

Dr Peter Vardy was Vice Principal of Heythrop College, University of London, from 1999 to 2011 and has been credited with doing more to get young people choosing to study Religion in schools than anybody else. The author of fifteen bestselling books – including “The Puzzle of Ethics” for HarperCollins – Dr Vardy has worked with organisations such as UNESCO, UNHRC and the IBO. He has been a consultant for television series in the UK and is a familiar voice on radio and in newspapers and magazines in Australia.



“Peter Vardy is a fantastic lecturer who made us realise what it will mean to truly participate in today’s society. I would highly recommend going to one of Dr Vardy’s conferences, especially if you want to expand your worldview. He is confronting, smart and funny. I’m glad I went.”

Y12 Student, Brisbane “Character” conference, May 2016

Student comments from Marist College, Ashgrove QLD (May 2016)...

“Peter Vardy is fantastic. You can no longer simply say our purpose in life is to be happy. My mind has just been blown apart!”

“The conference was really thought provoking. It was a pleasure to be taken out of my comfort zone and to explore ideas in detail that may not have occurred to me otherwise. The topics that were explored I found to be both relevant and interesting. I much enjoyed the day and would definitely urge others to attend.”

“After attending Dr. Vardy’s conference I am now much better equipped to evaluate a situation and consider the ‘benefits’ associated with specific situations. I found his points on perspective very relatable and the idea of there being a different perspective for each person very true – this was made clear during the afternoon debate.”

Wendy Rowe (trading as Wombat Education) has been organising training conferences across Australia, NZ, Hong Kong and Singapore since 2007.

Wombat Education aims to help schools and teachers improve the standard of their offering in Religious and Values Education and Philosophy as well as to support provision for Gifted and Talented students.

By combining academic rigour with relevance to the modern world, Wombat conferences show how important it is that young people become particularly familiar with themes in Philosophy, Ethics and Religion for their development into adults.

To Book...

Student places for **A Grand Design Science, Ethics and Religion in Dialogue** cost \$30 each with a free place for teachers accompanying 12 students or more.

Registration will take place at 9.30am for a prompt 10am start. The conference will conclude at 2.30pm.

Morning tea and a light lunch will be provided for teachers but no refreshments are provided for students who should bring a water bottle and a packed lunch.

Discounts available for 100+ students.

Detailed notes, supplementary resources and extension reading suggestions will be provided which can be loaded onto the school’s intranet for students’ use.

Bookings must be made through Wendy Rowe.

To reserve your place, please email or telephone Wendy Rowe, or bookings can also be made via the website.

An invoice will be forwarded with payment instructions.
www.wombateducation.com/bookings
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A Grand Design

Science, Ethics and Religion in Dialogue

with **Dr Peter Vardy**
An intensive one-day event for senior students,
the leaders of tomorrow’s world

2017

Adelaide 8th May, Melbourne 10th May, Canberra 12th May,
Brisbane 15th May, Toowoomba 17th May, Cairns 22nd May,
Sydney 24th May, Hobart 25th May



www.wombateducation.com

Dr Peter Vardy has been running the best attended student events related to religion, ethics and philosophy in Australasia and across the world for over twenty years. His events are always inspirational, fast-paced and up-to-the minute in terms of content, challenging and academically stretching for everyone – teachers included.

“When we signed up for an ethics lecture with Peter Vardy, the day was advertised as ‘fast-paced’. But that was a lie.

Fast paced is an understatement.

By the end of the day, I had pages of notes on a myriad of topics, from politics to love, Aristotle to Climate Change, Christianity to Voldemort and Harry Potter. Our heads swirled...

but what was most impressive perhaps, was Dr Vardy's relevance. His topics and his use of modern media was just perfect for his adolescent audience. We all enjoyed it.

So much. It was enlightening, with a capital E. I would recommend it for everyone.”

*Review by Courtney, Year 10 student,
Santa Sabina College, Strathfield NSW (May 2016)*

Lectures include plenty of film-clips, images, references to current-events and examples as well as opportunities to discuss and debate key points one-on-one, in small groups or in front of the whole audience. Full student resources are provided so there is no need to make reams of notes on the day and there is plenty to support further reading, lessons and extension work after the event.

Sessions will include:

War of the Worlds?

This introductory lecture considers how the relationship between Science and Religion developed from the days of Aristotle through the Enlightenment to the present day. The common idea that science and religion have always or even often been in conflict will be challenged, not least with reference to “God’s Philosophers” of the Middle Ages, and consideration will be given to the origins of the modern trope of Science and Religion being at war.

This session ends with a pairs or small-group discussion opportunity.

The Grand Design?

This session explores Natural Theology, the ancient attempt to prove God’s existence through scientific reasoning. The focus will be the Design Argument and the extent to which it remains a useful support for religious faith following Darwin’s Theory of Evolution through Natural Selection, Auschwitz, the Big Bang Theory and Quantum science. In the second part of this session, consideration will be given to the contemporary arguments advanced by scholars such as Behe, Dembski, Moreland, Ward, McGrath and Lennox – and the extent to which they offer (or do not offer!) potential for science and religion to be reconciled.

This session will conclude with an opportunity to debate the and vote on the motion “This house believes that order and purpose in the universe are best explained by an intelligent designer!”

The Cosmological Revolution

This session explores the ancient Cosmological Argument for God’s existence; as an infinite series of causes and effects is impossible an uncaused causer (which is what everybody calls God) must exist. Did the argument pre-empt the Big Bang Theory and even Quantum Science? Does cutting-edge cosmology support the idea that God could exist – or is any such suggestion naïve? Is the God supported by cosmological exploration compatible with the God of religion or just a feeble “God of the Gaps” about as worthy of worship as the Higgs Boson!

This session ends with an open Q&A session.

Humanity +

The final session turns to the possibilities opened up by genetics to reduce human suffering and even enhance the next generation’s potential for experiencing pleasure. **Pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, mitochondrial donation, somatic cell therapies, CRISPR gene-editing...** today, all these are science fact not science fiction. Exploring both religious (natural law) and non-religious (utilitarian) approaches to decision-making in bioethics, and considering the viewpoints of scholars including Peter Singer and Julian Savulescu, Nick Bostrom and David Pearce, Catholic ethicists Germain Grisez, Charles Camosy and Bernard Hoose, this session will ask what can, will and should we do with the knowledge and capabilities that science has given us and does religion have any role in shaping the future of humanity.

At the end of this session students will be invited to prepare and make a reasoned contribution to a whole-group discussion on germ-line genetic engineering

