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### May 14, 2014: When Science and Religion Mixed

Bruce Ledewitz

*Duquesne University*, ledewitz@duq.edu

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Title: When Science and Religion Mixed

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5/14/2014—One thing the new Cosmos series has emphasized is the harm that religion has sometimes done to science. Indeed, my fellow atheists have praised the show just for this comfortable assurance. So, imagine my surprise when, in the last episode, the Christian faith of Michael Faraday—one of the most influential scientists in history—was specifically mentioned as a source of comfort and humility. Certainly that is true. One gets neither comfort nor humility from atheism. But this way of looking at religion neglects the aspect of religion as truth. Watching Cosmos' treatment of Faraday, the most significant aspect of his thought seems to have been his certainty that the phenomena of electricity, magnetism and light had to be linked. The theory of electromagnetism was born from that commitment. As I watched, I wondered whether this certainty in the unity of reality was not a result of Faraday's Christian faith. It is not surprising to read in Wikipedia that "[b]iographers have noted that 'a strong sense of the unity of God and nature pervaded Faraday's life and work.'" Modern atheism likes to pretend that it reflects reason and religion partakes of the irrational. Faraday is a reminder that science is possible only when the unity, order and intelligibility of reality are assumed. Science arose in the West out of the Christian conviction that in knowing the world, humanity comes to know the mind of God. Forget whether such a thing as God exists. The unity, order and intelligibility of reality are part of what the word God reflects. That is part of the reason that the national motto, In God We Trust, is not a purely religious sentiment.