Dear ISCAST stalwarts wherever in the world this Digest finds you,

I hope, in the busyness of the supercharged scampers that many of us find ourselves in, that this Digest encourages you in some way.

It is a privilege to have Denis Alexander, one of the movers and shakers of global science and faith conversation, join the ranks of ISCAST Distinguished Fellows. Denis was founding director of The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge, editor of the journal Science & Christian Belief and gave the Gifford Lectures in 2012, published as Genes, Determinism and God.

Closer to home, congratulations to ISCAST Fellow Michael Knight and member Charles Sherlock for receiving honours in the recent Australia Day awards.

And in other news of the moment …

ISCART is hiring!

ISCART is seeking to contract a Publications Editor (approximately one day per week). For many years ISCAST has published book reviews, opinion, and peer reviewed articles on the website. In 2018 we launched the ISCAST Nexus book series, publishing A Reckless God? in conjunction with Anglican Media and Morning Star Publishing. In 2019 ISCAST will increase its volume of publications and seeks a Publications Editor to edit and proofread material for publication. Perhaps you know someone who might like to join the team? In short:

- The task: Formatting, editing and proofing of documents ranging from short book reviews to whole books.

- Prerequisites: A keen eye for detail; excellent English; familiarity with MS Word; resident of Australia; committed to the ISCAST vision and mission.

- Experience: Perhaps a person with editing and proofing experience, or a person without professional experience but who is very competent at English language skills.

- For further details please contact Chris on ChrisMulherin@ISCAST.org or 0431 330 380. Expressions of interest are invited by March 10, 2019.

Finally, please do keep ISCAST in your prayers (and your budget!) as we plan wisely for the future. As well as public lectures and our biennial conference, we are expanding our engagement in schools, churches, the media and publishing, as we seek to increasingly see our vision—a healthy interactive science–faith conversation—further realised in Australia.

I hope that this Digest stirs your interest, strengthens your faith and leads you to fruitfully integrate living in the kingdom of God while immersed in the secular soup.

Kind regards,

Chris Mulherin, ISCAST Executive Director
News Items

Call for Science and Theology Papers for New Zealand July Conference

Our friends in New Zealand have advised us of the Science and Theology track at the upcoming ANZATS conference in New Zealand from July 1 to 3. Nicola Hoggard Creegan is coordinating the stream and would love to have submissions.

Submissions must contribute to theology; anything relating to science and faith or ecology is welcome. Ideally, submissions would relate to the theme of “mission.”

Read more...

Confessions of a Meddlesome Economist: New Book from ISCAST Fellow Ian Harper

We are delighted to announce the release of the latest ‘meddlesome’ volume from ISCAST Fellow Ian Harper.

From the publisher: “In Confessions of a Meddlesome Economist, the long-awaited revised and updated edition of his prize-winning book Economics for Life, Ian’s aim is the same: to illustrate the power of good economics to improve people’s material lives, and the power of the Christian faith in helping this practising economist keep a balanced perspective in his professional life.”

Read more...

A Reckless God? First Book in ISCAST Nexus Series Available for Purchase

A Reckless God? Currents and Challenges in the Christian Conversation with Science, edited by ISCAST Executive Director Chris Mulherin, Roland Ashby, John Pilbrow and Stephen Ames, can be ordered from ISCAST. This book is the first in the new “ISCAST Nexus” series.


If you are interested in this anthology and its discussions of philosophy and science, there are buy links (for Australian and overseas addresses on our website.

Read more...

30% Discount on Ricœur and the Third Discourse of the Person

We are delighted to be able to offer our ISCAST friends a 30% discount on the purchase price of ISCAST Fellow Professor Michael Wong’s book.

To take advantage of the discount, you need to buy the book from the publisher’s website and use the code LEX30AUTH18.

Read more...

Review of Patron Graeme Clark’s Biography

Eternity News has published a review of ISCAST Fellow Mark Worthing’s biography of ISCAST patron Graeme Clark.

The review is by Belinda Garth, a friend of ISCAST and married to another fellow (of the ISCAST variety), James Garth.

Read more...

No access to the internet and want more information? Contact the ISCAST office (see back page) and we will forward the full item to you.

Postage and handling fees apply.
Articles of Interest ...

Prayer and Entangled Quantum States

Article by Ranjit A. Thuraisingham

The author is a theoretical chemist who holds a PhD in molecular quantum mechanics from the University of Cambridge, UK. His scientific publications are in areas related to molecular physics, acoustic scattering, molecular neuroscience and biomedical signal analysis. He is now retired but is associated with the Rehabilitation Studies Unit, University of Sydney as an honorary research fellow. He is a Christian and is engaged in trying to complement his understanding of the spiritual world with quantum physics. A published essay of the author in this area is: “A contemporary scientific reading of St Paul on human duality.”

Read more...

Design and Evolution: A Mechanic Looks at the Mechanistic World

Article by Ross Macmillan

Ross Macmillan is Senior Fellow in Agricultural Engineering, University of Melbourne and a Fellow of ISCAST. Ross has qualifications in mechanical and agricultural engineering and has taught the latter in Indonesia, New Zealand and Australia for over 40 years. His long-term interest in agricultural engineering education has resulted in online publication of curricula materials which are widely used in first and third world countries. In retirement he enjoys making mechanistic models in his workshop and watching green grass grow on the family farm on the northern outskirts of Melbourne.

Excerpt:

The words in the Scriptures about the origins of our world, which were written for a general readership in a pre-scientific age, speak simply of it having been “created.” They emphasise its characteristics such as its divine origins, its enduring and fruitful nature, its giftedness to its creatures and the inherent glory that it, and the whole of Creation, gives to its creator—God.

On the other hand, in our modern understanding and description of the natural world, we often use the word “mechanistic.” We can do this because both its biological and non-biological creatures (broadly defined to include all natural things) have characteristics (described below) that we recognise and read back from our modern human-made mechanisms, machines, structures etc. In describing how it came into being, we also describe it as having had a beginning, of having been designed and of its having evolved.

However, as an engineer I am here interested in how we should understand these two views and how they relate to each other in ways that are consistent with both the faithful interpretation of the ancient Scriptures and with our modern scientific understandings.

Read more...

NASA Study on the Greening of Earth via Human Processes

NASA has published an article concerning a recent study about the recent increase in global leaf area — and humanity’s involvement therein.

China and India are making a disproportionately large contribution to this phenomenon — they “account for one-third of the greening, but contain only 9% of the planet’s land area covered in vegetation”

The full article discusses some of the implications of this phenomenon, both for future studies and for the climate itself. It can be read on NASA’s website.

Interview with Francis Collins on Gene Editing of Embryos

In their new podcast Language of God, BioLogos has conducted an interview with Francis Collins regarding science, Christianity, and gene editing.

During the section in which gene editing was discussed, Collins said:

We believers, who view human beings as being of a special nature because of our relationship with God, ought to think carefully about scenarios that some are willing to begin to discuss about reinventing ourselves. Because not only can you edit a bone marrow cell and cure sickle cell disease, you could edit an embryo and create a human being that has a DNA instruction book that’s never happened before. And you might do so for benevolent reasons, but pretty soon you might do so because you think, you know how to improve the next generation. … [If] we are fearfully and wonderfully made, do we want to be fearfully and wonderfully remade in some other kind of image based on what we think we ought to become?”

The full clip can be viewed on the BioLogos website.

Sir John Eccles and His Struggle to Integrate Science and Religion

This article by Matt Neal examines the way that trying to integrate his scientific work and religion impacted the life and legacy of Sir John Eccles.

Excerpt:

Sir John Eccles is an icon of Australian science, but an attempt in later life to mix religion and science made him an outsider in the scientific community as it won him fans in the Catholic Church.

Read more...
Event News

Modern Science & the Christian
Thursday 28 February at 19:30

Venue:
St Mark’s Anglican Church, 1 Canterbury Road, Camberwell (Melbourne)

Enquiries to Chris White:
cjwhite46@gmail.com

Talk by distinguished Professor Cees Dekker, one of Holland’s most cited scientists:

4pm - Seminar by Professor Cees Dekker
5pm - Light Refreshments, with opportunity for continuing dialogue with Prof Dekker
6pm - Evening Church, with presentation “Creation: What the Bible Says” (Roger Lewis)
7pm - Supper

ISCAST Seminar
Sunday 17 March at 16:00

Venue:
16-18 Eastern Street Gwynneville [St John’s Keiraville], Wollongong NSW

Register here for sections of interest: TinyURL.com/ceesdekker

Talk by Emeritus Professor John Pilbrow: “Delving Deeper” is a monthly program coordinated by ISCAST fellow Chris White. It is generally about the connection between Christian faith and wider issues. John’s talk will consist of four segments of 10-15 minutes each (What makes science possible? The human face of science; Examples from 20th and 21st century physics; and To what extent can we say we have a handle on reality?), with Q&A following each segment.

Other News

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Twitter: @ISCAST_Oz

Keep an eye on the website for events www.iscast.org

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