



# **Spiritual Literacy in John Wesley's Methodism: Reading, Writing, and Speaking to Believe (Studies in Rhetoric and Religion)**

*By Vicki Tolar Burton*

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Vicki Tolar Burton argues that John Wesley wanted to make ordinary Methodist men and women readers, writers, and public speakers because he understood the powerful role of language for spiritual formation. His understanding came from his own family and education, from his personal spiritual practices and experiences, and from the evidence he saw in the lives of his followers. By examining the intersections of literacy, rhetoric, and spirituality as they occurred in early British Methodism—and by exploring the meaning of these practices for class and gender—the author provides a new understanding of the method of Methodism.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **Review**

"*Spiritual Literacy* illuminates an underappreciated aspect of the Methodist movement?John Wesley's concern for the literary abilities of ordinary citizens."?Randy L. Maddox, Professor of Theology and Wesleyan Studies, Duke University Divinity School

"Through close examination of primary sources, Tolar Burton offers a rich account of leading Methodist women such as Sarah Crosby, Mary Fletcher and Hester Ann Rogers.... Historians of early Methodism should regard her study as essential reading."?Barry W. Hamilton, Northeastern Seminary

"Here is the counter history to the elitist rhetoric of Hugh Blair and George Campbell. Vicki Tolar Burton's close reading of the actual day-to-day texts of early Methodism's founder and followers expands our knowledge of how a democratizing rhetoric gave cultural voice to women and to working class men in early Methodism."?Robert Stephen Reid, Communication Department Chair, University of Dubuque

#### **From the Inside Flap**

...carefully argued and painstakingly researched... "-Linda Ferreira-Buckley"

#### **About the Author**

Vicki Tolar Burton (Ph.D. Auburn University) is Associate Professor of English and Director, Writing Intensive Curriculum, Oregon State University.

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