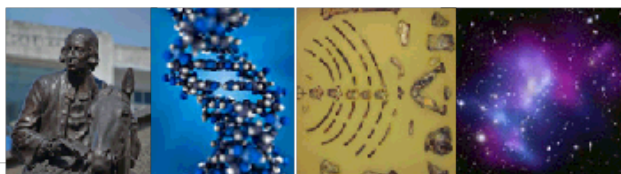


WesleyNexus

Science and Religion within the Wesleyan Tradition



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April 12, 2012

Dear WesleyNexus Colleague:

Dr. Randy Isaac @ Oakdale Emory United Methodist Church, Olney MD

Dr. Randy Isaac will speak at Oakdale Emory United Methodist Church on April 29, 2012.

Dr. Isaac, Executive Director of the American Scientific Affiliation, will address the topic:

Information & Intelligence in the Universe: Implications for Spirituality and Faith. The event flyer can be found [here](#).

New Book Review

Dr. Walt Shropshire has written a review of *A Science and Religion Primer* by Heidi Campbell and Heather Looy. For those who have wondered where to begin their science and religion journey, this book provides an “excellent introduction to and coverage of the major issues of the science and religion dialogue” The review can be found [here](#).

Emergent Church

Philip Clayton, Dean of the Claremont School of Theology, has written a recent Op-Ed for the LA Times highlighting the growth in those who no longer identify with any institutional faith. The “Rise of the Nones” presents communities of faith with new challenges and new opportunities. Clayton’s answer is to promote the Emerging Church movement. “It’s a movement based on understanding the reasons for mainstream religion’s dramatic decline: improved scientific understanding, changing social norms, an increasingly pluralistic religious culture and more freedom to doubt and question — a freedom that until the last three centuries was mostly absent or suppressed and that is still resisted, sometimes violently, in much of the world today.” The article can be found [here](#).

Tennessee: Teaching Evolution

Tennessee has approved a bill that will protect teachers who wish to promote "alternate" theories in the science classroom. As Lucas Johnson of the AP states, “the bill says it would encourage critical thinking by protecting teachers from discipline if they help students critique scientific weaknesses”. Creationism and intelligent design would be allowed as part of this “critique.” Advocates of the bill claim that it improves academic freedom, while its critics see it as an open door to the promotion of pseudoscience and religious doctrine within the public school system.

In 2009, there were 120,000 United Methodists residing in Tennessee. In its 2008 Book of Discipline, the United Methodist Church affirms “*science as a legitimate interpretation of God’s natural world*” and “*that science’s descriptions of cosmological, geological, and biological evolution are not in conflict with theology.*”

The Huffington Post article and the AP article can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

On Being Wrong.

The challenge of discovery and new knowledge is often difficult. We usually think that facts determine what is true but in a recent NY Times article, “The Trouble With Data That Outpaces a Theory,” Dennis Overbye points out that the process isn’t always that simple. Theory and evidence work together in providing confidence in interpretations of our world. The article can be found [here](#).

The God issue: New science of religion

New Scientist has published an entire issue devoted to the scientific study of religion. Articles include:

- To rule out god, first get to know him
- We are all born believers
- Religion is the key to civilization
- God is a testable hypothesis
- Alain de Botton's religion for atheists

Access to all articles requires a subscription. The cover page can be found [here](#).

Higgs Boson: Data Hint at Hypothetical Particle, Key to Mass in the Universe

After decades of searching, evidence appears to indicate that the Higgs boson may finally have been found. See the NY Times article [here](#).

Red Deer Cave: A New Human Species?

In a recent study, a “previously unknown type of human—jut-jawed, heavy-browed, deer-eating cave dwellers—may have been identified via Stone Age bones from southern China.” according to the National Geographic and LiveScience.com. The articles can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

God Bless,

Rick Barr, Secretary, WesleyNexus

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