

PREFACE

The Editor's Voice

Dr. Gwendolin Herder, publisher of *A Christian Cosmology*, suggested that I prepare this companion book for the six-volume Pendergast series. In the course of our conversations during the past three years, she learned of my own work in related areas that she thought would be helpful in presenting our material in historical perspective.

I have been a member of the scientific community for over six decades, getting my start at an institution that played a key part in the genesis of the Age of Information. After receiving my doctorate in mathematics, I went on to participate in the introduction of statistical techniques in medicine. My activities included teaching, consulting, collaboration with medical investigators, and the building of a department, work that involved incorporation of evolving computer technology and extensive fundraising for the support of my organization.

I studied ethics and the philosophy of science. My research concerning ethical issues of uncertainty in biomedical science and technology led to the concept of an “ethics of evidence,” a multidisciplinary approach that addresses both scientific and existential uncertainty. There will always be scientific uncertainty, integral to the scientific method, and there is existential uncertainty, because the question of ultimate meaning is beyond the scope of science.

For decades I taught medical students and served on U.S. government advisory committees. I was asked to be a consultant for ESTE, a new encyclopedia for science, technology, and ethics. I contributed a series of ten articles, presenting the enigma of chance in the framework of

the Ethics of Evidence and the context of the history of science. My theme has always been the same: sharing what I know, to offer insight into information.

In 2015, I established the Ethics of Evidence Foundation, with divisions for medicine, social justice, physics, and cosmology, and the mission to support the search for meaning in the Age of Information. I included cosmology to cover the work of the Jesuit scholar Richard J. Pendergast (1927–2012) concerning faith and science.

The Bible, eternal legacy of humankind, needs to be read in the light of what has been revealed about the world by science. The heliocentric theory of Copernicus, just turning five hundred, was a challenge, because it is so contrary to human experience. We are today facing a more significant development, the theory of evolution, which involves the origin of the human race.

Richard J. Pendergast devoted his life to the integration of modern science and divine revelation; that is why he became a Jesuit. His aim was to update the Christian synthesis of St. Thomas Aquinas, based on the philosophy of Aristotle and a static worldview, to reflect evolution. Combining notions from science, philosophy, and theology, he would weave a coherent picture of what we know about reality. He sees a living universe, reality as dynamic process, and evolution with purpose in the mystery of love. His ideas appeared in peer-reviewed professional journals, but it was his deepest desire to reach a general audience, especially young people, and that is the aim of our series.

This means interaction with our popular culture, with its oversimplified view of science. The ignoring of transcendental values may lead to the mistaken notion that science and religion are unrelated and that evolution must be a random process.

To clarify this serious issue is the reason for my book. In Part One, I first give a brief account of my personal story. Then in chapter 2 I introduce Richard Pendergast in the context of the Ethics of Evidence, freeing his work from the distractions of popular culture. I provide additional discussion in the chapters of Part Two.

I was planning this volume when I learned that Sir Ronald A. Fisher, founder of modern statistics and genetics and, in my judgment, the greatest scientist of the twentieth century, was caught in the cancel wave sweeping our culture. A response to the charges against him has been published by the trustees of the Fisher Memorial Trust in a careful and thoughtful analysis of his writings. I can add further important information, and do so in chapter 2. It is especially relevant that Fisher, creator of the neo-Darwinian synthesis, was a lifetime believer.

For over two hundred years, in times of crisis and turmoil, the publishing house of Herder has been providing a platform for strong, independent voices to speak to the issues of their day. I am pleased to add my voice to urge the resolution of this critical problem.

Valerie Miké, President
The Ethics of Evidence Foundation
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