

EDITOR'S PREFACE

The articles in this issue span a range of perspectives on interdisciplinary research and education. The first two are historico-critical reflections. The essay by Joseph Kockelmans is based on the keynote address he delivered for the 1985 Association for Integrative Studies meeting at Eastern Kentucky University. In it, he examines the development of the modern university, focusing on the impact of disciplinarity and then suggesting ways in which interdisciplinary programs may respond to the problems created by specialization. Vosskamp considers historical prerequisites for interdisciplinarity and then explores different kinds of interdisciplinary cooperation, drawing upon the current German literature on the subject and an interdisciplinary project on Utopia conducted at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Bielefeld (West Germany). For permission to use the English translation of Vosskamp's original German article, I thank the editors at Kindler Verlag in Munich. The original essay, "Von der wissenschaftlichen Spezialisierung zum Gespräch zwischen den Disziplinen," appeared in the volume entitled Der Mensch in the ten-volume Kindlers Enzyklopädie, published in 1984.

The other four essays in this issue explore the areas of education, social psychology, ethics, the humanities, and the philosophy of interdisciplinary knowledge. In an essay that offers historical insight into the nature of liberal education, Frederick Weaver considers how the inquiry conception of liberal education may relate to interdisciplinary studies. He proposes, in particular, that

upper-division programs can be organized around minor programs of study based on clearly formulated, substantive questions rather than a discipline. Drawing on his rich experience in the areas of social psychology and ethics, Thomas Murray offers one more entry in a woefully under-represented genre, the “autobiography” of interdisciplinary work. In doing so, he reminds us of how essential it is that interdisciplinary theory be based on examples drawn from practice.

In an essay of wide scope, Beth Casey synthesizes a number of important new developments that have permitted a reintegration of the humanities disciplines of linguistics, literature, rhetoric, philosophy, aesthetics, history and art history with each other and the social sciences. In the process, she looks at the work of four scholars: Claude Levi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault. Finally, Un-chol Shin reflects upon the problem of an adequate epistemology for interdisciplinary knowledge. By comparing Erich Jantsch’s scheme of different kinds of interdisciplinary cooperation with Michael Polanyi’s theory of tacit knowing, he is able to clarify how interdisciplinary knowledge is the knowledge of new meaning.

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Julie Thompson Klein
Editor