

Editorial

This issue is sent forth as a typical example of the range and diversity of thinking on the religion/science interface that *Zygon* aims to survey. Though it requires little commentary, there are some items that deserve special attention. James Gustafson joins our galaxy of “profilees”: Arthur Peacocke (biochemist and theologian, in December 1991), Eugene d’Aquili (neuropsychiatrist, in June 1993), and Michael Ruse (historian and philosopher of biology, in June 1994). The profile of Gustafson, a theological ethicist, may profitably be compared with that of Ruse last year. Both thinkers put ethics at the center of their work, and each takes scientific thought as the context for his interpretations of ethics. Beyond this, the reader is challenged to find further agreement. They may serve as instructive examples of how gifted thinkers who start from different points and hold to contrasting assumptions find their way through a common intellectual and social framework. Taken together, however, these two thinkers help us understand how the religion-science relationship plays out in the realm of ethics, and why that relationship is important.

The other articles and book reviews shed light on the range of scientific, philosophical, and theological perspectives to be found in the work of those who share this journal’s concern with bringing scientific and theological knowledge into meaningful relationship. Philosopher Iris Fry and biologist Robert Ulanowicz propose ways of interpreting nature that are consistent with new thinking in terms of complexity, a line of thinking that is also discussed in Richard Strohmann’s review of a work by Stuart Kauffman. Nature is a focus for James Nelson, who contributes to the increasing body of literature on “divine action theory,” and Kurt Richardson, who works to incorporate technology into a theological theory of nature. Langdon Gilkey provides provocative insistence that liberal ideas of progress may infect our understanding of evolution.

This issue includes the first part of a two-part book symposium on Frank Tipler’s recent book, *The Physics of Immortality*. In this installment, theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg and mathematician Frank Birtel contribute constructive and, on the whole, positive commentaries on Tipler’s book. In the September 1995 issue, astronomer Donald York and philosopher Hans-Dieter Mutschler will continue the conversation. As the editors of *Zygon* have followed the often turbulent controversy over this book, we have determined that our interest lies in uncovering what may be learned from Tipler’s efforts, regardless of the final scientific and theological judgment about the adequacy of his hypothesis. This seems to be the way responsible “falsification” of ideas should proceed.

—Philip Hefner

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Appearing in the Next Issue of *Zygon*—September 1995

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- Ann Pederson (theology), "Instability and Dissonance: Provocations from Sandra Harding"
- Helmut Reich (physics), "The Doctrine of the Trinity as a Model for Structuring the Relations between Science and Theology"
- J. Wesley Robbins (philosophy), "If Our Genes Are for Us, Who Can Be against Us? Thoughts of a Pragmatist on Science and Morality"
- William Rottschaefer (philosophy), "B. F. Skinner and the Grand Inquisitor"
- Jerome Stone (religious studies), "Bernard Meland on the New Formative Imagery of Our Time"
- Lisa Wersal (religious studies), "Islam and Environmental Ethics: Tradition Responds to Contemporary Challenges"
- Donald York (astronomy) and Hans-Dieter Mutschler (philosophy) examine Frank Tipler's *The Physics of Immortality*