

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the June 2019 issue of *Colloquium*. We have a special inclusion in this issue. It is a paper detailing the findings of a research project endorsed by the peak bodies, the Council of Deans of Theology and ANZATS, and funded by the Australian Research Theology Foundation with additional contributions from the University of Divinity, Charles Sturt University, and Alphacrucis. The paper arising from this research was submitted to *Colloquium* as the journal of ANZATS, and underwent the review process. This project sought to provide an evidence-based expert-informed ranking of religion and theology journals, and an analysis of ARC grants in religion and theology. The authors of the paper are Paul Oslington, Nick Jensen, and Ingrid Ryan of Alphacrucis.

In order to facilitate the dissemination and usage of this important research, it has been decided to offer this article with associated access to other related documentation, including the ranking table itself. The article appears in print with references to these other documents and where they can be found. It will also be provided with open access online with links embedded in the article to the various associated documents. I commend this research to your attention, with the hope that it may prove useful in what has to date been an area with some significant gaps.

Apart from the presentation of these research findings of such interest for our sector, the other articles in this issue are loosely grouped around issues of sacrifice and death. This is due in part to the ANZATS conference of 2018 which had a theme of sacrifice. But there also seems to have been a recent increase in submissions around issues of death. As Jason Goroncy says in his article in this issue. “Visitors to modern art galleries and writer’s festivals, and consumers of contemporary media, will have witnessed signs that public discourse around death and dying has come some way since the appearance of Kübler-Ross’s taboo-breaking work.” One aspect of this, which Goroncy deals with, is an increasing willingness to view euthanasia as a morally acceptable and legal option. In “Dying Without a Script: Some Theological Reflections on Voluntary Assisted Dying”, he brings two different areas of concern together, one the area of the autonomy and rights of the person, and the other the

area of the sanctity of human life. He wrestles with the difficulties these present, arguing that they bring into conflict fidelity to competing theological commitments.

In our next article, Greg Marcar looks at the related issue of suicide. His article, “Hope, Self-Denial and the Love of God: Towards a Kierkegaardian Perspective on Self-Condensation-Unto-Death” uses the theology of Søren Kierkegaard to reflect on guilt-motivated suicide. He argues that Kierkegaard is useful in sustaining a position against suicide arising from guilt.

We move from a focus on self-chosen death in euthanasia and suicide, to two articles related to sacrifice. The first brings the concept of sacrifice into conversation with ecotheology. In Evan Pederick’s “Sacrifice and Creation: An Ecotheological Perspective”. Pederick seeks to demonstrate that sacrifice can incorporate “both human and non-human life into the life of God.” A rather different look at sacrifice is found in the next article by Albert Haig. In “Dying and Living with Christ: A Sketch of a Participatory Theory of the Atonement Founded in Platonic Realism and an Irenaean ‘Soul-Making’ Theodicy”, Haig presents a theory of the atonement which brings together the Platonic doctrine of participation, and an Irenaean theodicy. This theory has some commonality with some versions of the Christus Victor model.

We finish the issue with an article review by Associate Editor John McDowell, “On Not Violently Disposing of Life: Brad Evans and Henry Giroux’s *Disposable Futures*”. McDowell examines their understanding of our post-industrial time in which violent devaluing of life is rampant. He provides both a critical review and a contextualisation of Evans’ and Giroux’s work in *Disposable Futures*. As McDowell points out, in a world in which dystopian stories are being perceived as presentations of fact, this discussion is timely and important.

I have found it interesting to read in tandem these various overlapping reflections on death, violence, and sacrifice at a time in which such themes are very much in my own consciousness and in the public discussion. I offer the entire issue to you then as a contribution to that weighty conversation on death in which we often find ourselves.

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Editor