

Northern Ireland has fueled centuries of hatred, discrimination, and warfare. There was peace in Northern Ireland from the 1920s to the 1960s, but sectarian grievances ultimately led to renewed violence. A similar fate could befall the current peace accord. The Catholic population is growing and may be the majority within a few decades. If new warfare is not to break out as the balance of power shifts, it is essential that the communal tribalism be overcome.

### HEALING THE DIVIDE

The referendum's success must be followed by a sustained program to integrate Northern Ireland society. The

government should integrate all state schools. The schools must foster tolerance and understanding between Protestants and Catholics. Secular community centers must be built. Integrated youth programs must be expanded. Equal housing programs and equal employment laws must be strengthened.

The people of Northern Ireland must reach across the barriers between the two communities. They must support integrated organizations, and abandon the most divisive sectarian traditions. Only then will the religious divide lose its stranglehold on politics and society.

The week of the peace agreement also saw the 400th anniversary of the

Edict of Nantes. The Edict granted civil rights to French Protestants, thereby ending religious warfare in France for several generations. Yet conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Europe did not completely subside until secularization undermined the power of religious sectarianism. Northern Ireland is the last exception.

If Northern Ireland is to join the mainstream of European society it must heal its divided society. Its government must build secular institutions. Its people must unite around the goal of peace and integration. The people of Great Britain, Ireland, and Northern Ireland must commit themselves to making sure that future generations can never think of terrorism as routine. ■

# A Journal Like No Other

**Keith M. Parsons**

In the staid and sober world of academic journals, something exciting has just happened. A new, peer-reviewed philosophy journal has just been launched to do something unheard of—offer rigorous critiques of theistic and religious claims.

The journal's name is *Philo*. It began when I proposed the idea to FREE INQUIRY Editor Timothy J. Madigan. He raised the issue with Paul Kurtz, who enthusiastically supported the project and agreed to make *Philo* a publication of the Council for Secular Humanism. *Philo* is sponsored by, and is the official journal of, the Society of

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Humanist Philosophers. With considerable diffidence, I agreed to edit the new journal, but only because I was assured of the support of Lewis Vaughn as my Executive Editor. His expertise makes the project possible.

My inspiration for selecting the name *Philo*, which was the name of Hume's skeptic in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, was a remark made by Richard Gale in his outstanding book *The Nature and Existence of God*. In his Introduction to the work, Gale comments that he wrote the book because, given recent, sophisticated work by theistic philosophers, he felt that it was time for a return of Hume's *Philo*. This is also the justification for the existence of this journal.

Over the past two decades, a number of outstanding theistic philosophers

have produced a number of very significant works in the philosophy of religion. Some of these works employ conceptual tools developed in science, the philosophy of science, and formal logic to give new life to old arguments. For instance, Richard Swinburne's *The Existence of God* applies Bayesian confirmation theory to the traditional cosmological and teleological arguments for the existence of God. He thereby produces powerful new inductive versions of those arguments, which, he claims, are not vulnerable to the standard refutations. In a similar vein, William Lane Craig has employed highly technical points from current physical cosmology to refurbish cosmological arguments. Other philosophers defend sophisticated modal versions of the ontological argument.

Philosophers such as Alvin Plantinga and William Alston have developed defenses of theism that depart from the old-fashioned natural-theology project. Plantinga develops an anti-foundationalist position he calls Calvinist (or Reformed) Epistemology. This position permits belief in God as a properly basic belief, i.e., a belief that is rational though based on no evidence or argument. Alston argues the intriguing view that

the Christian's claims to perceive God need be no less rational than our everyday perceptual claims. R.M. Adams also provides novel treatments of old issues, such as the problem of evil.

A new development has been the resurgence of anti-evolutionism and the emergence of so-called intelligent design theory. Led by activists such as Philip Johnson, this movement has attracted endorsements from several leading

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philosophers. More sophisticated than the crude propaganda of "scientific creationists," the new anti-evolutionism is also an attack on scientific naturalism. I intend that an entire issue of *Philo* will soon address "intelligent design" and its philosophical defenders.

Finally, the Fellowship of Christian Philosophers has flourished and produces an outstanding journal, *Faith and Philosophy*. Various other lesser-known journals are devoted to the rational defense of theism in general and Christianity in particular.

While these various apologetic enterprises have multiplied, with some notable exceptions, the response of nontheist philosophers has been muted. Only a handful of book-length responses have appeared. Several critical pieces have appeared in the journals, but are generally swamped by the volume of pro-theist pieces.

The purpose of *Philo* is, quite simply, to provide a single source for the best articles by nontheist philosophers on topics relating to the philosophy of religion and religious apologetics. We shall also publish articles on naturalistic or humanistic ethics. This does not mean that editorial policy will exclude articles by theists; our policy is to publish the best articles we receive. However, we aim to become recognized as the source for the highest quality writings by the most distinguished nontheist philoso-

phers. In this sense we aim to make our journal the counterpart of *Faith and Philosophy*.

*Philo* aims to be a professional journal of the highest quality and will therefore inevitably contain highly technical materials of interest chiefly to professional philosophers. However, I think that philosophers should not feel it beneath their dignity to occasionally address semi-popular apologetic works.

These works are often quite influential, and, unless philosophers examine them, they often go without significant critical evaluation. This means that educated nonprofessionals should also find things of interest in *Philo*.

Each issue of *Philo* will consist of three parts. The first section will contain peer-reviewed articles. The second section will consist of responses to earlier articles and replies by the original authors. I expect that the articles in *Philo* will provoke a number of lively debates, and we intend to pro-

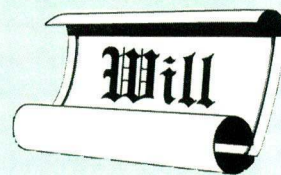
vide a forum for such continuing discussion. The third section will be a lengthy section of book reviews. Works in the philosophy of religion appear quite frequently, and we shall aim to have the more important of these works reviewed by the appropriate experts. Most reviews will be short, but works considered particularly significant will be reviewed at length in "review essays."

We are particularly lucky to have an outstanding group of articles in the first issue. Contributions come from Kai Nielsen, Adolf Grünbaum, Richard Gale, Quentin Smith, Paul Kurtz, Michael Martin, Theodore Drange, Theodore Schick, Jr., and H. James Bix. One could hardly have asked for a more distinguished group of philosophers to grace our first issue. (See page 9 for subscription details.) Other very distinguished philosophers have agreed to serve on our editorial board. These include W. V. Quine, Kurt Baier, Mario Bunge, Daniel C. Dennett, Paul Edwards, Ted Honderich, Philip Kitcher, and Antony Flew. We expect their writings to appear in the journal in the future.

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We would be happy to work with you and your attorney in the development of a will or estate plan that meets your wishes. A variety of arrangements are possible, including gifts of a fixed amount or a percentage of your estate; living trusts or gift annuities, which provide you with lifetime income; a contingent bequest that provides for FREE INQUIRY only if your primary beneficiaries do not survive you.

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