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## Godsey's "The god particle: God-talk in a "big bang" world" (book review)

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# Book Reviews

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Godsey, R. K. (2016). *The god particle: God-talk in a “big bang” world*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press. 102 pp. \$20.00. ISBN 9780881465853

Godsey has two earned doctorates (theology and philosophy) and was president of Mercer University for twenty-seven years. Godsey initially presented this material as a series of lectures given at the Mountain Top Lectures in Georgia, which is a place for theologians, scientists, and others to discuss ideas in a safe space. Godsey’s lectures were on the common theme of the interplay between faith and science, whereby the importance of faith and mystery to the facts of science, and the impact of the wonders and discoveries of science to the conversations of faith are elucidated. This book is a revised transcription of those lectures with the addition of a preface and a postscript. Each chapter can stand alone and, while each does add to the theme, they do not necessarily build on each other. Also, since the book derives from spoken lectures, the tone is more colloquial and accessible, which fits its intended audience of churches and faith-based organizations.

Godsey does well at presenting a cross-disciplinary perspective of why faith, often stated as mystery, is necessary for science and scientific exploration. Godsey also provides several ideas that spark contemplation on how the facts and wonder of science influence religion and its discussion of the unknowableness of God. Where this book fails is the disconnect between the level of the topics addressed and the tone of the writing.

Godsey uses topics such as bosons, relativity and the speed of light, and social-religious myths. These topics generally require a college-level education to understand the topic enough to gain value from Godsey’s insights. The tone of the writing and the lack of citations or bibliography, however, remove this work from consideration for college-level religion and philosophy classes, and makes higher-level interactions with Godsey’s work difficult. The “Homebrewed Christianity Guide to” series also introduces heavy topics to general audiences but does so with endnotes. Brian McClaren’s works have a similar audience, but they include some footnotes and partial quotes and references. Godsey has none of these. Because of this disconnect, it is hard to place Godsey’s book as it is neither an introduction to scholarly ideas nor popular literature.

Therefore, it is mostly a primary source document for Godsey's school of thought on the interplay between religion and science.

**Reviewer**

Rory Patterson, Liberty University