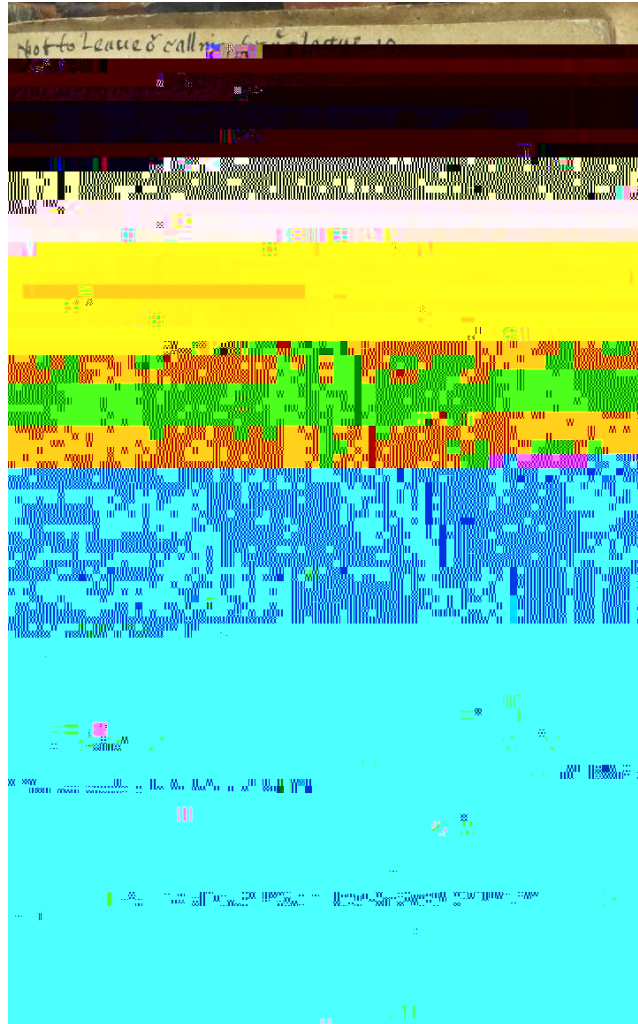


William Dowsing Reads a Plague Sermon

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, someone considering the various early modern religious tracts which make up New College Library, Oxford,



in 1533. There were many within the city who believed that the best way to fight to plague was for people, especially women and children, to flee the city and to wait for the outbreak to pass. But others, including Osiander, were troubled by the unchristian way in which this response neglected the needs of those who were unable to leave so readily and by the way in which this uncharitable exodus seemed to value bodily over spiritual health.¹

¹ Andrew Weeks, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), p. 53. On the 1533 Nuremberg plague more generally, see Hannah Murphy,

played a defining role in the English Reformation. These include works by William Tyndale,¹⁵ Jean Calvin, John Jewel. In this area, he seems to have been guided by John Foxe's