The Magician's Twin

C. S. Lewis on Science, Scientism, and Society

JOHN G. WEST, EDITOR

Seattle

Discovery Institute Press

2012

Description

Beloved for his Narnian tales and his books of Christian apologetics, bestselling author C.S. Lewis also was a prophetic critic of the growing power of scientism, the misguided effort to apply science to areas outside its proper bounds. In this wide-ranging book of essays, contemporary writers probe Lewis's warnings about the dehumanizing impact of scientism on ethics, politics, faith, reason, and science itself. Issues explored include Lewis's views on bioethics, eugenics, evolution, intelligent design, and what he called "scientocracy."

Copyright Notice

Copyright © 2012 by Discovery Institute. All Rights Reserved.

Publisher's Note

This book is part of a series published by the Center for Science & Culture at Discovery Institute in Seattle. Previous books include *The Deniable Darwin* by David Berlinski, *In the Beginning and Other Essays on Intelligent Design* by Granville Sewell, *God and Evolution: Protestants, Catholics, and Jews Explore Darwin's Challenge to Faith,* edited by Jay Richards, and *Darwin's Conservatives: The Misguided Quest* by John G. West.

Library Cataloging Data

The Magician's Twin: C. S. Lewis on Science, Scientism, and Society

Edited by John G. West. Foreword by Phillip E. Johnson.

Contributions by M. D. Aeschliman, Edward J. Larson, Jake Akins, C. John Collins, Jay Richards, Victor Reppert, James Herrick, Michael Miller, and Cameron Wybrow.

348 pages, 6 x 9 x 0.94 inches & 1.5 lb, 229 x 152 x24 mm. & 0.67 kg

Library of Congress Control Number: 2012942135

BISAC: SCI075000 SCIENCE / Philosophy & Social Aspects

BISAC: REL106000 RELIGION / Religion & Science

BISAC: BIO007000 BIOGRAPHY & AUTOBIOGRAPHY / Literary

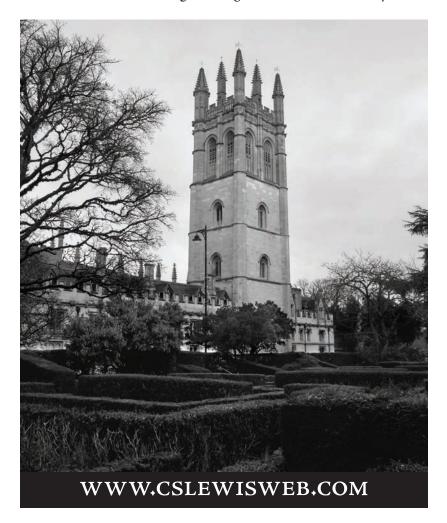
ISBN-13: 978-1-936599-05-9 (paperback)

Publisher Information

Discovery Institute Press, 208 Columbia Street, Seattle, WA 98104 Internet: http://www. discovery.org/ Published in the United States of America on acid-free paper. First Edition, First Printing. September 2012.



EXPLORE MORE Access videos, articles, and additional free resources about C. S. Lewis, including *The Magician's Twin* documentary.



CONTENTS

FOREWORD	
INTRODUCTION	
Science & Scientism	
The Magician's Twin	
C. S. Lewis on Mere Science	
C. S. Lewis on Science As a Threat to Freedom 53 Edward S. Larson	
C. S. Lewis, Science, and the Medieval Mind 59 Jake Akins	
A Peculiar Clarity	
Origins	
DARWIN IN THE DOCK	
C. S. Lewis and Intelligent Design	
Reason	
Mastering the Vernacular	
C. S. Lewis's Dangerous Idea Revisited	

Society

10	C. S. LEWIS AND THE ADVENT OF THE POSTHUMAN 235 James A. Herrick
11	THE EDUCATION OF MARK STUDDOCK
12	C. S. Lewis, Scientism, and the Battle of the Books 293 <i>M. D. Aeschliman</i>
13	C. S. Lewis, Scientism, and the Moral Imagination 309 Michael Matheson Miller
	BIOGRAPHIES OF CONTRIBUTORS
	INDEX

Foreword

Phillip E. Johnson

C. S. LEWIS'S MANY ADMIRERS WILL BE EAGER TO READ THIS COLlection of articles, collected and edited by the Discovery Institute's John West, concerning Lewis's views of science, which he respected, and scientism, against which he warned. The book contains a timely and well-reasoned chapter about Lewis and intelligent design, which seems to have replaced creationism as the alternative most feared and reviled by Darwinists. Another chapter describes the subtle interconnection between *That Hideous Strength* (my favorite Lewis novel) and his much admired philosophical work, *The Abolition of Man*.

As West notes in chapter 1, C. S. Lewis remarked that "[t]he serious magical endeavour and the serious scientific endeavour are twins"—an image that gives this book its title. Lewis meant that modern science and magic have a common starting point in history, arising from efforts to understand and manipulate nature, and they have retained important and perhaps unexpected similarities down to the present. His point makes me think of what scientific studies of identical twins, separated at birth and raised apart, have shown. Such studies consistently demonstrate that, aside from physical resemblance, when the twins first meet each other decades later, they display striking similarities in matters so unexpected and detailed that they seem eerie. It is as if the studies were aimed at proving that, despite all we have learned about stars since 1600, astrology may nonetheless still have an impressive power of prediction.

Of course, the twin studies support genetics, not astrology, but what they teach us about identical twins raised apart makes it unsurprising that the scientific culture of the nineteenth and early twentieth century produced three great wizards—Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud—whose concepts were so spellbinding that they set the intellectual agenda for the entire twentieth century. In many ways, they still hold us in their grasp.

I would add to the list of scientific magicians the "DNA is everything" biologists, including the brilliant popularizer Richard Dawkins and the physicalist neuroscientists who assure us that our thoughts and decisions (including the conclusions of neuroscientists?) are no more than the effects of electro-chemical events in the brain. These have sought to make science indistinguishable from scientism, and thus have inadvertently alerted us to the continuing importance of C. S. Lewis's exposure of the irrationality of scientism.

Overall, this collection charms the reader, not because Lewis has necessarily said the final word on every subject covered, but because his perceptive words illuminate every subject and inspire discussion in which participants can employ their own intellects to move ever closer to the truth.