EDITORS PAGE: IS AXIOLOGY A SCIENCE?

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REM B. EDWARDS received his A.B. degree from Emory University in 1956, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. While in graduate school, he was a Danforth Graduate Fellow. He received a B.D. degree from Yale University Divinity School in 1959 and a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Emory University in 1962. He taught for four years at Jacksonville University in Florida, then moved from there to the University of Tennessee in 1966, where he eventually became a Lindsay Young Professor. He retired from there partly in 1997 and partly in 1998 after 35 years of teaching. He has since worked almost full time on a volunteer basis for the Robert S. Hartman Institute. He was a charter member of the Institute and joined its Board of Directors in 1987. In 1989, he became its Secretary/Treasurer and now is its Secretary/ Webmaster. He is the author or co-author of 20 books and over 80 published articles and reviews. For more details, please visit: http://sites.google.com/site/rembedwards/.

The editors expected this issue to be largely but not completely devoted to articles dealing with the question, "Is axiology a science." However, many of the articles in this issue address this topic only indirectly if at all. When you read the articles that do deal with this, ask yourself such questions as:

What does this author mean by "science"?
Do I accept his or her definition?
If not, how is it defective?
What does it need to make it adequate?
Does the definition given adequately reflect Robert S. Hartman's own understanding of "science."
Is the overall case for or against axiology as a science convincing?
What is the difference between a formal science and an empirical or natural science?
Could axiology be a primitive formal or natural science, a science in some respects, but not yet a paradigm science in all respects?

Perhaps axiology has become a science in some respects but not in others. For example, axiology may have become a science, both formal and empirical, in its psychology, as grounded in the Hartman Value Profile, while not being a science in providing the calculus of value that Hartman himself thought so essential. The main problem with making axiology a science is with finding a mathematics that is adequate to the task. Validating and applying the Hartman Value Profile require only ordinary arithmetic and statistics, and they seem to serve their purposes perfectly well. However, Hartman aspired to develop an axiological calculus that would permit the calculation and comparison of value combinations, even very complex ones, and that would yield useful practical and theoretical results. He used transfinite mathematics for this purpose, but it does not seem to be adequate to its task for many reasons—like those given in the last article in this issue.

Some axiologists happily champion transfinite mathematics, but they add that Hartman's insistence on infinities should be regarded as merely metaphorical and not taken literally. This serves many legitimate purposes perfectly well, for example, poetic and intrinsic valuation purposes; but does this really help with turning value theory into a science? Our paradigm sciences, whether natural or formal, do not get by with merely metaphorical math. Logically, everything that can be accomplished by treating "infinite" metaphorically could be just as well accomplished with the concept of "finite but indefinitely large;" but this would not have the same emotional impact, the same affective "vibrations."

Several axiologists have explored, or are now exploring, the possibility of numbering the three value dimensions, intrinsic, extrinsic, and systemic, in finitistic ways, using alternative mathematical notations and systems, and we hope to publish some of this research in future issues. In the present issue, one author proposes that we consider using fractal geometry. He shows how this might be useful in making and creatively expanding our axiological judgment capacities and intuitions, as well as in avoiding oversimplification when dealing with complex value situations; but he does not show us how to make actual axiological calculations using fractal geometry. Perhaps someone could show us how to integrate fractal geometry into a working value calculus, but this is an issue for further research.

Because I take a strong stand on axiology as a science in the last article in this issue, I will not say more about it here.

Since most of our present readers are axiological service providers, the first five articles in this issue deal with topics or themes in applied axiology: employee engagement, focus, innovation, peak performance, and the Christian Value Profile [which is available at: http://www.christianvalueprofile.com.] Five more theoretical or philosophical articles will be found in the last part of this issue.

We hope and believe that our axiological service providers and many other interested axiologists will find these articles to be especially relevant to their most immediate professional, personal, or theoretical concerns.

We strongly encourage future articles that explain what can be learned using the Hartman Value Profile, as well as articles that deal with more theoretical issues in formal axiology. Please be thinking about contributing an article to the 2010 issue. The deadline for submitting articles for the 2010 issue is March 1, 2010. Note that this is the date when your article should be finished; it is not the date when you should begin to work on it!

If you wish to write for this Journal, it is absolutely essential that your work conform to the formatting and content requirements given on the JOURNAL OF FORMAL AXIOLOGY page of the Robert S. Hartman Institute website, http://www.hartmaninstitute.org. Please try to meet these requirements at the very beginning of your writing, not at the end of it, and definitely before you submit even a preliminary draft to the Editors. This will make the writing and editing process much easier for all of us and forestall many difficulties. *Articles that fail to meet these requirements will not be read or considered by the Editors*.