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Faith and Science

Kate Harper

Welcome to Volume 40 issue 2 of Consensus for 2019.

This issue explores the intersection between Faith, Spirituality, Religion, and the social and human sciences. There is a particular emphasis on theology and the science of psychology. For example, Dr. Daniel Rzonczinski explores spirituality and complex thinking as it relates to clinical, student, and supervisory relationships. Complexity theory emerged from the natural sciences and has been extrapolated to many of the social sciences, psychology and psychotherapy in particular, and Rzonczinski presents some through-provoking ideas. Dr. Gyeong Kim and Dr. Allen Jorgensen make connections between mental health and the theology of the person, and it includes not only some stark statistics about mental health and suicide rates in Canada, but there is also an emphasis on mental health and Indigenous populations. Based on the case study of Richard Cardinal, from the NFB film *Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child* (1986) their paper dives into the subjective nature of these issues as they relate not only to the individual, but more importantly to society as a whole; Kim and Jorgenson provide a needed exposition on the societal influences on suffering.

Dr. Kate Harper examines the field of Neurotheology. Neurotheology explores the neurological foundations of spiritual practices. Harper looks at some historical connections to the field and some of the contemporary research emerging from this new discipline. Dr. Sean Hannan explores the work of William James, Augustine, and Franz Brentano as he probes through their theories of consciousness. In comparing their perspectives, Hannan provides an exceptional integration of ideas that provides the reader with a new perspective on three giants in the history of philosophy, psychology and theology. Emily Blacker explores the Earth Charter, eco-consciousness and theology as she reflects on Pieter Bruegel's drawing, "Big Fish Eat Little Fish," which was created in 1556. Bruegel created illustrations of many proverbs, but this one evokes many emotions. Blacker's thoughtful and thought-provoking piece captures the essence of these emotions by plunging the reader into the spirit of Bruegel's historical drawing and then taking us back up to the surface, connecting it to today's ecological realities.

The Studies and Observations section of this edition also provides thought-provoking material. Dr. Christine Helmer provides us with a historical look at some of the possible "myths" surrounding the story of Luther. Dr. Hendrik Rudolf Tjibeba considers Bowen's theory a relevant one for pastoral counselling in Namibia. Tjibeba's cross-cultural assessment of family systems theory and therapy provides us with some key insights into working with families in the Namibian culture. As we know, psychotherapists and spiritual care providers cannot diagnose. However, I teach a course in psychopathology, where students learn to about the various DSM diagnoses. Students find a character from a book, movie, or tv show and are asked to bring them into the present day, consider what diagnosis they might have, and create a treatment plan. Carol McMullen does something similar; she

gives us food for thought as she takes a contemporary look at some historical biblical characters through the lens of trauma.

In addition, this issue also provides two fantastic sermons. Dr. Joy Philip reminds us of the links between eco-consciousness and spirituality, while Dr. Jensen explores how seemingly small actions can make significant differences in his sermon based on the Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. And finally, Dr. John Milloy provides a beautiful analysis of the new release by Michael Aeschliman entitled *The Restoration of Man: C. S. Lewis and the Continuing Case against Scientism*.