

# NEWS AND NOTES

## *Tradition and Discovery* 46:2

### July 2020

The online-only “News and Notes” section of *Tradition and Discovery* includes bibliographic information, calls for papers, annual meeting programs, and any other items possibly of interest to members of the Polanyi Society and other persons working with the thought of Michael Polanyi. Send material to David Stewart, Editor of *Tradition and Discovery*, at [contact@davidjamesstewart.com](mailto:contact@davidjamesstewart.com).

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### **A Note on the *TAD* Editorial Transitions**

David Stewart is the new general editor of *TAD*. Submissions and other inquiries related to publication in *TAD* should, after July 1, 2020, be directed to David at the e-mail address which is already listed above: [contact@davidjamesstewart.com](mailto:contact@davidjamesstewart.com). David has been on the *TAD* Editorial Board for several years, so he is familiar with editorial and production practices used by *TAD*. David’s interests and recent work are outlined on his web page which you can access at <https://www.davidjamesstewart.com/>.

Paul Lewis, *TAD* General Editor for the last eight years, becomes Managing Editor of *TAD* after the publication of *TAD* 46:2. In this new position, he will continue to be responsible for *TAD*’s relationship with Mercer University and with businesses that help to produce *TAD*. Jean Bocharova ([jzbocharova@yahoo.com](mailto:jzbocharova@yahoo.com)) is taking over from Andrew Grosso as the new Book Review Editor.

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### **Re-Booting the June 9-11, 2020 Polanyi Society Conference**

Due to the dangers and complications associated with the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the Nashotah House conference “Post-Critical Philosophy and Social Theory” was postponed. The option of a 2021 conference at Nashotah House in early June is now being explored. Information about a 2021 conference will appear in the online-only “News and Notes” section of a future *TAD* and will be posted on the Polanyi Society website ([polanyisociety.org](http://polanyisociety.org)) as soon as it is available.

By the time you receive this issue of *TAD*, you likely already will be aware that the Society put together online opportunities for the presentation of some papers and other elements originally slated for the June 9-11, 2020, Nashotah Conference. The Polanyi Society discussion list ([polanyi\\_list@yahoogroups.com](mailto:polanyi_list@yahoogroups.com)) and website ([polanyisociety.org](http://polanyisociety.org)) have been used since mid-May to advertise online events, post papers for review, and encourage those interested to sign up for the online presentations and discussions. Six online presentations and discussions occurred in

the June 9-12, 2020, window, and 25-30 persons participated in each session. Other Zoom sessions may be scheduled later. Check the Polanyi Society website ([polanyisociety.org](http://polanyisociety.org)) and notices on the discussion list for updates.

Presentations and discussions for the six sessions held June 9-12 were recorded and are, until mid-July, available on the Zoom cloud. Listed below are the links for these recordings on the Zoom cloud. On June 11 and 12, there were two back-to-back sessions which are a single recording; you can use the “fast forward” slide to move rapidly through recordings. Later these recordings will be moved from the Zoom cloud to a downloading location on [polanyisociety.org](http://polanyisociety.org) where you can also still download materials originally posted for discussion in each session. For further information, write Phil Mullins ([mullins@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:mullins@missouriwestern.edu)).

### **Recordings on Zoom Cloud**

Discussion of Michael Polanyi’s “Economics Education” Film with Gabor Biro

Date: Jun 9, 2020 10:39 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Meeting Recording:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/1I9IDfav70ZJE7fP8kzuAY4BG6LHT6a81nBI\\_KEIz0gf0IHT8MtbAVTZ88t0SPfP](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/1I9IDfav70ZJE7fP8kzuAY4BG6LHT6a81nBI_KEIz0gf0IHT8MtbAVTZ88t0SPfP)

Jon Fennell, “Michael Polanyi and the Theologico-Political Problem”

Date: Jun 10, 2020 10:38 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Meeting Recording:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/wtZ8P6H6\\_WROTY2KuRxf4ctIYjMeaa81HJLq\\_tczU6jvDtsImmqrIkrR0GCPp](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/wtZ8P6H6_WROTY2KuRxf4ctIYjMeaa81HJLq_tczU6jvDtsImmqrIkrR0GCPp)

Robert Hyatt, “Trauma, Metaphor and Meaning” and Charles Lowney, "Body-Knowing and Neural Networks: Is a Computer’s Ability to Learn Human Skills a Victory for Reductionism?"

Date: Jun 11, 2020 10:37 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Meeting Recording:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/95Zrf5\\_y9XJLTIHQ2lvHfL57MYf1T6a81nUeq6IPzh6EcKV\\_EGRmFPqRftUDqkzE-](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/95Zrf5_y9XJLTIHQ2lvHfL57MYf1T6a81nUeq6IPzh6EcKV_EGRmFPqRftUDqkzE-)

Phil Mullins, “Michael Polanyi’s ‘Social Capitalism’” and Walter Gulick, Gus Breytspraak, and Phil Mullins, “Michael and Karl Polanyi”

Date: Jun 12, 2020 10:38 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Meeting Recording:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/9\\_5LBJLq2jpIeomW9X\\_aZKd4Gq\\_Keaa80XQXqPoPzKxGwn7UKEu\\_F9Ko4Ls1Mb6G](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/9_5LBJLq2jpIeomW9X_aZKd4Gq_Keaa80XQXqPoPzKxGwn7UKEu_F9Ko4Ls1Mb6G)

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### **Possible Online Seminar on Chapters in *Personal Knowledge***

In conjunction with the now cancelled June 9-11, 2020, conference at Nashotah, WI, a June 8 seminar on some material in *Personal Knowledge* was planned. This seminar was intended for graduate students and others new to Polanyi studies but would have been open to anyone interested. It was to provide an introductory overview of Polanyi's life and developing philosophical ideas and to focus on key elements of Polanyi's philosophy of science and its roots in his ideas about skills and articulation, subsidiary and focal awareness, and the "tacit dimension." The plan was to dig deeply into a few chapters of *Personal Knowledge*, treating topics such as skills and articulation, and perhaps also to discuss a short late Polanyi essay. Copies of primary texts were to be provided to participants for study before the seminar; the seminar discussion of texts was to be facilitated by seasoned Polanyi scholars. Several people inquired about the June 8 seminar. The Polanyi Society is presently considering an attempt to resurrect some components of the originally planned seminar as a series of four or five short Zoom meetings. If you are interested in participating or if you know someone who might be interested in participating, please e-mail Phil Mullins ([mullins@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:mullins@missouriwestern.edu)).

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### **Update on the 2020 Polanyi Society Boston Annual Meeting**

The 2020 Polanyi Society annual meeting will be in Boston, MA, and is tentatively scheduled for Friday and Saturday, November 20 and 21. Like Society annual meetings in past years, this meeting is in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), a larger scholarly organization that recognizes the Polanyi Society as a cooperating society. The AAR recently indicated they **are** proceeding with planning for Boston, although they note it is possible that all meetings may later have to be cancelled due to developments related to COVID-19. If the Polanyi Society annual meeting is cancelled, this will be posted as soon as possible on the Polanyi Society website ([polanysociety.org](http://polanysociety.org)) and the Polanyi Society discussion list ([polanyi\\_list@yahogroups.com](mailto:polanyi_list@yahogroups.com)).

The program for the Boston meeting is printed below. Confirmations about the times for sessions as well as the locations for sessions will be posted on [polanysociety.org](http://polanysociety.org) in the summer as soon as this information becomes available from the AAR. As with past Polanyi Society annual meetings held under the umbrella of the AAR, you do **not** have to register for the AAR meeting

to attend Polanyi Society sessions. It is the case, however, that it will likely be difficult to book a hotel in the vicinity of the location in which Polanyi Society sessions are held so book early.

**Friday, November 20, 2020.**

**9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.**

Jessica Schroeder, “Polanyi on ‘Beauty’”

Stan Scott, “The Poetics of Discovery”

**10:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon**—Meeting of the Polanyi Society Board of Directors

**3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**

Robert Frazier, “Polanyi on Nihilism and the Political Authority”

Richard Moodey, “Confronting or Denying the Minotaur”

Charles Lowney, “Two Freedoms and an Emergentist’s Hope for Social Progress”

**Saturday, November 21, 2020**

**9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

Esther Meek, “Subsidiary-Focal Integration, Things, and a Metaphysics of Liberty”

Joshua Gilliland, “The Silent Knowers”

Brief business meeting

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**Relaunching the British Personalist Forum and *Appraisal***

Richard Allen recently announced that The British Personalist Forum has a new website and its journal *Appraisal* is being relaunched as a fully open access journal. No subscriptions are required to read and download issues. The homepage for The British Personalist Forum (<https://www.britishpersonalistforum.org.uk/>) has a link for the latest issue of *Appraisal* and the e-mail for The British Personalist Forum is [contact.britishpersonalist@gmail.com](mailto:contact.britishpersonalist@gmail.com). A special

issue of reviews of Jonas Mortenson's book, *The Common Good: An Introduction to Personalism*, was recently posted (see discussion below). Another forthcoming issue will provide a translation of Juan Burgos' *Introduccion al Personalismo*. R. T. Allen, the first *Appraisal* editor, will again serve as the editor and will soon send out a call for papers on the future of personalist thinking (e.g., new approaches within personalism, including new areas to apply personalism--e.g. sociology, psychology and psychiatry, art and literature, theology and culture generally). David Jewson is Assistant Editor. Contact Allen and Jewson at the new address [editor.britishpersonalist@gmail.com](mailto:editor.britishpersonalist@gmail.com).

You should soon be able to become a member of The British Personalist Forum by writing [membership.britishpersonalist@gmail.com](mailto:membership.britishpersonalist@gmail.com) or [treasurer.britishpersonalist@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.britishpersonalist@gmail.com) and a PayPal option for membership and/or donations should soon be available on the website. You can report any problems on the website by writing [webmaster.britishpersonalist@gmail.com](mailto:webmaster.britishpersonalist@gmail.com).

The British Personalist Forum Blog (<https://britishpersonalistforum.blogspot.com/>), managed by Simon Smith ([simonsmithdphil@gmail.com](mailto:simonsmithdphil@gmail.com)), invites your review and contributions.

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## Remembering Ruel Tyson's Polanyian Legacy<sup>1</sup>

Phil Mullins

On May 30, 2019, Ruel W. Tyson Jr. died at 88 in his home in North Carolina. Most readers of this brief reflection about Tyson's connection with Michael Polanyi will likely not remember Tyson (unless they happen to have been associated with the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, or Duke University). But Ruel Tyson was a member of the first generation of North Americans academics to take a serious interest in Polanyi's philosophical thought. Along with figures like Richard Gelwick, Tyson's early work on Polanyi helped bring attention to Polanyi in academic circles like the American Academy of Religion.

Tyson wrote two rich *TAD* articles, "[Criticism and Tradition: The Social Thought of Michael Polanyi](#)" published in the Fall of 1986 and then, twenty years later, "[From Salon to Institute: Convivial Spaces in the Intellectual Life of Michael Polanyi](#)," and this second short essay was a sensitive and insightful comment on the just-published Scott and Moleski Polanyi biography. In both of his *TAD* articles, he reflected on his life-shaping first meeting with Michael Polanyi, noting the way in which Polanyi in fact embodied the conviviality about which he wrote.

While Tyson was still a student at Yale Divinity School, one of his friends and teachers, William Poteat, wrote a letter of introduction to Polanyi which led to a December 1956 meeting with Polanyi in a New York hotel. Polanyi was in New York to deliver an address to the American Association for the Advancement of Science that became the essay "The Scientific Outlook: Its

Sickness and Cure.”<sup>2</sup> Although he knew nothing firsthand about Polanyi’s ideas, Tyson had seen writing about Polanyi’s interest in “fiduciary foundations,” a notion that fascinated him and he wanted to meet Polanyi. Polanyi talked passionately to young Tyson about the Hungarian Revolution which had occurred a few months earlier. Both Polanyi’s presence and what he said remained with Tyson fifty years later. After finishing his seminary work, he went on to study with Polanyi in Manchester in Polanyi’s last year before retirement and then later in Polanyi’s time at Oxford. Tyson did further graduate work at the University of Chicago and there he likely worked with Michael Polanyi’s friend Edward Shils and in fact Tyson is occasionally mentioned in the Shils-Polanyi correspondence.

Tyson’s earlier *TAD* article, although it was published in 1986, was a paper prepared for and presented on December 31, 1964, at a plenary session in one of the early meetings of the recently formed American Academy of Religion. This session was a symposium on Polanyi’s thought and in addition to Tyson’s paper it also included presentations by Thomas Langford and Richard Gelwick. William Poteat was instrumental in organizing this session and already was at work with Langford on the Polanyi festschrift *Intellect and Hope* (1968). Michael Polanyi and Marjorie Grene participated in this session because they were in New York at this time to consult with Ford Foundation officials about a grant proposal which in January 1965 funded the Study Group on the Foundations of Cultural Unity.

Ruel Tyson had a long and distinguished academic career, one that was deeply informed by his appreciation for Polanyi’s thought. He taught first at Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest but in 1967 joined the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Department of Religious Studies which he later chaired. Tyson was recognized with several different awards for his teaching and scholarship and in 2000 UNC created the Ruel W. Tyson, Jr. Distinguished Professorship in the College of Arts and Sciences. He was known for his seemingly inexhaustible supply of ideas and his good cheer. Particularly his scholarly work in anthropology of religion with field work studying Appalachian Primitive Baptists is striking. Perhaps his most important contribution to UNC was his work establishing and directing for twenty years the Institute for the Arts and Humanities which promotes the kind of interdisciplinary discourse and scholarly inquiry that Tyson and Michael Polanyi valued.

Tyson’s affability, generosity, and hospitality extended his influence well beyond the borders of UNC. He welcomed extended conversations with William Poteat’s graduate students in the Duke program and was an important mentor for several of them. He was also a lively and provocative presence in the Society for Values in Higher Education while it still had strong ties to the Danforth Fellowship Program.

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<sup>1</sup> This memorial note draws freely from an online notice posted by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill College of Arts and Sciences in [Synergy Unleashed](#) and the obituary posted online by [The News & Observer](#) of Raleigh, NC. Thanks go to Larry and Sande Churchill, Gus Breytspraak and Diane Yeager for assistance.

<sup>2</sup>*Science* (March 15, 1957) 125: 480-484.



## **James W. Stines – Some Remembrances<sup>1</sup>**

**Dale Cannon**

Jim Stines, one of the early graduate students of William H. Poteat<sup>2</sup> and a lifelong enthusiast of Polanyi studies, died January 20, 2020, on the eve of his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday at Watauga Medical Center in Boone, NC, in the company of his wife, Joyce, and his family. As fellow Poteat student Ben Ladner put it: “I’m sure we all remember him fondly – his intellectual persistence; large, easy smile; and impeccable North Carolina mountain accent. [“**Hey**, Dale!” would inevitably be his first words to me over the phone.] – all combined in a mixture of seriousness and cheerfulness that was unique to him. A friend and colleague to all who had the good fortune to know him.”

Jim was born January 21, 1934, in Asheville, NC. He attended Wake Forest College, where he earned a degree in English in 1954. He went on to receive a degree in divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1958 and a Ph.D. in religion from Duke University in 1970, minoring in philosophy. His dissertation under William Poteat was titled “Phenomenology of Language in the Thought of Søren Kierkegaard.” Studying under Poteat was where Jim developed his passion for teaching, his vision of teaching, and his calling as a teacher-midwife, helping persons recover themselves and find their way out from under the self-absenting predicament of the old modern age. And Kierkegaard, for Jim, was at its center.

Jim began his career between 1956 and 1958 as a social case worker at children’s reception centers in Louisville and Jefferson County in Kentucky. From 1955 to 1958 he was pastor of New Liberty Baptist Church in Henryville, Indiana, and was appointed a Baptist Chaplain at the University of Florida from 1958 to 1961 and the same at Duke University from 1961 to 1964. While chaplain he was a guest lecturer at Duke Divinity School and served later as a part-time instructor in Duke’s Department of Religion. While at Duke he was involved with the Duke University Project Nicaragua, a six-week cultural immersion and service opportunity for Duke students to develop relationships with local leaders in Managua as they worked together to improve an elementary school and a hospital. He joined the faculty of Campbell College in 1967 and moved on to Appalachian State’s Department of Philosophy and Religion in 1968, where he taught until his retirement in 1996. During his years of teaching he became involved in many local, professional, and regional organizations – charitable, church-related, civic, inter-faith, inter-disciplinary, student welfare related, curriculum related, summer studies abroad programs, professional societies, intellectual discussion groups, etc. He taught an adult Bible Study class in Blowing Rock for 45 years. He was director of and teacher in the General Honors Program,

participant in team-taught courses from some eleven departments, and, of course, chairperson for a stint or two of the Philosophy and Religion Department.

Harvey Durham, the former Provost and Chancellor at Appalachian, commented (according to Jim's colleague Ozzie Ostwalt) that the thing he remembered most about Jim in the many settings throughout the university where he had observed Jim was that he was "always the voice of reason" when any dispute would arise, and that he could never remember a time when Jim wasn't calm and collected.

Jim was a remarkable master of words. As his friend and colleague Ozzie Ostwalt said,

Those of you who were around Jim at all knew that he was blessed with a substantial vocabulary – Ray Ruble used to say that 'Jim Stines possessed a vocabulary that could choke a mule!' Jim also had a joke he liked to tell about Ray, but I can't repeat that one in church. Anyway, Jim's intellect and vocabulary were impressive, and even if you didn't understand all the intricacies . . . , it sure sounded pretty when Jim talked about it.

But more than a master of words, Jim was a master of what Kierkegaard called "the dialectic of ethical and ethico-religious communication" that attends to *how* what is said is said more than to what is said, and how *that* expresses the kind of person that you are, the kind of existential posture that is manifest in how you say what you say. For it was the person of his colleagues, of his students, of his neighbors that Jim sought to address, and draw out, and connect with, but not as individuals to impress, persuade, or manipulate. When Jim spoke to you, at some deep level you knew you were being addressed, singled out, and, indeed, in important respects loved as the person you are.

In the early 60s, Jim had something of a revelatory dream that profoundly contributed to him becoming this person, with this remarkable capacity for good-humored buoyancy in the midst of life's vicissitudes but, above all, for conveying love for other persons. According to Joyce, his wife (as related through colleague, friend, and pastor, Jeff McClain),

. . . [O]ne morning Jim woke up all excited and kept repeating over and over, 'It's real! It's light! All of it! It's so very real!' He insisted it wasn't just a dream he had, but rather some kind of unmistakable revelation. Undeniable knowledge. About all the things Jim had learned about love through studying philosophy and religion and Kierkegaard and scripture. He experienced a special kind of knowing, deep in his soul, that was absolute truth. Love. God is love."

In the words of a tribute rendered at his memorial service by a former student, friend, and eventual colleague, Kinney Baughman,

If 'language is the dress of thought,' as the great Samuel Johnson considered it, then Dr. James W. Stines was cut in sartorial splendor. Dressed to the nines! Language. Words. Ideas. Belief. These were the tools of his trade. And he wielded them like a master. The language and thought of the great thinkers of history, East and West, this was the land he tilled. This was the land that bore the

fruit of his labors. This was the land he endeavored to open up for his students, a task that brought him great delight and joy, the kind of joy that caused one to revel in his presence, as he strove to give birth to the ideas and the insights in his students, that he understood and exemplified and which gave meaning to his own life.[Often from his lips at the drop of a hat would be] . . . words dense with meaning, ideas you had to reach for, concepts packed so tightly together, they often didn't reveal themselves fully until hours later.

One story Kinney told of Jim reveals a lot about Jim (as well as Kinney, and their relationship):

One afternoon, a year or so after I had graduated, I knocked on Jim's door in Sanford Hall and walked in unexpectedly – as usual – to resume – once more – one of our lofty discussions, with my blue-eyed, albino Great Dane at my side! Understand, the faculty offices in Sanford were barely bigger than a closet. So between Jim, me and Buddha, a dog so big he could stand on his hind legs, put his paws on \*my\* shoulders and at 6'8", look \*me\* square in the eyes, well, let's just say there wasn't much room left to wiggle in, in that office on that afternoon. Within minutes Jim and I were off and running again. Those of us who knew this man also knew that once Jim got going on explaining something, you best just buckle up and go along for the ride!! In time, we had transcended again. Lost in the clouds. And on this particular day, after a while, Jim made some kind of snippy snarky remark to the effect that, yeah, there are those who consider themselves as the 'bearer of truth' and 'knower of all that is wise,' and then they get a speck of dirt in their eye. Soon, we heard my dog, Buddha, start grunting. Then he stood up on all fours, pushing each of us into our respective corners. From his head to his tail, he started heaving and to my horror, "Oh no. Oh no." When voila! Buddha made us a present of his lunch right smack-dab in the middle of Jim's office! Big dog. Small office. Large lunch. You get the picture! As I was on my knees cleaning up behind my dear, beloved dog, I looked over and said, "Jim. I think I've got something in my eye!" And, oh, did we laugh! And Jim, that twinkle in his eye and that glorious, all-encompassing laugh . . .

Like Kinney, Jim was a consummate storyteller and joke teller, but always with kindness and consideration. He could indulge in irony where it might be needed, but he always came back to telling truth and forthrightness (especially to power).

Jim's daughter, Stephanie Phillippi, adds this:

Some words, no matter how sartorial their dress, fail us. Dad loved well. He was able to do that because he was, and clearly is still, loved first. It is, as it has always been, ' . . . so damn simple. We are all bastards. But God loves us anyway, so go ye therefore and do likewise.' Anterior to his life's aspirations, it was this knowing that enlivened him to us—that there is always that pesky speck of dust. The sooner we know that the sooner the fairy tale can begin!

In Kinney Baughman's words, Jim was: "A man full of grace. Of wisdom. And a heart bigger than all the world."

Below is a list of Jim Stines' publications.

Stines, James W., *Phenomenology of Language in the Thought of Søren Kierkegaard* (Duke University dissertation, 1970).

Stines, James W., "Language Theory and Hermeneutics in the Thought of Horace Bushnell," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 7:2 (1980): 134-150.

Stines, James W., "I am The Way: Michael Polanyi's Taoism," *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*, 20:1 (March 1985): 65ff.

Stines, James W., "[Vocation Recalled: Personal Knowledge and Cosmic Re-enchantment](#)". *Tradition and Discovery* 12:1 (1984-1985): 15-24.

Stines, James W., "[The Tacit Victory and the Unfinished Agenda: Chaos Theory, William Poteat's Polanyian Explorations and Indwelling](#)," *Tradition and Discovery* 18:1 (1991-1992): 15-17.

Stines, James W., "Some Reflections on the Conditions of Cultural Pluralism," (Triple-T News: Presented at Triple-T Conferences in Washington, D.C., and Lincoln, NB, 1992).

Stines, James W., "Time, Chaos Theory and the Thought of Michael Polanyi," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*, 44 (Dec 1992), 220–227.

Nickell, James M., and James W. Stines, eds., *The Primacy of Persons and the Language of Culture: Essays by William H. Poteat* (U of Missouri Press, 1993). (This important and wide-ranging collection of 23 essays by Poteat includes an illuminating introductory essay to Poteat's work as a whole by Nickell and Stines.)

Stines, James W., "Timing the Print and Recovering the Voice: A Review of William H. Poteat's A Philosophical Daybook," *The Personalist Forum* 9:2 (Fall 1993): 133-146.

Stines, James W., guest editor of *TAD*'s first thematic issue, "[Responses to William H. Poteat](#)," *Tradition and Discovery* 21:1 (1994-95). See Stines' "Responses to William H. Poteat: Introduction" (2-4). Stines selected and worked with all essay writers.

Stines, James W., "William H. Poteat: Liberating Theologian for Polanyi?" *Tradition and Discovery* 35:2 (2008-2009): 39-43.

Stines, James W., "Personhood and the Problematic of Christianity," *Recovering the Personal: The Philosophical Anthropology of William H. Poteat*, edited by Dale W. Cannon and Ronald L. Hall (Lexington Books, 2014): 103-114.

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<sup>1</sup>This memorial note draws on several sources: typescripts of remarks prepared for Jim's memorial service by Jeff McClain, Ozzie Ostwalt, Herbert Hash, Jr., and Kinney Baughmann; an article published in 2004 for Appalachian State University by Richard D. Howe in connection with Jim's retirement; and email correspondence with all of these persons plus Robert Hyatt, Benjamin Ladner, and Jim's daughter, Stephanie Phillippi.

<sup>2</sup>Some readers of this Remembrance may wonder who William H. Poteat, Jim Stines' graduate teacher and mentor, is. He was a central influence in bringing Michael Polanyi to the attention of American scholars and, particularly, to the interest of scholarship in religion and theology. Poteat's own work was heavily impacted by Polanyi. In turn, Polanyi's affiliation with Poteat at Duke in 1964 (when Jim got to know Polanyi and his work) and elsewhere clearly impressed and edified Polanyi and led to Polanyi's later request for Poteat's collaboration with him on *Meaning*. That promising collaboration was not realized, however.

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## Academic Papers, Blogs, Dissertations, and Publications

Cvetelin Vasilev, a biophysicist, has an interesting article "[A Century of Polymer Science: A Look at the Key Developments](#)" that discusses Michael Polanyi's role in the development of polymer science. This appears in *AZoM* which is an online publication aimed at the international Materials Science research community in academia and manufacturing.

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Martin Beddeleem published a chapter in the new volume *Nine Lives of Neoliberalism* (Dieter Plehwe, Quinn Slobodian, and Philip Mirowski [eds.]) available on Amazon, at [Verso Books](#), and, in full open access, at <https://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/215796>. Beddeleem discusses Polanyi as one of the protagonists of the philosophy of science in early neoliberalism.

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The latest special edition of *Appraisal*, edited by Simon Smith with assistance from Abigail Klassen, is now available online at <https://www.britishpersonalistforum.org.uk/current-issue.html>. This issue focuses on Jonas Norgaard Mortensen's *The Common Good: An Introduction to Personalism* (Vernon Press, 2017) and features reviews by Grzegorz Holub, **Teresita** Pumará, Lucy Weir, John Hoffbauer, David Treanor, James Beauregard, Nathan Riley, David Jewson, and Simon Smith. Editor Simon Smith provided the following short summary of Mortensen's book:

Our traditional ways of thinking about politics and society are becoming obsolete. We need some new points of reference in order to re-imagine the possible character, growth, and functioning of our private and common life. Such re-imagination would imply doing away with every-man-for-himself individualism as well as consumption-makes-me-happy materialism and the-state-will-take-care-of-it passivity.

There is an alternative: Personalism is a forgotten, yet golden perspective on humanity that seeks to describe what a human being is and to then draw the social consequences. Personalism builds upon the thinking of Martin Buber and Emmanuel Levinas, among others, and has been a source of inspiration for Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu, and other important personalities in recent history.

According to personalism, humans are relational and engaged and possess dignity. The person and the relationship amongst persons are the universal point of departure: Human beings have inherent dignity, and good relationships amongst humans are crucial for the good, engaged life and for a good society.

Personalism has been greatly neglected in Western political thought. In this book, Jonas Norgaard Mortensen attempts to introduce personalism while simultaneously demonstrating its historical origins, acquainting the reader with its thinkers and those who have practiced it, and showing that personalism has a highly relevant contribution to make in the debate about today's social and political developments.

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On YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihXI8uLMonE> there is a 42 minute, 2014 lecture titled "Michael Polanyi--The Republic of Science" by Nicole Pepperal, a professor at the University of Waikato in New Zealand. This lecture outlines the 1962 Polanyi essay "The Republic of Science" which is likely Polanyi's best known short writing, originally published in the inaugural issue of *Minerva* (available at <http://www.polanyisociety.org/essays.htm>). The lecturer focuses on the major points Polanyi treats in his account of science. Since this lecture was part of a larger course treating other figures, Pepperal at times dwells on connections and disconnections between Polanyi's views and those of other thinkers.

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On YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0HT6QO7jOM> there is a new 21 minute presentation with Power Point slides titled "Money Circles, Sensible Citizens and the Walt Disney of Economics." This is a short lecture on Polanyi's "economics education" film by Gabor Biro, author of *The Economic Thought of Michael Polanyi* (2019). This material was used in a 9 June 2020 Zoom meeting in which Biro discussed the film.

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Charles Lowney recently published an article (available open access) on connectionism and Wittgenstein, collaborating with several computer scientists.

Lowney, C.W., Levy, S.D., Meroney, W. and Gayler, R. W. "Connecting Twenty-First Century Connectionism and Wittgenstein." *Philosophia* 48, 643–671 (2020).  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11406-019-00154-9>

*Abstract:* By pointing to deep philosophical confusions endemic to cognitive science, Wittgenstein might seem an enemy of computational approaches. We agree (with Mills [1993](#)) that while Wittgenstein would reject the classicist's symbols and rules approach, his observations align well with connectionist or neural network approaches. While many connectionisms that dominated the later twentieth century could fall prey to criticisms of biological, pedagogical, and linguistic implausibility, current connectionist approaches can resolve those problems in a Wittgenstein-friendly manner. We (a) present the basics of a Vector Symbolic Architecture formalism, inspired by Smolensky ([1990](#)), and indicate how high-dimensional vectors can operate in a context-sensitive and object-independent manner in biologically plausible time scales, reflecting Wittgenstein's notions of language-games and family resemblance; we (b) show how "soft" symbols for such a formalism can be formed with plausible learning cycles using Sparse Distributed Memory, resolving disputes surrounding Wittgenstein's private language argument; and (c) show how connectionist networks can extrapolate meaningful patterns to solve problems, providing "ways to go on" without explicit rules, which indicates linguistic plausibility. Connectionism thus provides a systematicity and productivity that is more than a mere implementation of a classical approach, and provides Wittgenstein-friendly and Wittgenstein-illuminating models of mind and language for cognitive science.

Charles Lowney's "Michael Polanyi: A Scientist Against Scientism" (pp. 139-158) is in a collection of essays, *Critics of Enlightenment Rationalism*, edited by Gene Callahan and Kenneth B. McIntyre, that came out in May 2020 from [Palgrave](#).

*Abstract:* Michael Polanyi (1891-1976), a scientist and philosopher, shows that Enlightenment standards for knowledge hold distortions that can have destructive effects. He admired the Enlightenment's political ideals, but its critical rationalism brought a "scientism" that justifies only facts based on physics and considers meaning and human values to be illusory. Polanyi's post-critical philosophy revises Enlightenment standards to more accurately reflect the limits of knowledge and how science actually proceeds. He critiques (1) the viability of complete objectivity, (2) the adequacy of Cartesian explicit analysis to simple self-evident truths, (3) the concomitant reductive analysis of reality to smallest physical components, and (4) reductive dichotomies between mind and matter, and fact and value. He opposes and balances these with conceptions of (1) personal knowledge, (2) tacit knowing, (3) emergent being, and (4) discovery and indwelling. Polanyi shows that science moves toward truth and better contact with reality by using the same tools of practical reason that produce understanding in traditions open to dialogue and discovery. Values—not just physical facts—can be real discoveries about the world. Post-critical epistemology thus provides a non-skeptical fallibilism that opens new possibilities for understanding. Polanyi hoped it would both combat nihilism and renew hope in human progress.

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Richard T. Allen is giving a paper, "Some Possible Meanings of the 'Meaning of Life' and the 'Meaninglessness of Life,'" at the upcoming online Philosophy and the Meaning of Life Conference 21-23 July 2020. The conference is free via Zoom. For more information, go to

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/events/2020/philosophy-and-meaning-in-life.aspx>.

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A new English-language issue of [Polanyiana \(vol. 26, issue 1-2\)](#) has recently been posted online. *Polanyiana* is now a digital-only journal; the [preceeding TAD “News and Notes”](#) outlines recent changes in *Polanyiana*, and the work on updating the *Polanyiana* web site continues. Inquiries about *Polanyiana* or submissions should be sent to [Gábor Bíró](#) who is the editor. Information about articles in the new issue follows.

Mihály Héder, [“Emergent Computing and the Embodied Nature of Computation,”](#) pp. 3-22.

*Abstract:* If we define computing as the typical activity of computers – in contrast to other approaches that define computation as an abstract mathematical process – it will become evident that in some cases the result of computation is not only a function of the algorithm executed but also of certain physical processes. For example, random numbers, which are used in many algorithms, are usually generated by sampling the physical environment of the computer. This may sound trivial, but as we will see some philosophical arguments around emergence seem to rely on some sort of platonic conception of computation and thereby draw conclusions that do not apply to real-world computation. In other words, we should not forget that computing is embodied, and different embodiments lead to different computation results. This article investigates what can be said about the question of emergent computing in light of computation’s embodied nature.

*Key words:* computers, emergent computing, epistemic emergence, Game of Life, ontological emergence

Gus Breytspraak and Phil Mullins, [“Michael Polanyi and the Study Group on Foundations of Cultural Unity,”](#) pp. 23-82.

*Abstract:* This essay provides an historically oriented account of the Study Group on Foundations of Cultural Unity (SGFCU). The SGFCU sought and received Ford Foundation funding to sponsor international conferences in 1965 and 1966 whose aim was to transform the mainstream intellectual ethos, using Michael Polanyi’s philosophical ideas as a catalyst. Polanyi chaired the organizing committee for this project but Marjorie Grene, with help from Edward Pols and guidance from sympathetic Ford Foundation officers, put together these conferences that generated a set of interesting publications. Discussion focuses on Polanyi and Grene’s effort to plan the conferences, on Ford Foundation support, on the role Polanyi plays in each

conference and on the ways in which Polanyi's participation in the SGFCU project contributed to his late philosophical interests and ideas.

*Key words:* Edward Pols, Ford Foundation, Marjorie Grene, Michael Polanyi, Sigmund Koch, Study Group on Foundations of Cultural Unity.

Walter Gulick, [“Understanding, not Knowing, as the Core of Polanyi’s Philosophy.”](#) pp. 83-115.

*Abstract:* Although Michael Polanyi's magnum opus is entitled *Personal Knowledge*, I argue that “understanding” more adequately describes Polanyi's many-layered epistemic vision than knowledge or even knowing. Knowledge suggests the achieved certainty and objectivity that science is alleged to provide. Such an emphasis on knowledge thereby devalues the personally understood traditions and personal goals that make life worth living. Understanding more comprehensively acknowledges the way humans live and cope. It is grounded in tacit functions we share with other animals, but through language it helps one gain a sense of control over what one intends, means, and does. It includes an interpersonal, appreciative aspect largely missing in knowing. In sum, understanding functions as the experiential base upon which healthy social relations, truthful claims, and personal responsibility rests.

*Key words:* intention, knowledge, language, meaning, Michael Polanyi, schemas, understanding.

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Three recently published books whose authors or editors are affiliated with the Polanyi Society are listed below. These all will be reviewed in forthcoming issues of *TAD*.

Paul Lewis, *Faithful Innovation: The Rule of God and a Christian Practical Wisdom* (Mercer, GA: [Smyth & Helwys](#), 2020).

An introduction to Christian ethics written for undergraduate and lay audiences, the book treats Christian ethics as an exercise in practical wisdom, substituting the kingdom or rule of God for Aristotle's *eudaimonia*. The book both describes a model for ethical reflection that integrates work from biblical studies, theology, philosophy, psychology, and the neurosciences and applies it by addressing issues of gun control, gene-editing, and capital punishment.

Walter Gulick and Gary Slater, eds., *American Aesthetics: Theory and Practice* (Albany, NY: [SUNY Press](#), 2020).

Gulick in his lead essay claims there is a discernible approach to aesthetics inspired by the classic American philosophers, including Peirce, James, Whitehead, and Dewey. This full-bodied approach takes account of such factors as social and historical conditions, artistic intent, and, most important, relies upon a much broader understanding of aesthetics than the attention only to beauty characteristic of so much aesthetic attention. Some of the twenty essays, including

ones by Raposa, Innis, and Shusterman, are historical in nature; some, including those by Wildman, Auxier, and Neville, are primarily theoretical; and others are devoted either to examining how American aesthetics is put into practice or to exploring aesthetic factors in everyday life. *American Aesthetics* is posited as an alternative to the narrowness of analytic aesthetics and to the tendency of postmodern thought to avoid aesthetic considerations.

Sheldon Richmond, *A Way Through the Global Techno-Scientific Culture*  
(<https://www.cambridgescholars.com/>, 2020)

Computers are supposed to be smart, yet they frustrate both ordinary users and computer technologists. Why are people frustrated by smart machines? Computers don't fit people. People think in terms of comparisons, stories, and analogies, and seek feedback, whereas computers are based on a fundamental design that does not fit with analogical and feedback thinking. They impose a binary, an all-or-nothing, approach to everything. Moreover, the social world and institutions that have developed around computer technology hide and reinforce the lack of alignment between computers and people. This book suggests a solution: we do not have to accept the way things are now and work around the bad social and technical design of computers. Rather, it proposes a diverse, distributed, critical discussion of how to design and build both computer technology and its social institutions.

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Eduardo Beira has recently translated into Portuguese Michael Polanyi's 1940 collection of essays titled *The Contempt of Freedom, The Russian Experiment and After. O Desprezo Pela Liberdade, A experiencia russa e depois* was published by Inovactec Press and includes three essays in Part II that help readers understand the context of Polanyi book. These treat such matters as Polanyi's early writing on Soviet economic statistics and why this is important in economics, Polanyi's correspondence with Sydney and Beatrice Webb, and Polanyi's connections with a host of other important figures in the twenties and thirties. You can find more information about the book online [here](#) or you can e-mail [Eduardo Beira](#).

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### **Donations to the Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund and the Polanyi Society Endowment**

In 2018 to simplify our accounting, the Polanyi Society consolidated several old funds into the Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund. Particular disbursements from this new fund may, however, be in memory of particular persons. The Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund will continue to support the participation of younger scholars in Society meetings. Some recent Polanyi Society annual meetings have included a session with graduate student papers, and travel awards supported this part of the program. These travel awards will continue under the Travel, Grants,

and Projects Fund and possibly some new awards and projects aimed at younger scholars will soon be added. Donations to the Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund are much appreciated.

The Polanyi Society Endowment was established a few years ago with a gift from the late Ann Herbert Scott, the widow of William T. Scott, the original Polanyi biographer. The Walter B. Mead estate recently provided a substantial contribution to the Endowment. Slowly, the Endowment is growing. The eventual aim is to have an Endowment that generates each year some income which can be used to support and expand Polanyi Society programming.

Please support the Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund and the Polanyi Society Endowment by sending a tax-deductible contribution to The Polanyi Society, C/O Charles Lowney, 10 Jordan Street, Lexington, VA, 24450. Bequests and large donations are very important to the Society, but the many smaller donations to the Society, often made in conjunction with dues payment, are also significant and appreciated. Checks should be made out to the Polanyi Society and, if so intended, marked Travel, Grants, and Projects or Endowment. Unmarked donations will go toward general operating expenses. You can also directly access the Polanyi Society PayPal button (with accompanying tutorial) to make a donation:

<http://polanyisociety.org/paypal/donate.html>

All actual PayPal transactions for the Polanyi Society are is handled on the secure PayPal site.

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