

Frances Ward, *Lifelong Learning: Theological Education and Supervision* (London: SCM Press, 2011), 208 pp.

In this slim and engaging volume, Frances Ward draws on current and historical literature on supervision and theological education to explore, as her Introduction states, “what supervision can offer as an *educational* means to sustain adult learning.” Ward’s emphasis on “educational” here is a rallying cry to supervisors of ministers to view their role as training “reflective practitioners,” consistent with the view of the clinical pastoral education movement. *Lifelong Learning* takes as its starting place Ward’s experience as an Anglican priest, nurse, educator, and supervisor of ministers in the Church of England. The book is aimed primarily at those training for church ministry and those supervising them, although it also may appeal to practitioners wishing to hone their reflective skills. Ward creatively draws on Anton Boisen’s notion of “living human documents” by using as primary sources six journal excerpts from Anglican ministers in different congregational settings. Using these six narratives as a reference point, Ward explores seven dimensions (or “anchor ropes”) of reflective practice as they relate to real-world ministry challenges.

One limitation of the book is its nearly exclusive emphasis on Christian theology in congregational settings. Readers of this volume who are outside the Christian tradition or parish ministry will need to do some translation for portions of the book.

Theoretically, Ward offers primarily a synthesis, which draws from sources as diverse as Mikhail Bakhtin and John Hull. The wide range of theorists upon which she draws is invigorating. However, at times her presentation of the theories feels disjointed rather than truly integrated.

Despite its few limitations, Ward’s book is engaging and creative. It offers a useful introduction to key themes in adult theological education.

Ward’s dialogical style is inviting and her strategies for supervision and selfreflection are valuable across philosophical and theological differences.

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