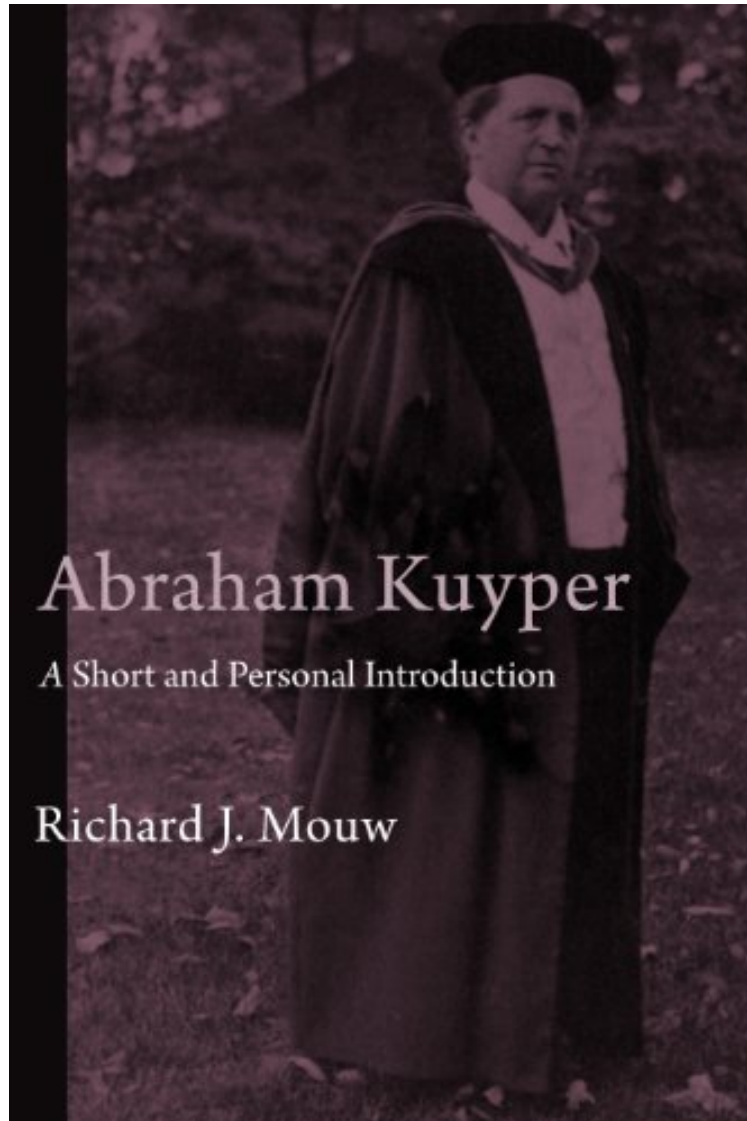


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## Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal Introduction

*Richard J. Mouw*

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**Richard J. Mouw : Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal Introduction** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal Introduction:

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Excellent but IncompleteBy Paul Van de WaterThis "short and personal introduction" to Abraham Kuyper is a bit too short and too personal. Kuyper was not only a theologian but a political figure. He served as Prime Minister of the Netherlands and was a founder of the Anti-Revolutionary Party, a forebear of today's Christian Democratic Appeal in the Netherlands and of European Christian Democracy. Mouw's

book shortchanges Kuyper's place as a politician and political theorist. Kuyper's theological conception of "sphere sovereignty" is inextricably bound to his opposition to the radical Enlightenment vision of the French Revolution. The French revolutionary government "issued decrees against the religious orders and passed laws abolishing trade unions and other social bodies, pressing further and further into the corporate and communal structures of religion, work, and family life. In this context, labor associations and religious associations were similarly excluded from the law and denied communal sovereignty in their respective realms [spheres] of work and spiritual development." {Lew Daly, "The Church of Labor," Democracy Journal, Fall 2011} Kuyper rejected such an all-encompassing role for the state. Instead, he promoted a corporatist structure in which social groups such as churches, trade unions, and employer associations would have assigned legal roles. In this brief volume Mouw touches on all these issues, but he does little to connect Kuyper's political activities and his theological views. Mouw's introduction to Kuyper is excellent as far as it goes but seems incomplete. For a more thorough introduction to Kuyper, choose *Religion, Pluralism, and Public Life*, a collection of 20 essays, including one by Mouw. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Mouw on Kuyper By Ronald M. Hofman Richard Mouw has done a beautiful job encapsulating the essence of this one man whose imprint on Dutch and North American culture can not be overstated. Mouw's books are insightful, pleasant to read, and always good at capturing the nuggets of the subject he tackles. He has done it again. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good Book By Matt Spoelstra I would rate more of these if there wasn't a required amount of words that I have to type out.

Richard Mouw was first drawn to Abraham Kuypers writings about public life in the turbulent 1960s. As he struggled to find the right Christian stance toward big social issues such as the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War, Mouw discovered Kuypers Lectures on Calvinism and, with it, a robust vision of active Christian involvement in public life that has guided him ever since. In this short and personal introduction Mouw sets forth Kuypers main ideas on Christian cultural discipleship, including his views on sphere sovereignty, the antithesis, common grace, and more. Mouw looks at ways to update and, in some places, even correct Kuypers thought as he applies it to such twenty-first-century issues as religious and cultural pluralism, technology, and the challenge of Islam.

James K. A. Smith Calvin College "This marvelous little book pulls off an astounding feat: though it is both compact and accessible, it also gives us the whole Kuyper. Too often we get Kuyper in slices: folks gravitate to a 'side' of Kuyper, adopting his theology of culture but neglecting his emphasis on the church, or picking up common grace but neglecting antithesis. But Mouw, with typical wit and warmth, introduces us to Kuyper in all his multifaceted richness. A gift for the next generation." John Bowlin Princeton Theological Seminary "Part introduction to the principal loci of Kuyper's theology of culture, part personal reflection on the legacy of neo-Calvinism, part Kuyperianaggiornamento for the twenty-first century, Rich Mouw's book is a gem. Its engagement with Kuyper's work is thoughtful and sympathetic, but also questioning and critical, a combination that makes this book a perfect entryway into Kuyper's social thought." John Stackhouse Regent College "Richard Mouw's book does just what it is supposed to do: stimulate our thinking on subjects of consequence, quicken our interest in a mind many of us ought to know better, and improve already great concepts into ideas even better suited to our circumstances. That's a lot to accomplish in a small book of which genre Mouw must now be acknowledged a master." Books Culture The genius of Mouw's take on Kuyper is the way he also lures in a Christian reader to a vision so compelling that, once a person sees it, she cant unsee it, and life changes. . . . A splendid book. . . . If readers are not deeply moved by Mouw's conclusion, I declare them here and now to be hard-hearted people! . . . We are much in Rich Mouw's debt, again Christian Scholars Those seeking an overview of Kuypers thought from someone who has been personally transformed by this theology and who thus believes that Christians should care deeply about the broader culture will be indebted to Mouw's work. Journal of Reformed Theology The importance of this book is that Mouw introduces the Kuyperian tradition to the Evangelical world, and there is no better ambassador for this work than he is. As a real ecumenical writer, he is able to discern the strong points in other Christian traditions and to acknowledge the weaker parts in his own.