

## Editorial Introduction to Special Issue on “The Virtue of Justice”

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The work on this special issue of *Philosophia* first began in the summer of 2010 when we began to prepare for the 2012 Midwestern Regional Meeting of the Society of Christian Philosophers (SCP), which we were organizing and hosting at Hendrix College in Conway, AR. Our guiding aim as we organized that SCP event was to choose a conference theme that would allow scholars working in philosophy of religion, ethics, political philosophy, and epistemology to be brought into productive conversation with each other regarding a topic of shared concern. Accordingly, we settled on “The Virtue of Justice” because we felt that it is a theme that invites collaboration across traditional subdisciplinary boundaries. We were honored to have Robert Audi, Jean Porter, and Nicholas Wolterstorff as the keynote speakers. Eventually we accepted nearly 70 papers for the SCP conference and all of the accepted papers were then invited to submit to this special issue of *Philosophia*. From the original 70 papers presented at the conference, 40 were submitted to us for consideration for publication. All of those submissions were then sent out for blind peer review. The reviewers who assisted during this process (and there are many of them) are all influential scholars with distinguished publication records in areas relevant to the paper each was asked to review. Indeed, we want to express our deep gratitude for the care and rigor that each reviewer brought to the process. Without them this issue would not have been possible. Ultimately, we accepted 5 of the 40 papers that were submitted for review. Those 5 papers loosely fell into 5 general categories: (1) Aquinas on the Virtue of Justice, (2) Social Epistemology and Social Ethics, (3) Virtue, Justice, and War, and (4) Justice and Politics.

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For each of these categories, we then invited a paper by a well-respected and established scholar working in each of those areas to join the papers that were accepted through the peer review process. Although we were unable to include Robert Audi's keynote address in this issue since it was previously committed elsewhere, we are very pleased that the addresses presented at the SCP meeting by Jean Porter and Nicholas Wolterstorff are both included here. Porter's essay serves as the invited piece for the "Aquinas on the Virtue of Justice" section (which also includes a paper by Stephen Chanderbhan), and Wolterstorff's essay serves as the invited piece for the "Justice and Politics" section (which also includes a paper by Michael Norton). Additionally, Michael Slote was invited to contribute an invited essay for the "Social Epistemology and Social Ethics" section (which also includes a paper by Stewart Clem), and David Fisher contributed a paper for the "Virtue, Justice, and War" section (which includes papers by Hadassa A. Noorda and Danny Marrero).

Given our initial hope that the theme of "The Virtue of Justice" would be broadly construed, we are pleased that this issue has maintained that breadth, while still conveying the sense of shared purpose and overlapping interest that animated the discussions of all who were present for those three days in Arkansas. One of the true highlights of the conference was a plenary session on the continued relevance of Audi and Wolterstorff's book, *Religion in the Public Square* (1997). That session included presentations by Kevin Carnahan and Erik A. Anderson and responses by both Audi and Wolterstorff. Wanting to recreate some of the excitement of that session in this issue, we expanded the focus to "Religion and Liberal Politics" more broadly and are pleased to include the essays by Carnahan and Anderson, with responses by Wolterstorff and Christopher J. Eberle.

We hope that readers will find this special theme issue to illustrate the ways in which "The Virtue of Justice" opens onto debates of wide-ranging interest to philosophers working in a variety of fields. It has been our pleasure to edit this issue and we hope that it will stimulate further discussion and dialogue among scholars who might not frequently enough see each other as conversation partners.

This issue is the result of long hours and hard work by numerous people. In particular we would like to thank the board of the Society of Christian Philosophers for its support of the conference from which this issue has arisen. Moreover, we would like to thank the Steel Center for Philosophy of Religion at Hendrix College, the Hendrix College Miller Center for Vocation, Ethics, and Calling, and the Hendrix College Office of the Chaplain for their support of this project. Finally, we want to thank Asa Kasher for the invitation to edit this issue, and Jack Mulder, Hannah Hudspeth, Hannah Flatau, Paul Richards, Jared McGowan, and Jessica Corey, for their energy and efforts in bringing everything to fruition.