

BOOKING FORM

God or Multiverse? 24 November 2007

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tickets at £65 concessionary tickets at £25 (full time students only)
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God or Multiverse?

THE PROGRAMME

9:30-10:00	Registration
10:00-10:50	Bernard Carr <i>Introducing the Multiverse and Physical Theories of Everything</i>
10:50-11:20	Coffee
11:20-12:10	Keith Ward <i>Introducing God and Theological Theories of Everything</i>
12:10-1:00	Rodney Holder <i>Can a Multiverse Provide the Ultimate Explanation?</i>
1:00-2:20	Lunch
2:20-3:10	John Polkinghorne <i>Meta-stories of fine-tuning</i>
3:10-4:00	Peter Coles <i>Can the Universe Explain Itself?</i>
4:00-4:30	Tea
4:30-5:30	General Discussion

A remarkable feature of the Universe is that the physical constants appear to be fine-tuned for the emergence of life. One possible explanation for this is that a Creator designed the Universe for our benefit. Another - prompted by recent developments in cosmology and particle physics - is that there could be many universes in which the constants are different, in which case the observed fine-tunings just become a selection effect. Some scientists regard this "Multiverse" explanation as more plausible since it is predicted by respectable (albeit speculative) physics but others regard it as just as metaphysical as invoking God since the other universes can never be seen. One might also argue that a God who can create a Universe could equally well create a Multiverse.

This day provides a unique opportunity for three theologians - Dr. Rodney Holder, Sir John Polkinghorne and Prof. Keith Ward - to join two cosmologists - Prof. Bernard Carr and Prof. Peter Coles - in a discussion of these issues. They do not expect to answer the question posed by the title definitively but - between them - they will explore all possible views: (1) no Multiverse and no God (for those who regard both God and the Multiverse as equally unpalatable); (2) Multiverse and no God (for those who regard the Multiverse as the natural atheistic explanation of fine-tunings); (3) no Multiverse and God (the standard theological view); (4) Multiverse and God (an alternative theological view). At the end of the day, there will be a general discussion, with contributions from the floor.

OPEN DIALOGUE

God or Multiverse?

Howard Building, Downing College
Cambridge

Saturday, 24th November, 2007

SPEAKERS:

Prof. Bernard Carr

Prof. Peter Coles

Rev. Dr. Rodney Holder

Sir. John Polkinghorne FRS

Prof. Keith Ward FBA

*"The multiverse
is the last resort
for the desperate
atheist"*

Neil Manson

The Scientific and Medical Network 

THE SPEAKERS



Professor Bernard Carr read mathematics as an undergraduate at Trinity College, Cambridge. For his PhD he studied the first second of the Universe, working under Stephen Hawking. He was elected to a Fellowship at Trinity in 1975 and in 1980 became a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge. In 1985 he moved to Queen Mary College, University of London, where he is now Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy. He has also held Visiting Professorships at various institutes in

America, Canada and Japan. His professional area of research is cosmology and relativity - with particular interest in such topics as the early universe, black holes, dark matter and the anthropic principle. He has just edited a book entitled *Universe or Multiverse?*, based on articles presented at three conferences sponsored by the Templeton Foundation. He also has a long-standing interest in the interface between science and religion - having contributed an article on cosmology and religion in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*. He is a former President of the Society of Psychical Research and he is on the Board of Directors of the SMN.



Reverend Professor Keith Ward FBA, was an undergraduate at the University of Wales and holds Doctor of Divinity degrees from Cambridge and Oxford Universities. He was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1972, was Dean of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from 1975-83, and a Canon of Christ Church, Oxford until 2003. He has been Lecturer in Logic at the University of Glasgow (1964-69), Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of St Andrews (1969-1971), Lecturer in Philosophy of Religion at the University of London (1971-75), Maurice Professor of Moral and Social Theology at the University of London (1982-1985), Professor of History and Philosophy of Religion at King's College London (1985-1995), and Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford (1991-2004). He is currently at Christ Church, Oxford, and Gresham Professor of Divinity at Gresham College, London. Comparative theology and the interplay between science and faith are two of his main topics of interest. In 1993-

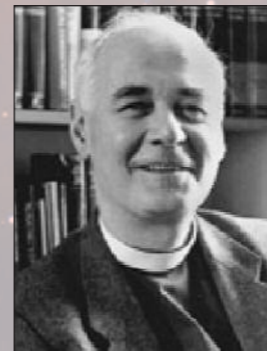
94, he delivered the prestigious Gifford Lectures. His many books include *Ethics and Christianity* (1970), *God, Chance and Necessity* (1996), *God, Faith and the New Millennium* (1998), *Religion and Human Nature* (1998), *Religion and Community* (2000), *God: a Guide for the Perplexed* (2002), *Pascal's Fire – Scientific Faith and Religious Understanding* (2006) and, most recently, *Re-Thinking Christianity* (2007).



Reverend Dr. Rodney Holder read mathematics at Trinity College, Cambridge, and then researched for a D.Phil. in astrophysics at Christ Church, Oxford. He remained at Oxford for a further two years as a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Astrophysics. After 14 years working for the Ministry of Defence, he returned to Oxford, and took a degree in theology in 1996. After completing his ministerial training, he worked for four years as a curate, before becoming Priest in Charge of the Parish of the Claydons in 2002. He is

currently Course Director of the Faraday Institute in Cambridge. He has explored ways in which science and faith may complement each other in *Nothing but Atoms and Molecules?* (1993). In his latest book, *God, the Multiverse, and Everything* (2004), he examines the fine-tunings of natural law that were necessary for life to evolve in our universe. His 1998 paper on miracles won a Templeton Foundation Prize as an exemplary paper in humility theology. Dr Holder is a member of the Society of Ordained Scientists, the Science and Religion Forum and Christians in Science.

Sir John Polkinghorne KBE FRS worked in theoretical particle physics for 25 years. In 1979 he resigned his chair as Professor of Mathematical Physics at Cambridge University to study for the Anglican priesthood and he was ordained in 1982. After some years in parish life, he returned to Cambridge to work on issues in science and theology. In 1996 he retired from being President of Queens' College, Cambridge, and he was knighted in 1997. He has been the Chairman of several committees offering advice to Government on



ethical and social issues related to new developments in science and technology. In 2002 he was awarded the Templeton Prize. He was one of the founders of the Society of Ordained Scientists and the Founding President of the International Society for Science and Religion. His many books include his Gifford Lectures, *Science and Christian Belief* (1994), his Terry Lectures, *Belief in God in an Age of Science* (1998), *The God of Hope and the End of the World* (2002), *Exploring Reality* (2005) and, most recently, *Quantum Physics and Theology* (2007).



Professor Peter Coles read Natural Sciences as an undergraduate at the University of Cambridge. He did a PhD in Theoretical Astronomy at Sussex University under the supervision of John Barrow, and he remained there for two years as a postdoctoral fellow. In 1990 he moved to Queen Mary College, University of London, as a Lecturer. In 1999 he became the first Professor of Astrophysics at the University of Nottingham and he has recently taken up a Chair at Cardiff University. His main research concerns cosmology

and the origin of large-scale structure of the Universe. He has published a classic textbook on the subject *Cosmology: The Origin and Evolution of Cosmic Structure* (2002) with Francesco Lucchin, as well as a more popular account *Cosmology: A Very Short Introduction* (2001) He was also responsible for compiling *The Routledge Companion to the New Cosmology* (1998). His other books include *Is the Universe Open or Closed?* (1997) with George Ellis, *Einstein and the Total Eclipse* (1999), *Hawking and the Mind of God* (2000), and *From Cosmos to Chaos: The Science of Unpredictability* (2006).

The Scientific and Medical Network is an interdisciplinary forum exploring frontiers of science, consciousness and spirituality, consisting of qualified scientists and doctors, psychologists, engineers, philosophers, psychologists and other professionals. The Network came into existence in 1973 and has Members in more than 50 countries. It questions the assumptions of contemporary scientific and medical thinking and seeks to reach beyond a materialistic world-view. By remaining open to both intuitive and spiritual insights, the Network fosters a climate in which science as a whole can adopt a more comprehensive and sensitive approach. See www.scimednet.org