

contribution to the global church. Ecumenical in scope, it can be used as a starting point to bridge evangelical concerns with the wider Catholic, Orthodox, and mainline Protestant traditions.

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*Just Water: Theology, Ethics, and the Global Water Crisis.* By Christiana Z. Peppard. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2014. Pp. x + 230. \$28.

It is an oft-cited principle of doing theology or preaching (attributed to both Karl Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr) that the doer must practice her craft “with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other.” As Peppard puts it, most newspapers of record fail to provide sufficient information when it comes to the problems of water scarcity, fracking, and the impact of agribusiness on fresh water supply. Thankfully, P. has produced a volume on the global water crisis that will serve theologians and preachers alike as a remedy to such oversights.

By turns informative, shocking, and witty, P. dives into this topic expertly and makes her arguments accessible to a wide range of readers. The volume’s most significant contribution is a linking of the three areas listed in the subtitle. In so doing, she has produced what should be required reading of anyone wishing to deal seriously with water (or food) as a central issue in Catholic social thought. To this end, chapter 4 stands out in a particular way as a clarion call for all who are eager to adopt a consistent ethic of life.

While theology is the primary topic in chapters 1, 4, 6, and 9, it is also an undercurrent in the remainder of the volume. Readers will be amazed at how deftly P. is able to connect theology and ethics with water, which, as she aptly claims, “charts human history” (19). In her introduction, P. notes that she has “tried to minimize supplemental discussion or extensive scholarly citation in the endnotes” (x). I suspect that some readers, particularly academics who may be experts on the issues discussed, may find this to be a weakness, though the text is thoroughly researched and well supported. That minor point notwithstanding, I cannot recommend this book highly enough to instructors—especially of Christian ethics—on the undergraduate level and to facilitators of parish reading groups.

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*Animal Suffering and the Problem of Evil.* By Nicola Hoggard Creegan. New York: Oxford University, 2013. Pp. xi + 206. \$55.

New findings in biology and evolutionary theory have proven to be both good and bad news for theologians wrestling with theodicy. On the good side, it has now become clear that symbiosis, cooperation, and compassion may be as deeply rooted as are competition

and predation in “nature red in tooth and claw” (4). On the bad side, new understandings of how animals share with us not just the experience of pain but also the capacity for suffering vastly multiply the scope of the classic question of how a good God can permit such horror. In this splendidly interdisciplinary work, C. brings together synopses of many of the biologists and theologians currently reframing and reengaging related questions. Topics range from consideration of the theological implications of human evolution, to explorations of animal sentience, to a tour through philosophical and theological approaches to animal suffering, to epigenetics and emergence, to what a notion of “fall” might be in light of contemporary knowledge of the natural world.

C. posits a “wheat and tares” understanding of the biosphere: “nature is indeed shot through with beauty. . . . [At the same time] if we dig deeper we will find disease and suffering and predation and precarious lives lived on the edge of survival” (6). While we are called to collaborate with the good, we cannot always distinguish between wheat and tares; indeed some tares are necessary for wheat to grow. The concluding ethical considerations are accordingly tentative, but still a good start for conversation.

This is an extraordinarily thought-provoking book, remarkable for its intellectual scope and lucid style. Few writers engage both scientific and theological literatures as well as C. does here. She candidly dismisses facile solutions, ultimately concluding that God is both revealed and obscured, and we are not “compelled to affirm the mixed picture as good” (137). Wheat and tares veer close to the mystery response to theodicy, but C.’s aim is to offer that parable as a worldview, a reading of nature, not a proof, inviting believers to affirm the rationality of belief in the biblical God of love in the face of a clear-eyed recognition of darkness as well as light at work in the natural world.

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*Civil Disagreement: Personal Integrity in a Pluralistic Society.* By Edward Langerak.  
Washington: Georgetown University, 2014. Pp. ix + 170. \$29.95.

Treating disagreement as a fact of contemporary pluralism, Langerak persuasively argues that mutual toleration is both theoretically justified and pragmatically appropriate when conflicting claims arise. With an accessible style and cogent progression of ideas, L.’s book would be particularly well suited for an undergraduate classroom, although perhaps primarily at the introductory level, for L. seems to assume an audience without much prior exposure to political philosophy or theology. At the same time, lengthy discursive notes situate many of L.’s claims within more nuanced debates in both fields, providing additional resources for those inclined to pursue further research.

Some of L.’s best work is found in the first two chapters, where he discusses the emergence of competing truth claims and defends “perspective pluralism” (51) as a balanced response that allows one to maintain one’s own convictions as true (contra epistemic relativism), while simultaneously accepting that another person might reasonably, albeit wrongly, arrive at an opposing position. Throughout the work, L. demonstrates a genuine