "so what" assessment of Steinberg's thesis, what difference did this make theologically.

O'Malley invited me to go with him to the lecture, asking that I assist him in inspecting all the medieval and renaissance paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art to see whether Steinberg's claims were valid. This required us to take fairly close inspection of such works. Though we found that Steinberg's claims were more common than we expected and therein significant, fortunately we were relieved that other Met patrons could not opine what it was that we were trying to detect in our close inspections!

After hearing Steinberg's lecture, the eyes of several hundred art historians were on O'Malley who fundamentally validated Steinberg's findings that artists sought to celebrate the fullness of Jesus' incarnate humanity. Subsequently, Steinberg's thesis and O'Malley's comments were published by the University of Chicago Press and were later translated into several languages.¹⁹

O'Malley notes in his autobiographical book that he "had for the first time entered directly into the world of art history."²⁰ Indeed, he became an interlocutor with many art historians, in which he helped them to understand theological claims as he witnessed their own style, thus giving him a fourth category for his book on culture.

In 1991, I returned to Weston now as a faculty member and joined John in the Jesuit community, Zipoli House at 10 Martin St. In 1993, at one community meeting John shared with us what it was like to write *The First Jesuits*. He told us that it was exhausting and described it as nearly a Sisyphean exercise of pushing endlessly uphill a large nearly immovable object. He accompanied the comments with a fairly simple drawing of the experience. He was not complaining, nor sharing regrets; rather, he was communicating the challenge of bringing his enormous research on the early founders to an educated audience. It was there in that narrative that I realized how personally difficult it is for great academics to present their research as a readable work.

O'Malley's congenial, vulnerable style is not the inevitable fruit of years of investigating multilingual documents, long ignored, but rather an artistic work that conveys the commitment of a teacher who wants others to learn and remember what he has unearthed for their own collaborative participation in the life of renewal. In that community meeting I saw, if you will, the sweat narrative, that lies behind the communicative style that so engages.

Praxis: O'Malley's Historical Method

Two years ago, in the *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, Emanuele Colombo published an interview with O'Malley on a variety of themes, including his "historical method." There O'Malley told the story of how he was invited to Centre Sèvres in Paris to teach a seminar on his method. He tells Colombo, "My method... , gosh. It was difficult for me, because I had not reflected too much on my method. On that occasion, I was obliged to think about my approach. I have the notes that I used on that occasion: there are eight short sentences."²¹ O'Malley shared the modest sentences. I will focus on the sentences and provide comment relating to capturing his style.

First. "The continuities are stronger and deeper than the discontinuities, but the latter must be taken into account to answer the question whether anything happened."

The historian's foundation is not change, but stability. It is why we need history. Nothing really

happens without precedence; knowing history means knowing the precedence and therein being able recognize the change.

Second. "The sources are mute. To make them speak I must ask them questions. Thus, begins a dialectic between me and the sources. I must assume that my questions are the wrong questions or at least not precisely put. The source then speaks back to me, helping me to find the right questions, or at least better ones."

In both the interview and in the autobiography, O'Malley reports how he interrogated the work of Egidio da Viterbo and how he learned that his original questions were not the right ones. He began to examine not Egidio but rather the presuppositions of his own approach, putting in doubt whether he had framed rightly what he needed to ask the text. We see here that a good historian has to have what the ethicist Margaret Farley calls "the grace of self-doubt." She describes it as

a grace for recognizing the contingencies of moral knowledge when we stretch toward the particular and the concrete. It allows us to listen to the experience of others, take seriously reasons that are alternative to our own, rethink our own last word. It assumes a shared search for moral insight, and it promotes (though it does not guarantee) a shared conviction in the end.²²

O'Malley's experience pertains not only to historians but to all researchers. An academic to be a good researcher *and* a good teacher needs that grace as well. Otherwise, we do not adequately let the objects of our inquiry speak and we do not adequately find a style that engages our listener. Indeed, Lisa Fullam argued that all researchers and all teachers need epistemic humility for both their studies and their reports.²³

As I told a colleague just this morning who feared that he did not know well enough what he needed to know nor how to teach what he did know: "Blessed are you to have the grace of self-doubt. The discomfort betters your study and your style."

Third. "Historical events do not fall out of the heavens. They have a pre-history. To understand them, it is essential to understand the pre-history (e.g., the 'long nineteenth century')."

O'Malley notes that his work on Vatican II prompted him in the second chapter to write about the "long nineteenth century" so as to appreciate the twentieth century Council. In a way, O'Malley wanted us to appreciate that the nineteenth century was productive, laying the groundwork for what would later emerge. As another Jesuit once said, some are called to sow, some are called to harvest. The nineteenth century was a time of sowing; the twentieth of reaping.

I would add that the historian's style is always tepid toward claims of serendipity.

Fourth. "If I really understand what is going on, I can explain it to an intelligent ten-year-old child. Thus, I want everything I write to be comprehensible on the first reading."

This fourth methodological point best captures O'Malley's style: he wants to make his material perfectly clear, not only in why and how it happened but why it matters. The clarity is what helps make it memorable, but the goal of such lucidity prompts in the investigator the self-examination that so animates the search for clarity not only in presentation, but first in understanding. O'Malley said it best in the interview: "this approach is a form of correction to myself: I have to be humble enough to acknowledge that, if the ten-year-old does not understand, it means that, deep down, I did not understand."²⁴

Fifth. "My experiences in the present help me as a historian because history is the story of human experiences. History is the story of how we got to be the way we are. That is what makes it so important. It is key to understanding our present situation. I write in order to throw some light on how we got to be the way we are. That is what gives me my professional energy."

The continuous river from the past through the present to the future is human experience. This is

the reason why you as the reader recognized O'Malley's claims earlier that experience allows teaching to be received. Shared experiences are the context for the communication of our understanding of history.

Sixth. "We professional historians should not leave reaching a popular audience of non-professionals. In the right hands, there is nothing wrong with 'the grand narrative.'"

Any academic knows that writing for a broader audience requires not "dumbing it down," but maintaining the clarity but not the density of a rigorous academic work. Unpacking the density is the challenge of what makes for more popular works and developing that style is critical because, just as one needs to be able to make it clear to the ten year-old, one needs also to keep the ten year-old's attention so that they will read or study on. Without developing a style for a popular audience, most academics do not achieve success in their more rigorous academic work or style. Eventually, the historian must move beyond the audience of his peers to a broader audience and it is here that the historian's style has even more significant impact.

Seventh: "It is important to practice the hermeneutic of compassion as well as the hermeneutic of suspicion."

I believe that the work of style, especially the historian's style, is to help people understand why things happened. Style is effectively about communication and therein it is about accompaniment, about being with an audience and helping them to see what the speaker sees. As such, style invites us to be vulnerable, to consider what is genuinely before us and to share in trust the fruits of the investigation. While suspicion allows us to test the veracity of claims, compassion provides the trusting environment where the claims are offered and received. As O'Malley reminds us often by his own example, the one making the offering has to support the climate of that environment. Anyone with an effective style of communication has to be inclined to respect the object of their inquiry as well as the recipients of their study.

Eight. "As Mark Twain said, 'The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between a lightning bolt and a lightning bug.' Therefore, revise, revise, revise... and keep asking yourself at each word, 'is this word necessary?'"

As I learned that evening in Zipoli House, good teaching is not finding the right text, but finding the right word. Here we should let O'Malley have the last one:

Yes, I revise a lot my work and read out loud, and often say: "It doesn't work"; "It's so boring!" I often realize that I could say something more clearly, more simply, and get rid of many qualifications. I believe that you do not really have a clear thought until you have the right word. The thought is developed in the act of writing: sometimes you are writing a sentence, and you realize that, deep down, you do not really know what you want to say. You revise, and at a certain point you say: "This is really what I think, what I want to say!" There are paragraphs or pages in my books I have revised seven or eight times. One fellow Jesuit minted a definition for me: "John O'Malley, that archenemy of the superfluous word."

Perspective: To Thine Own Self Be True

The difference between style and affectation is integrity. O'Malley frequently asserts that style is the person. That is not simply a descriptive statement but also a normative one; style cannot be style if it is not from the person. We do well to heed Polonius's well-turned phrase, "To thine own self be true." There is then an honesty and a transparency to style. In fact, without those qualities, it is really not one's style; it is rather, just an act.

Proposing a style emerges naturally from the self, as a form of communication, seeking to engage the other in such a way that the other remembers both the content and the form of the encounter. But one can only be true if one does have the grace of self-doubt that allows one to occasionally say, "I don't know," "I was long mistaken on

that,” etc. Honesty and transparency about one’s real self is what makes for style.

In a way, O’Malley’s own style is what prompts others to take his promotion of style seriously. It is not his argument about style, but rather his own style that he communicates as he teaches, lectures,

investigates and writes. Like the autobiography or the interviews, his style is evident, in its honesty, vulnerability, care, cleverness, humor, and sense of purpose. It’s a style that cannot be repeated, but can be emulated.²⁵

Notes

¹ Catherine Clifford, “Style Is Substance: Origins of John W. O’Malley’s Contribution to the Interpretation of Vatican II,” *Theological Studies* 79, no. 4 (2018): 752, <https://doi.org/10.1177/004056391880118>; John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 370.

² James F. Keenan, “Social Trust and the Ethics of Our Institutions,” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 42, no. 1 (2023), forthcoming.

³ John W. O’Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); John W. O’Malley, “Reform, Historical Consciousness, and Vatican II’s *Aggiornamento*,” *Theological Studies* 32 (1971): 573–601; “The Hermeneutic of Reform: A Historical Analysis,” *Theological Studies* 73 (2012): 517–46; “Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?” *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 3–33; *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); *Vatican I: The Council and the Making of the Ultramontane Church* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

⁴ John W. O’Malley, *Giles of Viterbo on Church and Reform: A Study in Renaissance Thought*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1968).

⁵ John W. O’Malley, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, 1450-1521* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979).

⁶ John W. O’Malley, *Four Cultures of the West* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2006).

⁷ O’Malley, *Four Cultures*, 5. Special thanks to Catherine Clifford for highlighting this in “Style Is Substance,” 753.

⁸ O’Malley, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome*.

⁹ “It is the pervading law of all things organic, and inorganic, of all things physical and metaphysical, of all things human and all things superhuman, of all true manifestations of the head, of the heart, of the soul, that the life is recognizable in its expression, that form ever follows function. This is the law.” Louis H. Sullivan, “The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered,” *Lippincott’s Magazine*, March 1896, 404–409.

¹⁰ O’Malley, *Four Cultures of the West*; Clifford, “Style Is Substance.”

¹¹ John W. O’Malley, *The Education of a Historian: A Strange and Wonderful Story* (Philadelphia: St. Joseph’s Press, 2021), 152–53.

¹² John W. O’Malley, “The Style of Vatican II: The ‘How’ of the Church Changed during the Council,” *America*, February 24, 2003, <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/423/article/style-vatican-ii>.

¹³ O’Malley, “Style of Vatican II.”

¹⁴ Clifford, “Style Is Substance,” 752.

¹⁵ For more on style, see Christoph Theobald, *Le Christianisme Comme Style: Une Manière de Faire de la Théologie en Postmodernité*, 2 vols. (Paris: Cerf, 2007).

¹⁶ Forever the teacher, O’Malley returned to these popes just this very week as I write this essay, see John W. O’Malley, “How Popes Became So Powerful—And How Pope Francis Could Reverse the Trend,” *America*, June 30, 2022, <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2022/06/30/papal-authority-omalley-pope-francis-243220>.

¹⁷ On vulnerability, see James F. Keenan, “Linking Human Dignity, Vulnerability and Virtue Ethics,” *Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society* 6 (2020): 56–73, <https://doi.org/10.30965/23642807-00601004>.

¹⁸ O’Malley, *The Education of a Historian*, 117–124, at 119.

¹⁹ Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

²⁰ O'Malley, *The Education of a Historian*, 120.

²¹ Emanuele Colombo, "So What?: A Conversation with John W. O'Malley," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 7, no. 1 (2020): 117-133, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-00701008>.

²² Margaret Farley, "Ethics, Ecclesiology, and the Grace of Self-Doubt," in *A Call to Fidelity*, ed. James J. Walter,

Timothy E. O'Connell, and Thomas A. Shannon (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 69.

²³ Lisa Fullam, *The Virtue of Humility* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellin Press, 2009).

²⁴ Fullam, *Humility*.

²⁵ I wish to thank my undergraduate research fellows Steven Roche and Samuel Peterson for their editorial assistance in this essay.