Kapic's "A Little Book for New Theologians: Why and How to Study Theology" (Book Review)

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While this volume is not an academic work, it is formatted in a way that lends itself to group discussion. Byun also includes appendices with helpful resources for further study and even a sample sermon that is encouraged to be shared. This would be a helpful addition to academic libraries with collections that support ministry and social work students.

The King’s Hand,
ISBN 9781782640776

Reviewed by Sherill L. Harriger, Library Director, Pontious Learning Resource Center, Warner University, Lakes Wales, FL

Anna Thayer has penned an epic fantasy trilogy entitled The Knight of Eldaran. In the first book of the trilogy, The Traitor’s Heir, she introduces the reader to Eamon Goodman. Eamon is a man conflicted because he has sworn allegiance to two very different rulers – the evil Master of the River Realm, Edelred, and the one true and rightful king, Hughan, who has declared Eamon to be his first knight. While in the city of Dunthriuk, Eamon gets lost in the trappings of power, esteem, and social standing provided by the Master and in the process loses himself and all thoughts of his allegiance to Hughan. However, now he has been commanded by the Master of the River Realm to confront Hughan with a terrible request: bring back the head of Hughan’s closest ally or pay the price. He has seven days to succeed in his ghastly mission or nearly a hundred of the men under his command will be tortured and slaughtered because of him. How will the king react to seeing Eamon, knowing the full extent of his betrayal? How can Eamon face the king after willfully committing such treachery against him and his people? But he must go; he has no choice.

A Little Book for New Theologians: Why and How to Study Theology,
ISBN 9780830839759

Reviewed by Tiffany Norris, Public Services Librarian, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX

Perhaps particularly in academia, it is useful to be reminded of the necessity of humility in theological reflection. Kelly Kapic keeps this reminder ever-present in this succinct, but thorough, argument for thinking through what we believe, why we believe it, and if our actions line up with those beliefs. Kapic states: “Given the
reciprocal relationship between theology and practice, it becomes imperative that theologians, whether armchair or professional, cultivate faithfulness” (p. 46).

A professor at Covenant College, Kapic advocates for faithfulness in practical theological reflection: “Attempting to separate life and theology is to lose the beauty and truthfulness of both” (p. 42).

He offers reasons to study theology as well as characteristics of faithful theology such as a love of Scripture, respect for tradition, and dependence on repentance. Kapic also points out the need to recognize the limitations in our theological reflections: sinful natures, cultural influences, and presuppositions. He concludes with a working definition of Christian theology that is a nice starting point for further discussion.

The book is similar in manner to Helmut Thielicke’s noted A Little Exercise for Young Theologians, and is, indeed, a helpful cognitive and spiritual exercise. It is personally edifying but would be a particularly useful addition for supporting the curriculum in introductory spiritual formation classes.


Reviewed by Deborah L. Denison, Medical Librarian, Madigan Army Medical Center, Tacoma, WA

This twelve-week book of devotionals for women, written by two women who are survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and a dysfunctional juvenile system, is “different from many others” (p. 18). Each meditation/devotional is written from two perspectives: the “brokenhearted” (p. 18) and Father God. A “Hope on the Edge” section at the end of each section raises questions designed to help the reader express her frustration to God. Each meditation ends with a fervent “Heart Cry” prayer. Love Letters from the Edge also includes tools that give an overview of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These tools include “websites, assessment tests, treatment centers, Scripture affirmations, and suggestions for friends, spouses, and the church” (p. 19). Activities suggested to help the reader move toward healing and deepen her relationship with God include journaling, writing letters, and art projects.