

"Biological functions are much discussed but little understood. Justin Garson appeals to the explanatory depth of functional explanations to develop a powerful general theory of functions. This book will serve as a reference point for future debate."

David Papineau, *King's College London*

"Garson does a superb job of explaining just how central a philosophical understanding of functions is to a wide array of discussions in philosophy and science."

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The biological functions debate is a perennial topic in the philosophy of science. In the first full-length account of the nature and importance of biological functions for many years, Justin Garson presents an innovative new theory, the "generalized selected effects theory of function," which seamlessly integrates evolutionary and developmental perspectives on biological functions. He develops the implications of the theory for contemporary debates in the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of medicine and psychiatry, the philosophy of biology, and biology itself, addressing issues ranging from the nature of mental representation to our understanding of the function of the human genome. Clear, jargon-free, and engagingly written, with accessible examples and explanatory diagrams to illustrate the discussion, his book will be highly valuable for readers across philosophical and scientific disciplines.

Justin Garson is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Hunter College of the City University of New York. He is the author of *The Biological Mind: A Philosophical Introduction* (2015) and *A Critical Overview of Biological Functions* (2016).

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