

Interdisciplinary & Transdisciplinary Approaches



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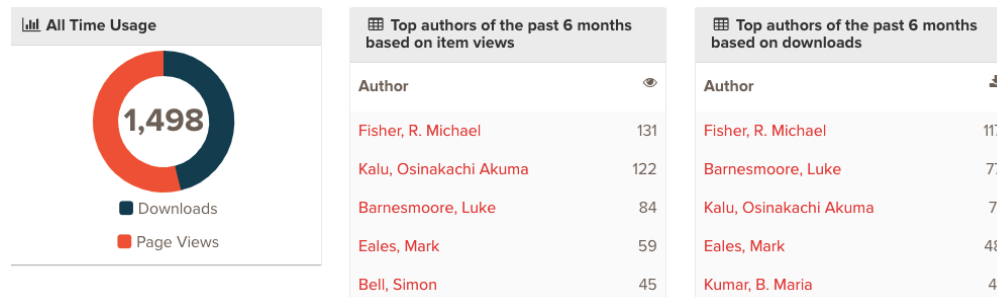
(Senior) Editorial: Getting Personal with Fear

- R. Michael Fisher
Canada

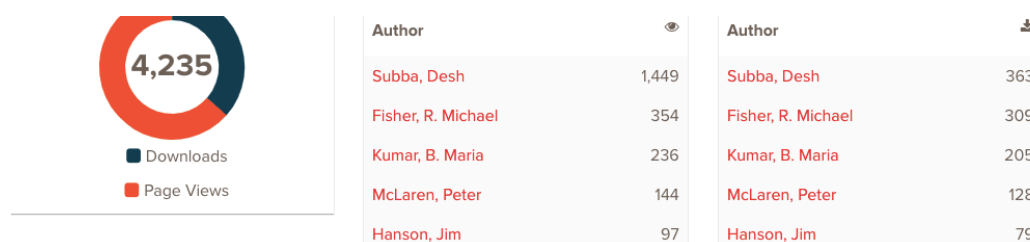
We had a delightful burst of *new authors* submitting for this issue, and several articles had to be turned down. I'm glad to see interest growing and this issue, which has a rich diversity of works from seasoned scholars (e.g., Peter N. Stearns) to nascent ones (e.g., Christine Legree). Overall, this is quite a 'personal' issue of pieces, including the poems that touch the heart (e.g., B. S. Adhikari). I am most grateful for Dr. Patrick Slattery's engaging and mature art pieces that bring a visual excitement as well, that I know comes from him every time he goes into his art studio.

On the statistical side of things, I am pleased to see the rate of people around the world downloading the issue in whole or part:

IJFS 1(1) -2019:



ISJFS 1(2) -2019:



With a near 3-fold increase in views/downloads combined from the first issue to the second there is obviously some spreading of the world happening. I also received a nice letter from Dr. Bartholomew, librarian at University of Calgary and he was intrigued with the journal and will likely write a short article on it for the next issue. Dr. Jonas Lysgaard, author of *Dark Pedagogy* and professor at a Denmark university wrote, "The journal and the whole issue of fear is extremely interesting, especially in the light of the ongoing climate crisis and our very human reactions

towards the consequences.” On that note, Dr. Rayson Alex had to postpone for another six months to put out a Call for submissions for a special issue on Eco-Fear as he had some family matters to deal with and yet he still wants to Guest edit an issue of *IJFS* in 2021, so stay-tuned for that.

I received another wonderful and in depth response by Rafiq [aka Robert Sean Lewis, see his book review pp. 71-75 in *IJFS* 1(2)] as he responded to my Editorial in the last issue. I quote it at length here because he talks about love and fear, a topic of which this issue *IJFS* 2(1) addresses once more with Dr. Michael B. Eneyo’s rejoinder and my response to that re: the Love and Fear Problem. Rafiq wrote, “I’ve been thinking about your lament that the field of Fear Studies has not been widely embraced, as reflected in the [initial] lack of submissions to the journal. I expect that a field of Love Studies would likewise not be well-received. Yet, there are enormous amounts of academic work going on that pertain both to love and fear. For example, after editing an anthology about Indigenous plant knowledge and ways of being [recently], which is full of beautiful examples of reciprocity and right relations with the earth, it seemed to me that what the book most strongly demonstrates is love for the earth, but the word “love” never occurs....My point is that the meta-lenses of love and fear are rarely foregrounded [by most other’s works]. Your task, then, seems to be to convince scholars who are already doing related work to dare to frame their ideas in such a way as to emphasize and grapple with the meta-lens of fear.”

I agree Rafiq, it is a task alright. A meta-lens of fear (also transdisciplinary lens) I have been calling for is a foundational relationality of an “ecology of fear” at the lower most substantial foundations of human meta-motivation (Fisher, 2012, 2015, 2016).

Summary of Contents in this issue of *IJFS*:

Thanks again to all contributors and peer reviewers of works in this issue. Simon Bell offers mindful teaching stories as a new methodology (and theory) to work with fear/terror, sure to make one contemplate in new ways and find more creative ways to manage/transform fear. B. S. Adhikari, out of Nepal, is both a scholar and poet and is finding his voice in writing through the topic of fear as a meta-lens to make sense of his experience and others. I welcome Dr. Ramji Timalisina, who also has applied a meta-lens of fear to diasporic poetry from Bhutan Nepali literary artists and how they come to use arts as an antidote to oppression from the State. This ought to be a good contribution to the literary branch of philosophy of fearism that Desh Subba began back in the late 1990s.

We are very fortunate that Peter Stearns passes on his decades of wisdom as a university teacher of the history of emotions (and fear), giving us some insights to what a historian’s methodology on the topic involves. Indeed, it is noteworthy that he thinks “fear” history is by far more *difficult* than other emotions’ histories. That doesn’t surprise me. I have always argued that *fear* (and ‘fear’) are unique amongst the emotions and require special methodological rigor for any adequate understanding of the phenomenon. The *IJFS* is founded upon that very premise, but we still require studies and speculative arguments to make that case for our emphasis.

This includes more and more literature, albeit still rare, that points to ‘fear is more than an emotion’ nowadays because of mediated culture and the way that impacts the nature of fear itself (e.g., Furedi, 2006). Madelaine K. Joss’ article herein is a good snooping out of just how quickly

technologies-fear boundaries are being crossed and she raises questions about our addictions and commission with practices that have dubious ethical merit, unless we self-reflect on the ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of this new phenomenon of technology rescuing us from our anxiety (supposedly). Again, *what is fear* (‘fear’) becoming in this postmodern condition and interfacing with culture and technology as the precarious future unfolds. Any writers still seeking to fix and simplify the *definition of fear* (or love, for that matter), I believe are going to be left in the backwater of the advances in fear research and knowledge.

Struggles, and hopefully productive ones, do have to be had here. *IJFS* as diverse as it is in its publishing menu of works, also has to catered to the philosophical and theoretical conflicts within Fear Studies. The rejoinder here by Michael B. Eneyo to my earlier critique of his critique of philosophy of fearism and fearlessness (see *IJFS* 1(2)) is provocative, I think, and my response is limited due to my other projects, but I invite you to dive in, even if it is a bit ‘heavy’ for most readers. He and I are attempting to stay open to each other, even with our obvious disagreements about really fundamental issues. Next, I am delighted to have someone in Canada from Ontario taking up a serious look at fear and fearlessness and applying theory into practice. Thanks Christine Legree for your sincere commitment to learning in this area. And it is heartwarming to see it has proved already to be expanding your appreciation of fear research (especially, by Four Arrows’ CAT-FAWN model) and is helping the planet too because you have joined more activism groups. It is a good model for anyone entering Fear Studies to read about her initial experiences.

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R. Michael Fisher, Ph.D.

Is an artist, fearologist, educator, philosopher and founder-director of In Search of Fearlessness Research Institute (1991-) and The Fearology Institute (2018-). His recent communications are online in the FM ning community he co-founded with Barbara Bickel in 2015:

<http://fearlessnessmovement.ning.com>

Contact: r.michaelfisher52@gmail.com
