

# *Catherine Keller's Cloud of the Impossible:* *A Symposium*

with Kirk Wegter-McNelly, "Religious Hypotheses and the Apophatic, Relational Theology of Catherine Keller"; Carol Wayne White, "Aporetic Possibilities in Catherine Keller's Cloud of the Impossible"; Donovan O. Schaefer, "The Fault in Us: Ethics, Infinity, and Celestial Bodies"; Colleen Mary Carpenter, "Enfolding Violence, Unfolding Hope: Emerging Clouds of Possibility for Women in Roman Catholicism"; and Catherine Keller, "Theology, Science, and Cloud of the Impossible."

## THEOLOGY, SCIENCE, AND *CLOUD* *OF THE IMPOSSIBLE*

by Catherine Keller

*Abstract.* As a work of constructive theology attentive to the de-constructive edge of theology itself, *Cloud of the Impossible* offers a contemplative space for fresh transdisciplinary encounters. The ancient apophatic practice (of "unsaying," *docta ignorantia*) here fosters a knowledge tuned to its own currently indeterminate edges. The present conversation surfaces issues of religion in relation to both science and ethics. It effects a multilateral advance in thinking the "apophatic entanglement" by which a relational ontology, with its attention to the materiality of our fragile planetary interdependence, is intensified through a theology of disciplined uncertainty.

*Keywords:* Karen Barad; *Cloud of the Impossible*; cosmology; Nicholas of Cusa; ecology; feminist ethics; mysticism; panentheism; quantum entanglement; relationality

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### A COSMOLOGICAL COINCIDENTIA

*Cloud of the Impossible* caught its name from a fifteenth century meditation on the contradictory tensions in our own thinking—points of high pressure that cannot be resolved by simply rejecting one term or its opposite. A disciplined attention to our own incomprehension must come into play. With his notion of the *coincidentia oppositorum* the theologian Nicholas of Cusa was not however counseling a pious acceptance of mystery, but a risky press into the roiling darkness, a courage of complexification. Only

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so might a luminous insight break through, might a third place spring momentarily open. “Hence, I experience how necessary it is for me to enter into the cloud and to admit the coincidence of opposites, above all capacity for reason, and to seek there the truth where impossibility confronts me” (Nicholas of Cusa 1997, *De Visio Dei*; see Keller 2015, 99).

For many readers of *Zygon* there is surely no binary opposition more in need of confrontation than that between science and religion. It lurks behind every break down of communication *vis-à-vis* reason and faith, realism and fantasy, the secular and the religious, old or new atheism vs any age of theology, and so on. So it does not confine itself to academic symposia or methodological presumptions but fuels vast public antagonisms, as in, per exemplum, the politics of Islamophobia (“only secularism permits democracy!”) or on the other side, U.S. religious denial of climate change (“secularism’s front for world government!”). And so the long-term conversation of religion and science can and often does work disarmingly, pluralistically, even counter-apocalyptically, through particular and so really *possible* analyses. Its practice of a highly focused interdisciplinarity has fostered the critical and constructive coinciding of what culturally has verged on impossibility.

Nicholas of Cusa’s “cloud of the impossible” invokes the whole lineage of negative theology—from the medieval *Cloud of Unknowing* back to the third century mystical reading of Moses’ encounter with God “in the dark cloud” (Gregory of Nyssa; see Keller 2015, Chapter 2). This is a theology of profound not-knowing, or more precisely, of *knowing ignorance: docta ignorantia*, knowing where your knowledge fades out and darkness begins. In other words it is an early Renaissance rendition of the mysticism of “saying away,” *apophasis*, in contrast to the *kataphasis*, the saying, of theological propositions as the truth. But would Cusa even recognize his cloud amidst the struggles and illuminations of settled current religion–science interdiscipline?

Without a moment’s hesitation. In terms of the relation of *scientia* to *theologia*, I read the Cusan method as the way not taken by modernity, a tragically lost opportunity. I have to admit that I—like most scholars either of religion or of science—was clueless that Nicholas of Cusa had already figured out that the Earth is neither fixed nor the center of the universe. I had thought that was Copernicus and Galileo in the next century. No. They did the measurements and provided mathematical models. And Cusa had wasted no time with the idea of a heliocentric universe, but postulated an acentric one. For there can be no physical center of a universe made in the likeness of the infinite, the boundless: it takes a perimeter to have a center. I was already susceptible to Cusa’s negative theology—where “the precise truth shines forth incomprehensibly in the darkness of our knowing,” where the One is not opposed to multiplicity but unfolds “in and as” it (Keller 2015, 92). But the realization that he was way ahead

of anyone else in terms of this concrete, cosmological, indeed scientific knowledge: this took me off guard. It was the rigorous humility of his unknowing that opened him—beyond scholastic certainties—to what was cosmologically then considered an impossibility: the Earth as a mobile speck within a “contractedly infinite” universe (or indeed multiverse, as Mary Jane Rubenstein reads him in *Worlds Without End* [2014, 78ff.]).

In other words, without attention to what we do *not* know, a breakthrough in knowledge remains impossible. My *Cloud of the Impossible*, however, is not about Cusa. He is for this book the pivotal ancestor, because he accomplished a crossover in thinking that I argue we need *now*: that between nonknowing and nonseparability, between a mystical apophysis and a cosmological relationality. And he does it in the same line of thinking by which he unfolds a new sense of the universe: the infinity of divinity, which is by definition unknowable in finite language, unfolds in the multiplicity of finitudes. As all things are in it and it is in all things, so all things are—through the universe—in each other. This is a pantheism that, far more than its mystical antecedents, takes the material multiplicity of the *pan* seriously (in this anticipating process theology). The crossover becomes critical now in new ways: apophatic theology can minister to the loss of God. Undoing propositional God-certainties, it also eludes the negative certainty of atheism. It lets us sit with “the incertitude of the void” (Joyce [1922] 2016, 1015).

#### APOPHATIC ENTANGLEMENT

Nor can *Cloud* claim to be “about” science. Indeed I do not offer deep credentials in the science–religion interchange, which is a highly specialized conversation with its own discursive communities and archives. My early study of Whiteheadian cosmology and involvement in the process theological network did layer into me the importance for theology and for ecology of this interdisciplinary; and my *Face of the Deep* did have its chapter on complexity and chaos theory as interpretive of the creation from chaos (the *creatio ex profundis* as an alternative to the *creatio ex nihilo*.) The feminist relationalism that drove me into theology in the first place could not, cannot abstain from serious engagements with the meaning of *matter*—or else our bodies remain pawns in the zero-sum game with all that matters. Given, however, my one, admittedly long, chapter on quantum physics, “Spooky Entanglements,” and given more broadly my preoccupation with theological cosmology, I am glad for the present symposium. Certainly my dawning awareness of the stunning implications of quantum nonlocality was a major instigator of the book’s key metaphor, that of “apophatic entanglement.” It performs its own *coincidentia oppositorum*, a kind of chiasmus between the ancient tradition of negative theology and current planetary materializations of relationalism.

The apophatically smudged entanglement unfolds across multiple, deeply disparate registers, wherein some interplay of a mindful unknowing and a rigorous, which is to say socially and ecologically responsible, attention to interdependence comes into play. For just where we are confronted by the unexpected, we encounter the uncertainty of relationship. It may take the form of quantum uncertainty, of economic contradictions, of religio-ethnic agonism, of ecological disaster. Apophatic entanglement will not solve our ecosocial problems for us. I do not know what, if anything, will. (Do you?) However, I hope it is a concept that empowers some imaginative risk-taking at the edge of the impossible, some instigation of wider and wilder coalitions.

Such cooperative movements will not sustain themselves without fresh and emergent coalescences of the dialogue between science and religion. The practicality of such conversation becomes clear, for instance—to pluck a text in sight as I write—in Philip Clayton’s solicitation of “the interconnectedness at the microphysical level (waves, fields, plasma clouds, etc.),” as “far greater than classical physics ever imagined,” within the context of a book that in its highly successful Chinese version is stirring a new line of approach to “ecological civilization” in the People’s Republic (Clayton and Heinzekehr 2014, 146).

#### CLOUD EFFECTS

While my *Cloud* as a text will not drift far beyond a scholarly readership, I hope its effects upon constructive theological speech *do*. It remains deconstructively self-questioning in its Christianity, but concludes with a shameless avowal of the entangling second testament love teaching. Apophatic entanglement is of course worth *speaking* only if it can address, and help others to address, the unspeakable horrors of past and coming history. So perhaps this is why I have long preferred the strategy of a *transdisciplinary* theological conversation to mere *interdisciplinarity*. *Transdisciplinarity* in this retains a methodological kinship to religion itself, which involves always its own subjective, social, and cosmic participation. It works then in the interest not just of conversation but of *transformation*. If it sometimes transgresses the boundaries of any particular discipline, and so, perhaps, of a more constrained exchange between disciplines, it is to heighten *interdisciplinary* attention to sociality, ecology, and ethics.

Such *transdisciplinarity* comes through beautifully in the contributions of the four other scholars in this symposium. Each takes religion, differently, into a dense and urgently materializing force-field of reflection. When apophatic entanglement emerges from its interaction with this quartet of readers, it finds especially its method and its ethics clarified, indeed enhanced. Two of the essays lend welcome language to the discursive strategy that is at stake, first in the context of the tension of religion

and science in Kirk Wegter-McNelly's reading, and next in terms of a broader interplay of religion and naturalism in that of Carol Wayne White. The other two essays address the question of ethics. Donovan Schaefer worries about the chilling effect of quantum talk on attention to warm bodies. Colleen Carpenter delivers a case study in theological ethics, in which apophatic entanglement is applied to a set of acutely vulnerable bodies. These four readings together test the idea of the chiasmus of our nonknowing and our nonseparability.

#### APOPHASIS AND HYPOTHESIS

Or so I might have said before reading Kirk Wegter-McNelly's reflection, which argues persuasively for a distinction between the testability of scientific hypotheses and the relative *untestability* of faith. Might I nonetheless hold out for *some* sense of the testing, the trying of both the commitments of faith and the propositions of theology—experiential rather than empirical, yielding existential confirmation rather than experimental proof? But I accept with gratitude the sense of “religious hypotheses” that this distinction of testabilities lets Wegter-McNelly put into contrastive relation with scientific ones. He elegantly links the notion of hypothesis to the apophatic, and does it succinctly for both religion and science. This is a splendid move. It offers theology a strong concept for its own experiments in language; and this only works because at the same time it honors the margin of uncertainty that is the actual subject of scientific hypothesis. What is already known requires no hypothesis, yet a hypothesis is not mere ignorance—any more than it is simply knowledge. So in this context we might agree: hypothesis without apophasis is mere hype.

I welcome the following paraphrase he offers of apophatic entanglement: “To embrace a hypothesis as a hypothesis is to enter into a committed relationship with an idea, known and yet not known, for the sake of engaging the world and seeing it in a particular way” (Wegter-McNelly 2016, 761). One may argue that it is dangerous to speak of climate change as hypothesis rather than proven fact. Yet of course there is massive uncertainty as to the when and where and how much of the complex effects of global warming. Thus stereotypes of scientific knowledge as certainty are allowing the religio-economic right to deny climate change: they point to the uncertainty as proof that the science is wrong. And we see that just repeating the known facts, and its 97 percent consensus, does not do the trick. A heftier notion of hypothesis will improve public discussion, we might say. *Cloud* Chapter 9, “Broken Touch: Ecology of the Im/Possible,” narrates the planetary entanglement that now threatens us with ecological apocalypse. Fortunately we may enfold *apokalypsis* in *apophasis*: doom is not certain.

Of course the feedback loops of the climate macrocosm seem distant from the quantum microcosm of entanglement itself. So let me confess

that Wegter-McNelly's important book, *Entangled God: Divine Relationality and Quantum Physics* (2011), which is the first systematic theological engagement of quantum nonlocality, was a boon to my engagement of physics. It performs its own im/possibility, made possible by his background in physics and yielding a doctrinally concentrated foreground. I lack both. Yet his more systematic theology meets religious uncertainty unflinchingly. I cannot help but set his wise comment on the "help my unbelief" of Mark's gospel next to James Joyce's rendition: "I believe, O lord, help my unbelief. That is, help me to believe or help me to unbelieve?" [Joyce [1922] 2016, 1078–79] Does the entangled God on occasion help us actively to unbelieve—to twist free from belief itself? Into just love? Just a hypothesis.

Wegter-McNelly concludes with a charming allusion to the "wish you were here" that paraphrases the medieval *Cloud of Unknowing*. The anonymous (suitably) author is responding to a question about what God is, what we can say about God: "I have no idea. For with your question you have brought me into that same darkness where I wish you were yourself" (Keller 2015, 84).

#### THE CLOUD THAT COULD

By a meaningful coincidence, Carol Wayne White's essay ends with its own allusion to that medieval cloud. She is considering how the more we know about the universe, the more we face "the absconded God who hides in a cloud of unknowing" (White 2016b, 779). White no more than I would launch the hypothesis of a God who plays hide and go seek with us. Indeed she does not pursue the God-hypothesis, either to advance or to repudiate it.

As a religious naturalist White pursues the alternative of a cosmological relationalism, setting forth nature as the sole reality. But unlike the "nature" of some forms of naturalism, White does not mistake natural reality for objects of exterior human observation. Nor does it ever lack for mystery. Indeed she wrote a book on the remarkable mystic and naturalist Anne Conway, the seventeenth century viscountess who sets forth a revolutionary vision of endless creaturely interrelation as a resistance to the triumph in her time of the Cartesian and Newtonian mechanists (White 2009). But now this author is addressing the possibility of a scientifically tuned and spiritually charged naturalism for our epoch. Indeed it realizes itself in her just published *Black Lives and Sacred Humanity: Toward an African American Religious Naturalism* (White 2016a). Beyond presumptions of Black theism, her luminous naturalism exposes how the complex embodiment of the human has been masked by its diseased anthropocentrism, systemically coupled with racialization. Intriguingly, in confronting the depredations of the transcendental signifier "human," she offers a new humanism. Even

if I might not risk that noun, I understand the dangers of losing its best potentiality in pursuit of mechanical or animal natures.

I am gratified that Carol Wayne White finds in the *Cloud* the sort of solidarity in thought and in materialization for which it had been written. I hope that in its resonance with her own unfolding work, the religious depths and the scientific rigors required for ethical transformation will be further stimulated. The mattering of Black lives, of nonhuman lives, of all the planetary collectives of humanly, economically, sexually, ecologically vulnerable lives, demands of us new kinds of creativity as well as action. Impossibility is no excuse to evade the work of White's radically relational "sacred humanity." I wish however I had thought of her anagram of *cloud* and *could!* It teases out old Cusa's *posse ipsum*, the possibility itself which is the "can do," the last name for "God," an infinite that does not do for us or to us but is the possibility of what we *could* yet do (Keller 2015, 47–48). Impossible though it seems.

#### TANGLES OF DIFFERENCE

For Donovan Schaefer, however, "the infinite need not apply." For the job of ethicist, that is. I would agree, but only because I notice the infinite always already there. Not as the engine of human ethics but as its milieu. It does not do the applying—we have to do that. Especially when it comes to ethics, that is, to applications of our apophatic entanglement to the precariously tangled matter of human life. Schaefer is arguing with (more with, than against) my recourse to both Cusan and quantum registers, macro and micro. But he makes no bones about his feeling that "the ethical dimension of relationality is left cold in the quantum field." For him ethics has "nothing to do" with the remoteness of the quantum scale, and indeed "nothing to do with 'infinity' at all."

Any time I hear "nothing to do with" I go apophatic. I wonder which entanglement is being concealed. But I take Schaefer's concern seriously. Indeed, in a certain way I agree. I do not derive ethics from any "quantum ontology." Rather, I read both quantum and ethics as exemplifying a relational ontology. Perhaps my dependence on the genius of Karen Barad's interpretation of Bohr's indeterminacy by way of a relational ontology has given a false impression (Barad 2007). Barad does espy a responsiveness at the level of the quantum phenomenon—an "agential intra-activity" that always already entangles its observer. And that responsiveness cannot be dualistically divided from what at the human level we call responsibility. But again, this is no reductive derivation but rather a refusal of the matter/mind dichotomy. She is one of the expert witnesses of quantum physics I will continue to rely on, among the many I cite who consider the doctrinaire bifurcation of the physical and the biological scales to be both premature and arbitrary. Of course links between the quantum and the

biological level remain—hypothetical. Nonetheless my quantum chapter remains one of ten, and I wonder why there is almost no reference to all the subsequent chapters that develop at a perhaps burdensome (but not infinite) scale the interhuman, interspecies, intraplanetary registers of ethically weighted materialization.

The boundlessness of spacetime and the translation by negative theology of God into the not-finite does indeed cloud every phenomenon, from this perspective: that is, it prevents the sharp separation that confuses *difference* with *division*. Hence I consider the *in-fini*, the unfinished—as the margin of incertitude at which the boundaries between my body and my keyboard, between my coffee and those humans and nonhumans who were used in its production, between my thinking and Schaefer's, are never absolute. Of course the infinite is handling a problem of *God-talk* for me as a theologian, especially that of the unquestionable separation between God and world, which perhaps *is* no problem for Schaefer as a scholar of religion. But the subversive theological impact of the infinite has then little to do (I do not say nothing!) with mere distance, with dark chilling reaches of universe or universes. Nor does it resemble the omnipotence or unresponsiveness of a traditional transcendence (to which James's "finite god" meaningfully opposed itself.) It is of interest, *inter-esse*, in its being-between every finitude, in its undoing the hard boundary and thus actually intensifying, indeed heating up, difference. It is a *coincidentia* of intimacy and infinity that invites this work of theological cosmology and so drives its critique of anthropocentrism. That is a critique we share, and to which Donovan Schaefer's new book applying affect theory to the study of religion makes an exciting contribution (Schaefer 2015). With his mastery of a wide spectrum of recent biology, he marvelously wires religion and its affectivity right through our animality.

I can here only briefly mention a few remaining issues. I would not have my use of the term "other" confused with the "Wholly Other." By the same token I am surprised to be found so closely tied to Levinas, whose notion of exteriority seems to me to weaken the work of ethical relation and certainly to rule out my notion of entangled difference. I do salute the Levinasian infinite glimpsed in the face of the other—precisely in its intimacy. But his exteriority does not abide the mutual constitution of subjects. Indeed its insistently anti-ontological exteriority may finally collapse the alternatives of totality and infinity that his ethics promises. So I agree then with Schaefer's (Derridean) critique of the Levinasian anthropocentrism. And I never remain with "the face," but explore our multifaceted creatureliness as ethical obligation. Yet of course by way of Whitehead, Barad, or Deleuze, or Mel Chen's "animacy," or the first chapter of Genesis, I also resist rendering the real distinctions of the organic and the inorganic as, yet again, the dualism. So I would not for example know



how to say that ethics is grounded in our animal bodies but has nothing to do with the elements *making up* the animal.

Still, relatively speaking, ethics describes a human evolution. But then another confusion arises, given Schaefer's rich sense of human animality and our implied entanglement in innumerable other animals. Why does he ask as mocking questions: "Shall we continue in death, that the microbiome might abound? Could we be even more relational, like the Jain saints who cover their mouths . . .?" Don't the microbes and the insects also count as *animals*—not quanta? Where does Schaefer want us to draw the line on moral relevance? Cannot we affirm even their bloodless contributions to our life-systems, and respect the dissident symbolism even of Jain asceticism—without covering over either our differences or our mouths?

I hope that minding our entangled difference leads beyond the fear that to affirm vast creaturely diversity not only democratizes our relational field but leads to "an undifferentiated one." Finding ourselves "amidst a democracy of fellow creatures" (Whitehead) brings us not into oneness but interrelation. And then might it be more fruitful to notice developments in quantum biology rather than to pit Darwin against quantum? Schaefer helpfully explains the evolutionary advantage of "sociality and ethicality" for "survival and reproduction." But does the language of survival and reproduction—far from quantum queerness!—then really suffice to motivate ethics? If so, let us chase away the whole cloudy crowd of creatures. Why bother then to distinguish between the unfathomable intimacies of the infinite—and Hegel's "bad infinite," just an ever further extension of the same? Chilling indeed. But finally I suspect Schaefer and I coincide rather warmly in an animal, animate religious affectivity, indispensable for the motivation of science or ethics—even if I retain an affect of wonder, concern, perhaps love, for the impossibly turbulent, demanding, expanding cloud crowd. And yet it confronts us only as the particular: the *unknown embodied before us*. As a New Yorker I join in the sing-along with Leonard Cohen: "And lost among the subway crowds I try to catch your eye." And yours. And yours . . .

If I thought apophatic entanglement would assure good ethical choices, it would have already disqualified itself. So with gratitude for his thoughtful critique, I agree with Schaefer's association of the cloud's ethical practice less with a moral imperative and more with Foucault's "technology of the self"—inasmuch as we may read the latter as Deleuze does, as an interiority effected by an enfolding of the world. Then we may relieve that technology of its own relentless anthropocentrism, in the interest perhaps of the darkly luminous humanistic naturalism of Carol Wayne White, and in the spirit of Wegter-McNelly's religious hypothesis. Does such a self-formative process take the place of moral imperatives? Not altogether, according to *Cloud's* concluding reflection on the biblical love-imperative, as subjected to its own self-implicating questionability. The relationality of doing unto

another as you would have done unto yourself—discernible on just about every spiritual path of the world traditions—undoes any self-sufficiently self-forming subject. Even as its imperative does haunt our doings.

#### ABUSIVE ENTANGLEMENTS

The fourth voice in this responsive quartet conveys a clarity that will allow a provisional resolution. In a case study that speaks for itself, Colleen Carpenter has offered (what I still do want to call) a test of (what I still will call) the ethics of apophatic entanglement. Unexpectedly, this engaged ecological theologian here takes on the thorny problem of marriage ethics within Roman Catholicism. Hearing her students greeting “the unknown before us” with courageous honesty, she burrows deep into the question of domestic violence. The way she lays out the impasse of the Roman Catholic tradition on the question of the indissolubility of marriage offers a concentrated model for ethical argument. She first sets forth the crucial and promising breakthrough of the 2002 Bishops’ letter acknowledging that “violence and abuse, not divorce, break up a marriage (USCCB 2002)” (Carpenter 2016, 802). On this basis her argument against the traditional and still standing teaching that marriage is indissoluble seems irrefutable. For it is precisely her refusal to give up on her tradition that enables her to confront the contradiction and push into its cloud of impossibility.

It will not help for this Protestant feminist to enter this specific fray—especially since I am aglow about *Laudato Si*—but I am pleased to find I have inadvertently contributed some ammunition. I admire Carpenter’s deployment of apophatic entanglement and its question/able love in her answer to the unquestionability of the marriage ethos. I must repeat the language of the crucial distinction she draws: “Indissolubility definitively shuts down any possibility of newness in the future; nonseparability recognizes the reality of human connection, even vowed connection, while making the im/possible claim that entanglement does not and cannot preclude freedom, newness, and hope” (Carpenter 2016, 805).

With this move we can affirm the spirit of the marital vow while refusing the violence of its legalism. For indeed at a certain level the old patriarchs are not wrong: there is a permanence in any marriage. If two atoms once entangled can never be separated—all the less so, two humans! Once entwined, we will remain parts of one another willy nilly. Divorce does not expunge you—or the effects of your violence—from my life, and it is counterproductive psychologically to pretend otherwise. Abuse never is erased. But that nonseparability is precisely a reason for divorce: the longer I stay with you the more influence you will have on my life, and on all those I influence. Therefore I am responsible to distance myself from abusive influences upon me—precisely *because* a relationship is not external to who I am, who I become. Separation is an illusion, but the differential force

of divorce is not. No doubt originally the church was simply channeling the gospel injunction against divorce, failing to contextualize it. Jesus was addressing a cultural context in which only men could initiate divorce, and they could do so casually; women were the victims of divorce, easy to cast out and replace. Divorce itself in such a context was an expression of patriarchal injustice. And what is context—textually or socially—but the indeterminately bounded complex of our entanglements?

Carpenter offers a powerful bit of contextual theology, sharing the story of the courage of her students sharing their stories of abuse and violence. Beautifully, she cites Howard Thurman on the importance and the risk of truth telling. It is worth noting here that Thurman wrote a book whose title is a citation of the ancient trope of apophatic mysticism: “The Luminous Darkness.” I had found him at the root of a rhizome combining the apophatic praxis of the Quakers and of Gandhi with Martin Luther King, Jr., for whom Thurman was a spiritual mentor and teacher of resistance to systemic violence (Keller 2015, 34ff.). Carpenter’s meditation demonstrates a deft oscillation between the vivid particularity of her students’ stories and the systemic suffering they share, demanding systemic response. The great cloud-crowd of witnesses to violence, in this case, marital violence against women, is not going unheard.

To the final call for a religion that will no longer “attempt to banish all shadows but instead with candle-soft stories and poetry that help illuminate the cloudy darkness within which we live and move and have our being” (Carpenter 2016, 807)—I mutter a transdisciplinary “amen.” Such theopoetics enacts its own religious hypotheses. Scientific hypotheses examine the play of shadows across the whole light spectrum. And in this zygon of reconnection between the disciplines, I offer my thanks to all four respondents, for considering ways not taken and ways yet possible—as we confront what without such gracious collaboration might remain impossible.

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