

Summer School 2010

April 22, 2010

TH520: God and Evolution

Dr. Michael Bourgeois

July 5-9, 2010. 9 am – 12 noon

Course Description

An examination of evolution by natural selection and its implications for Christian theology. Issues addressed include: human origins and the place of humanity in creation; divine immanence, transcendence, and interaction with creation; the argument from design and “intelligent design”; sin and evil; biblical interpretation; and the relation of science and theology.

Competence Objectives

Students in this course will acquire:

- knowledge and understanding of the main features of Darwinian evolutionary theory, some of the key theological responses to it since the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859, and some of the leading authors in the discussion of evolution and Christian theology;
- knowledge and understanding of various patterns of relating science and theology, especially as these patterns illuminate diverse Christian religious responses to evolution;
- skills in understanding and fairly describing and evaluating diverse Christian religious responses to evolution; and
- skills, both oral and written, in developing and presenting their own critical and constructive positions on evolution and related theological issues.

Course Requirements and Assignments

For all Participants:

1. *Required reading* for the course will be drawn from:
 - Before start of course: John Haught, *God After Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2008). Please make your own arrangements to obtain a copy of this book. **VST does not order course books.**
 - During the course: Assigned readings (as indicated in course schedule below) will be available on reserve in the VST library.

Recommended reading (indicated in the course schedule below) is provided to help you get started on research for your topic paper and identify sources you might use to pursue your interest in particular topics. The attached bibliography lists some additional sources.

2. *100% attendance and informed participation in class.*
3. *In 4-5 typed and double-spaced pages, answer the following four questions, due on June 28, 2010, sent to the instructor by e-mail (see address below) as an attachment in Microsoft Word format.* No reading or research is required for this assignment, and it will be evaluated not on the content of your answers, but rather on how completely you have reflected on and how well you have presented your answers.
 - What educational and/or professional background do you have in the natural sciences, especially biology?
 - In what context did you first learn about evolution – home, church, school, other? Was evolution presented to you positively, negatively, or neutrally?

- In the way that evolution was presented to you, what seemed to be assumed about the relationship between religion and evolution – conflict, unrelated, or other?
- What opinions or assumptions do you hold now about the relation between religion and science, especially Christian theology and evolution? And why do you hold these opinions or assumptions?

For Degree Students

4. *A final topic paper, 12 typed and double-spaced pages long, due no later than August 15, 2010.*

Option 1: Using the required and recommended reading for the class session on this topic, and your own additional research in other sources: a) describe the main theological issues at stake in one of the following topics, and b) make a case for what you think is the most promising approach to the topic and related theological issues:

- evolution and the authority and interpretation of the Bible
- evolution and the doctrine of God
- evolution, design, and divine action
- evolution and the problem of evil
- evolution, creation, and emergence
- evolution and human origins and purpose
- evolution and ethics
- evolution and ecology

Option 2: Using primary sources by a theologian of your choice as well as secondary sources assessing the work of that theologian, write a critical assessment of one theologian's response to or engagement with evolutionary biology, *or* of a non-theological critic of theological responses to evolution.

Theologians you might consider, for example, include Thomas Berry, Philip Clayton, Denis Edwards, Asa Gray, Charles Hodge, Sallie McFague, Jürgen Moltmann, Arthur Peacocke, Ted Peters, Hans Schwarz, Christopher Southgate, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, or Patricia Williams.

For all written assignments you must:

- *Submit assignments by e-mail in a Microsoft Word file.* michael.bourgeois@utoronto.ca
- *Give reasons* for your positions and arguments and *back them up* with material from required, recommended, or other research. One helpful resource on academic research and writing is Margot Northey and Joan McKibbin, *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- Include complete documentation (either footnotes or endnotes) for all sources you use, whether you summarize, paraphrase, or directly quote those sources. Use a standard system of documentation such as the one described in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
- *Observe all academic regulations* of the Vancouver School of Theology.

Class Schedule

5 July “Darwin’s Dangerous Idea”

Required Reading

- John Haught, Chapters 1 and 2, “Beyond Design” and “Darwin’s Dangerous Idea,” *God after Darwin*, 1-24.
- Charles Darwin, Chapter XIV, “Recapitulation and Conclusion,” in *The Origin of Species*, 371-96.
- Daniel Dennett, Chapter 2, “An Idea is Born,” *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea*, 35-60.

Recommended Reading

- James Lennox, “Darwinism and Neo-Darwinism,” in *A Companion to the Philosophy of Biology*, ed. Sahotra Sarkar and Anya Plutynski, 77-98.

- Claude Welch, Chapter 6, “Evolution and Theology: Détente or Evasion?,” *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. 2, 1870-1914*, 183-211.

6 July **Relating Evolution and Theology**

Required Reading

- John Haught, Chapter 3, “Theology Since Darwin,” *God after Darwin*, 25-47.
- Ian Barbour, Chapter 4, “Ways of Relating Science and Religion,” *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*, 77-105.

Recommended Reading

- Denis Lamoureux, Chapter 1, “Introductory Categories,” *Evolutionary Creation*, 1-52.
- Antje Jackelén, “A Critical View of ‘Theistic Evolution,’” *Theology and Science* 5 (July 2007), 151-67.

7 July **Evolution, Design, and Divine Action**

Required Reading

- John Haught, Chapter 6, “A God for Evolution,” Chapter 10, “Cosmic Evolution and Divine Action” and Chapter 11, “Darwin and God After Dover,” *God after Darwin*, 87-112 and 172-209.
- Michael Behe, Chapter 11, “Science, Philosophy, Religion” and “Afterword: Ten Years Later,” *Darwin’s Black Box*, 10th anniversary ed., 232-72 and 305-11.

Recommended Reading

- Aubrey Moore, “The Christian Doctrine of God,” in Charles Gore, ed., *Lux Mundi*, 5th ed., 47-90.
- Jaroslav Pelikan, “Creation and Causality in the History of Christian Thought.” *Journal of Religion* 40 (1960), 246-55.
- George L. Murphy, Chapter 6, “God’s Action in the World,” *The Cosmos in Light of the Cross*, 74-92.

8 July **Evolution and the Authority and Interpretation of the Bible**

Required Reading

- Paul Murray and David Wilkinson, Chapter 2, “The Significance of the Theology of Creation within Christian Tradition: Systematic Considerations,” in Christopher Southgate, ed., *God, Humanity, and the Cosmos*, 2nd ed., 39-62.
- Conrad Hyers, “Comparing Biblical and Scientific Maps of Origins,” in Keith B. Miller, ed., *Perspectives on an Evolving Creation*, 19-33.

Recommended Reading

- Ronald Numbers, Chapters 1 and 3, “Creationism in the Age of Darwin” and “Creationism in the Fundamentalist Controversy,” *The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design*, 15-32 and 51-68.
- Denis Lamoureux, Chapter 5, “The Bible and Science: Beyond Conflict and Concordism,” *Evolutionary Creation*, 148-76.

9 July

Evolution and Human Origins, Purpose, and Morality

Required Reading

- John Haught, Chapter 8, “Religion, Ethics, and Evolution,” *God after Darwin*, 129-52.
- Ted Peters and Martinez Hewlett, Chapter 6, “What Does it Mean to be Human?,” *Theological and Scientific Commentary on Darwin’s Origin of Species*, 115-35.
- Michael Ruse, Chapters 9 and 11, “Christian Ethics” in *Can a Darwinian be a Christian?*, 157-69.

Recommended Reading

- Ian Tattersall, Chapter 5, “Becoming Human” in *Becoming Human: Evolution and Human Uniqueness*, 135–187
- Stephen Jay Gould, Chapter V, “Possible Worlds: The Power of ‘Just History,’” in *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History*, 292-323.
- Philip Hefner, “Theological Perspectives on Morality and Human Evolution,” in W. Mark Richardson and Wesley Wildman, eds., *Religion and Science: History, Method, Dialogue*, 401-24.

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