and a pleasant surprise, containing unvarnished attempts at truth-telling that contrast starkly, in content and tone, with everything else you have read.

In the end, Denny argues that we need to use all the tools available—science, technology, diplomacy, and our very limited supply of wisdom—to avoid the worst effects of climate change. For example, he recommends that we nurture and develop, rather than reject, the "technological monster" of nuclear power, in spite of our disappointments with it (three accidents so far). Don't like nuclear power? He demonstrates the human brain's general inability to understand risks in a one-page chapter entitled "You Suck at Statistics."

It is stunts like this that make reading *Making the Most of the Anthropocene* so enjoyable. Many of Denny's chapter-essays are fascinating, opinionated, and subversive. Love, peace, and granola, anyone (chap. 31)? While at first they seem loosely connected to each other, eventually they form a web. Why does it matter that "Nobody Understands Economics" (chap. 35)? Economic scenarios are a larger uncertainty in next-century climate projections than the scientific uncertainty in climate models, and this has been true for many years.

Denny has written at least nine previous books about science for a general audience, and his ability to avoid jargon and hold the reader's attention while still getting the science right rarely wavers in this one. The only error I noted in the entire book had to do with details of the history of the discovery of the ozone hole by members of the British Antarctic Survey—a minor issue that does not substantially detract from the overall achievement. In this book, Denny has expanded his scope to cover a lot more than science, and readers will benefit from his ambition.

Reviewed by David De Haan, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, University of San Diego, San Diego, CA 92110.

Ethics

LOSING SUSAN: Brain Disease, the Priest's Wife, and the God Who Gives and Takes Away by Victor Lee Austin. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016. 150 pages. Paperback; $17.99. ISBN: 9781587434075.

Victor Lee Austin's *Losing Susan* is a difficult book to classify. One could potentially find it shelved in bookstores under biography, medical ethics, caregiving, death and dying, spirituality, or theology. It would not be out of place in any of these sections. *Losing Susan* can also be a difficult book to read. The very title of the book gestures toward the unflinchingly honest and often painful account of a husband attempting to care for his wife in the face of terminal brain disease. The "In Memoriam" page with which the book begins signals to the reader from the outset that there will be no fairy tale ending to this story. The shadow of death hangs over everything. Even the depiction of the joyous courtship and marriage of the Austins ends on a foreboding note with the observation, "It would be fifteen years before her tumor was found" (p. 21). However, darkness is not the couple's only companion. There is another strange, often silent, character who accompanies Susan and Victor as they journey through the valley of the shadow of death: "the one everyone calls God" (p. 10). It is the God "who gives and takes away," whose presence sustains Victor and whose sheer ineffability gives rise to this priest and theologian's most raw and piercing reflections.

The book is simply divided into three chapters, entitled, "The Beginning," "The Middle," and "The End." "The Beginning" traces the initial meeting between Victor and Susan, the blossoming of their friendship while walking together to church during college, their courtship, and the early years of their marriage. Set to the soundtrack of the Song of Songs, the opening chapter is the story of a man who has been given the desire of his heart and has the opportunity to delight in the embodied presence of his bride. In the person of Susan, we encounter a woman of deep faith, with an aptitude for hospitality and for organically integrating the habits and practices of the Christian faith into the ongoing life of the home. A gifted writer, Susan stands as a true intellectual equal and spiritual partner to her husband.

Susan's first seizures led to the detection of her brain tumor and marked the beginning of her descent into illness. "The Middle" depicts this period of almost twenty years during which Victor would come increasingly to serve as caregiver to his wife. While this period is not bereft of grace or moments of joy, the burden of being a caregiver to a spouse whose health is failing takes its toll. Austin is racked by the guilt of not recognizing particular symptoms earlier. He experiences the agony of having to treat his life partner and mother of his children as a child herself. He is plagued by the anxiety that is brought on by the feeling of being out of control and not knowing how to respond to Susan's condition.

The occurrence of a grand mal seizure in July of 2011 marks the beginning of "The End," which traces the last year and a half of Susan's life. Amidst the forthright description of the travail and anguish that accompanied such things as selecting a nursing home

and signing a "do not resuscitate" order, Austin is also able to write movingly about finding joy in the midst of caring for a now-incontinent spouse. The relational journey which began as a type of Song of Songs existence now moves into the territory of the book of Job. While Austin refers to Job as "the best book in the Bible" (p. 135), it is ultimately the crucified Christ screaming out in prayer to God who is given the last word. *Losing Susan* then concludes with a hauntingly beautiful midrash on the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ written by Susan Austin entitled, "To Plumb the Depths of God's Love."

In some ways, *Losing Susan* could be seen as an indictment of a medical system that now treats conditions, rather than patients. While Austin is thankful for the medical treatment that Susan has received, his first-person account of the bewilderment that he often experienced as a medical layperson attempting to navigate the labyrinthine realities of the medical bureaucracy in his efforts to secure the best care of his wife should be required reading for all healthcare professionals. The darkness of this largely inhumane, and often inept, healthcare system was punctuated by glimmers of light in the form of particular nurses, therapists, and doctors, who took the time to genuinely care for Susan, advocate for her needs, and listen to her family.

In keeping with Austin's conviction that there are three major *dramatis personae* in this story, theological reflections are skillfully woven throughout the book. As one might expect, there are significant discussions of the gift of love, faithfulness, and the problem of evil. However, Austin's telling of the story also allows him to reflect upon other less obvious theological themes, including how we come to know God, the relation of free will and providence, the doctrine of the Trinity, and prevenient grace, to name just a few. The centrality of the embodied character of human existence is a recurring theme throughout the book. Also present are important practical reflections upon the comfort found in the liturgy, the importance of pastoral visitors for the sick and their families, and the experience of being sustained by the prayers of the community of faith.

This short but poignant book will find an obvious audience among caregivers, health professionals, ethicists, and theologians. Beyond that, it commends itself to all people of faith who are ultimately pressed with the painful question of the seeming absence of the God who has drawn so uncomfortably near to us in the flesh of the crucified Jesus.

Reviewed by Robert J. Dean, Providence Theological Seminary, Otterburne, MB R0A 1G0.

History of Science

REVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE: Transformation and Turmoil in the Age of the Guillotine by Steve Jones. New York: Pegasus, 2017. 353 pages. Hardcover; $27.95. ISBN: 9781681773094.

Have you ever wondered why so many Paris Metro stations carry the names of French scientists and intellectuals? *Revolutionary Science* is a book that may give a partial explanation. The book surveys the rich scientific landscape of the French capital and details the contributions of many late eighteenth-century scientists, aristocrats, and radicals who lived during the French Revolution. The book is written by John Stephen Jones, former Head of the Department of Genetics, Evolution and Environment at University College, London. He has also been a BBC television presenter and has won the 1996 Royal Society Michael Faraday prize "for his numerous wide-ranging contributions to the public understanding of science," or to use the French term that I am confident Jones would prefer, *"vulgarisation scientifique."* Jones is in love with France, particularly Paris.

Paris was the world capital of science at the time of the French Revolution. Jones creates an elegant and stimulating narrative recounting the many scientific discoveries made by Enlightenment-era French scientists, radicals, and intellectuals. At the same time, Jones wants the reader to become aware that these same persons were also deeply involved in civic and business affairs. We think, naturally, of their efforts to develop a system of weights and measures, of Antoine Lavoisier's chemical and physiological investigations, of the development of modern cartography, of the many discoveries in electricity—such as the unit for electrical current by Andre-Marie Ampere, of the study of metabolism by Lavoisier and Laplace, of the investigation of venereal disease or the introduction of new food-stuffs—such as the potato by Parmentier—into the French cuisine. But, Jones reminds us, Lavoisier was also a munitions expert and tax-collector; Lagrange, founder of the decimal system of measurement, was President of the Senate later in life; and E. I. du Pont de Nemours was both a chemist (expert in explosives) and founder of the world's largest chemical company after he fled to the United States.

In many ways this is an unusual history of science book. Ostensibly a book about science in revolutionary France, it wanders in ways that cleverly illuminate later developments. During any specific wandering, we are offered fascinating historical tidbits of information. One word of warning: it would