
EDITORIAL

COGNITIVE TEMPLATES AND LGAT SEMINARS

ARMIN W. GEERTZ

Aarhus University

awg@cas.au.dk

Welcome to the 8.1 issue of the *Journal for the Cognitive Science of Religion*. This issue consists of two articles addressing important issues in CSR theories.

The first, by Michael Miller, Jill Thorson, and Paul Robertson from the University of New Hampshire, examines the foundational CSR model, first proposed by Pascal Boyer, of perception being based on ontological categories or templates. The authors argue that concepts such as MCIs, ontological categories, socially significant strategies, and inference generation must necessarily be tested and verified if CSR scholars wish to pursue these matters further. They also argue that such testing and verification is necessary especially in light of contemporary views on human cognition. Their results, using pictorial primes, indicate that the earlier CSR template model needs to be supplemented by research into relevance and threat.

The second article by John Hunter from the University of KwaZulu-Natal examines neurological approaches to religious experiences. It is a growing approach in the cognitive science of religion and one that this journal welcomes. Building on the work of Patrick McNamara, Uffe Schjødt, Quinton Deeley, Robert N. McCauley, and George Graham, among others, Hunter applies Jaak Panksepp's dopamine-driven SEEKING analysis of the experiences of participants in LGAT (large group awareness training) human potential seminars. This unusual topic, the author argues, is relevant to understanding religious contexts.

This issue is rounded off by reviews of two new books on ritual and child cognition, on the one hand, and social and cognitive perspectives on the Sermon on the Mount, on the other.