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Religion, Brain & Behavior's seventh year

Richard Sosis, Joseph Bulbulia, Wesley J. Wildman & Uffe Schjoedt

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EDITORIAL

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In many religious systems, seven is an auspicious number: seven chakras, seven Catholic sacraments, Buddha walked seven steps at birth, seven blessings at a Jewish wedding, and countless other examples. Of course, in the secular world our weeks revolve around a seven-day cycle, with ancient religious origins now mostly forgotten. For many academics, every seventh year we are granted a cherished sabbatical. With such cultural underpinnings, we cannot help but note that the seventh year of publication for *Religion, Brain & Behavior* looks auspicious indeed. Notably, we look forward to publishing several special issues. Over the past six years *RBB* has offered only one special issue: issue 2.1 was a special issue on atheism highlighted by target articles from Dominic Johnson and Catherine Caldwell-Harris. However, over the next year or so we have special issues planned on Terror Management Theory, Big Gods Theory, the work of Iain McGilchrist, and our Hilbert Problems for the Scientific Study of Religion.

The most notable event for *Religion, Brain & Behavior's* seventh year, however, is that it begins with an editorial change. We regretfully bid farewell to Michael Spezio, who has served as our co-editor and neuroscience specialist over the past two years. In addition to his service in handling our neuroscience and related submissions, Michael has also established important guidelines for neuroscience submissions, guidelines that we hope extend beyond *RBB* (see Spezio, Bulbulia, Wildman, & Sosis, 2015). We greatly appreciate Michael's efforts over the past two years. As a member of our editorial board, Michael will thankfully remain available for consultation and advice.

While we will miss Michael, we are very excited to welcome Uffe Schjoedt into our fold. Uffe is widely regarded as one of the world's leading neuroscientists of religion and he needs no introduction to our readership. Nonetheless, some brief background comments are in order.

Uffe is currently an Associate Professor in the Department for the Study of Religion at Aarhus University, where he received both his undergraduate and graduate degrees. Uffe's expertise lies in the experimental social neuroscience of religion. However, Uffe's interests are hardly limited to social neuroscience, and *RBB* will benefit from his diverse skills. His research has employed neuroimaging, heart-rate analysis, eye-tracking, online surveys, repeated measures/longitudinal surveys, and textual analysis. Uffe's methodological and theoretical work has produced some of the most important findings in the bio-cultural study of religion. He is widely credited with the first neurological demonstration of reward activations in the brain from repetitive prayer, as well as showing that prayer experiences are neurologically akin to ordinary social interactions with another person. Uffe's research has also established a link between charismatic authority and hypnotic brain states. Moreover, his research has explored ritual and memory, ritual arousal, religious cognition, mystical experiences, and other topics in the bio-cultural study of religion.

Over the past six years we have benefited from Uffe's numerous *RBB* publications and his outstanding contributions as an ad hoc reviewer for the journal. As our newest co-editor, we will now benefit from Uffe's exceptional scholarship in a more regular and sustained way. We feel very fortunate to have him as a co-editor and we greatly look forward to working closely with him.

Reference

Spezio, M. L., Bulbulia, J., Wildman, W. J., & Sosis, R. (2015). Religion, SCAN, and developing standards of inquiry. *Religion, Brain & Behavior*, 5(3), 179–181.

Richard Sosis
Joseph Bulbulia
Wesley J. Wildman
Uffe Schjoedt