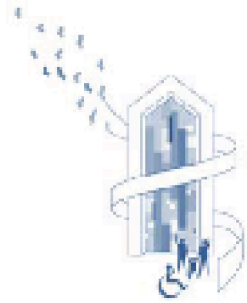


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# FAITH4ALL

## Inclusive Times

### Latest Edition:

This issue of the **Inclusive Times** will look at the subject of cosmogenesis.

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### Cosmogenesis

Recently I read the book [Cosmogenesis: An Unveiling of the Expanding Universe](#), written by [Brian Thomas Swimme](#). The book *Cosmogenesis* is an autobiography of Dr. Swimme as he attempts to come to terms with his scientific understanding of the expanding universe and answer the question “What is the meaning of all of this?” In this journey, he works with the Episcopal priest, [Father Matthew Fox](#), as well as with [Father Thomas Berry](#)<sup>1</sup> in search of answers to this important existential question.

In addition to this book being autobiographical, “it is also in the tradition of cosmology in that these conversations were woven around the major features of the expanding universe.” It is a really fun and relatively easy read, despite the subjects being the rather heavy subjects of cosmology, the expanding universe, and the making of meaning!

Starting from a fundamental level, Dr. Swimme points out how intimately we humans are connected with the cosmos, how many of the cells in our body are composed of atoms which are merely star dust, and that we are energized by systems of organization that trace back to the beginning of the universe. Indeed, he says that “each of us is an elegant construction of the universe!”

Secondly, Dr. Swimme points out that everything, and I mean **EVERYTHING**, functions in relation to other things: nothing maintains existence except in relation to other objects in existence. For example, a neutron, if left alone, will decay after a few minutes. But if that same neutron enters into a relationship with a proton, it can exist for billions of years. A neutron in relationship with a proton is fundamentally different from a neutron all by itself.

The same is true of life on our planet which for eons consisted solely of single-celled organisms, each one smaller than the sharp end of a pin.

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<sup>1</sup> See the website <https://storyoftheuniverse.org/books/cosmogenesis/#:~:text=It%20is%20in,the%20expanding%20universe.>

After three billion years, they entered into relationships with one another, relationships which brought forth whales, dinosaurs, and oak trees. What needs to be appreciated is that nothing more than these single-celled organisms were involved. Nothing came to Earth from the outside. Relationships transformed tiny cells into large animal bodies with intricate animal minds. We exist solely because of changing relationships to our environment!

While the traditional explanation of our creative cosmos has been that it was driven by a deity, usually thought of as benevolent and life sustaining. This way of thinking is possible; however, Dr. Swimme, as well as a great many other scientists and otherwise trained scholars, have come to the conclusion that it seems that a creative drive is inherent in everything that exists! This drive works in contravention to the 2<sup>nd</sup> law of thermodynamics (which says that, in all closed systems, the order and structure of the system will eventually tend toward randomness). Swimme states “Matter is not inert or passive. Matter’s intrinsic dynamism is the cosmic form of intention”<sup>2</sup> (Swimme 236).

<sup>2</sup> Swimme, BT. *Cosmogenesis: An Unveiling of the Expanding Universe*. Berkeley, Counterpoint, 2022,

Indeed, the physicist Freeman Dyson and scholar at Princeton’s Institute for Advanced Study, summarized the observation of the “fine tuning” of the universe, the exact matching of various physical constants and properties of interactions for the development of life, is summarized in a single phrase: “*The more I examine the universe and study the details of its architecture, the more evidence I find that the universe in some sense must have known we were coming*”<sup>3</sup>.

In this book, Dr. Swimme details how he came to the “spiritual” understanding of the creative advancement of the universe -- cosmogenesis -- as a result of his scientific studies. Swimme contends that advancement of the universe, though in a way “divine”, is **not** imposed upon it by a separate entity, or god; he sees cosmogenesis as **built into** the very nature of our dynamic universe. This book suggests that our understanding of the nature of the dynamic universe and cosmogenesis is broadly in agreement with more traditional notions of creation, though his notions of cosmogenesis are much more scientifically-based and are, importantly, a testable understanding life’s evolution from what existed early in the development of our universe.

**I recommend this book to you all!**

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<sup>3</sup> Dyson, Freeman. *Disturbing the Universe*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.

**We hope you are enjoying our winter weather and praying for even more snow!**

### **Future Inclusive Times Topics:**

- In our next *IT* issue, I hope to outline how one can understand the notion of cosmogenesis as embedded in the thinking of process theology.
- **Could readers of the IT suggest possible topics for future articles???**



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