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Sullivan Edits Book Honoring Oxford Theologian

Feb. 10, 2015

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Illinois Wesleyan University Chair of Religion Kevin Sullivan is co-editor of a new book of academic essays honoring eminent British scholar, theologian and priest Christopher Rowland.

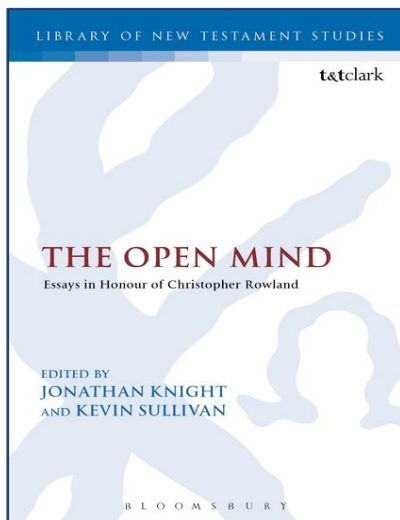
The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland (Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2015) draws on the research interests of Rowland, who recently retired as Dean Ireland's Professor of the Exegesis of Holy Scripture, The Queen's College, Oxford.

Famed for his innovative approaches to matters textual and non-textual, Rowland is the author or co-author of nearly 40 books. His pioneering book *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (SPCK, 1982) redefined the concept of apocalypticism and opened new vistas on the understanding of first-century Christianity, Sullivan said.

The Open Mind is a "Festschrift," according to Sullivan. The term, borrowed from German, can be translated as a celebration publication. Sullivan said such collections are fairly common in Biblical studies, and noted *The Open Mind* is the third such book to appear on the occasion of Rowland's retirement. "The fact that one man receives three such volumes speaks volumes in itself," the editors write.



Kevin Sullivan



The majority of *The Open Mind's* essays were written by Rowland's former doctoral students, including Sullivan and his co-editor Jonathan Knight, who is Research Fellow of the Katie Wheeler Trust. The significance of the Jewish contribution to developing Christian ideology is critically assessed, including the original Jewish sources on the earliest Christian belief. Sullivan also wrote the chapter entitled "Jesus, Angels and the Honeycomb in Luke 24:42."

"I thoroughly enjoyed working on this project," said Sullivan. "Bloomsbury/T&T Clark is a preeminent academic publisher in the UK, so we were pleased to get the volume into their well-established Library of New Testament Series."

Sullivan is also associate professor of religion at Illinois Wesleyan. He completed his Ph.D. at Oxford in 2003 and joined the faculty at Illinois Wesleyan in 2006. He holds master's degrees from both Notre Dame University (theology) and the University of Michigan (near Eastern Studies), where he also earned bachelor's degrees in economics and near Eastern Studies.

Sullivan's research interests focus on late Second Temple Judaism, the New Testament and Christian Origins, and especially Jews and early Christian angelology.

He is also the author of *Wrestling with Angels: A Study of the Relationship between Angels and Humans in Ancient Jewish Literature and the New Testament* (Brill Academic Publishers, 2004).