

## Editorial

A good deal of the work that is done on the interface of science and religion attempts to get one's mind around certain central questions. These questions are sometimes perennial ones, but often they are new questions that emerge from developments in scientific research and from past attempts to deal with the perennial questions. This issue of *Zygon* gives us a glimpse of thinkers who are dealing with questions from both of these sources.

James Ashbrook continues his foundational work on the neurosciences by focusing on the question of how the brain's information processing is integrated into the human activity of meaning-making. In one sense, this is a version of the perennial question of how mind and brain are related, but Ashbrook is dealing with this question in the light of the newest insights into how the brain actually works to process information.

"The Question of God in an Age of Science" certainly qualifies as a urgent perennial question—at least in the modern period—but in Anna Case-Winters's hands, this old question also becomes an inquiry into the need for new paradigms of thinking, both on the science side and in the God domain. Colin Grant and Philip Clayton also enter into the discussion of new paradigms for answering old questions. Grant, speaking from the angle of social sciences, tackles what is becoming an increasingly pertinent question: Do the data of the relevant scientific research support a view of humans as basically selfish or as basically altruistic, or as some combination of both? While early sociobiologists seemed to have established the inherent selfishness of the genes as an inviolable law for understanding humans, newer generations of researchers are focusing on the altruistic. Grant cautions us to take seriously the complex and ambiguous dimensions of this discussion.

Clayton, a philosopher, makes a contribution to the age-old question of how human minds make arguments that are cogent. He represents a point of view that seeks to move beyond several of the current answers to this question, including those of the critical realists and the Lakatosians. His proposal for IBE (inference to the best explanation) is presented for its usefulness for moving between the domains of science and theology.

The modern period has wrestled hard and long with the question of how to think about myth. Craig Palmer and Lyle Steadman approach this issue once again from anthropological, psychological, and literary perspectives, and thereby they enrich our repertoire of possibilities for understanding what myth is and how it functions.

The Teachers' File section includes three items: Ronald Fox's contribution to our "What One Needs to Know" series, dealing with the origins of life; a sample course syllabus from Allen Gathman and Craig Nesson; and a basic discussion of electronic pedagogies by William Grassie.

Few attempts to deal with questions perennial and new can match the multivolume series that has emerged from the collaboration of the Center for Theology and Natural Sciences and the Vatican Observatory, under the leadership, respectively, of Robert John Russell and George Coyne, S. J. Steven Crain provides an insightful discussion of this achievement as it has progressed thus far. There are still more volumes to issue from this project and still more discussion of it in this journal. John Albright provides a review of the fourth and latest volume in this series.

*Zygon* is always interested in how individuals put together their experience of science and religion. In the Credo section, George Brooks provides us a clue to his way of fashioning a coherent worldview on the interface.

—Philip Hefner

Ralph Wendell Burhoe, founding editor of *Zygon*, died on 8 May 1997, after a long illness.

Volume 33 (1998) of the journal will be dedicated to Ralph. Each issue will include some commemorative pieces.