

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Bill Schlotter

Renowned Oxford Historian to Open UCSB Series of Templeton Lectures on Science and Religion

The second season of UC Santa Barbara's distinguished lecture series on "Science, Religion, and the Human Experience" will begin this week with the appearance of John Hedley Brooke, an internationally acclaimed scholar of the interaction of science and religion.

Brooke, the Andreas Idreos Professor of Science and Religion at Oxford University in England, will open the series of nine free public lectures Friday, Jan. 11 with a 7 p.m. talk titled, "Darwin, Design and the Unification of Nature," in UCSB's Corwin Pavilion. The 2002 series continues through May.

"We've been very lucky to attract some of the best scholars in the world," said James Proctor, director of the series and associate professor of geography at UCSB.

"Professor Brooke is perhaps the foremost historian of science and religion in the world today."

Brooke will focus his remarks on Charles Darwin, the 19th century scientist and originator of evolutionary theory.

Though many credit 20th century scientists for putting together the unified system with which we now describe and understand biology, Brooke will contend in his talk

that Darwin also achieved a degree of unity in his descriptions of biology. He believed in a single evolutionary process, that all species came from one origin and that all humankind came from a single ancestor.

Darwin's thinking was influenced by religion, although he became an agnostic in later life, Brooke said.

"In my lecture, I will discuss his loss of faith," he added.

Brooke's talk will be followed by comments from a panel of three UCSB faculty members, questions from the audience, and a reception.

The series is sponsored by the John Templeton Foundation, which seeks to encourage

"a fresh appreciation of the moral and spiritual dimensions of life." UCSB and Columbia were the first two universities to be selected to receive Templeton grants to present lecture series covering science and religion.

Stanford University and Israel's Bar-Ilan University were added to the foundation's program for 2002. UCSB will also offer a Templeton-sponsored series of lectures in 2003.

Each university approaches the subject in its own way. "While the assertions scientists make about reality and religious practitioners make about God and the sacred are important to us, we're also interested in the human face of science and religion," Proctor said.

In addition to their public talks, Templeton lecturers will meet and hold discussions with UCSB students and faculty members during their visits. The lecture series has a web site (www.srhe.ucsb.edu) with speaker biographies and abstracts of each talk.

Other speakers in the 2002 UCSB series include:

Evan Thompson, associate professor of philosophy, member Center for Vision Research at York University in Toronto. Thompson's talk is titled "Empathy as a Way of Knowing: From Cognitive Science to Contemplative Science." Thursday, Feb. 7 in Corwin Pavilion.

Pascal Boyer, the Henry Luce Professor of Individual and Collective Memory at Washington University in St. Louis, Mo. "Gods, Spirits, and the Mental Instincts that Create Them." 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 8. Isla Vista Theater.

Michael Ruse, Lucyle T. Werkmeister Professor of Philosophy at Florida State University. "Darwinism and Atheism: A Marriage Made in Heaven?" 7 p.m. Thursday, March 7. Corwin Pavilion.

Bruce Tiffney, professor of geological sciences UC Santa Barbara.

"The Origins of Science in Religion; or, Parents and Offspring Should Respect Each Other."

7 p.m. Friday, March 8. Isla Vista Theater.

Harold Oliver, professor emeritus of philosophy of religion at Boston University.

"The Complementarity of Science and Religion." 7 p.m., Thursday, April 11, Isla Vista Theater.

Thomas Carlson, associate professor of religious studies at UC Santa Barbara. "Modernity and the Mystical: Science, Technology, and the Task of Human Self-Creation." 7 p.m. Friday, April 12. Isla Vista Theater.

Hilary Putnam, Cogan University Professor (emeritus) at Harvard University. "The Depths and Shadows of Experience." 7 p.m., Thursday, May 9.

Corwin Pavilion.

Bruno Latour, philosopher, anthropologist, author.

"The Specific Regime of Enunciation of Religious Talk."

7 p.m. Friday, May 10. Corwin Pavilion.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society.

All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.