

# INTRODUCING THE GOD QUESTION

## Exploring the Science v God Debate

A Resource for Teachers and Students of Philosophy,  
Religious Education and the International Baccalaureate



Is modern science in the process of burying God or does it help make a convincing case for a creator? That is the question at the heart of a debate that is threaded through this fascinating series.

Join world renowned experts including Paul Davies, Carol Cleland, John Lennox, Francis Collins, Richard Dawkins, Dan Dennett, John Polkinghorne and many others, exploring the subject of science and God.



Take three fascinating journeys to discover the breathtaking wonders of the *Cosmos, Life on Earth and Human Mind & Brain*. What is their ultimate explanation?



Professor Richard Dawkins

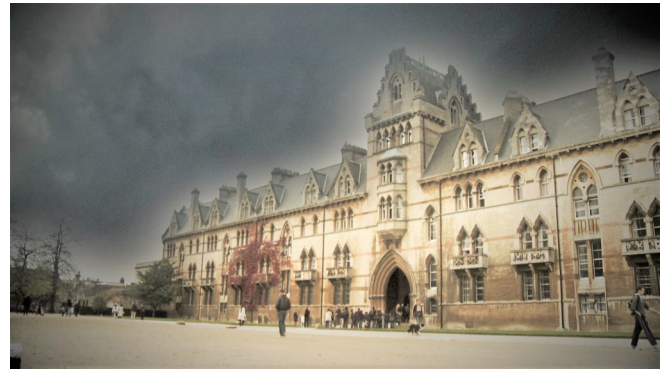


Professor John Lennox

Oxford Professors Richard Dawkins and John Lennox go head to head in a debate about science and God held at the Oxford Museum of Natural History. At stake: are science and religion incompatible alternative explanations of our existence? Hear powerful excerpts from the debate in programme two of Introducing the God Question.

## PROGRAMME ONE: COSMOS

**How are the wonders of the cosmos best explained?**



The Oxford Museum of Natural History



Scientists believe that 13.8 billion years ago time and space arrived with an unexplained 'Big Bang'. Somehow order emerged. How?



The universe is finely tuned to support life on earth. Even the slightest change would be devastating. Why is the universe so finely tuned?



*"Where the Big Bang came from? We don't know"*  
Kim Weaver, Astrophysicist, NASA



The Milky Way: fruitful earth with its sophisticated life forms is located on a spiral arm in a perfect relationship with its sun. Why?





Florence, Italy—one of the centres of the scientific revolution which began 500 years ago. John Lennox argues that *“the motor that drove its rise was belief in a rational intelligent creator of a universe which can be investigated and explained using mathematics”*. But can that argument be sustained in the light of modern science?

## PROGRAMME TWO: LIFE AND EVOLUTION

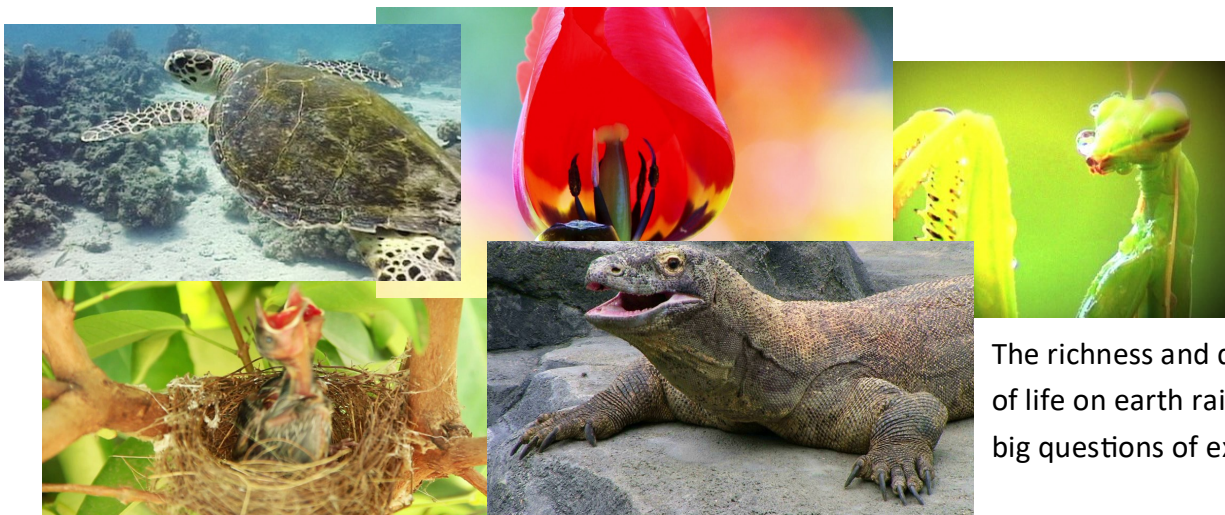
**How are the wonders of life on earth best explained?**



In a universe 13.8 billion light years in diameter, planet earth is the only known location where sophisticated life exists and where the conditions to sustain it are all in place. This awesome fact raises the question ‘why?’.



A little closer to the sun and earth would burn up; a little further away and earth would freeze life out of existence.



The richness and diversity of life on earth raises the big questions of existence.





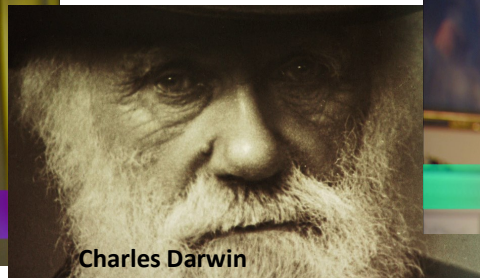
Do religious views of origins have any relevance in an era of advanced science and technology?



Human beings: the only species known to be able to reflect on our place in the universe and to ask the questions how and why.



Francis Collins argues that Dan Dennett's view—that Darwin left God nothing to do—is a deep misunderstanding of science and philosophy.



John Lennox argues that evolution cannot explain its own existence. Nor did Darwin (above) explain the origin of life.

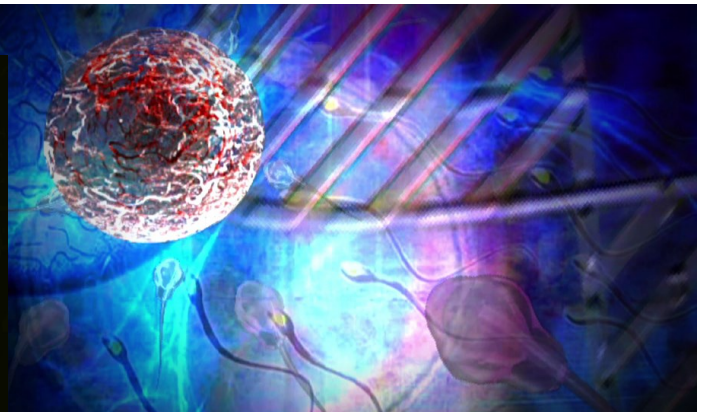


Dan Dennett recounts how, when he discovered Darwin, he abandoned belief in God. But what kind of God did he believe in?



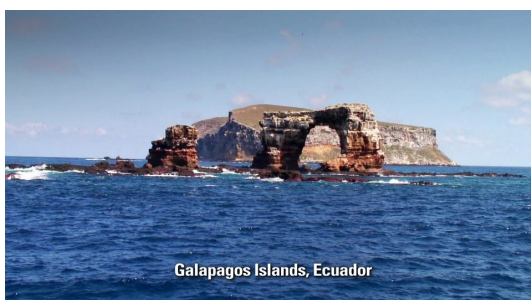
The wonder of DNA

For life to continue, strands of DNA must be able to copy themselves exactly. This is one of many natural wonders of life on earth.



The wonder of the reproduction of life

DNA, the code at the heart of life, is an instruction book of 3 billion letters about how to build the whole body from an embryo. Simply astonishing!



Galapagos Islands, Ecuador

From the Galapagos Islands to the ancient landscape of North West Scotland, follow the compelling story about the development of life.



Loch Torridon, Scotland





Without a range of special conditions on planet earth life could not exist.



## PROGRAMME THREE: MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS

How are the wonders of mind and brain best explained?



The human brain: the most sophisticated organism in the whole universe?



**Denyse O'Leary**  
Co-Author – "The Spiritual Brain"

*"We all know we are conscious but we don't know what consciousness is."*

Denyse O'Leary, Co-author—The Spiritual Brain

Dr Sam Parmia recognises that what we understand about the brain still leaves consciousness largely unexplained. A medical doctor, he is also the Director of an international project exploring the scientific evidence for near-death experience (NDE).



Science has not yet discovered why we are able to create memories.



**Dr Sam Parmia**  
Director, Human Consciousness Project  
Southampton University





From left to right:

**Prof Alvin Plantinga** helps us understand why most people across the world believe in some kind of God.

**Dr Peter Fenwick** studied people in transition from life to death and reports some intriguing findings.

**Prof Peter Atkins** thinks “God is a lie” and that science has all the answers we need.

**Prof Andrew Newberg** helps us investigate why we believe what we believe.

**Dr John Rutter**, a composer, argues that music is an important link to a spiritual dimension of human consciousness.

Consciousness can include...



...a sense of self and one another...



....a sense of beauty



...a sense of right and wrong

...and a sense of God



Ely Cathedral

The God Question broadcast TV series has been transmitted on mainstream channels to hundreds of millions of homes across the world. See [www.thegodquestion.tv](http://www.thegodquestion.tv)

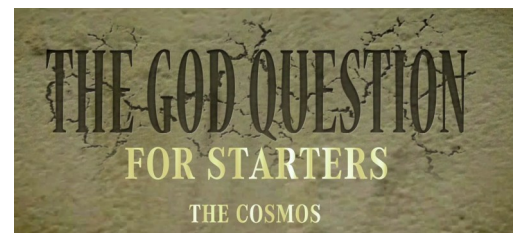
The series was commissioned and is owned by Search for Truth Charitable Trust (Charity number SC039465).

## Introducing the God Question in Practice



There are several flexible and complementary ways to use The God Question resources.

- For use with whole class or small groups. With the programmes accessible via their personal devices, young people can engage with the content 'section by section' and use the 82 page Study Guide (exemplified above) to focus discussion, further exploration and debate.
- Select one or more extracts from any programme for use at school assembly or as a stimulus to focussed classroom discussion.
- Set up a half-day or whole-day conference in which young people engage at some length with one or more of the series' themes. The Teacher's Guide (on USB) contains organisational support as well as printable discussion materials for such events. Optionally, request input from a speaker at [info@kharisproductions.com](mailto:info@kharisproductions.com).
- Use the simplified God Question for Starters version in class or at school assemblies. It presents the key ideas of the three programmes in 10 short excerpts per theme. Any excerpt can be used to stimulate thought and discussion.







**How to Access Introducing the God Question—with: full colour Student Study Guide and Teacher's Guide on USB** with links to A Level Philosophy and A Level Religious Studies, RMPS and RME in the Scottish Curriculum and the Theory of Knowledge in the International Baccalaureate

Web-stream or view on DVD/Blu-ray, with optional subtitles for the hearing impaired.

[www.thegodquestion.tv/introduce](http://www.thegodquestion.tv/introduce)

## What Educationists say about Introducing the God Question

*"These resources exemplify the Curriculum for Excellence at its best."*

John Swinney, MSP  
Former Education Minister

*"Exceptionally well produced...captivating and very engaging. A very useful resource to promote critical thinking on the issues."*

Mandy Evans Ewing  
Humanist University Chaplain

*"The strength lies not only in the contemporary voices answering an age old question but also in the supporting study materials challenging learners to reflect, understand and reach their own conclusions. A perfect resource for meaningful discussions at a deeper level."*

Barbara Coupar, Director,  
Scottish Catholic Education Service

*"Encourages young people to ask questions of meaning and purpose...promotes critical thinking and inspires debate."*

Wendy Heydorn,  
Teacher of Religious Studies  
and Director of Higher Education,  
Sevenoaks School, Kent

*"The current clash of theistic and atheist worldviews is superbly presented. A 'must see' for anyone interested in the relationship between science and belief in a creator."*

Baroness Cox,  
Westminster Parliament, London

*"An outstanding high quality production...As objective and balanced on the issues of religion and science as you are ever likely to get. An exceptional resource offering insights in a critical area of study for schools."*

Ken Cunningham CBE,  
Former General Secretary,  
School Leaders Scotland



[www.kharisproductions.com](http://www.kharisproductions.com)

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