Sophie Opferman

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Ms. Borkowski

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Robert B. Downs’ *Books That Changed the World* tells the story of unprecedented ideas, insights and revelations. St. Augustine was the first of the major theologians of the Middle Ages. His magni opi, *Confessions* and *City of God*, reflect two major ideas about the church and God. *Confessions* is a book in 13 parts that tells Augustine’s story of converting from pagan to Christian. As a young adult, Augustine made many errors; he stole for pleasure, was licentious, and had a son out of wedlock. But due to the doctrine of grace, Augustine saw the errors of his ways and was able to soothe his guilty conscience. *Confessions* is notable for its introspective analysis; not only does Augustine relate his memories, he also takes into his emotions and state of mind during his negative actions. *City of God* is essentially a summary of the architecture of the Middle Ages. The state represents the city of the earth, home to most of humanity and the place of “self love in contempt of God” (Downs 166). The state is in charge for matters of material affairs. For everything else, including morality and ethics, the church dominates, representing the city of God. The city of God values living by God’s law and “love of God in contempt of self” (Downs 166). *City of God* vindicates the church during the time when man Romans blamed it for the decline of their city.

St. Thomas Aquinas was the second major theologian of the Middle Ages with his magnum opus *Summa Theologica*. *Summa Theologica* codified Christian doctrine and became the fundamental source for scholasticism. It is divided into three parts, the first dealing with man and morality, the second with God and angels, and the third with Christ, or God as man. *Summa Theologica* tells of the need for harmony between reason and faith. It lists many virtues and sins: the monastic virtues (poverty, chastity, and obedience), the four cardinal virtues (prudence, fortitude, justice, and temperance), the three theological virtues (faith, charity, and hope), the seven deadly sins (gluttony, pride, envy, anger, sloth, covetousness, and lust), and the four kinds of law (eternal, natural, divine, and human). *Summa Theologica* draws upon many famous sources to provide evidence for its assertions, including the teaching of Plato, Roman law, the Bible, and Aristotle’s philosophical ideas. The use of traditional writings allowed philosophers to defend Christianity.

Downs makes the assertion that *Confessions, City of God,* and *Summa Theologica* have changed the world. *Suma Theologica* certainly changed he world, though not in a positive way; it delayed innovation because revolutionaries such as Galileo were persecuted if their ideas contradicted those of the church, as was the case with heliocentric theory. Augustine, in *City of God,* directly influenced Roman politics by asserting the church over the state. Many believed that the state could only become true virtuous if it submitted to the church. Augustine’s other work, *Confessions*, established him as a psychologist as well as a theologian; his introspective techniques were superior to all others. Both St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine wrote book that changed the world.