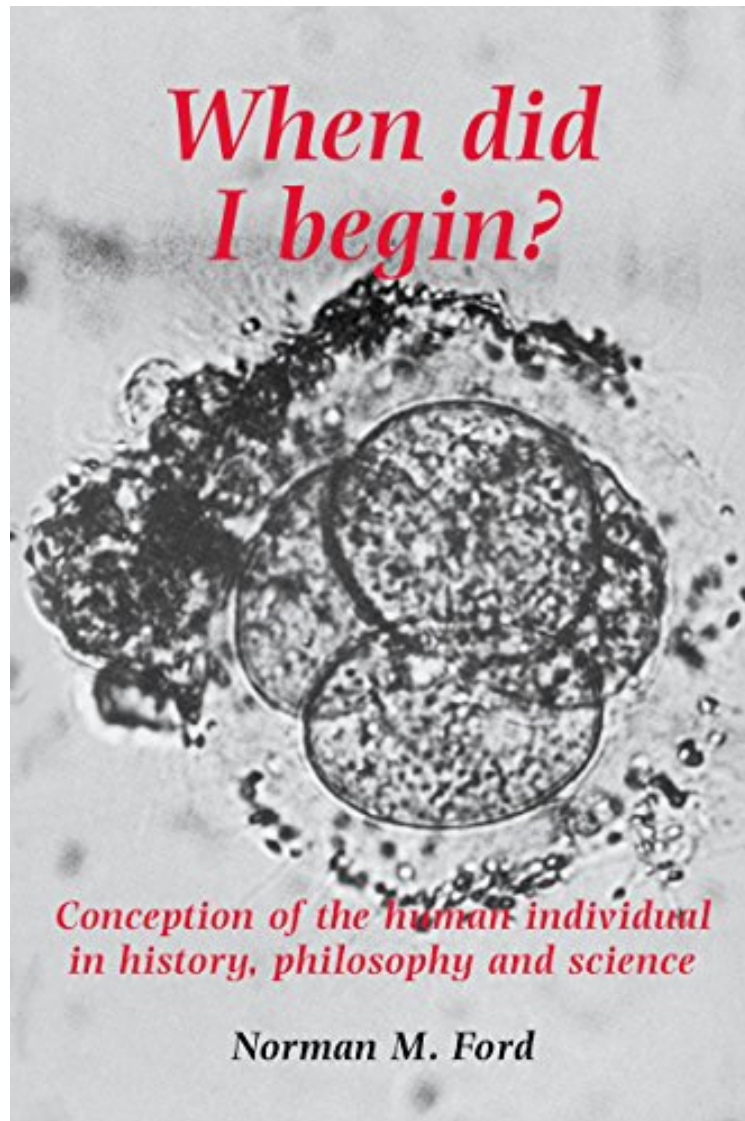


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When Did I Begin?: Conception of the Human Individual in History, Philosophy and Science (Conception of the Human Individual in History and Philosophy)

Norman Ford

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Norman Ford : When Did I Begin?: Conception of the Human Individual in History, Philosophy and Science (Conception of the Human Individual in History and Philosophy) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When Did I Begin?: Conception of the Human Individual in History, Philosophy and Science (Conception of the Human Individual in History and Philosophy):

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Good Metaphysics, Questionable Embryology By A Customer I first read Ford's book and was fascinated by his argument. I found his utilization of Thomistic metaphysics convincing and inspiring as he negotiated a middle course between the traditional Church teaching and the performance theories of those such as Peter Singer. However, despite my clinging belief that Ford's metaphysical analysis is sound. I have encountered enough critiques of his embryological analysis to call his overall conclusions into question. I think this book is still a thought-provoking read for those interested in tackling the subject of the origin of the human person. However, Ford's metaphysical analysis is only as good as the science to which he applies it. Caution is warranted.

When Did I Begin? investigates the theoretical, moral and biological issues surrounding the debate over the beginning of human life. With the continuing controversy over the use of in vitro fertilization techniques and experimentation with human embryos, these issues have been forced into the arena of public debate. The answer to the question, 'When did I begin?' draws on both scientific evidence, and on the philosophical concepts of the presence of the human individual. As a leading theologian and moral philosopher, thoroughly conversant with modern embryology, Norman Ford, a Salesian priest, is well qualified to bridge the gap between the biological and philosophical point of view. Dr Ford argues that a human individual could not begin before definitive individuation occurs with the appearance of the primitive streak about two weeks after fertilisation. While he does not specifically address any moral issues regarding the treatment of human embryos, the author views reading of this book as an essential prerequisite for such moral considerations. The implications of Dr Ford's answer to the question posed in the title will be crucially important for fully evaluating such problems as embryo experimentation and contraception, for a range of readers from embryologists and physicians to moral philosophers and theologians. The book has already stimulated considerable interest and debate, and is now available in paperback for the first time.

"In an area notorious for its polemics, Ford's tone is remarkably evenhanded and calm. The integrity of the argument combined with the richness of scientific data make Ford's book a most valuable resource..." American Scientist