Evolution, cooperation and the question of God

Is there a future for “natural theology”?

ACU public lecture - Professor Sarah Coakley

In this lecture Sarah Coakley is concerned with the way that evolution has been purveyed in the last generation as ‘selfishly’-oriented genetically, yet devoid of either positive meaning or discernible structure. Does evolution really bespeak nothing but competitive ‘selfishness’, or is there some alternative that might itself enhance the expansion of human altruism to face pressing contemporary political, ethical and ecological crises?

Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity in the Divinity Faculty at Cambridge University from 2007-2018, Sarah Coakley was previously Mallinckrodt Professor of Divinity at Harvard University (1995-2007). From 2018-2020 she is Honorary Professor at St Andrews University, and from 2019 Visiting Professorial Fellow at the Australian Catholic University (Melbourne and Rome). She is a Life Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, a member of the European Academy of Arts and Sciences, and holds honorary degrees from the Universities of Lund, St Andrews, Toronto (St Michael’s College), and London (Heythrop College). Sarah has led major research projects in theology and the biological concept of evolutionary cooperation, and has written extensively on Christian theology and feminism.