

Hardcopy \$22 pa
Softcopy free

ISCAST is a network of people, from students to distinguished academics, exploring the interface of science, technology, and Christian faith.

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

I hope, in the busyness of the supercharged scamper 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*.



Denis Alexander, ISCAST's newest Distinguished Fellow

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 ...

ISCAST is hiring!

ISCAST 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

In this Issue:

- News Items
- Books and Resources
- Event News

News Items

News about the interface between science and Christianity, and of significance to the ISCAST community. Your submissions are most welcome.

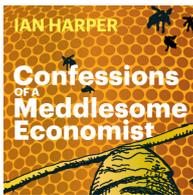


Call for Science and Theology Papers for New Zealand July Conference

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...](#)

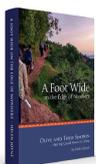


Confessions of a Meddlesome Economist: New Book from ISCAST Fellow Ian Harper

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

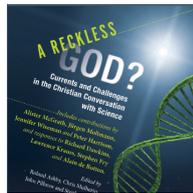
From the publisher: "In *Confessions of a Meddlesome Economist*, the long-awaited revised and updated edition of his prize-winning book *Economics for Life*, Ian's aim is the same: to illustrate the power of good economics to improve people's material lives, and the power of the Christian faith in helping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

[Read more...](#)



A Foot Wide on the Edge of Nowhere: by Helen Joynt Now Available

Up now on the website, a review by ISCAST fellow Brian Edgar of a missionary biography by long time ISCASTian Helen Joynt about her parents. [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.

The book includes contributions by Alister McGrath, Jennifer Wiseman, Rodney Holder, Tom McLeish, Jürgen Moltmann and others. It includes responses to Richard Dawkins, Stephen Fry, Lawrence Krauss and Phillip Adams.

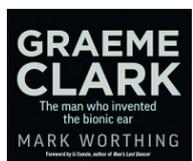
If you are interested in this anthology and its discussions of philosophy and science, there are buy links (for Australian and overseas addresses [on our website](#)).



30% Discount on Ricoeur 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.



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...](#)



ISCAST Fellow Mark Worthing Featured: ABC RN Artificial Intelligence Discussion

ABC Radio National program *God Forbid* (Feb. 3 2019) includes ISCAST fellow Mark Worthing talking about artificial intelligence (AI). It's a fascinating discussion about the implications and the nature of AI as well as the questions raised by its use.

As well as Mark, the program features two AI/robotics professors (Toby Walsh and Mary-Anne Williams). Mark says, "It was a very wide-ranging discussion from Alan Turing to sex robots and autonomous weapons. There was not a lot of theological content—more ethical and philosophical. But hopefully listeners will see that theologians do more than say why things shouldn't be allowed."

[Read more...](#)



ISCAST Fellow Brian Edgar Recognised in Christianity Today's "Book of the Year"

Congratulations to ISCAST fellow Brian Edgar, whose book *The God Who Plays* has been recognised as one of the best books of the year in the [Book of the Year awards](#) conducted by Christianity Today magazine in the USA.

"Western Christianity is often haunted by a sense of perfectionism, anxiety, and exhaustion. Edgar points out that many Protestant traditions have developed a work ethic that lies in profound tension and even contradiction with the life of grace. His book provides a thoughtful and nuanced correction, emphasizing that as Christians we are first of all children of God, which entails a kind of 'playful' relationship. Faith-filled play draws us back to a merciful God who calls us into a childlike faith. It can help restore our trust in God as a good and gracious Father." (Gisela Kreglinger, writer and speaker, author of *The Spirituality of Wine*.)

The God Who Plays: A Playful Approach to Theology and Spirituality [can be bought here](#).

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

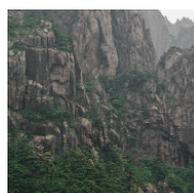
Article by Ranjit A. Thuraisingham

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."

Excerpt:

Often science and theology are put in separate compartments. In contrast to the mechanical view of the universe, presented by classical physics, the advent of quantum mechanics has produced a paradigm shift, replacing the logical processes observed in the macroscopic world with processes that obey a different physics in the quantum world.

[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](#).



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.

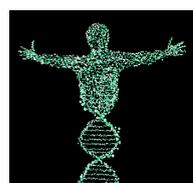
Excerpt:

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...](#)



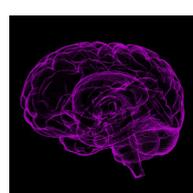
Interview with Francis Collins on Gene Editing of Embryos

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 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.



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 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

Other News

Look us up on:



Facebook: www.facebook.com/ISCAST



Twitter: [@ISCAST_Oz](https://twitter.com/ISCAST_Oz)



Keep an eye on the
website for events

www.iscast.org

Digital Subscription and Renewals

Please fill out the form if you would like to subscribe to the Digest for the first time or continue your subscription and return it to us by mail or by fax with any payment that might be required. Renewals apply to subscribers who are not members of ISCAST and who have elected to receive the Digest by post, or those wishing to change their subscription from email to post. You can also register online at www.iscast.org/Digest_Registration.

Yes, I would like to subscribe to the ISCAST Digest

Yes, please renew my subscription to the ISCAST Digest

Preferred format: Email (no cost) Post (\$22 annual subscription for hardcopy format)

Name: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Chapter: Syd Bathurst/Orange VIC Gippsland SA Tas Qld WA

I would like to know more about being associated with ISCAST

Annual Subscription by post: \$22 (Credit Cards add \$2 processing fee) Total Due: \$ _____

Contact the ISCAST office for payment details.

This is an official organ of ISCAST (The Institute for the Study of Christianity in an Age of Science and Technology, a not-for-profit organisation registered in New South Wales, Australia).

It is published quarterly in both hard copy and digital formats. It includes news items of relevance to both the ISCAST community and to the engagement of science and Christianity in Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere.

It also includes abstracts of articles submitted to *Christian Perspectives on Science and Technology*, ISCAST's online journal, and the latest information of events hosted by ISCAST chapters around Australia and New Zealand.

Items published on the ISCAST website and in this Digest explore the interaction between science and the Christian faith and will be published to foster the discussions and debate. ISCAST cannot endorse any of the opinions expressed here.

Details of events published will be correct as at the date of publication but you are encouraged to check the website or with the relevant contact before the event.

Hard copy versions of the Digest are available at the cost of \$22 pa and subscriptions can be arranged by contacting the ISCAST office.

Contact ISCAST:

C/- Stockdale ACS
Suite 3, No 6 Atherton Road,
Oakleigh Vic 3166

Phone: (03) 9254 1045
Fax: (03) 8610 1936
Email: admin@iscast.org