

in favor of a universal extent than a limited atonement view. He asserts the great scholastic theologian Thomas Aquinas interpreted key texts like John 1:29, 1 Timothy 2:4–6, and 1 John 2:2, as supportive of the universal extent of God’s atonement (24). Theological counter-currents were evidenced within both Reformed and Arminian camps and were part and parcel of theological debate long before the sixteenth century.

Third, some 27 times throughout the book, the reader encounters the central question being addressed, “For whom did Christ die?”<sup>7</sup> Allen answers the question with an affirming “for all sinners of all time” (791). All who repent and believe the gospel will be saved.

This book would be a challenge for undergraduate students but should be required reading at the graduate and doctoral levels of theological education. The historical scope, the comprehensive narrative, the theological concepts, and the candid analyses of all points of view make this book an excellent primer on how to do systematic theology.

- Wayne VanHorn, Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi

***God and Cosmology: William Lane Craig and Sean Carroll in Dialogue.* Edited by Robert B. Stewart. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016. 262 pages. Hardcover, \$79.00.**

In 2005, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) began hosting the Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum in Faith and Culture, a venue for respected scholars of differing opinions to converse on important subjects in religion and culture. The forum features a central dialogue followed by several paper presentations. Robert Stewart (professor of philosophy and theology, NOBTS) has been working to publish each annual forum’s dialogue and papers to bring its fruits to the attention of the larger academic and religious community. *God and Cosmology* is his seventh volume of the Greer-Heard forum series to be published.

*God and Cosmology* records the 2014 forum, the subject of which was the existence of God in light of contemporary cosmology. The primary question being debated was, “Does the evidence of contemporary cosmology render God’s existence more probable than it would have been without it?” (3). The book transcribes the featured debate (Stewart notes this year’s forum was more of a debate than a dialogue) between William Lane Craig (professor of philosophy, Talbot School of Theology and Houston Baptist University) and Sean Carroll (research professor of theoretical physics, California Institute of Technology). The book also provides the papers presented by Tim Maudlin (professor of philosophy, New York University), Robin Collins (distinguished professor of philosophy, Messiah College), Alex Rosenberg (R. Taylor Cole Professor of Philosophy, Duke University), and James D.

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<sup>7</sup>Using the digital version of *The Extent of the Atonement* on Kindle, the reviewer found 27 instances of the use of “For whom did Christ die?” in the book.

Sinclair (Senior Warfare Analyst, U.S. Navy). *God and Cosmology* also includes, for the first time in this series, the responses and counter-responses to the papers presented.

It is difficult to evaluate a book that transcribes the proceedings of a forum without that evaluation somehow saying something about the forum itself. So, to restrict evaluation to the book as much as possible, I will focus on comments that Stewart makes in his preface and introductory essay as these are exclusive to book and reveal its merits. In his preface, Stewart notes that the book is unique in that “brings together the best minds from both science and philosophy in one volume and allows them to speak to each other, and respond to each other—in one place” (xiv–xv). Any book that does this is a valuable resource. But being a transcription, one might wonder if the book is preferable to an audio recording. I think so—and it seems that Stewart may as well, for he later alludes to the fact that rhetoric and mood can often trump reason in debates. There is a reduced risk of being distracted by the eloquence (or lack thereof) that accompanies speeches when reading their transcriptions instead of listening to a recording. Reading a transcription allows one to focus on the claims being made and not on the manner in which they were articulated. This is especially important for considering the existence of God in light of contemporary cosmology since the tendency of many on all sides of this issue is to marginalize those with whom they disagree.

Additionally, Stewart’s introductory essay is very helpful in preparing readers to navigate the disputations. In the debate, Craig repeatedly emphasized that the forum had a specific question that it was trying to answer and accused Carroll, Maudlin, and Rosenberg of presenting red herrings when they raised other issues. Nevertheless, secondary though these issues may be, they are related in important ways to the primary question of the debate, revealing that the subject of God and cosmology is rather complex. Stewart is to be commended for his willingness to devote some space introducing readers to these secondary (and sometimes preliminary) issues (6–14). This fits well with his intention for the book to serve as a starting point for those wishing to hear from the best scholars on the existence of God in relation to contemporary cosmology (xv).

Unfortunately, if the book is meant to be a starting point, then it faces one problem. Anyone approaching a new field of study faces a learning curve, so to say that a book is difficult does not *ipso facto* rule it out as a good starting point. But if Sean Carroll was correct in his opening speech at the forum when he said that the role of God in bringing about the universe is not an idea taken seriously by scientists at cosmological conferences (36–37), then this suggests that readers of *God and Cosmology* will most likely be theists. Theists might find the philosophical portions of *God and Cosmology* a bit challenging, but most, I think, will find these portions manageable. Stewart’s introductory essay provides some context and explanation that will help novices. Participants in the forum, however, reference scientific ideas like Boltzmann brains, the Borde-Guth-Vilenkin theorem, and de Sitter space, presupposing at least a general knowledge of contemporary physics.

Although there are undoubtedly theists who are scientifically trained or are familiar with contemporary physics, my experience has been that most theists—and most Christians—are woefully inept on these subjects. Given this, I am not sure if it is accurate to describe *God and Cosmology* as a starting point. Stewart informed me, via personal communication, that this is by far the most technical book of the Greer-Heard forum series. In that case, it would have been prudent to include a section in his introductory essay outlining at least a general picture of contemporary physics and perhaps some brief explanations of some of the more complex scientific theories brought up in the debate. This would help the book serve better as a starting point. As it stands, I suspect that many theists will at the very least need to brush up on their physics before they approach this debate—and, I would add, if they are to give the arguments of Carroll, Maudlin, and Rosenberg a fair hearing.

One other problem with the book has to do with the format. The book includes several figures illustrating the presenters' points. Having not attended the forum in person, I can only assume that these are reproductions of various PowerPoint slides the presenters used in their arguments. Most of these reproductions are of poor quality and distract from the sharpness of the main text. This is most likely a fault of the publisher—and one that I find puzzling. One would expect Fortress Press to include high-quality illustrations for a book with a hefty price tag.

Overall, even if readers need to brush up on their knowledge of philosophy or contemporary physics, *God and Cosmology* is rewarding. Most of the participants in the forum presented strong arguments for their positions and thoughtful rebuttals of opposing arguments, which is desirable if a forum like this is to succeed. In transcribing the forum, the book (as Craig noted in his concluding comments) revives the valuable medieval tradition of publishing debates as a way of inciting commentary and criticism (252). I hope that Stewart continues this tradition of making the Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum in Faith and Culture available to the reading public.

- Stephen D. Mizell, Scarborough College, Fort Worth, Texas

***God Has Spoken in His Son: A Biblical Theology of Hebrews.* By Peter T. O'Brien. *New Studies in Biblical Theology* 39. Edited by D. A. Carson. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016. 256 pages. Paperback, \$25.00.**

Peter T. O'Brien is professor emeritus and former vice principal and senior research fellow in New Testament at Moore College in Sydney, Australia. He has authored and edited more than a dozen books and numerous articles, and he is perhaps best known for his major commentaries on Hebrews and Ephesians in the Pillar New Testament Commentary (PNTC) series, Philippians in the New International Greek Testament Commentary, and