


# Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life

*By Stephen Jay Gould*

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**Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life** By Stephen Jay Gould

Writing with bracing intelligence and clarity, internationally renowned evolutionist and bestselling author Stephen Jay Gould sheds new light on a dilemma that has plagued thinking people since the Renaissance: the rift between science and religion. Instead of choosing them, Gould asks, why not opt for a golden mean that accords dignity and distinction to each realm?

In his distinctively elegant style, Gould offers a lucid, contemporary principle that allows science and religion to coexist peacefully in a position of respectful noninterference. Science defines the natural world; religion our moral world in recognition of their separate spheres of influence. In exploring this thought-provoking concept, Gould delves into the history of science, sketching affecting portraits of scientists and moral leaders wrestling with matters of faith and reason. Stories of seminal figures such as Galileo, Darwin, and Thomas Henry Huxley make vivid his argument that individuals and cultures must cultivate both a life of the spirit and a life of rational inquiry in order to experience the fullness of being human.

In *Rocks of Ages*, Gould's passionate humanism, ethical discernment, and erudition are fused to create a dazzling gem of contemporary cultural philosophy.

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## Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Revered and eminently readable essayist Stephen Jay Gould has once again rendered the complex simple, this time mending the seeming split between the two "Rocks of Ages," science and religion. He quickly, and rightfully, admits that his thesis is not new, but one broadly accepted by many scientists and theologians. Gould begins by suggesting that Darwin has been misconstrued--that while some religious thinkers have used divinity to prove the impossibility of evolution, Darwin would have never done the reverse.

Gould eloquently lays out not "a merely diplomatic solution" to rectify the physical and metaphysical, but "a principled position on moral and intellectual grounds," central to which is the elegant concept of "non-overlapping magisteria." (Gould defines *magisteria* as a "four-bit" word meaning domain of authority in teaching.) Essentially, science and religion can't be unified, but neither should they be in conflict; each has its own discrete magisteria, the natural world belonging exclusively to science and the moral to religion.

Gould's argument is both lucid and convincing as he cites past religious and scientific greats (including a particularly touching section on Darwin himself). Regardless of your persuasions, religious or scientific, Gould holds up his end of the conversation with characteristic respect and intelligence. *--Paul Hughes*

Review
"Gould is at his brilliant best... A truly convincing performance" Guardian "Convincingly argued and thought provoking-Gould must rank as one of the leading scientific essayists of his generation and, as ever, he is in total command of his subject matter. He steers a deft route through contentious waters, but manages to retain a humorous edge, that keeps the book both engaging and highly entertaining. Gould provides the literary magic to deliver a light-hearted read" Irish Times "Concise, eloquent and passionate. It is a marvellous work. Gould speaks clear, sound sense, and Rocks of Ages should be required reading not only for scientists and religious people, but for anybody who cares about the quest for meaning" Independent "This marvellous extended essay should have been the real lost book of the New Testament. Gould, arguably our greatest living popular science essayist, has many joyful enthusiasms. Among them are eternity, Charles Darwin and baseball-Gould has such insatiable and infectious enthusiasm for the intellectual challenge and fascination of being a mere speck in a vast universe" Scotsman "Rocks of Ages is easy and enjoyable to read. It contains many charming illustrations and interesting insights" Sunday Telegraph

From the Inside Flap
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**From reader reviews:**

**Christopher Patton:**

Now a day people who Living in the era where everything reachable by talk with the internet and the resources included can be true or not need people to be aware of each data they get. How people have to be smart in obtaining any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Studying a book can help people out of this uncertainty Information specially this Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life book since this book offers you rich details and knowledge. Of course the info in this book hundred per-cent guarantees there is no doubt in it you know.

**Maria Gardner:**

The book with title Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life has a lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. This specific book exist new information the information that exist in this e-book represented the condition of the world currently. That is important to yo7u to find out how the improvement of the world. This kind of book will bring you throughout new era of the syndication. You can read the e-book on your own smart phone, so you can read it anywhere you want.

**Shannon Blackshear:**

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