On the whole, I think that Katz' second volume of essays on mysticism, is a success. If there is to be a third, I would suggest that Katz continue to solicit papers such as those of Gimello and Cousins—papers that really show us, rather than only tell us, how the mystical literature should be understood.

*Creative Interchange*, ed. by **John A. Broyer** and **William S. Minor**. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982. 566 pages. $27.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN H. PHILLIPS, University of Texas at Austin.

This *Festschrift* in memory of Henry Nelson Wiemann, 1884-1975, shows above all Wiemann's influence upon contemporary theology and religious inquiry. The contributions range in topic from Wiemann's biography through philosophic and social dimensions of his thought to aesthetics and comparative religion.

The biographical contributions present Wiemann as a philosophic mystic who is certain of the reality of "God," and who throughout his life strives to find concepts adequate to his religious experience. Lewis Hahn's essay emphasizes the change and development in Wiemann's thought in regard to the content of his concept of God, as he reflected upon the nature of mystical experience.

Many contributors point out that Wiemann understands the term 'God' to designate the source of human value. This Wiemann's "formal" definition of the term apparently derives from his understanding of the relevant intellectual history. It remains a fixed point in all the theological reformulations.

Marvin Shaw discerns another constant. This is that Wiemann sees mystical experience not as supernaturalistic, but rather as a special dimension of ordinary experience which compels personal growth. Often Wiemann identifies personal growth as the "human good." Gary Kessler stresses that mystical or religious experience, according to Wiemann, brings a person to transcend inherited dispositions of belief and behavior.

Echoing the vitalism of Bergson and the phenomenology of Husserl, Wiemann later in his life found "creative interchange" to be the least inadequate way to conceptualize the source of human good. (That he expresses his views in this manner, as converging on theoretical adequacy asymptotically, is another indication of Wiemann's empiricism—many contributers see the empiricism as the most prominent feature of his theology.) Michael Lazarin shows that the precursors of "creative interchange" extend to Plato's concept of *eros* in the *Symposium* as well as to Socratic *elenchus*.

In enunciating the importance of creative interchange, Wiemann comes to

speak much less of mystical experience and even of God. Creative interchange is presumed to be a natural process emerging from the uninterpreted, phenomenological level of our human being-in-the-world, and in addition something which can be the object of our ultimate commitment.

Everyone of the contributions helps to elucidate this central idea, which gives the book its title, although many papers, particularly in the sections on aesthetics, social philosophy, and comparative thought, take Wiemann's ideas as seminal or explore their significance for one or another individual discipline. The high quality overall of the thirty-odd papers is a tribute to the power of Wiemann's thought.

It is difficult to express in a few words what I sense is unacceptable in Wiemann's central concept, particularly in light of its demonstrated fertility. Yet Charles Hartshorne, in his essay, appears to pin down the most general difficulty when he asks (p. 110), "Is that [our being creative], just in itself, a measure of value?" Wiemann claims that the concept of creative interchange bridges any presumed gap between fact and value. Creative interchange is also, however, considered a fact, while Wiemann's conception of it is presumed to be empirically derived. Hartshorne in his objection reflects longstanding philosophic qualms to any such approach to the theory of criteria of value.

Yet the interacting of people creatively with one another does appear to spur progress, at least technological progress, probably other kinds as well, although one should not underestimate, I should think, the contributions of the recluse. And perhaps, as John Dewey proposes, we discern the criteria of valuations through observing what appears to produce things of value while examining our assumptions concerning it. To an extent, Wiemann's concept may be thought to generalize from common-sense and firmly held value-assumptions.

However, Wiemann also claims to have discovered the one ultimate value, and this is bound to raise further objections. Does our creativity itself have value in the context of the universe as a whole, given the likelihood that our species eventually will perish? Wiemann does not appear to explain, nor do his defenders here, how an ultimate value is possible, though he views creative interchange as just that.

Academic theory of value has become complex and diverse in the last hundred years. Some follow Brentano and Meinong in endeavoring to formulate a unitary theory. In sharp contrast, the followers of Moore and Wittgenstein attempt to specify the logic of separate spheres of value. The contributors to this volume find, generally speaking, Wiemann's thought to preserve the best in these two apparently conflicting approaches. They tend to see Wiemann's theorizing as at once unitary and sensitive to distinct value-contexts. But beyond this merit, the volume leaves the impression that Wiemann's outstanding contribution was his own personal commitment to value, his own personal response to the history of

human commitment to values and refinement of valuations, and his effort to preserve that history in the face of increasing relativism and nihilism.

*Ethics: Approaching Moral Decisions*, by **Arthur F. Holmes**. Downers Grove, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 1984, 132pp., $4.95 (paper).

Reviewed by PETER GENCO, Eastern College.

Christians have always appealed to the Bible when setting themselves the task of developing a moral theology. However, although they work from a common source, divergent views still emerge concerning exactly how the Scriptures should be appropriated in the construction of a systematic Christian ethic. This methodological concern has prompted some writers to work for a "pure" ethic free from the taint of non-biblical approaches and has prompted others to integrate both philosophical and biblical truth into a unified and more complete whole. Arthur Holmes takes his place among the latter.

In the first chapter of his book, *Ethics: Approaching Moral Decisions*, Holmes expresses the view that there is a complementary link between philosophical ethics and religion. The former provides the tools for systematically structuring biblical morality and for addressing questions regarding moral choices and exceptions to moral rules. The latter fleshes out abstract ethical principles and virtues by drawing on the vast repertoire of ethical material found in the biblical narrative.

Accordingly, Holmes contends, the Christian cannot afford to disregard ethical reasoning and opt instead for a "pure" biblical ethic. On the contrary, as he sees it, Christians should want their "...philosophical and biblical ethics to go hand in hand, the biblical informing the philosophical whenever possible, and the philosophical serving the biblical" (p. 13). This means, of course, that Christians must enter into dialog with other philosophical approaches.

In the next four chapters, Holmes himself enters into dialog with Cultural Relativism, Emotivism, Ethical Egoism and Utilitarianism. Being faithful to his purpose, Holmes discloses what is untenable and commends what is acceptable in each approach. When considering Cultural Relativism, for example, he maintains that Christians must accept as fact the differing moral beliefs and practices of other cultures and must be tolerant of these differences. However, he also makes the point that variety does not preclude there being universal moral principles and that tolerance need not be non-selective. In other words, Cultural Relativism recognizes moral differences (as should the Christian Ethic) but does not recognize (as does the Christian Ethic) the validity of transcultural principles— and thereby overstates its case. Holmes says the same about Emotivism, Egoism and Utilitarianism. Each has something to teach the Christian but none tells the