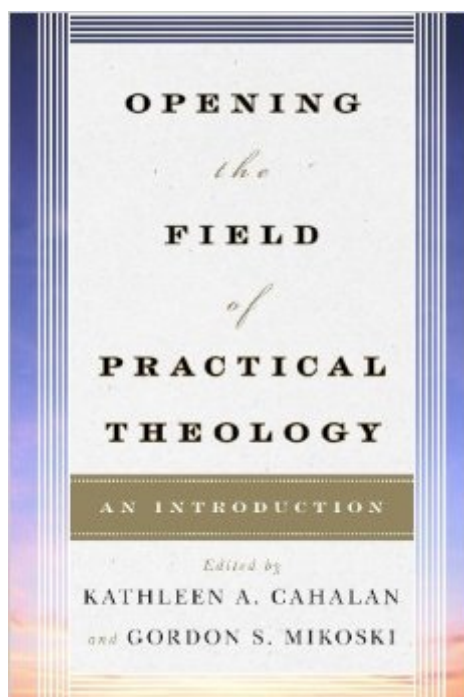


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# Opening The Field Of Practical Theology: An Introduction



## Synopsis

Opening the Field of Practical Theology introduces students to practical theology through an examination of fifteen different approaches—ranging from feminist to liberationist, Roman Catholic to evangelical, Asian American to Latino/a. After an introduction to the field of practical theology and its broad range of practice today, the book features chapters written by leading experts in the discipline. Each chapter has an identical structure to facilitate comparison, covering historical context, key features and figures, norms and sources of authority, theory-practice, contexts, interdisciplinary considerations, areas of current and future research, and suggested readings. Opening the Field of Practical Theology is an ideal introduction to the field, highlighting the diverse ways practical theology is engaged today.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this book, fourteen of the nation's top scholars in the field of practical theology contribute chapters, offering snapshots of various approaches and trajectories in practical theology. If one began with the assumption that practical theology was a fairly monolithic discipline or methodology, this book would certainly challenge that assumption. Opening the Field does not look to clarify what everyone means when they say "practical theology"—as though they all mean the same thing—but instead it opens up and invites the reader into the lively conversation that is practical theology, with its various definitions and approaches. One quickly realizes that while some things are shared among practical theologians (i.e. "respect for the self-identification of other theologians, ...emphasis

on context, and the emphasis on interdisciplinary studies" p.271), there is in fact much diversity in the various histories and theological heritages from which different approaches emerge, the key figures to which they refer, the understandings of the relation between theory and practice, and the sources and norms of each discipline. Different people ascribe different degrees of authority to the biblical witness and to the human experience. Some approaches prefer to make ontological claims, others epistemological ones. And yet, there is apparently enough commonality between different approaches for them to stay in conversation (which is why the editors of this book chose to describe it as "a conversation" in their conclusion). As someone who is relatively new to this field of study (at least at this more defined level), this book was important. It exposed me to approaches to practical theology both familiar and foreign to my own. I was both affirmed and challenged.

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