



HISTORY OF SCIENCE

CONVERSATIONS WITH GALILEO: A Fictional Dialogue Based on Biographical Facts by William R. Shea. London, UK: Watkins Media, 2019. xi + 115 pages, including notes and further reading. Hardcover; \$14.95. ISBN: 9781786782496.

Have you ever wanted to engage in an extended conversation with a famous person whose work and historical milieu you have studied carefully for many years? William R. Shea, one of the world's leading Galileo scholars, invites you to sit down, relax with a cup of coffee or a glass of wine, to engage in a conversation with Galileo. *Conversations with Galileo: A Fictional Dialogue* incorporates many of Galileo's own words taken from his works or letters. This slim book will allow you to experience how such a dialogue may have transpired.

Shea, a Canadian historian, was Galileo Professor of the History of Science at the University of Padua, Italy from 2003–2012, the very university where Galileo once taught. He has authored many books about Galileo and the Scientific Revolution. The latest, co-authored with Mariano Artigas, are *Galileo in Rome: The Rise and Fall of a Troublesome Genius* (2003) and *Galileo Observed: Science and the Politics of Belief* (2006). *Conversations with Galileo* is part of a series of books published by Watkins Media Ltd., offering conversations with luminaries such as JFK, Oscar Wilde, Casanova, Buddha, Charles Dickens and Isaac Newton.

First, a word about the format of *Conversations with Galileo*: A three-page introduction by Dava Sobel, author of *Longitude* (1995) and *Galileo's Daughter* (1999), is followed by a short (21-page) biography by Shea entitled "Galileo (1564–1642): His Life in Short." Then we are offered 13 chapters dealing with a vast range of topics. Each chapter then begins with Shea posing a leading personal question. These questions cover what, I suspect, most people would want to ask Galileo: questions about censorship, the earth as a planet, scientific failures, what do you take the Bible to say, relations with the Roman Catholic Church Congregation of the Holy Office, also known as the Roman Inquisition, and the Congregation of the Index, other church officials, and, perhaps a final question: what is your claim to fame? The Galileo I remember: the rebel, the seat-of-the-pants philosopher, the "heretic," the defender of the Copernican world-picture, and the creator of a "science of motion" (appearing in the last chapter, "His Claim to Fame") are all present.

So, what more would you want to ask? To me it was surprising to see what else Shea does in fact ask. There are conversations/chapters dealing with "Family Burdens," "Wine, Women and Song," "The Burdens of Teaching," "Moonlighting," "Mind your Horoscope," "The Plague," and "On Art and Literature." This is a

Galileo with a human face, with human foibles, jealousies, amorous interests, financial pressures and responsibilities, work-load issues, social conventions, concerns about the plague and social distancing, and literary interests. These are subjects which are usually hidden or absent in many accounts of Galileo's exploits. For instance, we learn of Galileo the lutenist and of his musical family: his father Vincenzo, his brother Michelangelo (a court musician to the grand duke of Bavaria in Munich). We meet his children: his two daughters, Virginia and Livia, who both entered a convent, and his son Vincenzo who had no scientific interests. We also learn about Galileo's life as a student. At seventeen, Galileo attended the University of Pisa to study medicine and "natural philosophy" (science in our parlance). He attended lectures for four and one-half years without acquiring a degree (which was quite common at the time) but did develop his mathematical interests. These are only a few of the personal details in Galileo's life which Shea explores in this book.

All in all, this is a delightful and inviting book, carefully constructed, written in an engaging style, and easy to read. Don't let the poorly designed cover keep you from picking it up. This is a good read for anyone wanting to get a look behind the scenes and meet an illustrious natural philosopher as he lived his rich and complex life.

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ORIGINS

FINDING OURSELVES AFTER DARWIN: Conversations on the Image of God, Original Sin, and the Problem of Evil by Stanley P. Rosenberg (general editor) and Michael Burdett, Michael Lloyd, and Benno van den Toren (associate editors). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018. vii + 375 pages. Paperback; \$34.00. ISBN: 9780801098246. Kindle; \$16.99. ISBN: 9781493406586.

Finding Ourselves after Darwin responds to questions of how humanity defines itself and understands its primeval origins in a post-Darwinian world. It does so by offering a representative selection of Christian responses to questions about the image of God, original sin, and the problem of evil raised at the interface of evolutionary science and Christian faith. This book grew out of the project "Evolution and Christian Faith" funded by BioLogos, and many contributors participated in several colloquia held at Oxford.

Finding Ourselves after Darwin is thematically and structurally coherent, unlike many similar edited volumes. Two introductory essays by general editor Stanley Rosenberg and associate editor Benno van den Toren introduce the truth-seeking and dialogue-modeling commitments of the book. Following these essays, the book is divided into three parts: (1) The Image of God and Evolution, (2) Original Sin and Evolution, and (3) Evil and Evolution. Each part features five or six