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**AN EVANGELICAL FORUM FOR
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tions such as additional considerations for the technique, relevant research, additional references, or related resources.

Evaluation

The clear organization of Neimeyer's work is a major strength, providing a user-friendly format that promotes accessibility. A quick scan of the table of contents lays out the whole structure and scope of the book. At a glance, the reader easily identifies the nearly 100 techniques included, each in a separate chapter, each grouped into 1 of 17 sections. It seems to this reviewer that many of these thematic sections loosely correspond to particular therapeutic orientations or approaches. Popular orientations represented include: emotion-focused therapy (Part II Modulating Emotion), behavior therapy (Part V Changing Behavior), cognitive therapy (Part VI Restructuring Cognition), dynamic therapy (Part VII Encountering Resistance), narrative therapy (Part IX Rewriting Life Narratives), and art therapy (Part X Integrating the Arts). There are also thematic groupings for specific interventions aimed at working with emotions (Part II), the body (Part III), trauma (Part IV), and memories (Part XI). A major benefit of Neimeyer's user-friendly organization is that a clinician can quickly scan the sections and chapters in order to select interventions that are best suited for their clinical training, orientation, and preferences, as well as their client's characteristics, needs, and preferences.

A second major strength of Neimeyer's work is the practicality and experiential quality of the techniques themselves. As already noted, every chapter/technique consists of indications/contraindications, a description of the procedure, and a clinical case example. The practical focus will be appreciated by every clinician who has found themselves in the therapy room knowing where their client needs to go but at a loss as to how to best get them there. In those clinical moments when theoretical musings fade into the background and existential concerns leap into the foreground, these techniques may be most welcome.

Thanks to the user-friendly organization, easy accessibility, emphasis on practicality, and great range of techniques, the usefulness and applicability of Neimeyer's work will extend well beyond psychologists, to include social workers, nurses, pastors, spiritual directors, caring family and friends, and anyone else who finds themselves confronted with the invitation to be a soul companion for a grieving soul. The sheer volume and rich diversity of techniques represented almost guarantees that there is something of value here for every reader.

Reviewer for This Issue

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A LEADING ATHEIST PHILOSOPHER REJECTS EVOLUTIONARY NATURALISM

Nagel, T. (2012).

Mind and cosmos: Why the materialist neo-Darwinian conception of nature is almost certainly false. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Hardcover. 144 pp. \$24.95. ISBN. 978-0199919758.

Reviewed by: Paul C. Maxwell, M.Div.

Thomas Nagel is University Professor in the Department of Philosophy and the School of Law at New York University. His books include The Possibility of Altruism, The View from Nowhere, and What Does It All Mean?: A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy. In 2008, he was awarded the Rolf Schock Prize in Logic and Philosophy and the Balzan Prize in Moral Philosophy.

Thomas Nagel, atheist Professor of Law and Philosophy at New York University, has delivered a thoroughgoing critique of the philosophical foundations and implications of evolutionary naturalism in his book *Mind and Cosmos*. He frames his task in terms of "the mind-body problem," or, the discipline of describing the relationship between the psychological and neurological aspects of human self-awareness. Beginning with the mind-body problem, Nagel proposes that three of the most important aspects of the mind—consciousness, cognition, and value—cannot be accounted for by, and are in fact incompatible with, the worldview of evolutionary naturalism. Nagel's tone is strong throughout: "the current orthodoxy about the cosmic order is the product of governing assumptions that are unsupported, and . . . flies in the face of common sense" (p. 5). Nagel delineates his argument in four main chapters, the first dealing with method (Ch. 2), and the rest dealing with consciousness, cognition, and value (Chs. 3–5).

In chapter 2, he sets up the conversation in the categories of metaphysics (in his words, the "natural order") and epistemology. His goal is to resist a reductionistic explanation for the world and history. Nagel charges both materialistic naturalism and theistic

intelligent design with understanding the facts of the world in a reductionistic fashion, because “both theism and materialism say that at the ultimate level, there is one form of understanding” (p. 22). In contrast to both of these, Nagel is a self-proclaimed idealist in the tradition of Plato and post-Kantians such as Hegel (p. 17). In Nagel’s view, the biological aspect of creatures cannot be the most basic controlling fact of existence; rather, it is the mind. Therefore, the structural relationship between the mind and the world must be the controlling structure for scientific method. In other words, the rationality of our minds, and the rationality of the universe itself, must control how we think about phenomena and perception (p. 17). The prioritization of evolutionary theory *over* psychological mind-body theory, since the criteria for assessing a systematic theory of explanation is not the rational constitution of the mind or the universe, but the principle of the survival of the fittest, “leaves the authority of reason in a much weaker position” (p. 28). Nagel insists: “in the criticism and correction of reasoning, the final court of appeal is always reason itself” (p. 83).

In chapters 3–4, Nagel directs his attention to the existence of consciousness and cognition. He gives the example of behaviorism as a crassly materialistic way of diagnosing mental phenomena; it relies on purely observable biological data and “behaviorism leaves out the inner mental state itself” (p. 38). In the epiphenomenal position, the mind is understood *in terms of* brain activity. But the mind must be conceived as something beyond physical. To this end, Nagel makes the distinction between what he labels Ψ , “a mental event like pain or a taste sensation,” and Φ , “the corresponding physical event in the central nervous system” (p. 39). Materialism, Nagel proposes, cannot account for a real distinction between Ψ and Φ due to the metaphysical and methodological shortcomings of their worldview (pp. 41–43). The only materialist account of such mental phenomena results in a form of psychophysical reductionism that actually precludes the observability of psychological reality. For what he labels a speculative alternative, Nagel proposes “neutral monism” by arguing thus: “since conscious organisms are not composed of a special kind of stuff, but can be constructed, apparently, from any of the matter in the universe, suitably arranged, it follows that this monism will be universal. *Everything*, living or not, is constituted from elements having a nature that is *both physical and nonphysical*—that is, capable of combining into *mental wholes*” (p. 57, emphasis mine). This is a significant claim which he terms “panpsychism,” the metaphysical claim that “all the elements of the physical world

are also mental” (p. 57). In other worlds, for Nagel, the Ψ/Φ distinction is not simply a mind-body formula, but it is a structurally foundational distinction that undergirds the constitution of reality.

If the Ψ/Φ distinction were to be taken, not only as cognitively necessary for mental processes, but also as the ontological architecture that supports the principle of the uniformity of nature (“all the elements of the physical world are also mental,” p. 57), then, Nagel proposes, he simultaneously solves the mind-body problem *and* defends against the subjective critique that leads to solipsism. Such a cognitive/metaphysical system would provide a rationale in defense of scientific realism that does not end with logic, but begins with it. He says, “therefore any evolutionary account of the place of reason presupposes reason’s validity and cannot confirm it without circularity” (p. 81). The necessary elements of such a structure (consciousness and cognition), construed in this way, exclude naturalistic and evolutionary origins (p. 92), since the ideas of ultimate reality underlying evolutionary naturalism and panpsychism are incompatible. This is because if the Ψ/Φ distinction were integrated into scientific methodology, it would undercut the need for an evolutionary explanatory system; yet if the Ψ/Φ distinction is jettisoned, then the evolutionary hypothesis is left unable to explain perhaps the most epistemologically basic aspects of scientific reality (self-awareness and rationality).

In chapter 5, Nagel proposes that evolutionary naturalism and the existence of values are incompatible. He conscripts the work of Sharon Street, an evolutionary naturalist who infers from naturalism that “value realism” (moral intuition) is impossible in her own worldview. Nagel moves in the opposite direction on the basis of the same inference: *because* value realism exists, evolutionary naturalism cannot be true (p. 105). Nagel concludes, “It would be an advance if the secular theoretical establishment, and the contemporary enlightened culture which it dominates, could wean itself of the materialism and Darwinism of the gaps—to adapt one of its own pejorative tags. I have tried to show that this approach is incapable of providing an adequate account, either constitutive or historical, of our universe . . . I find this view . . . unbelievable—a heroic triumph of ideological theory over common sense” (pp. 127–128).

Mind and Cosmos is a must-read on principle: a leading atheist philosopher of human psychology critiques the leading scientific philosophy of history with Oxford University Press. One cannot ignore a voice so intriguing in such a new and relevant conversation. The

philosophy of science was popularized with Thomas Kuhn's famous work, and as the world becomes increasingly self-conscious of the revolutions that have occurred in its own scientific structures, the academy awaits a theory that can actually give philosophical justification for the reliability of science. Nagel concludes that no such theory is ultimately attainable in our age (p. 128). Yet in the world of psychology, clinicians and practitioners hardly have the luxury of waiting for such a theory. Any who have been around long enough will remember the rise of the antipsychiatry movement, the challenge of the application of the medical model to psychology, and the many other intersections of theory and practice. Nagel's work is a step forward in giving

theists a voice in the conversation about the philosophy of science. While his criticisms of theism cannot be addressed here (Plantinga's *Where The Conflict Really Lies* [Oxford, 2011] gives a theistic account of these issues), his criticisms of evolutionary naturalism make room for Christian practitioners of psychology to pursue their discipline as a science without the burden of the skyward nose of the naturalistic academy.

Reviewer for This Issue

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