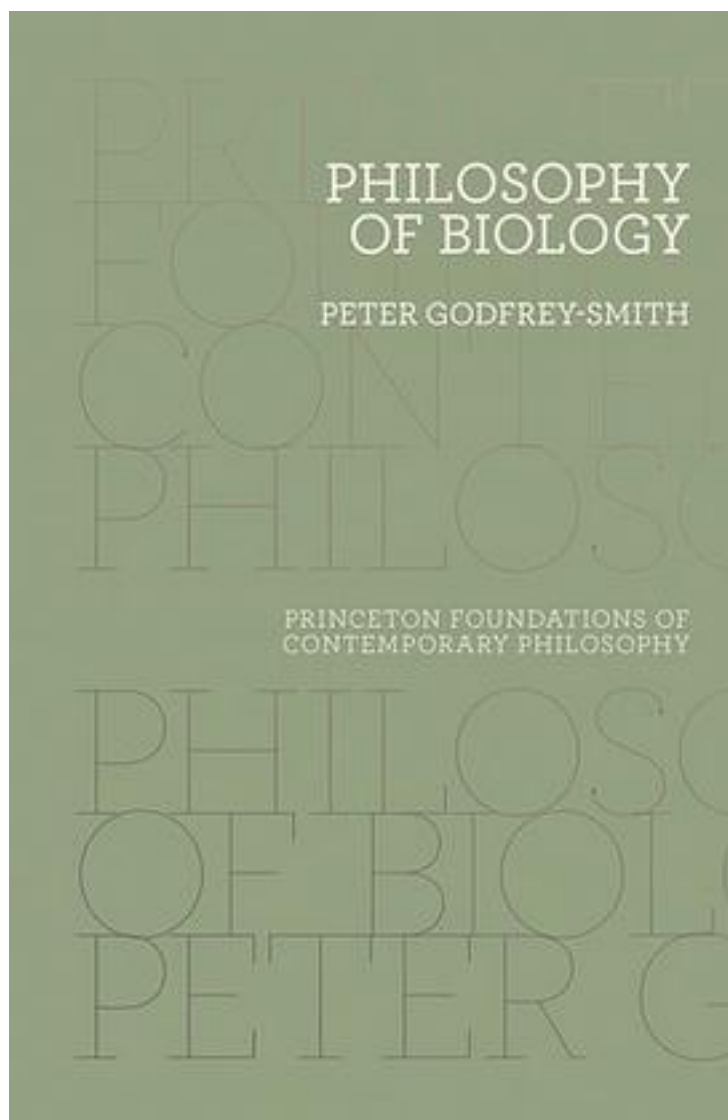


Philosophy of Biology



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This comprehensive new textbook for a rapidly growing field of study provides students new to the subject with an up-to-date presentation of the key philosophical issues. Care is taken throughout to keep the technicalities accessible to the non-biologist but without sacrificing the philosophical subtleties. The first part of the book covers the philosophical challenges posed by evolution and evolutionary biology, beginning with Darwin's central argument in the *Origin of the Species*. Individual chapters cover natural selection, the selfish gene, alternative units of selection, developmental systems theory, adaptationism and issues in macroevolution. The second part of the book examines philosophical questions arising in connection with biological traits, function, nature and nurture, and biological kinds. The third part of the book examines metaphysical questions, biology's relation with the traditional concerns of philosophy of science, and how evolution has been introduced into epistemological debates. The final part considers the relevance of biology to questions about ethics, religion and human nature. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Although Garvey's treatment of philosophy of biology is too restricted for most potential readers, a dissection of its limitations may stimulate some constructive thoughts regarding the way in which new teaching texts might approach philosophy of biology. Despite the appearance of a large number of textbooks on the philosophy of biology in recent years, it is noticeable that none of them has attempted to offer an account of what the philosophy of biology actually is. If not a philosophy of evolution, is philosophy of biology a philosophy of life itself, or is it a philosophy of biological science as it is actually practised? Should the philosophy of biology restrict itself to describing the conceptual problems encountered by biologists, or should it also attempt to influence and transform the way biologists think about the problems they encounter? We believe that what the discipline needs, in addition to updated syntheses of the core debates in the field, is an examination of the way the field is configured, a dissection of its central programmatic objectives, and an exploration of its epistemic relation to biological science, the history and philosophy of science, and perhaps even the public understanding of science. In our view, these sorts of issues would constitute useful starting points for any new books on the philosophy of biology, as well as provide helpful correctives to the unreflective recycling of old or limited debates."

作者介绍:

Career details

Brian Garvey did a B.A. in philosophy and politics, and an M.A. in philosophy, both at University College Dublin; and a PhD in philosophy at Trinity College Dublin. Following that he held a Government of Ireland Post-doctoral Research Fellowship from the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences. Then he lectured at Trinity College Dublin, until joining the department at Lancaster in 2005.

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