

Explore the Theme — Breaking Ground / Ground-breaking

a poem, a ploughman's reflection on his labor, & a book aiming to inspire a post-pandemic future
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All the Years of Breaking Through the Soil

Carol Bialock RSCJ

All the years of breaking through the soil,
gasping for growth,
straining to height and aroma and juice,
heavy with effort,
sweating it.

And when the glory came
and I breathed free and opened full,
strange how only then did I know
it was all gift.
I hadn't
done anything.

It was sun and rain and earth and air,
I had only to rest in
light, water, soil,
only trust and surrender
only be still
to flower into beauty.

Breaking Ground: Charting Our Future in a Pandemic Year

by Anne Snyder, Susannah Black, et al; <https://amzn.eu/0Q58tLD>

In response to the upheaval of a pandemic year, a new book grew from the seeds of a public, inter-disciplinary conversation between June 2020 and



How much has to be done to a field before its bed is fit for sowing! Ploughed twice perhaps; cultivated first one way then criss-cross; dragged twice; chain-harrowed and rolled; the couch burnt. **Does the general public realize** that all this is done to that field seen from the road, looking so silent, so deserted, as if no one ever went near it? **Does the man on the road know** that it has to be scratched and beaten and turned over like a rug, and scorched and burnt and knocked about? **Does he know** that before we can live even by bread alone, before bread can begin at all, all this must be done? I did not, when I was a man on the road and in the train.
The Worm Forgives the Plough by John Stewart Collis

What soil have you labored to break through in your life? How has it been ground-breaking for you or others?

June 2021, *Breaking Ground* is "a record of human beings striving for humility before an onslaught of uncertainty and rapid adjustment— humility that is the necessary soil for hope to seed a more intelligent and humane future." This collection of essays includes "voices from the spheres of politics and policing, education and journalism, medicine and business, theology and science, philanthropy and technology, and the family and household too [C]omplex truths have been aired in public, where conversation has been rigorous in its search for truth yet grace-filled in its respect for the human face." It is written at a time when "nearly every corner of society, secular and sacred, has been stopped short at the question of unity."

[Its writers] "have been animated by an encounter with a God who is alive and redeeming yet."