



# Book Reviews



## ANTHROPOLOGY & ARCHEOLOGY

**WHO IS ADAM?** by Fazale Rana and Hugh Ross. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 2005. 287 pages, index. ISBN: 1576835774.

Rana is a Ph.D. biochemist (Ohio University) with postdoctoral studies at the Universities of Virginia and Georgia and seven years industrial experience with Proctor & Gamble. Ross has a Ph.D. in astronomy from the University of Toronto with several years of postdoctoral research experience in astrophysics at the California Institute of Technology. This book addresses a subject, human origins, of continuing interest to the members of the American Scientific Affiliation. The most recent article on this subject in *Perspectives on Science and the Christian Faith* was entitled "Establishing Adam," by David L. Wilcox in the March 2004 issue.

The positions of various writers on this volatile issue are typically related to their placement in one of four general categories defining the broader subject of origins (Schaefer, *Science and Christianity: Conflict or Coherence*, 2003):

1. *Naturalistic Evolution*. Impersonal processes, e.g., natural selection, mutations, chance, or some combination of these, account for all forms and species of life. Whether emerging gradually (Dawkins) or appearing suddenly (Gould), humankind is the product of unthinking, nonpurposive forces.
2. *Theistic Evolution*. God as immanent Agent sustains and directs the natural processes that shape the evolution of life. This position is scientifically indistinguishable from the first, but presupposes the sovereign activity of God in planning and executing the evolutionary process.
3. *Progressive Creation*. God immanently directs an extensive development of species. God acts transcendently at special stages of this process to create the main biological orders of being. Humankind is not dependent physically on any intermediate species. The age of the universe is about 13.8 billion years, and the age of the Earth is about 4.7 billion years.
4. *Recent Creation*. All life forms are created "*de novo*" by supernatural Agency. No late orders of creation are dependent on earlier kinds of being. The age of the Earth is not more than 10,000 years.

Although their aggregate has decreased in recent years, the ASA still includes a significant number (perhaps 5% of its members) of recent creationists. For the past 30 years the dominant group within the ASA has been the Theistic Evolutionists. However, my sense (wishful thinking?) is that the fraction of Progressive Creationists is increasing yearly. There are, of course, a vast number of origins posi-

tions intermediate between the four main views stated above. I remember my friend David Cole (Professor of Biochemistry at Berkeley) telling me some years ago that on the scale of 1 to 4 he was a 2.5.

In their book *Who is Adam?* Rana and Ross provide the first book-length examination of the question of human origins from the Progressive Creation perspective. With 681 references, many from the prestigious journals *Science* and *Nature*, this is a serious scholarly endeavor. In light of its uniqueness, I strongly recommend this book to all members and friends of the ASA. I do think the book is a bit harsh on the Recent Creationists (my wife is one!), but this is a minor criticism. The great strengths of the book are its careful and respectful critique of positions 1 and 2 above, and its exposition of a detailed and testable model for the (sometimes) previously vague Progressive Creation position. From a theological perspective, the book is consistent with the fine "Genesis" commentary of the late James Montgomery Boice.

Win, lose, or draw, I think *Who is Adam?* is the most important contribution to the human origins debate to appear during the past fifty years. The book will generate enormous controversy, but for the best of reasons. Love it or hate it, I encourage you to read this book.

*Reviewed by Henry F. Schaefer III, Graham Perdue Professor of Chemistry, University of Georgia.*

**BONES OF CONTENTION: A Creationist Assessment of Human Fossils** by Marvin L. Lubenow. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004. 400 pages, seven charts and tables, endnotes, three indices. Paperback; \$21.99. ISBN: 0801065232.

Lubenow is professor of Bible, theology, and apologetics at Southern California Bible College and Seminary in El Cajon, California. He has spent more than thirty-five years researching the human fossil issue and frequently speaks and writes to defend the creationist position.

As the subtitle asserts, Lubenow's book is an unabashedly creationist assessment of hominid fossil remains. (Henry Morris, Tim LaHaye, and Ken Ham enthusiastically endorse it.) It is also, as the title suggests, contentious.

Lubenow begins by criticizing the field of paleoanthropology in general:

This field is the scene of much prejudice, subjectivity, and emotionalism in the interpretation of human fossils and in the construction of phylogenetic trees. The professionalism and objectivity found in other areas of science have been conspicuously absent in this area (p. 34).

He goes on to consider Neanderthal (*Homo neanderthalensis*), Lucy (*Australopithecus afarensis*), Java Man (*Pithecanthropus*), *Homo erectus*, *Homo habilis*, and lesser-known hominids. Lubenow finds fault with the conclusions and hypotheses of paleoanthropologists regarding the dating of remains, reconstruction of anatomy, and hypothesized family trees for the various hominid species.

Lubenow's position regarding hominid fossils can be summed up briefly. He does not like the term hominid: the fossils studied by paleoanthropologists represent

## Book Reviews

either nonhuman species or man himself. He thus labors to show that Neanderthal, Java Man, and *Homo erectus* were true humans, descendants of Adam; the other hominid species were either nonhuman primates (Lucy) or did not actually exist (Pittdown Man, *Homo habilis*, others). A determined critic of the Out of Africa model of human origins, Lubenow believes that all of these remains are less than 10,000 years old; he cites generally accepted dates, but points out time and again that he does not accept them.

Readers of *PSCF* who are not young earth creationists (YEC) or special creationists might be tempted to skip this read. I (who am not a YEC or special creationist) would recommend that they think again. There is valuable material in *Bones of Contention*. Some of Lubenow's criticisms are trenchant, and should warn anyone not to accept hypothetical reconstructions and family trees to be established facts. The charts at the end of the book are excellent comprehensive summaries of the extant fossil remains for various hominid species. And the uniqueness and spiritual nature of *Homo sapiens* cannot be denied by any Christian who takes the Bible to be the Word of God, nor can those features be regarded as having evolved. In maintaining these truths, Lubenow does a valuable service to the church and the world, even though many of his specific criticisms do not hold water.

*Bones of Contention* first came out in 1992. The present work is a revised and updated version of the first edition. A perusal of the endnotes indicates that about a quarter of the references were published after the first edition. Unfortunately, the book lacks a bibliography.

Reviewed by Robert Rogland, Science Teacher, Covenant High School, Tacoma, WA 98465.



### ENVIRONMENT

**THE SPLENDOR OF CREATION: A Biblical Ecology** by Ellen Bernstein. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2005. 145 pages. Paperback; \$16.00. ISBN: 082981664X.

Bernstein is the founder of the first national Jewish environmental organization (Shomrei Adamah). She is also the author of *Ecology and the Jewish Spirit: Where Nature and the Sacred Meet*. This present book is divided into seven chapters, based on the days of creation, with endnotes and no index. Bernstein deals with her subject from a devotional rather than a scientific angle. I found only one misspelled word: "absence" (p. 30).

Although she has taught high school biology, Bernstein's perspective in this book comes from her religious values: "I have chosen Judaism as the path I walk and the Bible as the sacred text I contemplate along the path" (p. x). To Bernstein, ecology and the Bible use different words to describe the same thing (p. xi), and Genesis 1 is the world's first environmental epic. In *The Splendor of Creation*, she draws upon wisdom from tradition, rabbis, scientists, philosophers, and poets. But perhaps her most salient sources are her Judaism and personal experiences (p. 58).

In campaigning for environmental sanity, Bernstein gives some interesting and relevant data. For example, on

a sunny day, an acre of trees transpires 3,500 gallons of water into the air (p. 28). During the past forty years, Pennsylvania has lost more than four million acres of farmland to sprawl, an area larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island combined (p. 43). This is due to the increase of home sizes by 26% and the increase of land development by 80%.

To make her points, many of which are certainly valid, Bernstein may sometimes use hyperbole. At least, she gives no supporting evidence for such statements as "most people seemed unmoved" by the destruction of nature (p. xi); "for most of us, the idea that our land, waters, and air are manifestations of the Sacred has disappeared from our mental vocabulary" (p. 2); most sprawl development has no town centers, no sidewalks, no corner stores, and no place to walk and congregate (p. 44); speed and efficiency are our primary values (p. 57); "we feel more stress and have less leisure than any other society in history" (p. 57); we imagine "that the more we have, the more we are" (p. 58); "we rarely approach time as a gift" (p. 64).

Bernstein offers some trenchant observations and opinions. For instance, "electric lights altered the daily rhythm of time forever. And this is a tragedy" (p. 63). The environmental crisis is a spiritual crisis which signifies a separation from nature and ourselves (p. 13). Pollution, sprawl, and climate change is frightening and overwhelming. Bernstein quotes Terry Tempest: "If we look too closely or feel too deeply, there may be no end to our suffering" (p. 30). Genetically modified crops are the most frightening threat to species diversity (p. 40). Urban centers are the greatest hope for combating sprawl (p. 46).

Obviously, Bernstein feels strongly about the degradation and condition of the environment. Her book joins a host of others lamenting the way humans treat God's creation. This is an important contribution to help readers understand the wonder and greatness of creation and what they can do to improve the environment. "The blessing of mastery over the earth calls us to exercise compassion and wisdom in our relationship with nature so that the creation will keep on creating for future generations ... the power is in humanity's hands" (p. 114).

Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.



### ETHICS

**THE CHEATING CULTURE: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead** by David Callahan. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Inc., 2004. 366 pages, sources, endnotes, index. Paperback; \$14.00. ISBN: 0156030055.

In Micah 6:8, we read: "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Three things the prophet enjoins upon us. This book addresses the first. What does "acting justly" mean to a modern day Christian citizen of the United States?

Callahan, author of five previous books, cofounder of the public policy center, Demos, writes in *The Cheating Culture* that ethical lapses (a polite way of defining "cheat-

ing") are so endemic in our culture that it is questionable if we can survive. The author skewers us all—the corporate CEO approving false earnings reports, the politician supporting public policies that favor those who support his campaigns financially, and the sports "hero" who attains his records through drugs. Then there is the white collar worker who pads his expense reports, the carpenter who takes materials from the job site, the waiter who reports a fraction of tips. And the college student who cribs a test, the high schooler who downloads "free" music from the net, the grade schooler who copies from his friend across the aisle. And all the rest of us. "Creative" tax accounting. Migrating company office supplies. "60 mph really means 65 or even 68." And on, and on, and on.

This is a difficult book to read. Well written, interesting, sometimes shocking, the "question" keeps coming up. Is it I, Lord? Am I included in this indictment?

Callahan finds the cheating culture pervasive; he attributes it to the competitive climate of the last few decades. Economic inequality has created two classes of people, the "winners," where cheating without consequences has created a separate moral reality, and the "anxious," people who cheat because they see that choosing otherwise would cancel their only (slim) chances of success. The book is well researched and thoughtful. It will make you angry. And almost certainly ashamed. Callahan recommends some structural changes; some sound reasonable. One does not. He suggests the SEC should be able to "eat what it kills." Bad idea; it would simply lead to cheating incentives within the SEC.

How does one avoid the cheating culture? Callahan provides two simple rules: (1) Can you tell your mama about what you are doing? (2) Be a chump anyway. Even if 85% of your colleagues pad their expense accounts, fill out yours as accurately as possible. Even if "everybody else" is doing it—you do not have to. Does your job require you to cut corners? Quit. Or blow the whistle.

I recommend the reading of Stephen Carter's book, *Integrity*, along with this one. The two together just might change your life.

*Reviewed by John W. Burgeson, Rico Community Church, Rico, CO 81332.*

**EVOLUTION AND ETHICS: Human Morality in Biological & Religious Perspective** by Philip Clayton and Jeffrey Schloss, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004. 339 pages. Paperback; \$32.00. ISBN: 0802826954.

If right and wrong is just a matter of personal preference, we might expect moral values to be as varied as favorite flavors of ice cream. However in practice there is considerable human consensus. Many moral convictions such as that one should not eat one's family members or torture babies for fun, are widespread. Can that consensus be explained by evolutionary advantage or side effect? If it can, does that have implications for the import of those convictions?

This anthology offers a collection of thoughtful and erudite essays that address that question and related ones. The editors are Jeffrey Schloss, an ASA member and professor of biology at Westmont College, and Philip Clayton,

the Ingraham Professor of Theology at Claremont. They have gathered eighteen scholars who agree that human beings have developed through a process of physical and cultural evolution. In each chapter an author tests what implications that has for the character, persistence, and validity of human morality. The authors vary in their conclusions, but interact with each other's arguments much more than one often sees in anthologies. The reader could guess that most of the contributors spent time together. They did: they had a month together at Calvin College in conversation about the involved issues. They reach consensus that moral life is grounded in our physical form, yet is more than biologically driven. What the moral life includes beyond biology is ably contested from multiple perspectives.

In the introduction, Jeffrey Schloss parses out the array of involved questions with nuance, courtesy, and thorough bibliography. This chapter alone is already worth the price of the book if one needs a source to get up to speed quickly on the discussion. From there Michael Ruse and others describe biological perspectives on the evolution of ethics. Loren Haarsma (ASA member) has the first chapter in the second section. There he and others test if religious and evolutionary ethics are compatible. In the third and final section, Mark Heim begins the discussion of how theology might evaluate and critique the ethics of evolution. Clayton wraps up the book with a phenomenological and compatibilist description of human nature. For Clayton religious belief and explanation adds an important dimension to the understanding of human morality. Considering both biological and religious perspectives on human morality offers a more complete description than either one is able to provide alone.

Schloss and Clayton have gathered together an anthology which is as open, honest, and as fair as it is thorough. May we see more works like it at the intersection of theology and science.

*Reviewed by James C. Peterson, R. A. Hope Professor of Theology, Ethics, and Worldview, McMaster University Divinity College, Hamilton, ON L8S 4K1.*



**FAITH & SCIENCE**

**FIFTY YEARS IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION: Ian G. Barbour and His Legacy** by Robert John Russell, ed. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004. 353 pages; bibliography, index of authors, index of subjects. Paperback; \$24.95. ISBN: 075464118X.

This book is a *Festschrift* dedicated to Ian Barbour, widely acknowledged to be the founder of academic interdisciplinary studies in science and religion in this country. A physicist by training, Barbour began his career at Kalamazoo College, teaching and studying cosmic rays. He took a two-year leave to study theology at Yale. After Yale, he accepted a position at Carlton College teaching both physics and religion. Within a few years, he secured permission to organize a religion department at Carlton; he remained there for over forty years. In 1999, he won the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion for his work in advancing the study of science and religion.



## Book Reviews

One should know something about Ian Barbour's methodology and theological outlook before reading this book to profit from it. First of all, Barbour practices what he calls *critical realism*. He is a *realist* in that he believes that both the world and God existed well before us and that they have an objective existence; hence our views of the world and God are not simply pragmatic or instrumental. He is *critical* in that he does not naively believe that our views of the world and of God are mirrors of reality. Readers of *PSCF* will not find this approach controversial; they may be surprised to learn that Barbour introduced it in the academic science-religion dialogue in the 1960s.

Secondly, Barbour frankly acknowledges a debt to *process* theology, an approach first popularized by Alfred North Whitehead. Process theology bears a resemblance to the open theism currently enjoying some influence in evangelical circles. Process theology does not view God as totally sovereign, omnipotent, or omniscient; rather, it sees God as interacting with his creation and changing as a result of that interaction. Barbour is definitely not an evangelical Christian, though he identifies himself as a Christian *simpliciter*.

Thirdly, Barbour sees science and religion interacting in four basic ways: conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration. He believes that process theology allows one to achieve maximum integration (his preferred mode of interaction) of science and religion.

*Fifty Years in Science and Religion* contains nineteen essays dealing with Barbour's contributions to methodology and to theological and ethical issues, as well as giving varied theological perspectives on his work. Four of the contributors are scientists and three are Europeans; the other contributors are American professors of theology. Of the theologians, two give a Roman Catholic and two a Buddhist perspective; the others are Protestants.

The titles of the essays will give the *PSCF* reader a good idea of the topics covered. Reflecting on Barbour's contributions to methodology are "Ian Barbour's Methodological Breakthrough," "Barbour's Way(s) of Relating Science and Theology," and "Critical Realism and other Realisms." The section dealing with Barbour's contributions to theological and ethical issues is broken down into subsections: God and Nature, Physics and Cosmology, Evolution, Anthropology, and Neuroscience, and Technology and the Environment. This section constitutes almost half the book. The final section, giving theological perspectives on Barbour's work, includes contributions from process theologians, Roman Catholics, and Buddhists.

The academic dialogue on science and religion is quite different from the kind of science-Christian faith dialogue carried out in *PSCF*. The two dialogues deal with few of the same issues, and the theological perspective(s) manifested in the academic dialogue are not evangelical. (The only identifiable evangelical contributor to this volume is Nancey Murphy of Fuller Theological Seminary.) I doubt that many *PSCF* readers will resonate either with process theology or with the theological viewpoints of the essayists. But many of us have acquaintances and colleagues in the sciences who have some kind of religious perspective, albeit not an evangelical one, and we would like to dialogue with—even witness to—them. I would recommend *Fifty Years in Science and Religion* to those who want to

know what religion-science issues and viewpoints the broader academic religious community wrestles with.

*Reviewed by Robert Rogland, Science Teacher, Covenant High School, Tacoma, WA 98465.*

**TWO REVELATIONS: A High View of Science and Scripture** by Lawrence Olsen. Longwood, FL: Xulon Press, 2005. 174 pages. Paperback; \$13.99. ISBN: 159781041X.

This book covers its topic in eight succinct chapters with an annotated list of suggested readings in less than two hundred pages. Olsen, professor of earth science and chemistry at Asbury College, has also taught high school and worked in private industry. He is an environmental education advocate who spends his spare time swimming, climbing mountains, and studying history.

Olsen thinks Christianity and science should be able to adhere to their positions without compromise. Most of what science and the church teach is acceptable to Olsen. However, he thinks a re-examination of the vocabulary and methods of science and a rediscovery of the basic beliefs of Christianity may result in more congruence between the two.

Olsen notes that he was a scientist before he was a Christian, and "from the start it was obvious that there were areas where my scientific training and church teachings were in conflict" (p. ix). This awareness propelled him to write a book where answers to this conflict were easily available. He intends his book for Christians and non-Christians.

Christian "agenda items" (evolution, multiculturalism, hate crime legislation, sex education, capitalism) have two sides, Olsen thinks. Christians who turn their opinions on these issues into policy, policies into doctrine, and doctrine into dogma may set up stumbling blocks for unbelievers (p. 18). Olsen shows his hesitancy to do this in his discussion of abortion. He writes: "I am not pro-choice, but I am prepared to compromise" (p. 21). He continues: "We should not accuse people who chose abortion of murder—abortion is not against the law" (p. 21).

Olsen discusses many controversial issues with evenhandedness and common sense. These include ecology, drug users, AIDS victims, single mothers, homeless alcoholics, civil rights, integration, and economic justice. On such issues, the author thinks the church is often mute, indifferent, or impractical (pp. 21–2).

Salient observations by Olsen are made on many other topics. They include: many Christians ignore natural revelation (p. 23); dispensational theology sees the physical creation as a secondary concern (p. 24); some scientists see nothing useful in religion (p. 32); some people ignore facts and logic (p. 35); scientists never prove a theory (p. 42); nonpharmaceutical advertisers can say anything without risk of litigation (p. 48); Michael Bebe and Carl Sagan have done more harm than good (p. 55); some of the details in Old Testament accounts are open to question (pp. 83–4); Paul never claimed his writings were Scripture or that the Old Testament was inerrant and infallible (p. 84); the intelligent design movement as currently practiced is unacceptable (p. 101); the Bible is not clear as to the

how and who of justification (p. 156); and, finally, "The problem of reconciling science and Scripture disappears if we move away from a literal and historical reading of the Bible" (p. 168). Olsen also explains and comments on carbon dating, the genetic code, inspiration of the Bible, miracles, and dualism. Educators may find this volume useful as a text or supplementary reader.

I liked this book a lot, and I predict you will, too. With this book, readers can expand their understanding and appreciation of the relevant issues and thus advance the cause of truth. Olsen has made a great contribution to the science/theology debate and interface. He is a knowledgeable, analytical, open-minded, clear thinking scientist and Christian. Olsen deserves hearty thanks from both the scientific and religious communities for sharing his wisdom, piety, learning, and commitments.

*Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.*

**SPIRITUAL INFORMATION: 100 Perspectives on Science and Religion** by Charles L. Harper, Jr., ed. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2005. 602 pages. Paperback; \$39.95. ISBN: 1932031731.

Sir John Marks Templeton, international financier and philanthropist, has supported scientific research in a variety of fields through the John Templeton Foundation (JTF). This collection of one hundred solicited essays was created in honor of Sir John's ninetieth birthday in 2002 and edited by Charles (Chuck) Harper, Jr., Senior Vice President of JTF and planetary scientist. The essays reflect the exceedingly wide range of Sir John's philanthropic and research interests and summarize research that has been conducted under JTF funding as well as research funded by others.

The professional backgrounds of the contributors span anthropology, astronomy and astrophysics, biology, economics, education, ethics, geology, history, history and philosophy of science, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, physics, political science, psychiatry, psychology, sociology, theology, and religious studies. Sixty-three of the contributors are at institutions or organizations in the United States, eleven from the UK, six from France, and the remaining twenty contributors are associated with institutions or organizations in Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, South Africa, and Switzerland. Several contributors have won prestigious awards from the scientific or social science communities and quite a few are current or former advisors to JTF. Many contributors, e.g., Robert Barro, Peter Berger, George Gallup, Martin Marty, Michael Novak, and Robert Wuthnow, are well-known social commentators and thought leaders. Others are outstanding (primarily physical) scientists whose names are associated with fundamental discoveries or theories in the sciences. Several Templeton Prize winners are among the group as well as winners of various international science awards. Consistent with Sir John's mandate for JTF, the contributors represent a wide range of religious and theological perspectives including atheism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, pantheism, Roman Catholicism, and evangelical Christianity.

Ten sections comprise the volume dealing respectively with spiritual capital and spiritual information (two terms favored by Sir John), the history and future of science and religion dialogue, cosmology and physics, quantum mechanics and mathematics, evolution and purpose, sociology and ethics, religion and health, contemplation and the virtues, theology and philosophy, and world religions. A typical essay is five pages long and includes a brief bibliography. Many essays admirably summarize selected key recent developments within a field and show their value to core concerns about spiritual realities (as Sir John terms them) such as unlimited love, accelerating creativity, worship, and the benefits of purpose in persons and the cosmos. ASA readers will find insightful ideas in topics of interest to them and stimulating reading in areas well beyond their own fields of expertise. The overall quality of entries is excellent and good editing has resulted in a smooth flow to most essays despite the wide range of cultures, native languages, and disciplines included in this unique volume. Charts, diagrams, tables, and other illustrative material are incorporated in selected essays when warranted by the topic or the discussion. Paragraph biographies of each contributor appear at the end of each respective essay and an alphabetical list of all contributors and their institutional affiliations appears at the end of the book. It is regretful that an index was not produced but the organization of the entries by topics makes up somewhat for this decision. This is an important addition to a personal or institutional library on science and religion.

*Reviewed by Dennis Cheek, Adjunct Professor of Science Education, Penn State Great Valley School of Graduate Professional Studies, Malvern, PA 19355.*

**COMING TO PEACE WITH SCIENCE: Bridging the Worlds between Faith and Biology** by Darrel R. Falk. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004. 234 pages, index. Paperback; \$17.00 ISBN: 0830827420.

This book is a scientific sandwich on evangelical bread. Books on theistic evolution frequently give theological issues scant attention, insufficient to satisfy the typical evangelical who believes that the biblical creation story is irreconcilable with Darwin's theory. Falk, a geneticist, evangelical Christian, and ASA member, has "sandwiched" a well-reasoned defense of evolution between an equally well-reasoned theological "bun." *Coming to Peace with Science* is more than Falk's personal testimony. It is a convincing argument that theistic evolutionism is not necessarily the first step towards liberalism, but rather a belief consistent with Scripture.

First, Falk describes his past conflict between his evangelical upbringing and his scientific career. He argues for a nonliteral interpretation of Genesis, citing the works of Augustine, Calvin, John Wesley, Henri Blocher and J. I. Packer, but also agrees with Phillip Johnson on anti-theistic bias in science. For Falk, atheists who use science to eliminate God are misguided, but believers focused on a literal Eden are even sadder, blind to both Genesis' spiritual significance and the beauty of God's "gradual creation."

The "meat" of the sandwich comes in the next four chapters, where Falk defends the evidence for an old earth, transitional fossils, speciation, and common ancestry.

## Book Reviews

Scientific principles are presented straightforwardly, with carefully chosen analogies understandable to nonscientists. Falk emphasizes the strengths of mainstream science, not the faults of scientific creationism. Either biological evolution occurred over millions of years or core principles of multiple scientific disciplines are fatally flawed. But, Falk never removes his "spectacles of faith," presenting science as not a threat to Christianity but rather as a God-given privilege.

Falk tops his sandwich with a final bit of theological "bread." He addresses common concerns like death before the Fall with not only his opinions but also those of C. S. Lewis and James Orr, among others. Certain essential doctrines of Christianity, such as the power of prayer, are beyond the scope of science, but Falk argues that the natural history of life is not, and therefore is something on which believing Christians can disagree. Evangelicals are exhorted to respect evolution-believing Christians as equals within the church and to stop pushing a sudden creationist view in science classes because "it is contrary to almost all of science" (p. 232).

Falk steadfastly avoids standard labels like "young earth creationism," preferring to let his readers choose between three possibilities: special creation of all species, special creation of prototypes, or evolution with common descent. Falk demonstrates that only the last is consistent with scientific data, effectively refuting scientific creationist positions without naming names. He treads more carefully around intelligent design, although he clearly is no proponent. He cautions against giving "undue attention to that aspect of Christian apologetics that tries to prove by scientific arguments that there is a Designer" (p. 59). For Falk, creation occurred gradually and with subtlety. Science is like analysis of brush strokes of a painting, and "scientists may not be able to recognize that there was a hand guiding the brush" (p. 206). Contrast this to Johnson's view that God "left his fingerprints all over the evidence" (Phillip E. Johnson, *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds*).

Falk's extreme avoidance of labels is laughably apparent in his reluctance to use the *e*-word, theistic or otherwise; his preferred alternative is "gradual creation." Phrases like "gradual modification of preexisting species" (p. 154) abound, but textbook terms like "evolution" and "natural selection" are rare. The Galapagos are conspicuously absent from the chapter on island speciation, and there is little mention of Darwin, who does not even rate an entry in the index. For Christians who have developed a conditioned aversion to those words, this could be a good thing. However, these omissions could reinforce the notion Falk wishes to dispel: that there is a problem with Christians accepting those concepts. Another weakness is the absence of any discussion of Noah's flood and how a nonliteral interpretation of that story fits into an evangelical Christianity.

As one of the few theistic evolution books directed at an evangelical audience, *Coming to Peace with Science* should prove an invaluable resource for Christians torn between biblical teachings and science and for pastors hoping to make their churches accessible to evolutionists. Although its openly evangelistic tone is unsuitable for required reading in a public school, it is a good recommendation for Christian students who raise religious objections to

the theory of evolution and a book teachers could read themselves to understand more about the conflicts many Christian students perceive in today's science classes.

*Reviewed by Louise M. Freeman, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, VA 24401.*

**HOW TO RELATE SCIENCE AND RELIGION: A Multi-dimensional Model** by Mikael Stenmark. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004. 287 pages, index. Paperback; \$28.00. ISBN: 080282823X.

Stenmark is professor of philosophy of religion at Uppsala University in Sweden. His other books include *Scientism: Science, Ethics, and Religion* (2001) and the Templeton Prize-winning book *Rationality in Science, Religion, and Everyday Life: A Critical Examination of Four Models of Rationality* (1995).

In the first chapter, Stenmark introduces three basic views about the relationship between science and religion: the independence or restrictionist view (exhibited by Stephen Jay Gould); the monist view; and the contact view. These three perspectives are compared with Ian Barbour's fourfold typology of conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration in the last chapter of the book. Stenmark argues that Barbour's dialogue and integration views should be interpreted as two different versions of the contact view. He also introduces two additional views: the complete scientific expansionist view and the complete religious expansionist view. Edward O. Wilson and Richard Dawkins are cited as examples of the scientific expansionist view while Alvin Plantinga is identified as a proponent of the religious expansionist view. These five possibilities serve as the first level of analysis in Stenmark's multidimensional model.

Several chapters are devoted to an extensive explanation of four other dimensions of science and religion interactions. The first to be discussed is the social dimension, as Stenmark argues that science and religion are both social practices performed by people in cooperation within a particular historical and cultural setting. The second is the theological dimension which addresses the goals of scientific and religious practice. The third is the epistemological or methodological dimension which centers upon the means developed and used to achieve the goals of science and religion. The fourth is the theoretical dimension which includes the beliefs, stories, and theories that are generated by the practice of science and religion. These four dimensions serve as an additional level of analysis in Stenmark's multidimensional model.

In chapter seven entitled "A Science Shaped by Religion," Stenmark discusses the perspectives of religious expansionists and ideological expansionists (combined under the umbrella term of worldview expansionists). Examples of religious expansionism include theistic or Augustinian science and Islamic science. Examples of ideological expansionism include left-wing science and feminist science. The basic idea behind worldview expansionism is that actual scientific practice is not worldview-neutral but filled with ideological and religious partisanship and bias. Worldview expansionists believe that the most appropriate strategy to adopt is to be explicit



about what "ideology-plus-science" one defends, and therefore talk openly about Augustinian science, Islamic science, left-wing science and feminist science.

The chapter which follows attempts to answer the question "Should Religion Shape Science?" In this chapter, Stenmark suggests that worldview expansionists are right in arguing that it is unrealistic to think that no faith or ideological commitments enter into the fabric of science. He does, however, suggest that one aspect of the scientific enterprise be kept free from worldview partisanship. Four different aspects of scientific practice are described: the problem-stating phase, the development phase, the justification phase, and the application phase. While he acknowledges that worldview partisanship is acceptable in the problem-stating, development, and application phases of scientific practice, Stenmark argues that the justification phase should be worldview-neutral. He writes:

Ideologies or religions ought not to be among the ground for accepting and rejecting theories in science. Theories should be accepted by the scientific community only in the light of considerations that involve empirical data, other accepted theories, and cognitive values such as consistency, simplicity, and explanatory power. Ideological or religious considerations are therefore illegitimate ways of deciding between scientific theories (p. 231).

Stenmark ends this chapter with a plea for the transformation of scientific education. He believes that scientific education should include the study of examples of worldview influences on past and present scientific research. This would provide scientists with a better understanding of how their own worldview commitments and the worldview commitments of others interact with scientific practice at different levels.

This book is not written for those who might be investigating the growing field of science and religion for the first time. It is primarily a book for serious philosophers of religion, philosophers of science, and others who are intimately acquainted with recent science-religion dialogue and debate. Within these circles, Stenmark's book deserves widespread readership and discussion as it is a well-written, innovative, and thought-provoking analysis. He argues convincingly for a multidimensional model of science and religion that refuses to give automatic priority to either discipline.

*Reviewed by J. David Holland, 868 Oxford Drive, Chatham, IL 62629.*

**HOW TO RELATE SCIENCE AND RELIGION: A Multidimensional Model** by Mikael Stenmark. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004. 287 pages, index. Paperback; \$28.00. ISBN: 080282823X.

Stenmark is a professor of philosophy of religion at Uppsala University in Sweden and a practitioner of the Christian faith. The purpose of this book is to examine the epistemologies of both science and religion through the analysis of shared and contrasting characteristics.

Stenmark begins by asserting that science and religion can be viewed as interacting in three ways: the independence view; the monist (unified) view; and the contact view.

During his discussion of these views, Stenmark focuses on the approaches of what he terms "scientific and religious (or ideological) restrictionists and expansionists." Essentially, these terms describe those who advocate for either complete separation of the domains of science and religion (e.g., Stephen Gould's proposal of NOMA, or non-overlapping magisteria), or those who would relate the two completely, using one domain to dictate the characteristics of the other.

After examining the characteristics of these various viewpoints, as described by the work of scholars in those domains, Stenmark offers a model that attempts to account for four dimensions of science and religion:

- (1) The social dimension—science and religion as social practices performed by people in cooperation within a particular historical and cultural setting;
- (2) The teleological dimension—the goals of scientific and religious practice;
- (3) The epistemological or methodological dimension—the means developed and used to achieve the goals of science and religion;
- and (4) The theoretical dimension—the beliefs, stories, theories, and the like that the practice of science and religion generates (p. 268).

Stenmark spends five of the ten chapters in the book developing his definitions of these dimensions. He uses evidence from the published literature to demonstrate the goals and methodologies that are used in the work of science and religion, and does what I think to be a good job articulating the similarities and differences between the practices of science and religion. He then uses three chapters to address the issues of overlap between the two. His discussion revolves around the question of worldview-neutral or worldview-partisan science. He breaks the practice of science down into four phases of operation: problem-stating, development, justification, and application. Within each phase, he demonstrates, through examples, how science would operate as worldview-neutral or worldview-partisan, and offers arguments for and against the appropriateness of these modes of operation.

This detail of analysis into the workings of science and religion constitutes the multidimensional perspective that he advocates. As these various dimensions are considered, Stenmark suggests that they can be related on five levels of analysis. These levels are laid out in detail and are too complex to summarize in this review, but they are intended to augment or supplant the four-fold typology articulated by Ian Barbour (conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration). Stenmark proposes that attempts to relate science and religion must remain fluid and be continually re-articulated over time as new information becomes available. In other words, there must be continual dialogue among practitioners concerning the possibility of separation or overlap of the two paradigms.

From an educational theory perspective, I found the book intriguing because of Stenmark's apparent fluency with knowledge of learning theory and cognition. He frequently brings his discussion back to an analysis of how people learn and think about these topics. At first glance, the title implies an answer to the question of how to relate science and religion. Instead, Stenmark has offered a complex model of analysis, or a toolkit, for guiding the way one examines work in these two areas.

# Book Reviews

I found this book to be quite scholarly in nature. It is well-referenced and footnoted, with a bibliography of over 170 entries. Stenmark examines a variety of philosophical stances in both science and religious scholarship, from a variety of American and European sources. While his focus is primarily on the relationship in thought between science and Christianity, he periodically addresses the implications for other theistic religious views as well. The book is most accessible to those already familiar with the nuances of the science-religion interface. I recommend it, especially for those engaged in the work of various approaches to the harmonization of science and Christian faith. This book has the potential to provide a useful framework for engaging the scientific and religious communities in useful dialogue.

Reviewed by Steven Owens, Science Teacher, Northglenn High School, Northglenn, CO 80234.



## HISTORY OF SCIENCE

**A SHORT HISTORY OF PROGRESS** by Ronald Wright. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2004. 132 pages, notes, bibliography, index. Paperback; \$14.95. ISBN: 0786715472.

This slim volume is a must read. The author, an award-winning historian, writes a cohesive history of the technological world since the times of prehistoric humanity. Superbly written, tightly argued, Wright's theme is how our species has, again and again, fallen into the trap of over consumption. The results have been the collapse of empires as great as the Maya, and as small as the kingdom of Easter Island. Wright is cautiously optimistic about our own civilization, arguing that by understanding past patterns we may be able to modify our ways (in some instances quite drastically) and continue into a rich and prosperous future. He is adamant in his view that to continue as we are now is to ensure civilization's collapse.

Wright begins with Paul Gauguin's three "childlike" questions: "Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?" He addresses the last of these, by expertly analyzing the first two. For over 10,000 years humanity has "progressed," and "progress has become an icon, a secular religion" (p. 5). "The myth of progress has sometimes served us well—those of us seated at the best tables, anyway—and may continue to do so. But I shall argue ... that it has also become dangerous ... [it] has an internal logic that can lead ... to catastrophe."

Wright looks at six ancient societies: Egypt, China, Sumer, Rome, the Maya and Easter Island. The first two have survived (tenuously) over 3,000 years; the last four collapsed in disaster in less than 1,000. The story of Easter Island is perhaps the most interesting (and scary). Rapa Nui (the Polynesian name) was settled in the fifth century. With sixty-four square miles of incredible verdant soil and forest, the population quickly exploded to 10,000 people by the year 1000. Each generation grew bigger, each generation cut more forest; by 1400 AD the last tree was gone. By 1722, when Captain Cook visited the island, civilization had collapsed. The word for wood, "*raku*," was the dearest in their language. About 2,000 islanders still survived, and

in the next fifty years after Cook's visit they were able to perfect their weapons of war and fight one another for the scraps remaining. In that fifty years, they also found the time to topple their religious icons, the 1,000 giant statues. Does their story pose a challenge for our civilization? Wright thinks so, and his reasoning is persuasive.

This is a book arguing for change. Wright writes:

The case for reform ... is not based on altruism ... The most compelling reason ... is that the system is in no one's interest. It is a suicide machine ... Things are moving so fast that inaction itself is one of the biggest mistakes ... The reform that is needed is not anti-capitalist, anti-American, or even deep environmentalist; it is simply the transition from short-term to long-term thinking (p. 131).

Reviewed by John W. Burgeson, Rico Community Church, Rico, CO 81332.

**THE GRAND CONTRAPTION: The World as Myth, Number, and Chance** by David Park. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005. 331 pages, index. Hardcover; \$29.95. ISBN: 0691121338.

David Park, an Emeritus Professor of Physics at Williams College in Massachusetts, has produced a wonderful story of human attempts over the past four millennia to make sense of the world within the cosmos, in relation to its physical nature, and in regards to its inhabitants—both real and imagined. He displays his talents as a storyteller in a manner consistent with his earlier acclaimed books such as *The Fire within the Eye* and *The How and the Why*. He uses as his principal organizing metaphor the idea of the natural world as some kind of mechanism. He employs extensive quotations from period authors because he believes quotes readily convey people's thought processes, highlight their assumptions, demonstrate what they considered to be evidence in support of their views, and reveal their personalities. He ends the book with current ideas in cosmology and geology but is very careful to point out the tentativeness of contemporary scientific understandings in light of all that has come before and that which will likely arise in the future.

The book opens with a tour of ancient beliefs about the world and the cosmos as represented by the Hebrews, Sumerians, Greeks, and Egyptians. For the six-page opening devoted to the Hebrews he quotes the *Genesis* text and then draws upon Rabbinic sources and the apocryphal *Apocalypse of Paul* from the middle of the third century. He moves on to consider Sumerian ideas from the *Enuma elish* and the *Gilgamesh* epic that then leads him to Homer and the ancient Greeks before passing on to the Egyptians. He continues this basic format moving back and forth among various ancient peoples for the remainder of the discussion regarding ancient views of the Earth and the cosmos. He takes up ancient views of the earth and its relationship to the heavens and time, the origin and destiny of the universe, and stars and other celestial objects.

The middle portion of the book summarizes developments from the high Middle Ages through Copernicus and Galileo and then to Isaac Newton. The final four chapters are devoted to the modern period and attend to theories of



matter, the age of the Earth, the descent of man, the cosmos in motion, the Big Bang, and the search for other worlds and extraterrestrial intelligence. He employs many telling metaphors such as using a 900-page Book of the World with each page representing about 5 million years. Algae appear by page 450, page 780 finds the first marine animals, dinosaurs appear around page 865, and the first hominids on page 899. He writes extremely well with a very good command of both the English language and the reader's likely patience and interest. This is surely one of the best books for general readers to appear in recent years that survey the history of human thinking about the Earth and the cosmos. Extensive period illustrations, quotations from primary resources rendered into English, and endnotes to follow up key arguments in more detail along with an extensive bibliography and index add to the overall worth and attractiveness of the volume. ASA members will enjoy this book and undoubtedly recommend it to others.

*Reviewed by Dennis Cheek, Adjunct Professor of Science Education, Penn State Great Valley School of Graduate Professional Studies, Malvern, PA 19355.*



## NATURAL SCIENCES

**ON HUMAN NATURE** by Edward O. Wilson. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004. 260 pages, index. Paperback; \$18.95. ISBN: 0674016386.

Wilson is Pellingrino University Research Professor Emeritus and Honorary Curator in Entomology of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University. He has won many scientific awards and published numerous books including *The Diversity of Life*, *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge*, *In Search of Nature*, and most recently, *The Future of Life*. *On Human Nature* is the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book that was originally published in 1978. The only difference between this edition and the original book is the inclusion of a new preface.

In this new preface, Wilson explains how he came to write this book back in 1977–1978. His original focus on the biology of ants eventually led him to write a book entitled *The Insect Societies* (1971), in which he proposed that “a coherent branch of biology might be constructed from a synthesis of social behavior and population biology.” He suggested that this new discipline of “sociobiology” would for the first time bind together knowledge of social insects and social vertebrate animals. In 1975, he expanded upon this concept in a 697-page book entitled *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*. In the final chapter of this book, Wilson argued for a similar approach to the study of human social behavior. Realizing that the last chapter of *Sociobiology* should have been a book-length exposition, he sat down to write *On Human Nature* two years later.

On the very first page of chapter one, Wilson writes that “we are biological and our souls cannot fly free. If humankind evolved by Darwinian natural selection, genetic chance and environmental necessity, not God, made the species.” *On Human Nature* is first and foremost a description of human social behavior from the perspec-

tive of a scientific materialist. Human behavior, according to Wilson, can only be understood through the lens of human sociobiology (evolutionary psychology). The brain exists because it promotes the survival and multiplication of the genes that direct its assembly. In order to understand human behavior, it is necessary to dissect the machinery of the brain and to retrace its evolutionary history. Innate sensors and motivators exist in the brain that deeply affect our ethical premises and from these roots, “human morality evolved as instinct.” Religions, like other human institutions, have also evolved “so as to enhance the persistence and influence of their practitioners.” The supernatural is denied, the spiritual does not exist, and there is no place for God in Wilson’s naturalistic approach to the understanding of human behavior.

In addition to explaining human social behavior from an evolutionary perspective, (with chapters on heredity, development, emergence, aggression, sex, altruism, and religion), Wilson also argues for the blending of biology and the social sciences. This desire to cultivate more intensely the relationship between the natural sciences and the humanities is introduced in the first chapter of the book and further explained in the last chapter. Wilson writes that “by judicious extension of the methods and ideas of neurobiology, ethology, and sociobiology a proper foundation can be laid for the social sciences, and the discontinuity still separating the natural sciences on the one side and the social sciences and humanities on the other might be erased” (p. 125). Once this union is established, it will then be possible to “fashion a biology of ethics, which will make possible the selection of a more deeply understood and enduring code of moral values” (p. 196). Wilson’s ultimate goal is to see that the presuppositions of scientific materialism, accompanied by the rigors of the scientific method, impact the social sciences and humanities in ways that will have far reaching effects upon “the high culture of Western civilization.”

Having taught biology courses at the college level for a number of years, I have come in contact with Wilson’s writings on a number of occasions. I have always been impressed by his vast knowledge of zoology, his passion for exploration and discovery, his concern for the preservation of biological diversity, and his support for the worldwide conservation movement. My Christian faith, however, is clearly at odds with the scientific materialism that provides the foundational epistemology for all of Wilson’s writings. Although he claimed twenty-five years ago, in the last chapter of *On Human Nature*, that he did not want scientific materialism to become an alternative form of organized formal religion, his subsequent writings suggest otherwise. Several recent books on science and religion classify Wilson as an example of a scientific expansionist or one who not only wants to see science explain religion, but also replace traditional religious beliefs with a new religious mythology that is based upon an evolutionary epic.

While I have admiration for Wilson’s work as a zoologist and conservationist, I am troubled by his belief that true knowledge can only be acquired by science, and that human beings are nothing more than biochemical machines, regulated by their genes and their evolutionary history. Readers of this journal can appreciate Wilson’s contributions to the discipline of biology. At the same

# Book Reviews

time, we should be genuinely concerned about his desire to undermine the foundations of Christian theology.

*Reviewed by J. David Holland, 868 Oxford Drive, Chatham, IL 62629.*



## ORIGINS & COSMOLOGY

**EVOLUTION VS CREATIONISM: An Introduction** by Eugenie C. Scott. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004. 272 pages. Hardcover; \$49.95. ISBN: 0313321221.

At last—a book that both Henry Morris, of the Institute for Creation Research, and Niles Eldredge, a prominent scientist, can agree upon! Eugenie Scott, executive director of the National Center for Science Education, is an articulate and engaging author. She has written a book suitable for a wide audience: high school and college students, teachers, and nonspecialized general readers. The book is comprehensive, treating scientific evidences for evolution, religious views, and a history of the so-called “evolution-creation” controversy. It is a “best buy” for school and college libraries; its stiff price may preclude an appeal to a private library.

Scott makes the point early that the so-called “creation-evolution” controversy is *not* a scientific one but one confined entirely to social debates. She writes:

Students are ill-served if in the name of “fairness” ... they are misled into believing there is a controversy in the scientific world over whether evolution occurred. There is none ... It would be dishonest ... to pretend that a public controversy ... is also a scientific controversy ... (p. xx).

Scott writes well, but unevenly; some sections are high school level, a few are too technical, particularly those on her own specialty of biology. She is very careful to define terms clearly. For instance, in her Introduction (p. xxii), she carefully separates the two components of evolution: (1) descent from common ancestors; and (2) natural selection as the major cause. Sometimes she “talks down” to the reader; phrases such as “you will learn about” suggest her primary target audience is the young scholar. This is annoying but understandable.

In writing this book, and selecting contrasting articles, Scott received courteous cooperation from the two primary Young Earth Anti-Evolution organizations, Institute for Creation Research (ICR) and Answers in Genesis (AIG). She also found Phillip Johnson to be cooperative; however, the Intelligent Design people at the Discovery Institute refused to participate. Scott refers disparagingly (p. xviii) to their “my way or the highway” response! As a result, the special creationists speak for themselves but the discussions of Intelligent Design Creationism (IDC) are those of Scott. There is no direct mention of the ASA, but there is a reference to ASAer Glenn Morton’s “delightful” web site (p. xxi) in the Introduction. Also, there is a citation of Roger Weins’ paper “Radiometric Dating: A Christian Perspective” as accessed on the ASA web site (p. 157). ASAer Richard Dickerson’s 1992 article, “The Game of Science,” from the *Journal of Molecular Evolution* (1992), is reprinted on pages 252–4; a version of this article also appeared in *PSCF*.

Eldredge has written a Foreword, “The Unmetabolized Darwin,” setting forth the reasons for the book. First, he writes, evolution “still does not sit well with an awful lot of (people) ...” (p. ix). Second, social discourse on origins “has been stuck in a rut since ... (1859).” Third, “it is because creationism transcends religious belief and is openly and aggressively political that we need to sit up and pay attention ... Creationists persistently and consistently threaten the integrity of science teaching in America—and this, of course, is of grave concern” (p. xii). Like it or not, Eldredge argues, one *must* enter the political arena to combat creationism.

The book is divided into three sections: three chapters on science, evolution, religion and creationism; three chapters on the history of the controversy; and six chapters containing contrasting literature selections. The areas of cosmology, astronomy, and geology are the chief focus. Legal, educational, and religious issues each have their own chapter, as does a discussion on the nature of science. This third section is poorly edited; literature selections appear abruptly, with citations following; this causes some confusion. Generally, the literature selections are appropriate; in one or two cases, however, the excerpts criticizing a preceding creationist argument are much too technical for a general audience.

In sum, this is a book I definitely recommend, even though its price is high, and it is not done “perfectly.” Scott, no Christian, does a fair job of representing the religious positions. This may be a book to give to a young relative who is struggling with the issues and, perhaps, too much influenced by ICR, AIG, James Kennedy, or other Christian preachers who base their theology on young earth anti-evolution arguments.

*Reviewed by John W. Burgeson, Rico Community Church, Rico, CO 81332.*

**EVOLUTION: The Disguised Friend of Faith? Selected Essays** by Arthur Peacocke. Philadelphia, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2004. 287 pages. Paperback; \$24.95. ISBN: 193203172.

The theme of this book is the challenge of science to traditional Christian beliefs. The author, formerly a distinguished biochemist, has the credentials for this task, both as a scientist and as an Anglican priest. The book comprises a selection from previously published articles and essays. The relatedness he saw in nature led Peacocke to recognize the need to integrate his understanding of evolution with a transformed and clear comprehension of his Christian beliefs. Peacocke received the Templeton prize in 2001 for his scholarly inquiry.

Peacocke has conveniently arranged these previously published materials in three parts. In the first part, he considers the theological consequence of issues related to the evolution of living things in nature. In part two, he amplifies his views about how humans, psychosomatic unities, should regard themselves in relation to God the Creator. In part three, Peacocke discusses the implications these findings may have in the reshaping of our beliefs. The epilogue briefly introduces the reader to medieval thinker Robert Grosseteste. Peacocke makes extensive use of the writings of others which is reflected in his twenty pages of notes.

For some Christians, a degree of uncertainty exists as to how to integrate this plausible mechanism, Darwinian evolution, with their faith. The author pursues this quest with an intellectual integrity, exploring the relationship of nature, humanity, and God. There is a relatedness of all living things within nature, imaged in their DNA profiles. These fundamental similarities in nature, in the opinion of the author, do not challenge the basic tenets of theology.

Peacocke accepts that what is true in science actually enhances and clarifies our understanding of God and of God's relationship to the creation, including humanity. The Hebrews considered the person to be an animated being, a unity, not an incarnated soul. Science can now demonstrate that humans are continuous with the material universe out of which they have evolved. The Christian understanding is that a transformed humanity, redeemed by God through Jesus Christ, will continue to live in the presence of God.

The Scriptures affirm that in Jesus we encounter the Incarnation of the transcendent God where Sonship is an ontological, not a biological concept. The author emphasizes the oneness of God and explains the postulates of pantheism, the Being of God penetrating the whole cosmos. Here God's interactions with the world occur from within, not from outside our world. The author says that in the fourth Gospel "pre-existence" does not imply divinity. Peacocke has achieved his aim in offering a synthesis of science and religion. In addition, he encourages Christians to use these findings of science in integrating their cosmology with their beliefs based on a correct understanding of the Scriptures. Peacocke identifies new realities that are emerging and that need discussing.

The book is a pleasure to read with its lucid style. Peacocke defines clearly his terminology. The book's cover is very attractively done; the typeface is large and reader friendly. There are thirteen chapters including the epilogue and an index.

*Reviewed by Ken Mickleson, 105 St. Andrews Road, Epsom, Auckland 1003, New Zealand.*

**GOD, THE MULTIVERSE, AND EVERYTHING** by Rodney Holder. Aldershot, England: Asgate Publishing Inc., 2004. 211 pages. Hardcover; \$84.95. ISBN: 0754651169.

Is the fine-tuning of the universe more consistent with a realm created by God or by random chance? Holder, Priest-in-Charge of the Parish of the Claydons, builds a compelling argument for God's existence being statistically more likely, and philosophically more satisfying, than the theory of multiple universes. Holder has a D. Phil. in astrophysics from Cambridge University, is a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and of the Institute of Mathematics and Its Applications, and is a member of the Institute of Physics. He has published several articles on science and religion and a book *Nothing But Atoms and Molecules? Probing the Limits of Science* which critiques reductionism.

Dramatic pictures of galaxies beamed down from the Hubble telescope inspire awe and wonder. Carl Sagan, Richard Dawkins, and others assure us this confirms the wonder of humanity's chance existence. Holder not only

thinks otherwise but uses recent discoveries in cosmology to show the much greater likelihood of a universe created by God. The book moves from an introduction to big bang cosmology and the fine tuning of the universe, to the inferences raised by design (chapters 1-4), and then discusses the central statistical evaluation of the origin of the universe (chapters 5-9).

Quotations are liberally used throughout to effectively differentiate science from metaphysics, particularly in connection with evolution of the universe at the very earliest stages,  $<10^{-32}$  seconds, when particle physics is most speculative. For example, "Barry Collins and Stephen Hawking showed that the probability that something like our universe would develop from arbitrary initial conditions, as proposed by chaotic cosmologies, is vanishingly small. They gave this explanation of why the universe is so isotropic (i.e., looks the same in every direction):

The fact that we have observed the universe to be isotropic is therefore only a consequence of our own existence. ... It is of course complete nonsense. As Mullin remarks, "But surely a necessary condition cannot function as an explanation" (p. 31).

The central statistical approach of the book is the use of Bayes's theorem to compare the likelihood of a designer with the brute-fact existence of the universe or the possibility of a multiverse (a multiplicity of universes). Holder states:

Physics can tell us what the laws are but cannot explain why they are the way they are. The design argument says they were deliberately chosen by God, who assigned values to the parameters expressly in order that the universe give rise to intelligent creatures at some point in its history (p. 11).

Holder deftly weaves statistical analyses throughout the middle of the book (chapters 6-9), relegating a thorough statistical treatment to five appendices which have a total of twenty-nine pages. Although a critique of the statistical analysis is beyond this reviewer, the basic arguments are not too difficult to follow, with several key ideas being previously published in articles indexed in the bibliography.

Holder has crafted an excellent response to the multiverse theory in which one habitable universe is ensured by considering an infinite number of possibilities. The extensive cross-examination of ideas through liberal quotation elevates a potentially boring statistical analysis to an engaging, and yet demanding book. Only at the end of the book is the nature of God, the stated Designer, revealed.

But the design argument gives us only limited information about God — that he exists, that he is glorious and powerful ... [W]ould it not now be equally rational to investigate much more deeply what that Designer is like? That is of course another story, which will take us into the realms of Revelation, where we may hope to find "... the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (p. 159).

Statisticians and intelligent design advocates will find this an indispensable contribution in support of a statistical defense of God's existence and creation.

*Reviewed by Fraser F. Fleming, Associate Professor of Chemistry, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA 15282.*



## Book Reviews

**BY DESIGN OR BY CHANCE?** by Denyse O'Leary. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Books, 2004. 336 pages, notes, index. Paperback; \$15.99. ISBN: 0806651777.

Denyse O'Leary is a freelance journalist based in Toronto who specializes in writing on topics related to science, religion, and faith. She has authored several previous books and articles, and writes a faith and science column for *Christian Week*.

*By Design or by Chance?* is an investigation of the relative merits of Darwinian evolution and Intelligent Design (ID). In the Introduction, O'Leary states where she is going and briefly defines the Big Bang, evolution, Darwinism, Young Earth Creationism, and ID. She subsequently takes up the existence of the universe itself (Part One), the origin of life and Darwinism (Part Two), creationism (Part Three), and design (Part Four).

In Part One, O'Leary describes the Big Bang hypothesis and the Anthropic Principle in layperson's terms, concluding that they suggest we live in a universe of finite age that is fine-tuned for life (chap. 1). In chapter 2, she discusses what she considers "the best argument against design," the many universe hypothesis, and in chapter 3 she briefly outlines "the best argument for design," the irreducible complexity of the living cell and its parts.

Part Two gives a history of Darwinism, from Darwin up to the present day. O'Leary discusses Darwin himself, the nineteenth century reaction to Darwin, the Scopes trial, the neo-Darwinian synthesis, and differences among contemporary neo-Darwinians (chiefly, Dawkins and Gould). She deals as much with the religious and philosophical positions of Darwinians and anti-Darwinians as she does with the science.

Part Three begins with a brief history of creationism as a reaction to the Darwinian revolution and goes on to young-earth creationism, the ASA (!), and old-earth creationism. O'Leary also tries to answer the question: Why has creationism been growing?

Part Four surveys traditional design arguments, design and information theory, and the detection of design; it also describes the work of ID luminaries like Phillip Johnson, William Dembski, and Michael Behe (chap. 13). Chapter 14, "Is ID Good Science? Is It Science at All?" is perhaps the pivotal chapter in the book. One by one, O'Leary takes up the formal, publicly stated arguments against considering ID to be science and refutes them. She concludes that opposition to ID is primarily philosophical: a commitment to naturalism (whether philosophical or methodological), leads one to the belief that ID cannot *in principle* be science. Chapter 15 looks at "theological" arguments against design, arguments advanced even by the nonreligious. Chapter 16 explores the possible futures of the ID movement.

The Afterword summarizes the opinions the author finally came to regarding the Big Bang, evolution, theistic evolution, YEC, "mainstream science," what should be taught in the schools, textbooks and "teaching the controversy," and ID. O'Leary is a Christian, but when she began her research, she had no clear convictions regarding the relative merits of evolution and ID. O'Leary concludes that "evolution happened but ... Darwinism is an inadequate explanation" (p. 237). What is missing from Darwinism is design. Through reading, study, arguments, and

interviews, she came to conclude that, "it appears that the whole universe is screaming DESIGN!" (p. xi). Hence, the *leitmotif* of the book is, "the slow, sure—and strongly opposed—reorganization of sciences around the theme of design, as opposed to no design."

*By Design or by Chance?* took first place in its category in the 2005 *Write! Canada* awards, a Canadian competition similar to the Christie awards in the US. It is not hard to see why: the book is a delight to read. O'Leary writes in a clear, vivid style. She defines technical terms in a way the intelligent layperson can understand. Her characterizations of the various positions advocated by those engaged in the controversy are accurate and fair. Whether you are pro-ID, anti-ID, uncommitted, or uninformed, *By Design or by Chance?* is worth reading for yourself; it also would provide an excellent introduction to the ID controversy for your nonscientific friends.

*Reviewed by Robert Rogland, science teacher, Covenant High School, Tacoma, WA 98405.*

**THE EVOLUTION-CREATION STRUGGLE** by Michael Ruse. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005. 288 pages, notes, bibliography, index. Hardcover; \$25.95. ISBN: 0674016874.

Ruse is a professor of philosophy at Florida State University, a prolific and well-respected writer of books on evolution. He takes on the philosophical struggles between the scientific establishment, the creationists of our modern times, and the "religious evolutionists" (such as Richard Dawkins) who preach incessantly the message that science is the only path to realistic thinking and that all religious thinking is a sham.

Ruse argues that both evolutionism (the religion) and creationism have common roots in the Enlightenment, when the "crisis of faith" emerged so strongly. He points out what should be obvious (but are not, at least until he discusses them) similarities in creationist and evolutionist arguments.

Ruse positions his arguments in an eschatological framework, arguing that evolutionists think in terms of postmillennial thought, creationists in terms of premillennial. But it is not so much biblical issues being argued, as much as moral ones; the two sides expect their adherents to behave quite differently. Ruse treats the subject historically, from early eighteenth century, spending much time on late twentieth-century thinkers: Wilson, Dawkins, Gould, Henry Morris, Conway Morris, Plantinga, Behe and Dembski. He treats with gentle sarcasm the underlying religious commitments of evolutionists, arguing that those most hostile to religion are actually fundamentalists of another kind. He also criticized the ID movement:

... even if Plantinga is right, and even if ID theory does give us "an important part of a serious and profound knowledge of the universe," that knowledge is not scientific knowledge. It cannot replace the understanding of life gained through contemporary evolutionary theory (p. 280).

One example from the book will illustrate the above. Ruse writes:

As we would expect, academic evolutionists deny any religious associations in their field—after all, they are scientists who have only recently dragged themselves up to full professional status, and would just as soon forget evolution's checkered past (p. 202).

He then quotes Dawkins from *The Humanist* 57 (1997), who wrote that faith is one of the world's great evils, that science has many of religion's virtues and none of its vices; that religious faith "not only lacks evidence, its independence from evidence is its pride and joy ..." Ruse then skewers Dawkins, Wilson (and others) as he shows (convincingly, I think) the innate religiosity of many evolutionists. On pages 212-3, he writes: "The real issue is whether some evolutionists use the supposed progressiveness of evolutionary theory to promote social and ethical programs. And indeed they do ... [evolutionism] continues to function as a kind of secular religion."

The book, while written "sharply," is not at all polemical. Ruse writes clearly, to the point, and in a manner which is understandable to the informed nonscientist. Highly recommended, it has "keeper" status in my own library. It should be read along with Eugenie C. Scott's recent book, *Evolution Vs. Creationism*. Neither author is a Christian, but unlike many non-Christian writers, both appear to understand Christianity reasonably well and treat it with respect.

*Reviewed by John W. Burgeson, Rico Community Church, Rico, CO 81332.*

**CREATION** by Alister McGrath. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2005. 90 pages. Hardcover; \$15.00. ISBN: 0800637003.

This short book has seven chapters, titles of twenty-three books for further reading, and seven beautiful illustrations in color. The illustrations are beautiful paintings by some of the world's leading artists including Vincent van Gogh, Michelangelo, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, and William Blake. The illustrations are intended "to stimulate and inform both the believing mind and imagination" (p. vii).

The book's purpose is to explain, in simple language, creation. With words and images, it aims to produce a rich tapestry of Christian faith by going to the beauty of faith's depths. C. S. Lewis' famous quote concisely sets McGrath's book in context: "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen—not only because I see it, but because by it, I see everything else" (p. 2). Trenchant quotes from other writers adorn the book. In developing his theme, McGrath stresses such ideas as humanity's obligation to care for creation, future renewal and transformation of creation, understanding creation through parables and miracles, people's place in creation, and the ruin and final restoration of humanity.

This is a wonderful book to read as a devotional and spiritual stimulus. Far from being a dry theology, its well-chosen words and pictures have the potential to motivate and inspire. It has the merits of being brief and beautiful, and it would make a wonderful gift.

Alister McGrath, professor of historical theology at Oxford University, is a well-published author with a Ph.D. in molecular biophysics. His books include *Dawkin's God:*

*Genes, Memes, and the Meaning of Life* and *The Science of God: An Introduction to Scientific Theology*. *Incarnation* is a companion volume to *Creation*.

*Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.*



## PHILOSOPHY & THEOLOGY

**THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND THE PROBLEM OF GOD** by D. Z. Phillips. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2005. 280 pages. Paperback; \$20.00. ISBN: 0800637755.

Some readers might look at the title of this book and ask "where is the problem"? The answer to that question goes back at least to the fourth century BCE when Epicurus phrased it this way: "Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is God able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is God both able and willing? Whence then is evil?"

Apologists and theodiscists offer many possible answers to this quandary. Phillips finds them all unsatisfactory. What is the distinction between an apologetic and a theodicy? A theodicy claims to know why God allows evil while an apologetic does not but insists there must be an ultimate good. Phillips sees the crux of the problem in the disagreement over the apologists' and theodiscists' belief that God is a moral agent who shares a moral community with humans. Here again, Phillips disagrees. When the defenders of evil put forth that God's ways are not our ways, they have conceded that God does not share a moral community with us, contends Phillips. He thinks consequentialism dominates their arguments which makes them blind to "common moral reactions" (p. 35). Phillips rejects the "God of the theodiscists" (p. 134).

The book is divided into three sections. In the first one, Phillips argues that the philosophical confidence that the logical problem of evil has been solved is misplaced and has become "our problematic inheritance" (p. 5). He discusses about a dozen of these suggested solutions to evil and seeks to logically disarm each one. The second section is entitled "Where Do We Go From Here?" Phillips seems to agree with other philosophers that apologists for religion should not try "to tidy up reality" and "what's ragged should be left ragged" (p. 141). In the last section, Phillips aims "to show a conception of human life found in Christianity ... that avoids the pitfalls of theodicy ... (and) shows the possibility of a response to the contingencies of life that is other than the celebration of the terrible, or a rebellious response to a God of caprice" (p. 141).

Whether Phillips succeeds in his goals to disarm theodiscies and offer an alternate explanation, each reader will have to decide. Most likely the apologists and theodiscists will attack some of Phillips' logic, and the debate will go on, as it has for thousands of years. To apply an early Christian apologist comment on the author of Hebrews to this debate seems apt: "Only God knows for sure." And so far, God is not telling.

Phillips, a philosopher of religion, teaches at Claremont Graduate University in California and the University of

Wales in Swansea. He is editor of the journal *Philosophical Investigations*. Recent books he has written include *Religion and the Hermeneutics of Contemplation* (2001) and *Religion and Friendly Fire* (2004).

Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.

**THE BEAUTY OF THE INFINITE: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth** by David Bentley Hart. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003. 446 pages. Paperback; \$35.00. ISBN: 080282921X.

The category of beauty, a name for God according to Dionysius, is far more important in the theology of the Orthodox Church than it is in the West. Also, the concept of infinity is one of the first attributes associated with the divine, so much that it became the designation of the divine at the dawn of theology (cf. Anaximander). Therefore, much could be expected if an Orthodox theologian announces in the title of his book that he wants to tackle the problem of beauty and infinity at the same time. But disappointment rather quickly settles in.

Part 1 of the book is an unilluminating discussion of equally unilluminating views of postmodernists: Derrida, Lyotard, et al. The author also feels obligated to give a presentation of the views of Nietzsche that concludes with a somewhat frivolous remark: "The most potent reply a Christian can make to Nietzsche's critique is to accuse him of a defect of sensibility—of bad taste ... Nietzsche had atrocious taste" (p. 125).

Part 2 presents some discussion of the trinity, creation, salvation, and eschatology. It is unclear from one page to another where the author derived his ideas and where he wants to go. Probably he best summarized his presentation of a series of theses by saying that "perhaps on account of some perversity of authorial temperament ... there is no systematic or deductive sequence to those theses" (p. 154). The role of beauty and infinity in Orthodox theology is presented in a most unclear manner. This is also done in a pompous, stilted style which is particularly exasperating in a book on aesthetics. It is hardly enlightening to read that "being is not a welter of images from which essences must be wrested in an action of noetic rarefaction on the one hand, nor a chaos of the unthematizable on the other, but is an unmasterable beauty boundless in its variations" (p. 141) or that "hell is the experience ... of divine glory not as beauty, but as a formless sublimity; it is the rejection of all analogical vulnerability, the sealing of the 'self' (or the cosmos) in univocal singularity, the 'misreading' of creation as an aboriginal violence" (pp. 399–400).

The book is at its best when it discusses patristic theology, in particular, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and Maximus. However, such moments are infrequent. The author acknowledges influence of Russian thinkers (p. 29), but this is rarely visible in his book. It is also puzzling that there is no reference to Evdokimov's exemplary book on theology of beauty. This is the book which the reader should utilize in order to see how important beauty is in Orthodox theology. Hart's long-drawn verbose treatise offers little reward in that respect.

Reviewed by Adam Drozdek, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA 15282.



## RELIGION & BIBLICAL STUDIES

**THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH: A Guide to Places in the Bible** by Richard R. Losch. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005. 260 pages. Paperback; \$16.00. ISBN: 0802828051.

This is not a book you would sit down and read from beginning to end. It is a reference guide to inform you about Bible geography. If you have ever wanted to know the pronunciation, history, and location of some place referred to in the Bible, this book may help. It has five maps, numerous pictures, an index, some archaeological references, and a guide to pronunciation. Most of Losch's information was culled from books, which he identifies, and some came from the Internet.

After Losch gives a brief history of the Holy Land, he presents in alphabetical order seventy-six locations of places found in the Old and New Testaments. He concentrates on the Roman Empire, the setting of the New Testament, but he also describes significant places not mentioned in the Bible (e.g., Sepphoris) but nevertheless influential in biblical events. From Ai to Ur, Losch informs about past history and in some cases gives the location's present name and condition. It was not the author's intentions to be encyclopedic, and he is not. Some important locations are omitted such as Neopolis, Troas, Lystra, Crete, and Cyprus. Losch calls his selections "a collection of information for the curious" (p. ix).

If you do not have access to *Cities of the Biblical World* by DeVries, *Baker Encyclopedia of Bible Places* by Bimson, or the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, or if you do not want to be overwhelmed with more than you want to know, this book is an excellent selection. It will serve well the layperson, the Sunday School teacher, or just the plain curious. It will enrich your knowledge of biblical sites and thus make the Bible more understandable and interesting. For these reasons, and its reasonable price, I highly recommend it.

Losch, retired rector of St. James' Episcopal Church in Livingston, Alabama, is also the author of *The Many Faces of Faith: A Guide to World Religions and Christian Traditions*.

Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.

**THE WOMEN WHO DANCED BY THE SEA: Finding Ourselves in the Stories of Our Biblical Foremothers** by Marsha Mirkin. New York: Monkfish Book Publishing Company, 2004. Paperback; \$16.95. ISBN: 0974935905.

Mirkin, a Boston-based clinical psychologist, has taught at several medical schools, and is a resident scholar at Brandeis University. Her book is described as the first of its genre to view the lives of biblical women through the eyes of contemporary psychological theories. It is intended "for anyone who is in search of spiritual meaning and guidance in an increasingly unstable and dangerous world." Therefore, it will perhaps appeal to PSCF readers (psychologists, Bible teachers, preachers, and laypersons) who are interested in the lives of Eve, Sarah, Rebecca,



Miriam, Hannah, Ruth, and others evaluated by a clinical psychologist.

In eight chapters, the author examines how each of these women gained wisdom to relate better to self, others, and God, while coping with depression, eating disorders, infertility, sibling rivalry, and favoritism. The essence of each chapter is contained in its title, such as "Rebecca: Envisioning Our Relationships." Interspersed with the biblical narratives, vignettes describe predicaments faced by some of Mirkin's clients.

The author is well-acquainted with the Hebrew Bible and writes from a Jewish background. She is convinced that people today, many of whom she has met in her clinical practice, can learn from the struggles ancient biblical women encountered. Mirkin draws helpful advice from the lives of people from the past and present.

*Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.*

**444 SURPRISING QUOTES ABOUT THE BIBLE** by Isabella Bunn, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing House, 2005. 190 pages. Paperback; \$9.99. ISBN: 0764300690.

This is a terrific little book for people who lecture, sermonize, or write. It can provide just the right quote to illustrate a trenchant point. Its seven chapters direct the reader to the power of the Bible to influence various areas of life.

A section of special interest to *PSCF* readers is the Bible's power to "Reveal Truth." Here are a few quotes that apply to science.

All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in Sacred Scripture (William Herschel).

I have been suspected of being what is called a Fundamentalist. That is because I never regard any narrative as unhistorical simply on the ground that it includes the miraculous (C. S. Lewis).

No sciences are better attested than the religion of the Bible (Sir Isaac Newton).

Finally, the fiery evangelist Billy Sunday put science in its place with this quote: "When the consensus of scholarship says one thing and the Word of God another, the consensus of scholarship can plumb go to hell for all I care."

There are some wonderful quotes from the chapter on the power of the Bible to shape civilizations like this one from Victor Hugo: "England has two books, the Bible and Shakespeare. England made Shakespeare, but the Bible made England."

"The Bible is for the Government of the People, by the People, and for the People" (John Wycliffe wrote this five hundred years before Abraham Lincoln used this line in his 1863 Gettysburg Address).

And how about this one from Desmond Tutu: "Don't give up! I have read the end of the book! We win!"

Isabella Bunn is a lawyer, theologian, and employee of Oxford University. She owns a collection of more than four hundred quotation books and spiritual anthologies.

In this book she provides a bibliography and index of sources. She indicates another volume like this is in preparation and invites readers to contribute.

*Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.*

**THE EMPTY TOMB: Jesus Beyond the Grave** by Robert M. Price and Jeffery Jay Lowder, eds. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2005. 545 pages. Hardcover; \$30.00. ISBN: 159102286X.

The question addressed in this collection of essays is "Did Jesus rise from the dead?" The authors examine such questions as "What did the New Testament writers mean?" "Does historical evidence establish Jesus' resurrection?" "Why would God raise Jesus?" "Was there an empty tomb?" and "What is the significance of the appearance stories?" In dealing with these questions, the authors examine the arguments of Christian apologists and theists. In summary, the authors of this book challenge the traditional orthodox view that Jesus Christ was bodily raised from the dead.

For the most part, the arguments against a literal, physical resurrection of Jesus are not new. Here are some of them: the Gospel accounts are unreliable, the eye-witnesses were partisan, it is contrary to naturalism, it is contrary to logic, it is contrary to history, it is contradictory, it is improbable, it is legendary and mythical, it is absurd, it is unscientific, it has no collateral support, it is inconsistent with the atonement, 1 Corinthians 15 is post-Pauline, much of its evidence is apocryphal, it is based on visions and dreams, it copies pagan resurrection stories, Mark's empty tomb was misinterpreted, hallucinations occurred, the relocation hypothesis is probable, resurrection refutation was unappealing in the first century, Jesus' body was stolen, Jesus' body was not buried Friday but Saturday night, Joseph of Arimathea is a fictional character, the ascension was a fiction developed by Luke, and modern objective scholarship refutes it.

The evidence for all these claims is too detailed and extensive to present in this book review. However, the discussion is directed against the historicity of the empty tomb and the arguments of William Lane Craig, "widely regarded as its foremost contemporary defender" (p. 261). The viewpoints of other writers, including Richard Swinburne, Charles Hodge, Stephen Evans, Peter van Inwagen, Ronald Tacelli and Peter Kreeft, are examined.

This book will perhaps appeal to theologians, philosophers, skeptics, defenders of the empty tomb, and anyone who likes the intellectual word-play of opposing views. The selected bibliography directs the interested reader to further resources which support both sides of the issue. However, for believers in the physical resurrection of Jesus, they will need to seek other sources for support. One of the best (reviewed in *PSCF*) is *The Resurrection of the Son of God* by N. T. Wright.

The book is modestly priced considering its length. It contains fifteen essays, plus indices of ancient sources, modern authors and selected topics. Each author is briefly identified. Robert M. Price, one editor of the book, is editor of the *Journal of Higher Criticism* and author of several

## Book Reviews

books including *Beyond Born Again*. Jay Lowder, the other editor of this book, is the cofounder and past president of Internet Infidels, an international coalition of nontheists.

*Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.*

**THE RAPTURE EXPOSED: The Message of Hope in the Book of Revelation** by Barbara R. Rossing. New York: Basic Books, 2005. 222 pages. Paperback; \$15.00. ISBN: 0813343143.

This book is addressed to people of all ages who are concerned about the biblical book of Revelation and its end-time consequences for today (p. xvii). The author disagrees with dispensational fundamentalists who teach "Jesus is a warrior who kills all those who disagree with him ..." (p. viii). She particularly finds offensive the *Left Behind* series of books by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins which she considers sheer fiction, dangerous, right-wing, violent, apocalyptic, absolutist, "us-versus-them," politically dangerous, politically extreme, delusional, anti-environmental, mythic, fear-inducing, "an enormous and lucrative end-time industry" (p. xvi), "a cosmic countdown," a "simplistic biblical script," end-times enthusiasm, a rapture-racket, voyeuristic, false, a fantasy, self-centered, "Beam me up theology" (p. 12), Manicheistic, a theology of despair, a drastic scenario, a selfish nonconcern for the world, a diet of fear, false theology, ridiculous, a fabrication, deterministic, false view, vengeful, wrathful, and biblical hopscotch. Included among those who hold and advocate this misguided theology are Hal Lindsey, James Watt, John Nelson Darby, Cyrus I. Scofield, Lewis Chafer, Dallas Theological Seminary, John Walvoord, Charles Ryrie, John Hagee, Anne Coulter, Jack Van Impe, Benny Hinn, Jerry Falwell, and Pat Robertson. It is obvious from Rossing's characterizations of rapture theology that she has quite a large vocabulary and an equally large disdain for the *Left Behind* series of books, the theology they transport, and those who advocate it.

The author acknowledges the crux of the matter in her preface: it is all a matter of how you interpret the Bible. She believes the interpretation of Revelation on which the *Left Behind* series is based is Christian fiction. "Many other Christians read the biblical story differently, and I am one of them" (p. xvii). "What is at stake here is our reading of the Bible. Prophecy novels and televangelists offer people one particular storyline for our world, one reading of Revelation. I seek to offer a very different reading" (p. xviii). "With this book I will make the case for a different interpretation of Revelation and indeed, for a different version of Christianity" (p. 18). Such starkly different opinions of what the Bible teaches point to the question of its perspicuity.

As might be expected in a polemic of this kind, many controversial opinions are offered. For example, Christians who embrace escapist ethics (rapture theology) are not urgent in loving and caring for the world in anticipation of Christ's return (p. 4); early Christians thought they were living at the start of the end-times (p. 16); the rapture was invented 170 years ago (p. 20); temple rebuilding and Israel restoration are not taught in the New Testament (p. 58); biblical prophecy is not the predicting of future events (p. 89); and God does not follow a script (p. 90).

Dispensationalists will not like this book, I suspect; covenant theologians and those who prefer to take the Bible less literally will perhaps revel in it. At any rate, for those who study the Bible and prophecy carefully, there is a good deal to ponder in the opinions of Rossing. If her book motivates readers to study the Bible, perhaps its effect will be salutary.

*Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.*

**WHAT HAS CHRISTIANITY EVER DONE FOR US? How It Shaped the Modern World** by Jonathan Hill. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. 192 pages. Hardcover; \$24.00. ISBN: 0820833285.

Has Christianity been more of a liability or more of an asset through the centuries? Its liabilities are well known: witch trials, the Crusades, condemnation of Galileo, justification of slavery, the Spanish inquisition, to mention a few. But what about its assets or positive contributions? Jonathan Hill says there are plenty and he aims to prove it with the research in this book. His approach is not to argue that Christianity is the true religion or that Christianity has done more good than bad. Rather he intends to look at some of the good things Christianity has done, i.e., where Christians got things right. To quote Hill: "Without Christianity, today's world would be very different in many ways, quite apart from the obvious 'religious' ones" (p. 6).

Hill illustrates his point by citing three key contributions often overlooked which Christianity has made to society. They are a strong sense of duty to assist the poor (the Roman Empire had no welfare system); an emphasis upon literacy (Christians started many educational institutions); and a commitment to meaningful stories (*Divine Comedy*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Lord of the Rings*). He further illustrates how Christianity has influenced culture, the arts, education, society, the individual and the world.

The book has large print, lots of white space, many photographs, picture acknowledgments, parallel quotes, and an index. The eighth chapter, the last in the book, asks the question: "What will Christianity do for us?" His answer is that the center of gravity of Christianity has shifted from the northern to the southern hemisphere, especially South America and Africa. Future contributions may well originate in those areas, and the church must respond to poverty, hunger, and AIDS so prevalent there.

This is a wonderful book, one which will not only inform, but balance the scale somewhat with Christianity's critics. Christianity started out a minority sect opposed by entrenched power. It is estimated that by the end of the first century there were no more than fifty thousand Christians. Today one-third of the world's population confesses to some form of Christianity. Just as in the past, the world continues to be strongly influenced by Christians who put their faith into action.

Hill, a graduate of Oxford University, has written *The History of Christian Thought and Faith in the Age of Reason*.

*Reviewed by Richard Ruble, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.*

**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGION** by Lindsay Jones, ed. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005, 2d edition. 15 volumes, 10,735 pages, index. Hardcover; \$1,295 set. ISBN: 002865997X.

When Mircea Eliade's edited multivolume *Encyclopedia of Religion* appeared in 1987 it was heralded as a major publishing event in scholarly literature. Lindsay Jones of the Ohio State University has successfully risen to the challenge of producing a substantially revised second edition of this enormously useful reference work. The editor decided to allow the contributing scholars considerable liberty in expressing their ideas and challenging traditional views in light of recent scholarship. The new editorial team exhaustively analyzed the 2,750 entries of the initial edition. First edition authors were invited to revise their entries and update the bibliographies. In instances where the original authors failed to respond for whatever reason, some entries were left unchanged and a 1987 date indicates that no revisions were made. Other entries had minor editorial changes and new bibliographies substituted. Still other entries were judged in need of a substantial revision and a new scholar whose name appears with the original 1987 author(s) undertook this task. Finally, there were some instances where a first-edition entry was considered a classic statement of the field at that point in time and left intact. A further entry was added that augments this earlier piece and may, in some instances, argue for a complete revision of the categories, perspectives, and research that informed the initial entry. In this dynamic way, readers can gain an appreciation for how scholarship about religion is an evolving field of human inquiry. Entirely new entries were also created for this second edition. The entire last volume of this reference work is devoted to various indices and supplementary matter including abbreviations and symbols employed, an appendix of late entries submitted too late to take their proper place in the other fourteen volumes but that thankfully appear here, a synoptic outline of contents, and a 500-page comprehensive index.

This multivolume set is too extensive to adequately review here. ASA members will find a delicious feast of entries related to science, technology, the social sciences, medicine, and religion scattered throughout the encyclopedia. Some sample entries from A-L (some of which are dealt with several times focused on different religious traditions) include Adam, alchemy, animals, architecture, Francis Bacon, bioethics, casuistry, chance, chaos theory, Christianity, cities, clothing, Copernicus, cosmology, cybernetics, Earth, ecology and religion, Albert Einstein, empiricism, ethnoastronomy, eugenics, evolution, fish, the flood, flowers, food, Galileo Galilei, gambling, gardens, gender and religion, genetics and religion, globalization and religion, healing and medicine, health and religion, human body, insects, intelligent design, life, and logical positivism. All the extended entries contain a bibliography that was updated through 2004. In an era when many publishers have raised prices to ridiculous levels, it is a marvel that these 15 volumes can be purchased for just under \$1300. This is an essential addition to an institutional library and scholars active in the field of religion will find it worth the cost to acquire it for their personal collections.

*Reviewed by Dennis Cheek, Adjunct Professor of Science Education, Penn State Great Valley School of Graduate Professional Studies, Malvern, PA 19355.*



## SOCIAL SCIENCE

**THE ANONYMOUS GOD: The Church Confronts Civil Religion and American Society** by David Adams and Ken Schurb, eds. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2004. 287 pages, notes. Paperback; \$16.99. ISBN: 0758608195.

This book, edited by Concordia Seminary professor David Adams and Lutheran pastor Ken Schurb, contains eleven essays dealing with church/state relationships and American Civil Religion. The perspective is that of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. While the essays will have special interest to persons of that religious persuasion, others will benefit from studying them.

Schurb introduces the question: are the god of Civil Religion and the God of Christianity the same, and, if not, how are they to be distinguished? Quoting from Senator Mark Hatfield and Robert Bellah, Schurb defines the book's goal, that of recognizing the force that civil religion exerts on American Christians. That force, he claims, is pervasive, persuasive, and often destructive.

David Adams begins with "The Anonymous God," one who is a challenge to the Christian God. He argues that this god, developed from Rousseau's 1762 "The Social Contract," has taken on a distinctive American flavor, with "manifest destiny," "American chosenness," and "religious tolerance," resulting in a god with no name, a god that cannot offend, a cosmic Santa Claus.

The second essay, by David Liefeld, discusses the Legatis of Athenagoras and the church/state precedents it established. Then Cameron MacKenzie, a Concordia professor, teams with Schurb in a discussion of the writings of Walther, Marty and Meade, all past Missouri Synod thinkers. This will be of only slight interest to non-Lutherans.

"In — We Trust, Filling in the Blank," by Professor Joel Okamute, argues that American Civil Religion is an inferior "theology of glory" as contrasted with "true theology" (Theology of the Cross). He has harsh words for those who argue, in the events of 9/11, that "God was there, holding all who die and all who mourn" (p. 159).

Next up is Professor Ronald Feuerhahn's "Patriotism Gone Awry." His historical view covers 2,000 years, culminating in criticism of the Reformed view of a "one kingdom" theology, one which has dominated America. "This explains ... why in America we so often confuse the civic and religious realms ... we are a nation comfortable with syncretism ..." (p. 180). Feuerhahn holds that "true" Christianity must necessarily be an offense. He claims that church leaders, offering advice to the state, are out of line. "The gospel is not spoken to the state because the state is not a community of faith" (p. 184). His conclusion is that pastors ought never participate in civic events in which other religious elements are mixed, for intolerance of error is to be preferred over love of neighbor.

Illinois Professor Alvin Schmidt next takes up a doctrinal sword against America's Civil Religion's new face, polytheism. While civil religion began with the Puritans as "Christian," it devolved to deism by the time of the Revolution, and morphed into polytheism about 1980. It uses



generic words for its god, it never defines him, it magnifies the "American Way," it has its own saints (Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln) and its own shrines (mostly in Washington, DC). Its holy day is July 4 and it holds that the USA is a "god-favored" nation. Schmidt attacks the Masons, the authors of the 1786 Virginia Religious Freedom Act, and even the U.S. Constitution (a hand offered to future polytheists). He concludes by arguing that "faith" is not to be equated with "religion." As an example, the phrase "Hindu religion," is OK; the phrase "Hindu faith" is without meaning. The word "interfaith," he says, is an oxymoron. He concludes with four scriptural arguments forbidding Christians from participating in civil religious exercises.

Adams returns again with "The Church in the Public Square in a Pluralistic Society." Summarizing the preceding essays, he presents ten theses, all keyed to recognizing that American Civil Religion is the state religion, and warning Christians against it.

Two short essays conclude the book. Adams writes about the tensions involved in being a Christian, the experience of living as "strangers in a strange land." He writes at length on "the scandal of particularity," and the need to not confuse the two kingdoms, the church and the secular realm.

Finally, Mark Sell writes on the two kingdom concept. It is best to read this essay first before engaging the other authors, for it is foundational to what they have to say.

I found the book interesting; it gave me insight into some of my Christian brothers with whom I have issues. I recommend everyone read it and Lutherans buy it.

*Reviewed by John W. Burgeson, Rico Community Church, Rico, CO.*



# Letters

## Serial Endosymbiosis Theory and the Hierarchy of *rps* Genes

I agree with Michael Buratovich concerning the validity of the serial endosymbiosis theory, and that neo-Darwinian mechanics alone do not explain the grand history of universal phylogeny (*PSCF* 57, no. 2 [June 2005]: 98–113). However, I disagree with the Buratovich hypothesis that the hierarchal transfer of ribosomal protein small unit (*rps*) genes from mitochondrial genomes to nuclear genomes indicates inbuilt Intelligent Design (ID) instead of neo-Darwinian mechanics, where inbuilt ID involves "purposeful forces that are wholly natural in their scope and activity."

Buratovich explains that the hierarchal transfer of *rps* genes relates to the importance of each *rps* gene to the function of the ribosome. This suggests that the hierarchal transfer of *rps* genes relates to the selective advantage of the particular *rps* genes. And basic population genetics probability indicates that the percent of selective advantage of a particular mutation relates to the probability of fixation by natural selection for the particular mutation.

Likewise, the percent of selective advantage of particular *rps* genes relates to its probability of fixation that results in gene transfer from a mitochondrial genome to a nuclear genome. This indicates that probabilistic neo-Darwinian mechanics alone could have been responsible for the hierarchal transfer of *rps* genes.

Perhaps the major flaw of the Buratovich hypothesis is that Buratovich seeks to find inbuilt ID other than neo-Darwinian mechanics in the processes of evolutionary genetics. While I encourage an exhaustive search for inbuilt biological ID, I conjecture that biologists will never find inbuilt ID apart from neo-Darwinian mechanics. But outside manipulation may have occurred in natural history.

James E. Goetz  
7 North West Street  
Coudersport, PA 16915  
jimgoetz316@yahoo.com

## Soul-Doctrine

Jeeves and Rüst grant that common soul doctrine is unfounded in Scripture (*PSCF* 57, no. 3 [Sept. 2005] 170–86; 191–201). But both seem concerned over how to discard mythology without becoming heretics. Only in real Protestantism can one suggest that both Plato and Calvin were incompetent on the subject of the Hebrew "soul."

Realizations about Greek ghosts have long existed among the "patently heretical" notions (p. 188) that Siemens (*PSCF* 57, no. 3 [Sept. 2005]: 187–90) is anxious to label and condemn. Tyndale and Luther both taught that the Greek immortal soul doctrine and its dualism are in clear opposition to Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

Rüst grants souls only to higher animals. However, the seas brought forth "abundantly the moving souls" during creation (Gen. 1:20). This unique *abundance* suits Cambrian invertebrates.

The meaning of the Hebrew term for living animals—translated "soul"—is in Scripture, not Greek philosophy. Tyndale realized that Greek doctrine steals Christ's argument by which he proved the Resurrection. Abraham is alive, and this *proves* he will physically awaken. No mention is made of the alien notion of ghosts awake in heaven.

Scripture speaks of identity, not a ghost addition. Animals *are* souls. Humans *are* souls. Adam was not given a soul; he *became* a soul. The *religious* "soul" is no more (or less) than "person," "self" or "creature." It includes such abstract, but physically linked realities as thought, feeling and memory—but never *apart* from the physical. The Resurrection is God's anti-Greek declaration of reorganizing this *very same dust*. Humans struggle to accept the audacious claim, primarily because they demand immediate gratification over millennial patience.

Jesus is the *one unique person* ascended to heaven. David is still in his tomb (Acts 2). Further, Paul did *not* offer condolences by claiming the dead to be awake in heaven; instead, he gave assurance that the sleepers would be gloriously awakened—literally. The physicality of resurrection is crucial to the Gospel message. Orthodoxy rejected extreme Gnosticism and came to regard its own moderate infection of the disease as correct.