
The field of astrobiology asks three thought-provoking questions: Where did we come from? Are we alone? Where are we going? An important scientific driver for astrobiologists is evolutionary theory. This volume is the result of a workshop series that brought together philosophers, historians, ethicists, and theologians with scientists to engage in an interdisciplinary dialogue on the implications of the science of astrobiology for their fields. Contributions by three Christian theologians explore both historical and current challenges and opportunities for theological reflection poised by the theory of evolution. The editor's introduction to the volume also includes a discussion of the possibilities for relating science and religion and their significance for public outreach on the topic of evolution.


John F. Haught, Retired Senior Fellow, Science and Religion, with the Woodstock Theological Center, Georgetown University, is a well-known author of works dealing with science and religion in general and issues pertaining to evolution and Christianity in specific. However, in this work, Haught intentionally describes three ways of reading the universe, and what he refers to as the “New Cosmic story,” in a way that is broadly inviting to multiple religious or spiritual traditions. He draws attention to the fact that the universe is “unfinished” an observation that also opens the possibility of recognizing the “inside story” of the universe. The emergence of matter, life, mind and religion and spirituality are all significant to recognizing that inside story. Religion and spirituality are celebrated as key components contributing to the story, but are also challenged by the observation that they too are unfinished. Haught’s view of the universe is an anticipatory one in which the efforts of individual lives contribute to the transformation of the whole universe, a very hopeful message.