



Monday April 28th, 2014 at 4:30 PM

Betts Auditorium, Architecture N101, Princeton University



William Hurlbut

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***"From Biology to Biography:
The Ascent to Spiritual Awareness"***

As evolutionary theory has become the unifying principle of interpretation of the organic world, it has raised difficult questions about the source and significance of human life, questions that challenge our traditional concepts of the human person. Beginning with the widest cosmic perspective and proceeding through a series of more focused lenses, it is possible to draw the outlines of a unified vision of the science of human life. From phylogeny (evolutionary origins) through ontogeny (organismal development), we can trace the historical process that culminates in the unique and unrepeatable existence of every human life. Drawing on insights from genetics to neurobiology, we will reflect on the meaning of our embodied form and the relational dynamics of human life that make possible the emergence of freedom, mind, and moral awareness—and the ascent toward spiritual ideals.

*William B. Hurlbut is a physician and Consulting Professor in the Department of Neurobiology at Stanford University Medical Center. His primary areas of interest involve the ethical issues associated with advancing biomedical technology, the biological basis of moral awareness, and studies in the integration of theology and philosophy of biology. In addition to teaching at Stanford, he has worked with NASA on projects in astrobiology and as a member of the Chemical and Biological Warfare working group at Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation. From 2002-2009 Dr. Hurlbut served on the President's Council on Bioethics. He is the author of *Altered Nuclear Transfer*, a proposed technological solution to the moral controversy over embryonic stem cell research.*

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