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Title: Thinkers in the New Secularism: Stuart Kauffman

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9/5/2008--One of the most exciting developments in the New Secularism, which is the term I use for the growth of a religiously hungry secularism in the world and in which Hallowed Secularism will play a role, is the growing connection between science and religion. One of the best voices in this area is Stuart Kauffman, whose 2008 book, *Reinventing the Sacred: A New View of Science, Reason, and Religion*, I have finally received (it had been lost in the mail by Amazon). Kauffman's major points seem to be to describe the universe—reality—as “ceaselessly creative”. Creativity here means that the goal of a certain kind of scientific viewpoint to reduce all phenomena to matter in motion is in principle unattainable. In other words, physics cannot predict biology. Kauffman conceives of this change in scientific understanding in quasi-religious terms: “One view of God is that God is our chosen name for the ceaseless creativity in the natural universe, biosphere, and human cultures.” There is much more to say about Kauffman, and I will return to him in latter posts, but for now his significance is that he bridges the gap between the science-oriented secularist and religion. I mentioned in a post back in June that Michael Shermer, the publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, has written about Kauffman's book in respectful tones and has considered the possibility that secularists who have closed off religious vocabulary may have lost something crucial. Science is where it is at in this culture and increasingly in the world. When religion has a problem with science, religion suffers. But when science begins to sound in a religious key, there is the potential for important cultural change.