



# **Entering the New Theological Space: Blurred Encounters of Faith, Politics and Community (Explorations in Practical, Pastoral and Empirical Theology)**

*John Reader*

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This book presents theological reflections on the changing nature of church mission and Christian identity within a theology of 'blurred encounter' - a physical, social, political and spiritual space where once solid hierarchies and patterns are giving way to more fluid and in many ways unsettling exchanges. The issues raised and dynamics explored apply to all socially-produced space, thus tending to 'blur' that most fundamental of theological categories - namely urban vs. rural theology. Engaging in a sharper way with some of the helpful but inevitably broad-brush conclusions raised by recent church-based reports (Mission-shaped Church, Faithful Cities), the authors examine some of the practical and theological implications of this research for the issue of effective management and therefore church leadership generally. Speaking to practitioners in the field of practical theology as well as those engaged in theological and ministerial training, key voices encompass dimensions of power and conflict, and identify some of the present and future opportunities and challenges to church/faith-based engagement and leadership arising from blurred encounters. Contributors - practitioners and theorists - cover a wide spectrum of interdisciplinary professional contexts and academic/denominational interests. Contributors include: John Atherton, John Reader, Helen Cameron, Martyn Percy, Malcolm Brown, Karen Lord, Clare McBeath and Margaret Goodall.

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