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Flannery O'Connor and Teilhard De Chardin: A Journey Together Towards Hope And Understanding About Life (American University Studies)



Synopsis

Flannery O'Connor, the renowned short-story writer, lived and fought a tumultuous battle with lupus erythematosus most of her adult life. In her last five years, she sought insightful and helpful sources to alleviate her struggle with the disease. Among these sources were the ideas and thoughts of a Jesuit-paleontologist-mystic by the name of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, an individual who opened doors of witness to the secular world and attracted suspicious questioning from his Catholic superiors. Like a moth drawn to a flame, Flannery O'Connor, a devoted Thomist, increasingly admired the ideas of Teilhard de Chardin to the point that she incorporated his ideas into her last six short stories in the collection *Everything That Rises Must Converge*. This book adds significantly to the neglected study of Teilhard de Chardin's influence in the later literary development of Flannery O'Connor. This book would be a valuable asset to students and scholars focusing on American literature, Southern literature, twentieth-century Southern female writers, and Flannery O'Connor.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

«Steven R. Watkins» [Flannery O'Connor and Teilhard de Chardin: A Journey Together Towards Hope and Understanding About Life](#) shows how deeply and successfully Flannery O'Connor responded to the thought of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

Watkins applies Teilhard to produce some fresh readings in his survey of a half-dozen of O' Connor's late short stories, but more significantly, he demonstrates that O' Connor responded to Teilhard on a personal level. She used Teilhard to contemplate both how to face a death caused by lupus and how to live the life of a writer. » (Marshall Bruce Gentry, Editor of The Flannery O' Connor Review; Author of Flannery O' Connor's Religion of the Grotesque) « Flannery O' Connor and Teilhard de Chardin: A Journey Together Towards Hope and Understanding About Life » is a brilliant book that juxtaposes the influences of Teilhard de Chardin against Flannery O' Connor's battles with lupus and her Roman Catholic beliefs during the last five years of her life. The book masterfully explores how O' Connor studied and applied Teilhard's theories on progressive diminishment in convergence to six of the stories published in her collection titled Everything That Rises Must Converge (a term taken from Teilhard's The Phenomenon of Man). This seminal work contributes a new way of reading O' Connor's stories and often challenges the assertions put forth by critics from the True Believers' camp, which will then invigorate a lively discourse for O' Connor scholars. Steven R. Watkins has carefully crafted a book that is a must-have for both scholars and educated lay readers. As a Teilhard and O' Connor researcher, Watkins has richly rewarded his audience with an insight into O' Connor's last years and with a fresh critical look at her stories. » (Barbara Bogue, Assistant Professor of Fiction, Ball State University; Author of James Lee Burke and the Soul of Dave Robicheaux: A Critical Study of the Crime Fiction Series)

The Author: Steven R. Watkins earned a Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of Texas at Arlington. He is a Senior Humanities professor at the University of Phoenix and has been teaching there since 2005. He has published and presented articles on Flannery O' Connor, American literature, religion, philosophy, and theology.

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