

# Notes from the Editor

Volume 10 (2020)

Well, I had high hopes of reclaiming my office following the renovations that took place in the university building in which the Philosophy Department is located. Arts and Sciences Hall, a fine example of Georgian Revival style architecture, was completed in 1938, so I am not surprised that an occasional update is in order. All of this changed dramatically, though, by February, when more attention was being given to what has become known as the “Covid-19” pandemic. By mid-March, just a few months after Vol. 9 of *ID* appeared in virtual space, we were all booted out of our offices and told to work from home for the duration, whatever that meant. My hopes of renewed normalcy were no more. Not only was remote teaching in the works, but all the activities of being a professor and Editor of *ID* would begin and end from home.



As a philosopher, I could have followed in the footsteps of one of my predecessors, the eighteenth century German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and engaged in counterfactual reasoning, contemplating what might have happened if, for example, President Trump took Covid-19

seriously and implemented measures early on to deal with the crisis. Yes, we can think of a number of possible worlds, one in which I am currently working from my office and another in which the upcoming volume of *ID* will include a total of 30 research articles, but those are only alternative worlds and not the one I live in. As a philosopher, I could also have followed in the footsteps of the twentieth century French philosopher Paul Ricoeur and engaged in recollecting memories of the past. The fact of the matter is that the crisis was brushed aside for far too long and I am now confined to The Victoria in my Park East neighborhood.

Those who know me well casually suggested that I most probably was facing a Sisyphean-like journey, since I am someone who for decades was ever present on campus, getting it done from his university office. Four months later, I have remarkably grown accustomed to working from home, but have unremarkably not acclimated to socially distancing myself from most people in my life. (Perhaps I am thankful that the authors have not felt the need to inform me of their own trials and tribulations with the pandemic.) To compound matters, it would be a summer without travel. I would have to rely on memories and photographs of last year's trips to Iceland and Kosovo. No matter, I had to choreograph all my activities with those of others regardless of the impact of the corona virus, and now the ongoing demonstrations and mass arrests that occasionally creep close to my doorstep. So, we have arrived with a finished product in hand.

This year's volume contains the work of scholars from North America and Europe. The volume begins with an article entitled "Trust, Ethnicity, and Political Approval in 21<sup>st</sup> Century South Africa" by Alecia Anderson and Jonathan Bruce Santo. Given that the political is full of uncertainty—that people typically do not know exactly what others,

including politicians, will do, trust will almost certainly be an issue. And when it comes to democratic rule, trust is nothing less than a precondition given its connection with political approval. As Anderson and Santo note early on, “when citizens trust their governing institutions, they tend to be more satisfied with those institutions and support them” (1–2). Taking the ethnic pluralistic nation of South Africa as their focus, Anderson and Santo investigate the impact of ethnicity on the relationship between trust and political approval in this African country. Their results indicate that there continues to be such an impact.

A couple review essays covering the topics of counterterrorism, and Žižek and the pandemic follow the Anderson and Santo article. The first is Kenneth Christie’s essay of books covering radicalization programs, ISIS, and Al-Qaeda. The second is an essay by Edward Sankowski and Betty J. Harris, two of *ID*’s assistant editors, which delves into Slavoj Žižek’s work on the Covid-19 pandemic. Reviews of six books follow the review essays. These contributions cover a range of themes from the emancipatory potential of performance art, the philosopher Edith Stein, an analysis of global violence, populism, to Montezume, and human rights.

I thank the editors, staff, and board members for their assistance in putting together Volume 10 in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. What was once a relatively easy task of writing a review, for example, suddenly became a burden because one’s professional and family life has become discombobulated. Again, I thank you. I want especially to thank Kathryn A. Cox Schwartz, who has served as editorial assistant since the inception of *ID*, and the Executive Committee of The Leonard and Shirley Goldstein Center for Human Rights for their continued financial support. I also thank Angela Brown for her work as administrative assistant.

There is still a need for additional board members and editors,

including an associate editor. Interested individuals should send a letter of interest and an abridged CV to rconces@unomaha.edu.

I thank all those who reviewed manuscript submissions to *ID* over the past months. I am grateful for their adherence to deadlines and, most importantly, their insightful comments to both editors and authors. The following list includes board members and external referees who reviewed submissions for Volume 10:

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