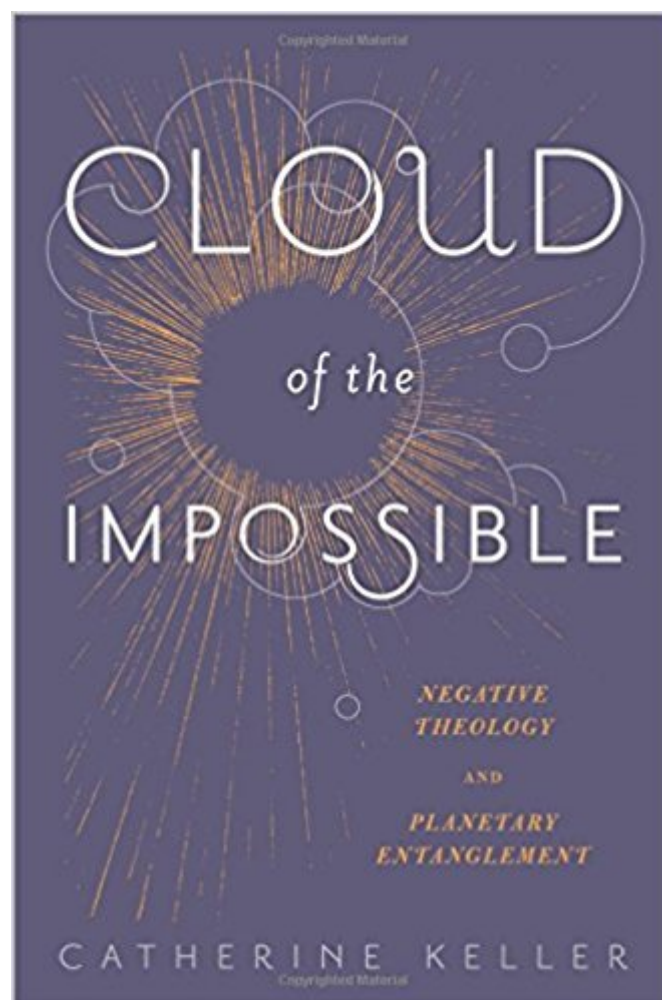


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Cloud Of The Impossible: Negative Theology And Planetary Entanglement (Insurrections: Critical Studies In Religion, Politics, And Culture)





Synopsis

The experience of the impossible churns up in our epoch whenever a collective dream turns to trauma: politically, sexually, economically, and with a certain ultimacy, ecologically. Out of an ancient theological lineage, the figure of the cloud comes to convey possibility in the face of the impossible. An old mystical nonknowing of God now hosts a current knowledge of uncertainty, of indeterminate and interdependent outcomes, possibly catastrophic. Yet the connectivity and collectivity of social movements, of the fragile, unlikely webs of an alternative notion of existence, keep materializing--a haunting hope, densely entangled, suggesting a more convivial, relational world. Catherine Keller brings process, feminist, and ecopolitical theologies into transdisciplinary conversation with continental philosophy, the quantum entanglements of a "participatory universe," and the writings of Nicholas of Cusa, Walt Whitman, A. N. Whitehead, Gilles Deleuze, and Judith Butler, to develop a "theopoetics of nonseparable difference." Global movements, personal embroilments, religious diversity, the inextricable relations of humans and nonhumans--these phenomena, in their unsettling togetherness, are exceeding our capacity to know and manage. By staging a series of encounters between the nonseparable and the unknowable, Keller shows what can be born from our cloudiest entanglement.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A sizzling, citable line on every page, this is Catherine Keller at her poetic, theopoetic, theological

best. She meditates not the fire of the apocalypse, nor the water of the deep, but the cloudâ of the impossible which precipitates the possible itself, the entanglement of knowing and nonknowing, of the relational and what overflows relation, of the enfolding and the unfolding. For her, the name of God is not the name of a cause or a guarantee but the lure of something that needs to be made and done. From philosophy and theology to physics and ecologyâ a sensational tour de force from a major theological voice. (John D. Caputo, Syracuse University and Villanova University)At last! A negative theology that plies the complex requirements of planetary life. Long intent on crafting ways of thinking theologically that resist common and oversimplified oppositions between divine and fleshy things, Catherine Keller leads us via ancient, medieval, and recent traditions of unsaying certainties into a rich understanding of divine entanglement as a basis for communal thriving and just democracy. This is a monumental contribution to Christian theology, especially regarding its foundational claims of divine embodiment and love. (Laurel C. Schneider, Vanderbilt University)Catherine Keller is our most creative and profound theologian today, and this book is her richest to date, tracking the enfolding and unfolding relation of everything to everything with theopoetic brilliance. (Gary Dorrien, author of Kantian Reason and Hegelian Spirit: The Idealistic Logic of Modern Theology)Catherine Keller's nuanced consideration of the apophatic cloud is both true to its subject and marvelously lucid. Tracing unexpected connections in the thought of medieval theologians, process philosophers, environmental activists, quantum physicists, and more, the book enfolds and unfolds, each line of thought traced with delicate precision, each intersection marked. Out of impossibility itself, enfolded in each and every relation, a new and open possible emerges. Through folds and mirrors, holograms and entanglements, poetry and theology, trauma and joy, this possible-impossible, this luminous darkness, entice us to followâ and to be glad that we did. (Karmen MacKendrick, Le Moyne College)Facing the complex majesty of Cloud of the Impossible, one cannot help but feel like some Moses-manquÃ© before a literary Sinai. The prose is finely wrought, tracing the inter- and indeterminacies of a provisionally named 'apophatic entanglement.' This is a beautiful and important book, which traces the contours of a transfigured, queerly-theological discourse and practice--precisely where such a thing might seem impossible. (Mary-Jane Rubenstein, Wesleyan University)With this work, Catherine Keller has produced a masterpiece on the level of her Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming. There is something of James Joyce in these pages. Readers are taken through core Hebrew and Greek debates, the emergence of infinity in Patristic theology, Christian and non-Christian mysticism, quantum physics, contemporary poststructuralist philosophy, the plight of theology today, nineteenth-century poetry, the environmental crisis... and that is only a start. Many critics will say that this is her best book yet.

(Philip Clayton, Ingraham Professor, Claremont School of Theology) Keller's bewildering and creatively beautiful body of work is often more poetry than prose... It is always worth the effort. (Christian Century) An impressive and astonishing work. (Syndicate Theology) This is an extraordinary book.... Readers will engage an astounding sweep of resources and conversation partners in this book. (Interpretation)

Catherine Keller is professor of constructive theology at Drew University. Her work interweaves process relationalism and poststructuralist philosophy with an evolving feminist cosmopolitics. At once constructive and deconstructive in approach, it engages questions of ecological, social, and spiritual practice amidst an irreducible indeterminacy. Among her many books are *Apocalypse Now & Then*; *God and Power*; and *The Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming*.

Unlike the Rolling Stones, Keller's cloud is not one she insists you getting off up, but caught up in! If you are a fan of her work you may be asking yourself if anything could match her masterpiece 'the face of the deep'! Well the impossible possibility has arrived printed on tree. If you haven't experienced Keller's work before then you are in for a treat unless poetically tinged theo-philosophical texts that fold and entangle disciplines, sciences, and human profundity aren't your thing. Here's an interview I did with her about the book if you want an audiological encouragement to get the book:

<http://homebrewedchristianity.com/2015/11/27/evil-providence-and-the-love-of-god-with-tom-oord/>

I cannot even begin to articulate why I love this book so much. I consider Keller to be one of theologies greatest prose stylists, so it is fun to read simply for the language. It is a revelation to think about clouds theologically. And her bringing together of apophatic theology and its many entanglements really situates some modern theological notions after the "death of God" in helpful fashion. Loved the explorations into Nicholas of Cusa and Whitman. Will be reading the book a second time for further meditation.

I think this book is Dr. Keller's finest work so far. It is simply beautiful. I believe that American Christianity is badly in need of new ways of talking and thinking about faith and Dr. Keller's work is pointing towards a way forward in our post-modern world. We need theology that looks like this. I found that reading this book was a deeply spiritual as well as intellectually engaging experience.

Theology in the 21st century is quite different from that of the past, and Keller exemplifies this current approach magnificently.

Oh boy when theologians start in with the quantum physics you know it's time to head for the hills. What will save most people from this book is the absurd price. You know friends what's really wrong here? The well-nigh unpardonable sin really being committed? It is to take the language of Shakespeare and Joyce and Austen, the glorious English language that in the hands of the adept can be made to sing, and scrambling it into this mishmash, this bafflegab!

My church is thinking of reading this book, but I am very dubious. We were given a list of rave reviews, but, as I told class leaders, "my 40 plus years in the book business tells me that a bunch of glowing editorial reviews on the page, or the back cover of a book are rather meaningless. I think for the class to make a really informed choice, we should be given the first 5 or 6 pages to read." So I "looked inside" on . On page 2 I found this: "Dream, in German Traum, becomes trauma." Is Ms Keller really linking "trauma" to "dream" through "Traum"? If I'm reading my dictionary correctly, "dream" derives from "Traum", but "trauma" derives from the Greek "traumat-" alter. of :troma" to wound. Dream and trauma do not appear to be connected. If she's doing something else there, then she isn't doing it very well. I think Keller is being a bit too clever in her "finely wrought prose". Speaking of which, one reviewer calls her "one of theologies greatest prose stylists", but it doesn't look like the kind of prose style I would enjoy reading.

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