

While many of the articles in the first six sections go over familiar territory, there are some surprises. For example, in section one, "The Ecclesial Context of Catholic Bioethics," Michael Banner, an Anglican contributor, subjects *Evangelium Vitae*, and to a lesser extent, *Veritatis Splendor*, *Donum Vitae*, and even the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to a rather lengthy critique. In his introduction (p. 3), editor Gormally rues the fact that there was no chance for conference participants to discuss the specifics of Banner's critique. As it stands, Banner's article, which is both heavily theological in nature and critical of the Catholic approach to bioethics, might be better suited for another sort of volume (perhaps *Issues for an Anglican Apologetic*)?

Another surprise, this time a pleasant one, is the article by Dominican scholar Anthony Fisher, "Is There a Distinctive Role for the Catholic Hospital in a Pluralist Society?" Although the author says nothing Catholic health care professionals do not already know, he reminds them of some lessons they ought not to forget, especially about intrinsically evil actions (p. 219).

Also worthy of particular mention for their perspicacity are the four articles comprising the section "Law, Public Policy and the Pro-life Cause." John Keown's "The Legal Revolution: From the 'Sanctity of Life' to 'Quality of Life' and 'Autonomy'" (pp. 233–260) presents definitions of 'vitalism,' 'sanctity of life,' and 'quality of life' that rival any currently in use. The article "Bioethics and Public Policy: Catholic Participation in the American Debate" (pp. 274–299), by Princeton University Professor Robert P. George with William L. Saunders, is sobering in its assessment of the impact (or lack thereof) of Catholic thought on the American political scene. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, for both J.J. Scarisbrick's "The Pro-life Cause in Great Britain" (pp. 300–311) and "The Catholic Church and Public Policy Debates" by John Finnis (pp. 261–273).

Thanks to Helen Watt, a Research Fellow of the Linacre Centre and a contributing author, *Issues for a Catholic Bioethic* contains a name index. This reviewer wishes that a subject index could have been prepared as well, since several themes worth investigating recur throughout the volume. Among them the culture of death, dualism, Catholic identity, cooperation, and utilitarianism stand out. There may be others as well, but this is a mere quibble. This volume should be on the shelf of any serious student of Catholic bioethics.

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Humber, James M., and Robert F. Almeder, eds. *Alternative Medicine and Ethics*. Totowa, NJ: Humana Press, 1998. 220 pp.

Alternative Medicine and Ethics is a book of modest length (220 pages) and even more modest content. As addressed in this book, a wide range of therapies constitutes alternative medicine. The tremendous heterogeneity of alternative medicine represents a major challenge in writing a brief text regarding ethical issues raised by the myriad of practices encompassed by the term. Alternative medical practices can be arbitrarily divided into a number of categories. There are well-known treatments underpinned by some mechanistic foundation including chiropractic, acupuncture, some herbal therapies, and certain nutritional supplements.

Treatments of some notoriety but possessing little or no mechanistic support include herbalism and homeopathy. Acupressure, aromatherapy, clinical ecology, electrodiagnosis, naturopathy, and natural hygiene can be considered as lesser-known treatments. Some treatments have a comedic flare, with craniosacral therapy attempting to manipulate the fused bones of

the skull; iridology, diagnosing disease from flecks of color in the iris; reflexology, massaging the feet to treat other body parts; and therapeutic touch, transferring excess energy from the healer to the patient. Bizarre treatments based on mysticism include Ayurvedic medicine and macrobiotics. Finally, the patently dangerous therapy of colonic irrigation is self-explanatory.

According to the editors (J.M. Humber and R.F. Almeder, Georgia State University), the book represents "the fifteenth annual volume in a series of texts designed to review and update the literature on issues of central importance in bioethics today." Each of the six chapters is written by different authors and addresses divergent topics including: the scientific validity of alternative medicine (Chapters 1 and 2); access and insurance issues (Chapters 3 and 4); legal and ethical concerns regarding the use of "healing" prayer (Chapter 5); and ethical dilemmas faced by pharmacists (Chapter 6). The buffet nature of the text results in a lack of flow and cohesiveness.

While reading Stephen Barrett, M.D.'s, stinging criticism of alternative medicine in Chapter 1, I was taken aback by the intensity of his animosity toward many alternative medicine practitioners until I read the second chapter in support of "complementary and alternative medicine." The content of this chapter is the intellectual equivalent of yelling fire in a movie theater. Occupying (like a hostile foreign power) approximately 25% of the book, this poorly edited contribution attempts to form a theoretical basis for alternative medicine by linking states of consciousness to quantum physics and Einstein's theory of relativity. The blatant inaccuracies permeating the second chapter are too numerous to itemize, but suffice it to say that the chapter's inclusion in a serious book is difficult to fathom. My guess is that the editors wanted to juxtapose two strongly opposing points of view in the first two chapters, but the chasm between the two sides is too wide for the nonexpert to traverse.

After recovering from the shock of Chapter 2, the reader enters into "Healthcare

Plans as Gatekeepers." As the first author Grace Powers Monaco is an attorney, it is not surprising that this chapter is organized in legal- brief fashion. Despite possessing the tone of a regulatory hearing, the chapter presents a good summary of the fiduciary responsibility of health care plans to manage payments for alternative treatments in the best interest of the plan members.

The fourth chapter by S. Mitchell Weitzman, J.D., LL.M., opens with the third rendition of a number of glossary-style definitions pertaining to alternative therapies previously provided in Chapters 1 and 2. Mr. Weitzman presents a sympathetic case for integration of alternative and scientific medical approaches. During his presentation, he puts forth several of the same arguments and levies some of the same accusations against scientific medicine previously seen in Chapter 2. However, acceptance of Mr. Weitzman's well-written and calm presentation of the case for considering completely unproven therapies, as adjuncts to current treatment regimens, would have serious deleterious consequences. In the absence of objective standards for evaluation of potential treatments, the proliferation of subjective treatments is inevitable. By analogy, it should be noted that the Internal Revenue Service recognizes approximately 20,000 separate Christian denominations in the US. Do we really need or want thousands of different cancer treatments?

In Chapter 5, G. Steven Neely, J.D., Ph.D., provides a nice review of the constitutional and legal issues surrounding prayer as a method of alternative healing for children. Although no new solutions are proposed, the perplexing issues of "parental rights, child welfare, state intervention, religious belief and practice, alternative world-views, and the limits of human knowledge" are summarized. The book concludes with John K. Crellin, M.D., Ph.D.'s chapter titled "Alternative Medicine: Ethical Challenges for the Profession of Pharmacy." Dr. Crellin's discussion of the issue is adequate, with the notable exception that he does not clarify the purpose of the article until the last page of his closing

comments. However, this deficiency is ameliorated somewhat by the brevity (thirteen pages) of the chapter.

Overall, four of the six chapters have merit as potentially citable reference material. Dr. Barrett's detailed description of the various types of alternative medical treatments is especially noteworthy as reference material. Also, a reference section accompanies each chapter. However, the poor proofreading of the text and the overall lack of thematic cohesiveness counterbalance these strengths.

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Miller, Kenneth R. *Finding Darwin's God: a Scientist's Search for Common Ground Between God and Evolution*. New York: Cliff Street Books, 1999. 338 pp.

Finding Darwin's God, by Brown University professor of biology Kenneth Miller, is a full-throated defense of Darwinian evolution against skeptics. Several things make the book more interesting than others in the genre (*Science on Trial* by Douglas Futuyma, *Scientists Confront Creationism* edited by Laurie Godfrey, *Darwinism Defended* by Michael Ruse, *Evolution and the Myth of Creationism* by Tim Berra). First, Miller knows how to write in a lively style (he is also a successful textbook author). Second, he takes on advocates of "intelligent design theory" including University of California-Berkeley law professor Phillip Johnson and—reader be warned, myself included, who are relatively recent apostates from Darwinism and have gotten hearings for our ideas in a number of academic settings. (Both Johnson and I have responded to Miller's criticisms of us, Johnson in his latest book

The Wedge of Truth and I, by a series of essays on the internet [www.crsc.org]. But, third, the most interesting facet of the book is that Miller is a practicing Roman Catholic, and he aims to show that Darwinism is at least compatible with faith in God, and perhaps it is even the best way for God to have made material life. Miller's theological view of evolution is that "[God] made the world today contingent upon the events of the past. He made our choices matter, our actions genuine, our lives important. In the final analysis, He used evolution as the tool to set us free" (p.253). I will focus on Miller's attempt to baptize Darwinism. Briefly, although well-intentioned, it founders on his idiosyncratic use of the concept of "chance."

Keenly aware that prominent voices in biology equate Darwinism with atheism, Miller contends it is reasonable to think that God purposefully created the universe. He points to the so-called anthropic coincidences—physical features of the universe (such as the strength of the gravitational constant, the charge of the electron, and so on) that seem suspiciously fine-tuned for our existence. He explicitly stands against those, such as the atheistic philosopher Daniel Dennett, who try to explain them away as evidence for an infinite number of universes. Fine and good, and I agree with Miller on this point. But he seems oblivious to the fact that he is making a classic argument for intelligent design—he has concluded, based on scientific data, that a viable explanation for the laws and fundamental constants of the universe is that they were the choice of an intelligent agent. Other reviewers have also drawn attention to Miller's design reasoning. Barry Palevitz, a determinedly atheistic biology professor, writes: "Wait! Is Ken Miller, irreducible complexity's worst nightmare, using the exact same arguments as Behe, except that instead of designing biochemical pathways, Miller's deity plays dice with quarks?"

Miller tries to justify treating physics differently from biology, noting "let's keep in mind that evolution is a biological theory,