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more on Place

Craig Bartholomew's *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today** (2011) is published by Baker Academic. The literature on place is vast but, as Bartholomew points out, very little has been written by Christians. Bartholomew credits Edward S. Casey with having done the most comprehensive work on the philosophy of place. His books include *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World** (Indiana University Press, second edition, 2009), *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History** (California, 1998); and *Representing Place: Landscape Painting and Maps** (Minnesota, 2002). Bartholomew argues that the modern tendency to abstract knowledge from the physical world—the assumption that abstract knowledge is the only true knowledge—is one of the principal sources of the modern crisis of place. As Bartholomew writes, “the great lesson from this history of the philosophy of place in the Western tradition is the skepticism about everyday, lived experience, and the trust in abstraction to lead us to true knowledge of the world. Abstraction is hereby separated from everyday experience and trumps it in terms of knowledge.” Bartholomew cites a number of thinkers who have offered critiques of this “cleavage between lived experience and scientific analysis.” For example, in *Tragic Wisdom and Beyond** (Northwestern, 1973), Gabriel Marcel observes: “The spirit of abstraction results when we ignore the concrete reality from which the abstraction is taken.” He also insists: “We are not only inseparable from our bodies, but from the concrete situations in which we find ourselves. I *am* my habitual surroundings in the same way that I *am* my body.” Bartholomew also cites Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge** (Chicago, 1958). J. E. Malpas's *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography** (Cambridge, 1999) explores some of the philosophical consequences of the fact that human identity is often deeply shaped by location. He discusses how human thought, knowledge, memory, and agency all interact with the experience of place. Almost every piece of writing by Wendell Berry includes some reflection on the significance of place; most notable is his essay, “The Work of Local Culture,” featured in several anthologies including *What Are People For?** (Counterpoint, second edition, 2010). In the title essay in his anthology, *Imagination in Place** (Counterpoint, 2010), Berry describes how the place in which he has lived almost all of his life is “precedent to my work, especially my fiction. . . . I have made the imagined town of Port William, its neighborhood and membership, in an attempt to honor the actual place where I have lived. By means of the imagined place, over the last fifty years, I have learned to see my native

Disc 1

1 Introduction

- 2 **Steven Shapin**, on whether or not there is a single thing called “science,” and whether scientists are united by a single “scientific method”
- 3 **Arthur Boers**, on why the ways in which technologies shape our lives should be recognized as spiritual and pastoral challenges
- 4 **Christine Pohl**, on why a deliberate commitment to certain shared practices is necessary for the sustaining of community

Disc 2

- 1 **Norman Wirzba**, on how attentiveness to our eating and our care of the land is a central aspect of culture and of godly faith
- 2 **Craig Bartholomew**, on carelessness concerning embodied experience and our “crisis of place”
- 3 **David I. Smith**, on how the forms of pedagogical practices ought to be crafted to correspond to the content of teaching

landscape and neighborhood as a place unique in the world, a work of God, possessed of an inherent sanctity that mocks any human valuation that can be put upon it.” Other works on place that may be of interest include: Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space** (Beacon, 1958); Winifred Gallagher, *The Power of Place: How Our Surroundings Shape Our Thoughts, Emotions, and Actions** (HarperCollins, 1993); Tony Hiss, *The Experience of Place: A New Way of Looking at and Dealing With our Radically Changing Cities and Countryside** (Vintage, 1991); Belden C. Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality** (Johns Hopkins, 1988, 2001); William Leach, *Country of Exiles: The Destruction of Place in American Life** (Pantheon Books, 1999); Philip Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory, and Identity** (Johns Hopkins, 2001); Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience** (Minnesota, 1977); and William Vitek, editor, *Rooted in the Land: Essays on Community and Place** (Yale, 1996).

Other Works Mentioned

Steven Shapin's *Never Pure: Historical Studies of Science as if It Was Produced by People with Bodies, Situated in Time, Space, Culture, and Society, and Struggling for Credibility and Authority** (2010) is published by Johns Hopkins. Arthur Boers's *Living into Focus: Choosing What Matters in an Age of Distractions** (2012) is published by Brazos Press. Christine Pohl's *Living into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us** (2012) and *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith & Learning** (2011), edited by David Smith and James K. A. Smith, are both published by Eerdmans. Norman Wirzba's *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating** (2011) is published by Cambridge.

The **MARS HILL AUDIO** Journal is produced at our studio in rural central Virginia, outside of historic Charlottesville. The Journal is one of several audio products we distribute, all of them intended to encourage greater wisdom about interaction with contemporary culture.

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