

THE SOCIETY FOR ECUMENICAL STUDIES

***The Established Church, Past, Present and Future, Mark Chapman,
Judith Maltby, William Whyte, editors, London, T&T Clark***

A review by Donald Norwood

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Here are a scholarly set of essays on the Established Church, a serious subject that is too often evaded, as was the case in the Report of the Anglican-Reformed International Commission, *God's Reign and our Unity* 1984. Sadly it may not advance the ecumenical argument, since almost all its contributors are Anglicans and Oxford Anglicans at that. The exceptions are Philip Endean SJ, who offers a comment related to Receptive Ecumenism, and David Carter (former Secretary of this Society), who writes about Methodists and the Established Church. Missing is any comment from the real victims of the way the Established Church was imposed on the rest of us in 1662, the so called Nonconformists like Congregationalists and Presbyterians. Thank God that in terms of State control and coercion the Church of England is now less established, and more hospitable than it once was and much more adventurous and flexible; but old assumptions die hard. Many still regard the Church of England as the norm and especially in Oxford one can only be a College Chaplain and in some cases a Theology professor if you are Anglican. It's the monopolistic attitude that still hurts.