

# Editorial

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*Nathan Kowalsky*

It is a distinct honour to write my first editorial for *The Trumpeter*, although I promise you, good reader, that I won't make a habit of it. This is the second issue I've had the pleasure of pressing the "publish" button on, and the first since having taken over as editor-in-chief in from the indomitable Jorge Conesa-Sevilla in January 2014 (who only took over that position from Michael Caley in January 2013). Unfortunately, these changeovers led to an extended period of flux at the journal with attendant delays. I am incredibly grateful to my editorial team for all the work they've put in behind the scenes, ensuring that we kept things going. Margaret Merrill continues to work as narrative section editor, and is joined by Michael Caley in that capacity. Wendell Kisner remains as book and film review section editor, but has also stepped up to join T. R. Kover as one of the journal's managing editors. Nicola Vulpe stepped down as poetry section editor in March 2013, and we were privileged to welcome Loren Wilkinson and Kelly Shepherd as replacements several months later. Finally, our two new copy editors, Lee Solotki and Bart Lenart, are absolutely indispensable in bringing each issue forth into actuality.

Indeed, being so impressed by the reconstituted editorial team for *The Trumpeter*, I proposed a panel of papers by various editors of the journal at the Under Western Skies 3 conference, held this past September in Calgary, Alberta. In the end, only three of the five panelists were able to travel to the conference, but those papers were by all accounts well received. Our publisher, Athabasca University Press, set up a table displaying some promotional material for the journal, and we certainly hope that many of the participants at the conference will consider submitting their work to *The Trumpeter* over the coming months.

This issue is the first of two that *The Trumpeter* will publish in 2014, albeit both at the end of the year and only a few months apart. One of the things long-time readers will notice about this issue (and the last one) is the simplified structure of the journal's sections. Over time, the journal accumulated over fifty different categories within which authors could submit articles. This surfeit became rather unwieldy, confusing, and sometimes redundant. Therefore, the number of main sections of the journal has been reduced to the following four, each with its own dedicated set of section editors: articles (for scholarly research), narratives (for other prose), poetry, and book or film reviews. Other sections (e.g., features, cartoons, obituaries) can still be utilized at the discretion of the editors, and all sections remain in the system, even if no longer active, as part of the historical record of the journal.

It is a pleasure to feature Freya Mathews' "Conversations Amongst Rocks with Sun Dew" at the

head of our Autumn issue. Originally submitted as a narrative, it could just as well be classified as an article. Indeed, her piece is emblematic of why *The Trumpeter* publishes not only academic research papers in their typical academic tone, but also a glorious diversity of prose and poetic voices. Mathews' narrative is conceptually rich – I am especially piqued by the notions of “affordances” and the “mimic-sphere” – and she argues compellingly for why religion “must no longer be a side show, but rather the main game of society.”

Our articles section begins with a multi-authored essay by Lissy Goralnik, Laurie Thorp, Dale Rozeboom, and Paul Thompson. In fact, their article bridges the artificial divide between articles and narratives by “their embrace of story as a holder meaning and ethical wisdom.” Wrestling with what Ortega calls the enigma of death, they offer a mutually modifying appropriation of both ecofeminist and agrarian philosophy in search of a critical alternative to the Enlightenment presuppositions that underlie much animal advocacy. The second article, Robert Mark Causey's “Nietzsche's Hyperanthropos-Centrism,” defends what seems to me a perspicacious interpretation of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*. He re-interprets Zarathustra's prophecy, “The Superman *shall* be meaning of the earth!” in a profoundly ecological way, as the foretelling of human-beings who overcome their humanity by relinquishing their anthropocentric hubris. Causey concludes by suggesting that it would take a whole other paper to explore how Nietzsche's antimoralism could synch with something like Arne Naess' Spinozist ethic. I certainly hope he writes it!

We are also pleased to publish two poems by the Edmontonian poet Don Perkins. I'm not sure editors should say much about poems in editorials, though, as the former don't seem to be the sorts of things that can benefit from introductory remarks. Better, I think, to let the reader simply experience the poetry for themselves.

This issue's narrative section starts off with “Mandakini,” a poignant story of homecoming in the hills of Northern India. The characters seem to move in and out of identity with the gods and rivers for which they are named, and I found myself closely relating to the pull that one's childhood landscape exerts on us as adults. Second, Paul Chamberlain's piece offers a fascinating geographical interpretation of the experience of kayaking, blending phenomenology and natural scientific description. He goes on to interpret this experience through the lens of Eastern religious traditions, achieving what he calls “mindfulness.” The final narrative, “Darwin on Fire,” is a fitting bookend to the section, as it mirrors the first article of the section above by transgressing the artificial border between narrative and research paper. Here the author reflects on his travels to the Tierra del Fuego, the Land of Fire, and how Charles Darwin's own encounters with the indigenous peoples there inspired him to develop his theory of evolution as something that would encompass human beings along with all other forms of life.

This issue of the *The Trumpeter* also contains four book reviews. The first is an extensive and appreciative though critical review of Jerry Kobalenko's photographic essay *Arctic Eden: Journeys through the Changing High Arctic* (2010). The second covers what sounds like a very poignant book of paintings and analysis of birds recently gone or going extinct, *On Rare Birds* by Anita Albus (translated from the German in 2011). Next is the anthology *Avatar and Nature Spirituality* edited by Bron Taylor (2013) who, our reviewer says, "should be commended for his far-sightedness and his sense of balance, for his deft handling of so much disparate material, which has resulted in such a scholarly yet accessible and genuinely enjoyable anthology." Finally, the review of John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker's *Ecology and Religion* commends the book as "the definitive work on the field and force of religion and ecology." Let me take this opportunity to remind our readers that we are always looking for volunteers to write book reviews, as well as for suggestions for books to review. Contact our book review editor, Wendell Kisner, through our website for further information.

With that, I send you forth to read and consider these contributions to the first issue of *The Trumpeter's* 30<sup>th</sup> volume. Meanwhile, the editorial team shall return to finalizing the second issue of the year, which will be a special issue celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary the journal. Stay tuned!