

## Holmes Rolston III (b. 1932)

Holmes Rolston III was born in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia. His richly varied educational career included studying physics as an undergraduate at Davidson College, then entering theological seminary and completing a Ph.D. in theology at Edinburgh University, Scotland, in 1958. He then worked for some years as a Presbyterian pastor before taking a master's degree in philosophy of science at the University of Pittsburgh. An academic appointment in philosophy followed at Colorado State University, where he became a full professor in 1976.

Rolston has been of central importance to the development of environmental ethics as an academic discipline, both as a profuse writer in the field and as one of the founders of the journal *Environmental Ethics*. He has published widely in environmental ethics, including three important books: *Philosophy Gone Wild* (1986), *Environmental Ethics* (1988), and *Conserving Natural Value* (1994). Rolston argues that the natural world carries intrinsic values that human beings should recognize. These values exist not only at the level of individual organisms but also in species, ecosystems, and natural processes. The existence of such values means that humans have duties toward the natural world, including duties to protect species and ecosystems from destruction. Besides publishing in environmental ethics, Rolston has also written in philosophy of science and religion more generally, including his 1987 book *Science and Religion: A Critical Survey*.

Rolston is associate editor of the journal *Environmental Ethics* and serves on the editorial boards of a number of other journals, including *Environmental Values*. He currently holds the position of University Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, Colorado State University.

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