

CTNS Public Forum

Clones, Sin, and Extinction:

Theological Anthropology in Light of Evolution

Braden Molhoek



While great strides have been made regarding the incorporation of the insights of science into our understanding of creation and humanity's place in the universe, not enough work has been done to show how these kinds of insights affect our understanding of human nature. This forum will examine three ways in which the insights of science help inform theological anthropology. In the context of the human cloning debate, misunderstandings about the human genome found in the argument in *Donum Vitae* and *Dignitas Personae* will be critiqued and then potential reasons people might wish to pursue cloning will be evaluated.

Reinhold Niebuhr's theological anthropology rejects an historical fall, emphasizes humanity's place as a created creature, but is not reductionist, allowing the insights of science to inform it. In particular, attention will be given to Niebuhr's understanding of original sin and original righteousness in light of evolution and how this might influence the articulation of theological ethics. Perhaps the greatest challenge to evolution and human nature is the possibility of human extinction. The final issue raised is whether there is a theological difference between extinction through dying out or extinction through continued evolution.

Braden Molhoek is a Ph.D. candidate in Ethics and Social Theory at the Graduate Theological Union. He has received a B.A. with a double major in Genetics and Religion from Ohio Wesleyan University, an M.T.S. from Boston University School of Theology, and a Certificate in Religion and Science (Bioethics track) from the Boston Theological Institute. His research interests include bioethics, how the theology and science dialogue can inform theological ethics, and virtue ethics. Braden has spoken to a stem cell lab at UCSF, presented several times at the Zygon Student Symposium, the Pacific Coast Theological Society, and at the 2012 meeting of the American Academy of Religion.

Lecture and Discussion

7:00 pm Thursday, April 25, 2013

Dinner Board Room, Graduate Theological Union, 2400 Ridge Road, Berkeley

Free Admission – For further information, call CTNS at (510) 848-8152 www.ctns.org

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