Humans manage the terror of death by adhering to culturally constructed beliefs about reality that provide a sense that one is a person of value in a world of meaning, and thus eligible for either literal or symbolic immortality. The quest for immortality underlies some of humankind’s most noble achievements. However, it also engenders some of our most ignominious affectations, including: hostility and disdain for people with different beliefs; indifference to, or contempt for, the natural environment; and, the mindless pursuit of material possessions—which, if unchecked, may render humans the first form of life responsible for their own extinction.