



Resensies / Reviews

- Burns, Michael & Weaver, Alex, *eds.* 2008. **Exploring sustainability science: a Southern African perspective.** Stellenbosch: African Sun.
(*F.P. Retief*) 455
- Muller, Stephanus & Walton, Chris. 2006. **A composer in Africa: essays on the life and work of Stefans Grové.** Stellenbosch: Sun Press.
(*D.J. Taljaard*) 457
- Conradie, Ernst M. 2008. **The church and climate change.** Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.
(*P. Styger*) 459
- Van Aarde, Mauritz. 2009. **The epistemology of statistical science.** Stellenbosch: Sun Press.
(*J.C. Geertsema*) 461
- Swartz, Nico P. 2009. **Historia persecutionis: the martyr accounts of Victor of Vita.** Stellenbosch: African Sun.
(*P.H. Fick*) 463
- Walton, Chris & Muller, Stephanus, *eds.* 2005. **Gender and sexuality in South African music.** Stellenbosch: Sun Media.
(*A.B. Petersen*) 465



Resensies / Reviews

Sustainability science: a new challenge to the Southern African scientific community – or is it?

Burns, Michael & Weaver, Alex, eds. 2008. Exploring sustainability science: a Southern African perspective.

Stellenbosch: African Sun. 625 p. Price: R350,00.

ISBN: 978-1-920109-51-6.

Reviewer: F.P. Retief

School of Environmental Sciences and Development,
Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University

Science is essentially about asking and answering questions. In short, these questions revolve around what is happening, why it is happening and how we should respond. We are living in a profoundly different era than any other in human history, which poses new questions and challenges to the research community. The level of complexity has increased dramatically to the extent that some questions are considered trans-scientific in that traditional science is unable to provide answers. Moreover, it is argued that science has become estranged, isolated and disconnected from decision and policy making. To deal with this ever-increasing complexity and to reconnect with decision makers, integrative understandings and solutions are sought to deal with questions around poverty alleviation, population growth, rapid urbanisation, loss of biodiversity, increasing energy demand, climate change, et cetera. This is especially true of, and applicable to those researchers exploring questions around sustainability or sustainable development. Sustainability science emerged internationally as a reaction to these challenges. In many ways the sustainability challenge is amplified, more complex and particularly acute within the Southern African region, mainly due to rapid population growth, wide spread poverty and poor governance.

This book presents the first attempt at defining and presenting the concept of sustainability science from a Southern African perspective. The work is the result of a research project/experiment which aimed to assemble a team of researchers from a variety of disciplines, persuade them to explore the concept of sustainability science and challenge them to put the knowledge gained to practical effect. The book pulls together views from a long list of well respected researchers (mainly from the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research) for whom the concept of sustainability science was novel before writing. Therefore, the content of the book is in many instances exploratory in nature, reflecting views of different authors on the how and why of multi-disciplinary thinking and research. As a point of departure the following definition for sustainability science is put forward, which classifies research based on the motivation that inspires it:

Sustainability Science is defined as use-inspired basic research that seeks to learn about the interactions among humans (including their cultural, political, economic and demographical characteristics), their technologies and the environment.

In line with this definition four main themes are covered, namely philosophical and conceptual foundations for sustainability science, transdisciplinarity and knowledge integration, resilience analysis of social ecological systems, and learning from adaptive self-organisation within social-ecological systems.

A particularly strong contribution of the book is that it provides a sound theoretical basis for thinking about sustainability science as well as general research dealing with sustainability issues. Furthermore, it succeeds in introducing diverse views and writing styles from various scientific traditions and disciplines. The individual chapters in many instances reflect a retrospective and introspective view on the current state of knowledge in terms of integrative thinking and multi-disciplinary research within disciplines. The book is therefore strongly recommended to researchers involved in multi-disciplinary as well as sustainability related research, especially within the region.

In conclusion it should be said that some readers might very well question the existence and the validity of sustainability science as a “new branch” of science. Especially the notion of it being use-inspired (as reflected in the definition stated earlier) in aiming to deal with sustainability. The argument could be given that due to the broad definition of sustainability, all research could essentially be

classified as being part of sustainability science. However, the debate around what is meant by sustainability science does not detract from the usefulness of the book, but rather highlights its potential contribution towards thinking about the role of science in providing solutions to the serious sustainability challenges we face globally and in the Southern African region.

Indeed a composer in Africa

Muller, Stephanus & Walton, Chris. 2006. A composer in Africa: essays on the life and work of Stefans Grové. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 175 p. Price: R160,00. ISBN: 9 781920 109042.

Reviewer: D.J. Taljaard
Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University

This book on Stefans Grové is a fascinating mix of personal accounts by those who have known one of South Africa's foremost composers, and critical commentary on his oeuvre. Grové's oeuvre includes musical as well as literary texts, but the focus of the collection falls on the musical oeuvre and justifiably so, since Grové has been and remains a composer who is also a writer.

Stefans Grové was born in Bethlehem in 1922 and with the exception of an 18-year period spent working in the USA (1953-1971), he has always lived and worked in South Africa. This is the first volume dedicated to the life and work of this important composer.

The editors' intention was to document Grové's extensive oeuvre as thoroughly as possible, and it is clear that this book makes an important contribution not only to the study of so-called "art music" in South Africa, but also to the wider understanding of South African culture and the interaction between art and politics in the second half of the twentieth century. The book contains more than an impressive work list, an extensive bibliography and biographical information which will no doubt form the foundation for further research on Grové. The editors also took upon themselves the scholarly task of examining the intersection between the international achievements of the composer and the roots of his cultural identity. Given the vastness and complexity of this task, some of the essays are indeed a tough read. The enthusiast who sets out to peruse this

work from cover to cover may become discouraged, and this would be a pity, because this is a book which deserves to receive a wide audience. It is definitely one that should not be read only by musicians, and for this reason, my review is aimed at the general reader.

I suspect that for this audience, the easiest entrance into the book and the world of Stefans Grové is to be found near the middle of the book on page 75, with the collection of eight of Grové's *Hoofstad Sketches* which were written in Afrikaans and are presented here in the original language. Stephanus Muller, currently one of the leading musicologists in South Africa, offers a short and enlightening introduction to the sketches. I am convinced that for those who are fortunate enough to understand the language, at least three of these, namely *Beurtsang van die eensaamheid*, *Die stille kring in die lou son* and especially *Monna Osoro het gekom* will provide the necessary impetus to want to get to know the composer/writer better. I certainly sat up, took note and read them a number of times, except for *Monna Osoro het gekom*. I am still working on building up enough courage for the second round.

The reader's interest now piqued, the path would best be resumed through the very charming introduction to the life of Grové found in the first three pages of John de Courteille Hinch's essay "Stefans Grové: the flute in his life". The next steps on this journey should, in my view, lead the reader to the first essay in the book called "Place, identity and a station platform" by Stephanus Muller. This essay is biographical and aims to arrive at a contextualisation of the composer's life and work in terms of his family, contemporaries, studies, personality and his Afrikaner heritage. In giving an account of the political implications of Grové's life and work, Muller demonstrates the fact that he is neither unwilling, nor too wary to delve into our country's tumultuous past in order to interpret events against the backdrop of the then prevailing times.

By now, our stroll has become less than leisurely, but the pace is still comfortable as we turn towards Chris Walton's essay "Connect, only connect: Stefans Grové's road from Bethlehem to Damascus" of which the striking empathy, even tenderness, makes this a must-read. Walton sets out to understand the reasons for Grové's return to South Africa in 1972 in the context of his biography, the difficulties he was facing at the time in the USA and the political climate awaiting him in his home country. In so doing, Walton manages to beautifully integrate the different strands that went into the creation of "a remarkable creative outpouring that shows no sign of ceasing"

which “the wider musical world is all the richer for”. Walton’s essay enriches our ways of thinking *as* artists and *about* artists in South Africa and makes our journey through the book well worth the effort.

Our reader should stop for a breather before tackling Muller’s other two essays. For this, the introduction by John Tyrell who studied under the young Grové at the University of Cape Town and three essays by other students of Grové’s will do. Elam Sprenkle opens up an intriguing vista on Grové as a teacher in America during his time at the prestigious Peabody Conservatory. The conflicting descriptions of Grové by two of his South African composition students, Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph and Etienne van Rensburg, will whet the appetite for the steep climb that awaits those who seek to discover something that most resembles “the truth” about this enigmatic composer/writer. And this search certainly comes to the fore in Muller’s other two essays, “Imagining Afrikaners musically: reflections on the African music of Stefans Grové” and “Stefans Grové’s narratives of lateness”. But since I promised to write this review for the general reader and not only for brave musicologists, I will allow our paths to part with my best wishes.

A cool approach to a warm subject

Conradie, Ernst M. 2008. The church and climate change.
Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications. 104 p. Price: R50,00.
ISBN: 978 187505374 2.

Reviewer: P. Styger
Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University

This booklet was published by Cluster Publications as the first book in their proposed series “Signs of the Times”. The reader is, therefore, immediately compelled to read the text from a specific paradigm. The book is organised around seven chapters. The chapters deal with climate change in the news: what is the church doing about climate change; what response is required to curb climate change; the church and consumerism; theological resources for responding to climate change; confessing guilt in the context of climate change; and discerning God’s Word for our time. The author states that it is his intention to use and to bring into play biblical and

theological resources for a Christian ecological, theological approach to climate change.

The “church” is one of the focal points of this booklet and it is, therefore, necessary for the author to define this concept in chapter two. He discerns the following “structures” as the church: the local congregation; the worshipping community; the denomination; ecumenical structures; para-church organisations; and the daily lives of believers. The conclusion is reached that only some of these structures are suitable to address the issue of climate change, but ultimately it is the role that Christians play, and can play, at home and in the workplace, that is important.

Chapter three is a brief description of the problem of climate change and includes suggestions from literature and the author on what should, in practice, be done. In conclusion three areas where carbon emissions can (possibly) be curbed by the actions of the church are identified, namely through more sustainable forms of technology, limiting population growth and reducing carbon emissions. A very unconvincing paragraph is dedicated to each of these issues.

Chapter four launches a cryptic and myopic attack on consumerism. The chapter concludes that there are three strategies that the church can use to confront consumerism: a sincere prayer of thanksgiving before each meal; to celebrate the Sabbath; and tithing.

Although the title of chapter five is “Theological resources for responding to climate change”, not a single quote from Scripture forms part of this discussion that concludes that the notion of “Salvation” should be employed to address climate change. This translates to the need for wisdom, a reduction in the polarisation between East and West and redemption of this threat by a victory over the forces of evil. The last of the three is the generally accepted view on salvation, but how the other two can be considered part of salvation is a myth.

Chapter six deals with confessions of guilt in the context of climate change. This chapter very successfully describes and uses the analogy of the whole history, role and processes of confessions in the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It is advocated that the church can play a meaningful role in the awareness of, and actions against, the factors that cause climate change, through a process of individual recognition and declaration of guilt for the problem of climate change. This will naturally result in asking for

God's mercy and forgiveness, with a concomitant resolve from each individual to amend his/her ways that are currently resulting in the negative factors that cause climate change.

In summary, a very disappointing booklet. It is way too cryptic to address any of the real issues and unfortunately, with the possible exception of chapter six, adds nothing new to the debate. The fundamental problem with the booklet is, however, the author's omission of the issue of man's stewardship role of God's creation.

The booklet can serve as an introduction to discussions in congregations on the church's role in climate change. But much better discussions and texts are available in the press and on the internet.

Philosophical foundations of Statistics

Van Aarde, Mauritz. 2009. **The epistemology of statistical science.** Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 446 p. Price: R380,00.
ISBN: 978-1-920338-04-6.

Reviewer: J.C. Geertsema
Faculty of Natural Sciences
Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University

This book is intended to be a contribution to the debate on the philosophical foundations of Statistics, a debate which has continued for more than a century and with many conflicting views. It has been said that the subject of Statistics suffers such strong divisions concerning its foundations because it is so close to the philosophy of knowledge. Indeed, Statistics is concerned with the very difficult and age old problem of obtaining valid knowledge from numerical data. The author has strong ideas about this and chose the subtitle "Challenging the statistical profession" for his Epilogue, in which he pleads for understanding if he appears to be "overly aggressive, even arrogant". His motivation for his strong approach is the perceived prejudices from fellow statisticians he needs to overcome, the alleged detrimental influence of authority in the subject and his fear of damage done to the "substantive sciences" through present statistical theory and practice.

The intended readership for the book is the members of the statistical profession, but even among these, it will be mainly those with some maturity in the understanding of statistical theory and practice who will benefit from a close reading of this material. Others, including people with an interest in the philosophical foundations of science, could form an impression of some of the main issues in the foundational debate by reading some of the less technical parts of the book. Even so, the book is not easy reading material. The arguments are developed slowly and the insertion of many detailed examples to motivate and illustrate the ideas often obscures the progress in the argumentation. The absence of an alphabetical index of topics creates another obstacle.

The author begins the book by stating his view that statistical data analysis concerns the development of statistical models for the representation of numerical data and that there is then a need for methods to test the adequacy of such models. In this connection, he emphasises his view that Statistics has an investigative character as contradictory to the widely accepted view that its aim is decision-making. To him the question is how a given set of data might have come about whereafter a suitable test would be able to separate more tenable explanations from less tenable ones. This is a question of determining the quality of fit. He disagrees with the theories of testing which were introduced during the previous century and proceeds to develop a new kind of test. The test is named a "co-ordination test", since it is expressed in terms of so-called "co-ordinates". It has a close relationship with "significance tests" as originally developed by R.A. Fisher, one of the main figures in early twentieth century statistics.

In most of the remainder of the book, and in separate chapters, the author contrasts his own ideas with other established schools of thought, namely decision-making under risk, frequentist inference, significance tests, likelihood inference, Bayesian inference and Fisher's fiducial inference. These chapters are of independent interest, since they provide a new and detailed discussion with examples which illustrate many of the arguments from the relevant literature on these topics. Unfortunately there are no references to important books on the comparison of statistical schools of thought, such as those by Barnett and by Berger.

The book takes a strong empiricist stand against logic and rationalism. There is an emphasis on the importance and the leading position of what is named the substantive sciences, which we must understand to be the empirical sciences. In the Preface and

elsewhere, there are arguments that Statistics is a science like these sciences, differing only in its subject matter and that Statistics must learn from them how to reason. Similarly, it is argued that there is no need for the term *statistical inference*, since the other sciences would then need to have their own inferences as well. In reaction to this approach, one may ask whether this is a good understanding of the unique place of Statistics among the sciences. A more widely accepted view is that Statistics has as aim the establishing of a systematic and common methodology for the analysis of numerical data which arise through observation and experiment in the empirical sciences. In this way Statistics serves these sciences through statistical inference which refines and contributes to the hypothetico-deductive scientific method used by them.

In conclusion, the book may be recommended to those who have an interest in the philosophical foundations of Statistics and its relationship to the empirical sciences. Readers will have to keep in mind that this is highly polemical material with an intended new approach to the continuing debate in this area. Time will tell what the level of acceptance of these ideas will be.

Martelaarsliteratuur uit die vroeë Christendom

Swartz, Nico P. 2009. **Historia persecutionis: the martyr accounts of Victor of Vita.** Stellenbosch: African Sun. 85 p.
Prys: R150,00. ISBN: 978-1-920383-00-8.

Resensent: P.H. Fick
Fakulteit Teologie
Potchefstroomkampus, Noordwes-Universiteit

Die eerste aantal eeue van die geskiedenis van die Christelike Kerk is gekenmerk deur vervolging – eers deur die Jode, later deur die Romeinse owerheid en uiteindelik ook deur die Germane. Victor van Vita skryf in die vyfde eeu sy *Historia persecutionis* oor die vervolging wat die Christene in Noord-Afrika moes verduur aan die hand van die Vandale tussen die jare 429 en 484. Hierdie boek is onder andere 'n belangrike bron vir die geskiedenis van die Vandale en vir insig in kontemporêre historiografie.

Hierdie boek is die neerslag van die skrywer se meestersgraadstudie. In die eerste van vyf hoofstukke bespreek Swartz die *Historia persecutionis* teen die agtergrond van die martelaarskultuur in Noord-Afrika deur dit onder andere te vergelyk met wat in Europa gebeur het. In die tweede hoofstuk bespreek hy die werk as 'n historiese dokument en gee aandag aan aspekte soos historiografie, hagiografie en didaktiese funksie. In die derde hoofstuk tref hy 'n vergelyking tussen die *Historia* en ander martelaarsgeskiedenis. In die vierde hoofstuk kom die teikengroep onder die loep en in die vyfde hoofstuk die struktuur daarvan waar narratologiese aspekte aandag kry. Verskillende metodes van navorsing word toegepas, waarvan die historiese die beste aangewend word. Die aanwending van die vergelykende en literêre metodes is minder geslaagd.

Die werk getuig van deeglike navorsing en 'n goeie verskeidenheid primêre en sekondêre bronne word gebruik. Die gebruik van Wikipedia kan egter bevraagteken word waar daar wel behoorlike bronne oor bepaalde onderwerpe (soos die Vandale en Gregorius van Tours) bestaan. Dit is ook jammer dat die skrywer die primêre bronne hoofsaaklik gebruik en aanbied deur gebruik te maak van bestaande vertalings, dat hy onnodige direkte aanhalings uit sekondêre bronne gebruik en ook swaar steun op sekondêre bronne. Varsheid, oorspronklikheid en selfstandige insig word daardeur ingeboet.

Die teks is tegnies goed versorg en lees maklik. Wanneer aanhalings in Latyn gegee word, word die vertaling direk daarna verskaf. Dit maak die werk uiteraard meer toeganklik vir die leser wat nie Latyn magtig is nie. Hierdie boek plaas die *Historia persecutionis*, wat 'n redelik onbekende werk uit die tydperk van die vroeë Christendom is, in historiese en literêre konteks en skep by die leser 'n behoefte aan die lees van die werk self. Hierdie werk word aanbeveel vir die akademiese leser met 'n belangstelling in die vroeë Christendom en die martelaarsliteratuur uit daardie tyd.

Postmillennial gendered discourses in South African musicology

Walton, Chris & Muller, Stephanus, eds. 2005. **Gender and sexuality in South African music**. Stellenbosch: Sun Media. 97 p. Price: R150,00. ISBN: 978-1919980409.

Reviewer: A.B. Petersen
School of Music
Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University

Gendered discourses in musicology constitute a highly current hence topical research issue. This publication, while it breathes a breath of fresh air into the (oftentimes) conservative world of musicology, should not be seen as the final word on this issue. I have no doubt that many more discourses will follow either as a result of this one and/or discussions with other points of departure. I am in full agreement with the editors when they state in the introduction that over “the past two decades, the study of sexuality and gender in music has become a decidedly mainstream activity”.

The contributors are (in order of their chapter contributions) Grant Olwage, Shirli Gilbert, Brett Pyper, Nishlyn Ramanna, Stephanus Muller, Martina Viljoen & Nicol Viljoen, Chris Walton, Meki Nzewi & Sello Galane and Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph. Of the eleven contributors, nine are based in South Africa. I have had the privilege of interacting with most of them either at conferences or at other academic gatherings. With the exception of Stephanus Muller, all the other “locals” are based outside of the Western Cape Province. The overseas-based contributors are Shirli Gilbert (University of Michigan) and Chris Walton (Soloturn, Switzerland).

While the three-pronged theme, namely gender, sexuality and South African music, is endemic to all the chapters, the individual chapters in themselves engage in very disparate discourses, all in keeping, I surmise, with the various areas of expertise of the individual contributors. The musical genres include black choralism (Grant Olwage), popular song (Shirli Gilbert) and jazz (Brett Pyper and Nishlyn Ramanna). Chapters on female composers include “Being Rosa” (on composer Rosa Nepgen) by Chris Walton and “Pride, prejudice and power: on being a woman composer in South Africa” by Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph. Meki Nzewi and Sello Galane offer a

philosophical discourse entitled “Music is a woman”. Stephanus Muller speaks to the issue of being a gay Afrikaner composer in his chapter “Queer alliances”.

For researchers into the history of black choralism, the first chapter by Grant Olwage, entitled “Black musicality in colonial South Africa: a discourse of alteralities”, is compulsory reading. The main thrust of Shirley Gilbert’s chapter, entitled “Gender and sexuality in South African music” is an investigation of how the songs of the struggle era can serve to deepen one’s understanding of the role of women in the struggle against apartheid. She raises several questions at the end of the chapter for further debate. Brett Pyper in his chapter “To hell with home and shame!: jazz, gender and sexuality in the drum journalism of Todd Matshikiza, 1951-1957” surveys the contributions of Todd Matshikiza both as a writer of jazz articles for *Drum* (1951-1957) as well as a “sought-after music teacher” and “gifted jazz musician” (p. 20). Nishlyn Ramanna’s chapter “Ethnicity, sexuality and all that jazz: the musical text as confessional space” provides a window of understanding into this gifted jazz-pianist-composer’s creativity. Stephanus Muller’s “Queer alliances” is a thought-provoking chapter which interrogates the plight of the gay white male university-based composer during the apartheid era. To quote a salient sentence: “... many of the composers (and performers and teachers) supported and fostered by the institutional structures of apartheid South Africa with its stultifying and often hypocritical moralistic code, were gay men.” (p. 38). In the chapter “The politics of the ineffable: a deconstructive reading of Hubert Du Plessis’ *De Bruid*” the primary focus is on Derrida’s deconstructive practice and how this technique can “give ‘voice’ to the excluded others in this song [*De Bruid*]” (p. 51) by Hubert de Plessis, which is the central part of his song cycle, *Die Vrou*. Chris Walton, in his chapter “Being Rosa”, assesses the contribution of the composer Rosa Nepgen to the South African serious music landscape. Nzewi and Galane in “Music is a woman” discuss, in particular, the role of gender in the *kiba* musical arts of the Pedi. Jeanne Zaidel – Rudolph’s chapter “Pride, prejudice and power: on being a woman composer in South Africa” – like Nishlyn Ramanna’s, is also autobiographical, giving the reader a fascinating glimpse into her world as a South African female composer.

This book, the first of its kind in South Africa, does indeed reveal how gender and sexuality both play an important role in musical creativity. Accordingly, it should be of particular value to both the student and teacher/lecturer of musicology. There is a balance

between chapters with a historical focus and those with a current focus. More publications should come to the fore wherein individual composers of any musical tradition in South Africa write about the wellsprings of their creativity via a gendered discourse.

