



Published on NCSE (<https://ncse.com>)

[Home](#) > Arthur Peacocke dies

SHARE TWEET EMAIL [PRINT](#) [1]

[NCSE Staff](#) [2]

10.26.2006

[Arthur Peacocke dies](#) [3]

The biochemist-turned-theologian Arthur Peacocke died on October 21, 2006, at the age of 81, according to the *Telegraph's* [obituary](#) [4] (October 25, 2006). Born in 1924 in Watford, Peacocke trained at Oxford University as a biochemist, and researched the physical chemistry of DNA at the University of Birmingham and Oxford. A sermon from William Temple, then the Archbishop of Canterbury, prompted him to re-evaluate his undergraduate agnosticism, itself a reaction to his adolescent embrace of evangelical Christianity. He began a systematic study of theology at Birmingham, leading to his ordination in the Church of England in 1971. In 1973, he became Dean of Clare College, Cambridge, but then returned to Oxford in 1985 as a fellow of St. Cross College, then Catechist at Exeter College and honorary chaplain and honorary canon at Christ Church Cathedral.

Among Peacocke's influential books are [Theology for a Scientific Age](#) [5], [Creation and the World of Science](#) [6], and the collection [Evolution: The Disguised Friend of Faith?](#) [7]. His influence was also manifest in his fostering of community among scholars of science and religion: he was the founder and first director of the [Ian Ramsey Centre](#) [8] at Oxford University, a founding member of the [International Society for Science and Religion](#) [9], and the founder and first warden of the [Society of Ordained Scientists](#) [10]. In 1993, Peacocke was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire; in 2001, he received the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, donating a substantial portion of the approximately one million dollar award to the Ian Ramsey Centre.

Although Peacocke believed in God as Creator, he was no friend of creationism, and sought to accommodate evolution in his theology. In his lecture "Welcoming the 'Disguised Friend' -- Darwinism and Divinity," Peacocke deplored "the way in which the 'disguised friend' of Darwinism, more generally of evolutionary ideas, has been admitted (if at all) only grudgingly, with many askance and sidelong looks, into the parlours of Christian theology," adding, "I believe that it is vital for this churlishness to be

rectified in the last decade of the twentieth century if the Christian religion (indeed any religion) is to be believable and have intellectual integrity enough to command even the attention, let alone the assent, of thoughtful people in the beginning of the next millennium."

[General](#) [11]

[2006](#) [12]

[International](#) [13]

[+ read](#) [3]

Source URL: <https://ncse.com/news/2006/10/arthur-peacocke-dies-00912#comment-0>

Links

[1] <https://ncse.com/printpdf/12982>

[2] <https://ncse.com/users/ncse-staff>

[3] <https://ncse.com/news/2006/10/arthur-peacocke-dies-00912>

[4] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/10/25/db2501.xml>

[5] <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0800627598?ie=UTF8&tag=nationalcenter02>

[6] <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0199271690?ie=UTF8&tag=nationalcenter02>

[7] <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1932031723?ie=UTF8&tag=nationalcenter02>

[8] <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~theo0038/>

[9] <http://www.issr.org.uk/>

[10] <http://home.earthlink.net/~jjkeggi/SOSc/>

[11] <https://ncse.com/general>

[12] <https://ncse.com/news/2006>

[13] <https://ncse.com/news/international>