



When Science Meets Religion: Enemies, Strangers, or Partners?

By Ian G. Barbour

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The Definitive Introduction To

The Relationship Between

Religion And Science

- * In The Beginning: Why Did the Big Bang Occur?
- * Quantum Physics: A Challenge to Our Assumptions About Reality?
- * Darwin And Genesis: Is Evolution God's Way of Creating?
- * Human Nature: Are We Determined by Our Genes?
- * God And Nature: Can God Act in a Law-Bound World?

Over the centuries and into the new millennium, scientists, theologians, and the general public have shared many questions about the implications of scientific discoveries for religious faith. Nuclear physicist and theologian Ian Barbour, winner of the 1999 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion for his pioneering role in advancing the study of religion and science, presents a clear, contemporary introduction to the essential issues, ideas, and solutions in the relationship between religion and science. In simple, straightforward language, Barbour explores the fascinating topics that illuminate the critical encounter of the spiritual and quantitative dimensions of life.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

We're closing in on the 150th anniversary of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, but clearly not closing in on any resolution of the debates that the book stirred up between science and religion. In this slim volume, physicist and theologian Ian Barbour summarizes his own decades-long accumulation of knowledge in these two arenas. Writing with clarity and a scientist's eye for organization, Barbour takes on the scientific and theological significance of the big questions: the big bang, quantum physics, Darwin and Genesis, human nature (the question of determinism), and the relationship between a free God and a law-bound universe. In each chapter, Barbour recognizes four possible ways of responding to the dilemmas posed by these topics: *conflict*, represented by Biblical literalists and atheists, both of whom agree that a person cannot believe in both God and evolution; *independence*, which asserts that "science and religion are strangers who can coexist as long as they keep a safe distance from each other"; *dialogue*, which invites a conversation between the two fields; and *integration*, which moves beyond dialogue to explore ways in which the two fields can inform each other. Barbour notes that his own sympathies lie with dialogue and integration.

Barbour won the 1999 Templeton Prize for his role in advancing the study of science and religion. "No contemporary has made a more original, deep, and lasting contribution toward the needed integration of scientific and religious knowledge and values," John Cobb has written of Barbour. This book is perhaps the best entry point into Barbour's work. --Doug Thorpe

From Publishers Weekly

This concise introduction to science-and-religion issues provides impressively well-balanced coverage of an increasingly complex family of topics in a single, accessible volume. As one of the better-known authors in the field, even prior to winning the 1999 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, Barbour has shown an almost unique ability to coax a "field" out of an unruly bunch of theologians, philosophers and scientists whose arguments often resist summary and synthesis. But this is exactly Barbour's goal as he guides readers through a four-fold typology of the science/religion relationship: Conflict, Independence, Dialogue and Integration that will be familiar to readers of his *Religion in an Age of Science*. Barbour's own sympathies are markedly on the side of dialogue and integration, but he makes an unusually successful effort to represent other perspectives in a fair light. Although the book's overall focus is on questions of method, it also manages to introduce readers to most of the topics of current science/religion dialogues. These include four areas based in the religious implications of specific sciences (cosmology, quantum theory, biological evolution and the sciences of "human nature") as well as the more general question of the relationship between God and nature. Barbour navigates with confidence through what has become a very wide literature, balancing coverage of essential "classical" sources (from Augustine to Kuhn) with the background necessary for reading more recent contributions to the field. (June)

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Review

"Ian Barbour is the 'doyen of contemporary writers on science and theology. In this survey of his thinking he writes with his customary well-organized clarity.'"--John Polkinghorne, author of "Belief in God in an Age of Science" Ian Barbour here distills a lifetime of thinking about how science and religion relate. In spanning the spectrum of the natural and the human sciences, he knows more about this than any other person on Earth, more, I suppose than any other in history. Couple this with his sure-footed capacity for balanced evaluation--a particular focus distinguishing this from his earlier books--and the result is outstanding."--Holmes Rolston,

III, author, "Genes, Genesis and God, University Distinguished Professor, Colorado State University" At last we have a volume in religion and science by the pioneer of the field, Ian G. Barbour, which uses Barbour's now classic four-fold typology to address fundamental issues of importance to us all. This book will be an invaluable resource to teachers, scholars, ministers, scientists and everyday inquirers who want to become part of the positive and creative interaction now growing rapidly and internationally between religion and science. Read this book and prepare for a wondrous experience!"--Robert John Russell, Director of The Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, Berkeley "No surer and fairer guide to the proliferating literature on the relation of science and religion can be found than Ian Barbour. In this volume he has made accessible the fruits of his extensive and scholarly studies to those coming new to the field. They, and also those already involved in it, will welcome this elegantly organised and presented work."--Arthur Peacocke, Oxford University, author of "From DNA to Dean: Reflections & Explorations of a Priest-Scientist

Users Review

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