Faith is a word not much used in these times. At least it seems to be used less in print and almost never in speech. The similar word belief is more common. Faith had been described one time as meaning the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. While faith would not count as evidence or substantive proof in a police investigation or courtroom, it does seem to be accepted as foundational for making many people’s major and minor life decisions and choices. Making a transposition of words and adding a little tone of silliness, but not meaning at all to be silly, one could say the meaning of belief is “the proof of something known but not provable.”

For something so significant, how do we quantify it? We measure colors by color wheels and pantone charts and hues, saturation, and so on, all with numbers. We measure sound in decibels, weight in pounds, heat in degrees. But when it comes to beliefs, or faith, there is no yardstick or quart jar for it.

These kinds of thoughts were the background for Beyond Belief. Beliefs are the things we use for determining values, but how does one measure a value. Can you measure love with a color wheel. Can you measure respect and dignity with a thermometer? Can you measure the value of a child’s life or an ill person’s suffering with anything like a tick-tock clock?

Left with nothing else, it seemed to the author that we use dollars to measure these things, as if they are dollar-able things. We make economics transcendent. Economics becomes the ultimate determinant of values. Everything has to be equated to dollar amounts and compared in dollar values. Decisions about immeasurable things and choices and plans that can harm and hurt life and the enjoyment of it are explained with terms like “economic trade-offs.” The author wanted to explore thinking about how we state beliefs and belief-derived values as explanations and justifications sometimes, and then use dollar measurements for the same situations at other times, and how we mix them together into what we think is a unified way of living, though it becomes a life of contradictions.