

# The Incoherence of Evolutionary Origins

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[This article was originally posted on Dr. Henebury's BLOG.<sup>1</sup>]

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet. – Psalm 8:3-6

According to the Bible, man, here meaning male and female (Gen. 1:27), is a very special part of God's creation. According to the scientific establishment we are nothing more than advanced animals, newly arrived upon the scene of earth history, without any more significance than a trilobite or a sea-horse.

Most of us are familiar with naturalistic evolution. This is what I was taught from a young child growing up in England all the

way through high school. And when I attended college I was taught it there too, even though it wasn't really part of the business degree that I was doing.

I wasn't a Christian until I was 25, and was not from a particularly religious household, so I believed more or less in evolution, although always in the back of my mind I could not quite understand how life came from non-life. Neither could I grasp how the marvelous beauty and order that we see in life could be accounted for by random unguided particles banging together. Neither could I quite understand how the theory of evolution could account for the significance that we find in our own lives. We write poetry, we write love songs, we listen to music of one sort or another that expresses our inner emotions, and what we feel about ourselves, and how important we think certain things are to the world and to life itself. We do this all the time; it's natural for the human being to do it, and I just could not understand how this sense of significance could be part of an evolutionary process.

Why did we evolve to see our own significance and reflect upon it? Why try to better it, critique it, and eulogize it? So there were these things that the 'science' did not fully explain to me.

I have listened to and read many evolutionists. I believe that at a

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<http://drreluctant.wordpress.com/2014/07/21/the-incoherence-of-evolutionary-origins-1/>

This is taken from an introductory lecture in the *TELOS* Course "The Doctrine of Man and Sin"

fundamental level, *Evolution is the creation myth of the secularist, of the unbeliever.*

They don't want to believe in the Creator. They don't want to believe that there is a God whom they have to face. Therefore, as theologian Millard Erickson tells us in his *Christian Theology*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 501f.), they have a group of processes into which they pour their faith, which, superficially at least, produce and explain everything that is, including all the diversity of life. All that is needed is 'a combination of atoms, motion, time, and chance.' As Erickson says, no attempt is made to account for these givens; they are simply there, the basis of everything else.

Now this is certainly true. Anybody who believes in evolution will not even try to think behind the ramifications of what they're saying, and will not try to give an explanation for the processes that they say delivered up to us "reality" (which they can scarcely define), as we presently experience it. It is just *there* they say. It all could have been any other way, but it just happened to be *this* way. One famous scientist said that the reason that the world is the way it is, is because it *was* the way that it is. In other words, just things are the way that they are and there's no real reason behind it; no personality, no Creator to guide it or to give it any further significance than just accidental occurrences. All of the matter and energy in the universe, and all of the different combinations of it came from a Big Bang, and the far future scenarios for the universe are either freeze or fry. We're

either going to just freeze, as entropy completely disintegrates, or we're going to fry as the whole thing burns up.

In between the Big Bang and the big freeze there is no significance or meaning other than what we can find in and of ourselves. We make it all up. There is no great explanation, there is no providential plan. Life came from non-life by lightning hitting a "pre-biotic" ('prior to life') pond. Scientific laws weren't laws until after these things conveniently came together. We should not see ourselves as anything more significant than temporary cosmic accidents.

### **Seven Basic (Silly) Assumptions**

Someone has said that, "The basic assumptions of evolution are:

1. Inorganic chemicals gave rise to life (belief in spontaneous generation – in modern garb).
2. Spontaneous generation only happened once. (They believe it only happened once because it is such an astronomically absurdly impossible thing to even postulate. Though some think it happened many times).
3. All living organisms are therefore related (IF the first two statements are true)
4. Single celled organisms [protozoa] gave rise to multi-celled organisms [metazoa]
5. Invertebrates are all related
6. Invertebrates gave rise to vertebrates
7. From fish we get amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals."

These are taken from a book by G.A. Kerkut called *Implications of Evolution*. One wonders if he really thought through the “implications”!

Those are of the seven basic assumptions that evolutionists make about evolution. Other assumptions are made about reality. For example, that morals, or the laws of thought are culturally-conditioned; that there is a correlation between what is in man’s mind and what is outside of man’s mind, and that correlation can be studied, analyzed, and mathematically predicted in terms of art, architecture, technology, and of course, the “science of evolution.”

But why and how did the amazing fine-tuning in the universe evolve? A fine-tuning whereby the universe itself seems to be particularly the way it is so that life can exist upon this planet. Well, if it didn’t, we wouldn’t be here asking about it!” And that’s an answer? These and other presuppositions evolutionists have. They don’t really try to see the convenience of it all; let alone the significance. They just try to ignore the coincidences and ignore the signals of design and purpose all around them while believing an incredible and oft-disproved theory.

### **The Fusion of Confusion**

Evolutionists, except the rather small coterie of Theistic ones, believe every complex and meticulously ordered thing got here through mechanisms which we neither see now nor can see in the evidence left in the past. Even our cognitive faculties and the immaterial laws

of logic and number “evolved.” The Big Bang is the most popular notion of the origin of the universe at the present time, although there is a significant lobby of dissidents. The Big Bang is an explosion. All explosions are chaotic, disorderly things. (The Big Bang exploded flat – not in all directions). In other ways it would have been like every other explosion: confused and irrational.

But from this chaos the vast complexity of the first life sprang: not, it is true, overnight, but over billions of years. From this incoherence the coherent came. Do we ever see coherence, in the form of *sequenced “specified” complexity*, arise out of chaos and disorder? No we do not. Nothing self-orders in complex and specific ways without a code. And a code needs someone to write it. But evolutionary naturalism requires just the opposite.

Furthermore, as we, the observers, recognize and analyze the coherence in the world, our standing (or existence) as observers must be accounted for. This was one of the questions asked by Richards and Gonzalez in their book *The Privileged Planet*. It is a good question. Why is the world comprehensible? Why can we do science?

This question must be addressed by creationists and evolutionists. It cannot be ducked on the pretext that evolution does not concern itself with such matters. Biological evolution does

not. But there is such a thing as “chemical evolution”. There is even a Center<sup>2</sup> for it!

One prominent evolutionist puts the matter clearly:

One has only to contemplate the magnitude of this task, to concede that the spontaneous generation of a living organism is impossible. Yet, here we are as a result, I believe, of spontaneous generation.”<sup>3</sup>

We must not link this use of “spontaneous generation” with the old idea that new life arises from rotting meat. Once this is kept in mind there is nothing wrong with Wald’s use of the term. But talk about the power of presuppositions! He believes in the impossible. And as we shall see, it is not one isolated “impossibility” that evolutionists have to swallow. In fact, it is not even the first.

Has this kind of evolution (a form of abiogenesis) ever been demonstrated? It has not (link<sup>4</sup>). One creationist writer comments:

After decades of investigation, no environment has been discovered that facilitates abiogenesis. The richest inventory of chemical compounds have been zapped, irradiated, dried, rehydrated, and subjected to a host of parameters. All of these processes, however,

have resulted in disorganized matter. In order to provide an appropriate framework for life, a machinist would still be necessary, one who could construct several thousand specific proteins, nucleic acids, carbohydrates, vitamins, and lipids in their exact configurations, all the while maintaining the integrity of each molecule in the collection.<sup>5</sup>

Also, as Meyer explains,

Every choice the investigator makes to actualize one condition and exclude another – to remove one by-product and not another – imparts information into the system. Therefore, whatever “success” these experiments have achieved in producing biologically relevant compounds occurs as a direct result of the activity of the experimentalist – a conscious, intelligent, deliberative mind – performing the experiments.<sup>6</sup>

To an evolutionist this means that “when” somebody produces organic cells from its constituents the cry will go up, “We have discovered the conditions in which life arose.” But would it? While some confidence in the deliverances of science, even defined in reductionistic tones, is warranted, and the great successes of scientists lend encouragement to the belief that more is to come, it is extremely

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<sup>2</sup> <http://centerforchemicalevolution.com/about>

<sup>3</sup> George Wald, *The Molecular Basis of Life*, 339

<sup>4</sup> <https://answersingenesis.org/origin-of-life/primordial-soup/attempts-trace-life-back-chemical-origins-maps-willful-ignorance-hunters/>

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<sup>5</sup> Brian Thomas, *Origin of Life Research Still Dead*.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell*, 335.

doubtful that any of these successes have any logical connection to belief in evolution. Scientists holding to evolution have done marvelous things, and so have scientists *not* holding to evolution. But the principle of testing competing hypotheses is not bettered by a belief which itself has failed to substantiate any of its major tenets.

To any other person any announcement that scientists have found the original environment for life would only prove that trained scientists, knowing the constituents of cellular organisms, have replicated what was (perhaps) previously done. It would certainly not prove it was achieved by undirected mindless processes. If evolutionists could do such a thing (and they can't), they would, in their announcements, be sure to divert attention away from the designed and controlled laboratory conditions and the training and funding of the scientists.

### **The Blind and Ignorant Watchmaker**

Richard Dawkins wrote,

Biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose.<sup>7</sup>

We all know this quote, but behind it lies a steely determination not to recognize what we all do recognize in every other walk of life – design. The title of his book is interesting but misleading. Interesting

because it evokes a scene where someone blind from birth, and having no prior knowledge of watches, proceeds over time to put together one of these marvelous mechanisms in full working order. Misleading because the watchmaker himself, also envisioned as a product of evolution, but being far more complex than the watch, must also be explained. Although Dawkins is being rhetorical, calling evolutionary processes by this name commits the fallacy of reification – a very common fault with these people.

What these sorts of quotes are telling us is that because of their naturalistic bias, these eminent evolutionists will not even consider special creation as an alternative. And as there are just two models of origins, evolution (in their view), wins by default: it must be true no matter how much evidence accrues to falsify it. Operating from such an outlook the evolutionist is doomed to miss the wood for the trees.

Evolution is treated as unfalsifiable, and is treated as such because it is viewed as having so much power to uphold the philosophy of naturalism. It is the only avenue of explanation open to the materialist, and cannot be allowed to buckle under unwelcome scrutiny. It is treated and taught as an unassailable fact. Evolution supports naturalism. Naturalism is the only methodology permitted by evolutionists. Ergo, naturalism must support evolution. It is viciously circular.

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<sup>7</sup> Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*, 1

Writing some time ago, two evolutionists admitted that,

Our theory of evolution has become one which cannot be refuted by any possible observation ; every conceivable observation can be fitted into it. It is thus outside of empirical science, but not necessarily false. No one can think of ways in which to test it. Ideas, either without basis, or based on a few laboratory experiments carried out in extremely simplified systems, have attained currency far beyond their validity. They have become part of an evolutionary dogma accepted by most of us as part of our training.<sup>8</sup>

Things haven't changed:

Science today is locked into paradigms. Every avenue is blocked by beliefs that are wrong and if you try to get anything published by a journal today, you will run up against a paradigm and the editors will turn it down.<sup>9</sup>

But the law of biogenesis holds. Why look for ways to circumvent it?

Biologists know only that all life derives from proceeding life, and that the parent organism's offspring are always of the same kind. The

idea that 'life can come from non-life' is called abiogenesis, which is assumed by evolutionists to have occurred only once or a few times at most in earth history. This conclusion is not a result of evidence, but is obtained because the current dominant worldview in Western science, naturalism, requires a chance spontaneous origin of life.<sup>10</sup>

The blind watchmaker seems to be on a hiding to nowhere.

### Life not from Earth

It is a universal law which, as all scientific laws, has not witnessed an exception: life does not come from non-life. Yet evolutionists, of the non-theistic sort) must teach that it does. Going further back, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, out of nothing comes nothing. No one has ever seen or heard of something (i.e. that which has properties and permits predication) coming into existence from nothing (that which has no properties and does not permit predication). Yet evolutionist must adhere to the contradiction of this very basic principle. That is, unless they want to teach the eternity of matter.

Is it a sign of rationality and a coherent system to flout two empirically static principles of science at the very outset of ones thinking? So how do they get around it?

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<sup>8</sup> E. Birch and PR Ehrlich, *The Journal of Nature*, 1967, number 214

<sup>9</sup> Sir Fred Hoyle, from 'Scientific American, of March 1995', quoted by Andy Macintosh, *Genesis for Today*.

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<sup>10</sup> Jerry Bergman, *In Six Days* – edited by John Ashton, 40

Staying with the life question, one quite popular maneuver is to equivocate on the word "life". Instead of keeping with a basic definition like "a self-replicating organism" (which is a reductionistic and often imaginary concept itself), they talk about "life" within hypothetical extrapolations where amino acids are formed in an ancient "soup" under propitious chance conditions. In this chance scenario these different amino acids came together in one place, beating off all the enormous odds of ultra-violet destruction and threat of contamination and, voila! "Life." A self-replicating cellular system? No. Any DNA? No. What was it then? "Well suppose....." So the story (or a version of it) runs. In evolutionism, organic life must come from non-living compounds. So much the worse for the laws of science.

The problems with getting life started, even granted the excessive gratuity of the 20 correct left-handed amino acids which make up basic proteins, would still remain a fantasy. In fact, as geneticist John Sanford, the inventor of the 'gene gun' has said, "fill the whole world with proteins, and you would still be no closer to getting life. Because proteins do not equal life." This is because of the amazing micro-machinery within even the simplest cell; machinery which is told what to do by a 'code' far more advanced than any computer software we possess.

Knowing the extremely unlikely chances that life could come about on this planet the way many evolutionists had hoped, eminent scientists like Fred Hoyle,

Francis Crick and Carl Sagan believed that it had to start elsewhere and come from outer space (And the complexity of the cell is known to be yet more wondrous than these men knew). Of course, claiming life came from outer space isn't an answer at all (although it might keep the issue of biogenesis off the table for a while longer). We still have to ask, 'How did life start some other place in the universe?' Out of sight, out of mind is really all that is being done here; just a rhetorical trick.

This rhetorical trick is performed all the time by evolutionists. They simply put their imaginations forward as some kind of scientific proof. Therefore, they try to put the burden of proof on someone who says 'Well, how did this happen?' They say, "I'm not sure, but I can imagine it happened this way." If they can imagine it happened that way, then it could have happened that way, couldn't it? This is what Miller-Urey, or Avida or any other like program is. As Stephen Meyer has said about these information fed extrapolations,

Since the lawlike processes of necessity do not generate new information, these combinatorial models invariably rely upon chance events to do most, if not all the work of producing new information. This problem arises repeatedly for models invoking prebiotic natural selection in conjunction with random events, whether Oparin's theories or various RNA-world scenarios. Since natural selection "selects" for functional advantage, and since

functional advantage ensues only after the result of a successful random search for functional information, combination models invariably rely upon chance rather than selection to produce new information. Yet these theories face formidable probabilistic hurdles, just as pre-chance models do.<sup>11</sup>

Here are some fundamental questions to start with:

- a. If the chances of a living cell coming from non-living elements (which themselves came from hydrogen and helium!) are staggeringly small, why believe it?
- b. All living cells contain DNA, but how did the informational instructions (incredibly complex specific code) for each of the cell's operations come about?
- c. As every instance of this kind of instructional information ever known comes from minds, why look for it's cause in mindlessness?
- d. Why because all amino acids are left-handed must that mean all life is related to a common ancestor? (a variety of the compositional fallacy).
- e. In the same vein (and the same fallacy), why because different creatures have features which look similar are they necessarily derived from a common source? N.B. These fallacies are built upon the premise that evolution is true –

- hence begging the question. Do forks and spoons and scissors and whisks have a common ancestor?
- f. Since evolutionists wrongly predicted there would be much "junk DNA" (see Meyer, *Signature*, 406-407) and creationists rightly predicted there wouldn't, why label evolution science and creationism religion?
  - g. How long is it going to be until evolutionists admit that the fossil record, which is the sole source for determining the truth or falsity of evolutionary history, undermines the whole theory?

### The Math

The mathematics on this is just staggering! Michael Denton is not Christian, doesn't believe in God, and he doesn't believe in creationism, but he doesn't believe in the present neo-Darwinistic view of evolution either. He says that it's 'nonsensical'. Writing about the possibility of life starting by chance he says:

As it can easily be shown that no more than 10 to the power of 40 possible proteins could have ever existed on earth since its formation [and Denton believes Earth is billions of years old], this means that if protein functions reside in sequences any less probable than 10 to the power of -40 it becomes increasingly unlikely that any functional proteins could ever have been discovered by chance on earth.

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<sup>11</sup> Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell*, 331

To get a cell by chance would require at least 100 functional proteins to appear simultaneously in one place; that is 100 simultaneous events, each of an independent probability, which could hardly be more than 10 to the power of -20, giving a maximum combined probability of 10 to the power of -2,000.

Evolutionists have got to take the odds (although they often subtract important data to reduce the number). Denton continues:

Recently Hoyle and Wickramasinghe in *Evolution from Space* provided a similar estimate of the chance of life originating, assuming functional proteins have a probability of 10 to the power of -20: 'By itself this small probability could be faced because one must contemplate not just a single shot at obtaining the enzyme, but a very large number of trials such as are supposed to have occurred in an organic soup early in the history of the earth.' The trouble is that there are about 2000 enzymes, and the chance of obtaining them all in a random trial is only one part in 10 to the power of 20 to the power of 2000; that is 10 to the power of 40,000, an outrageously small probability that could not be faced even if the whole

universe consisted of an organic soup.<sup>12</sup>

These numbers are closer to nil than quarks and mesons are to nothing. When you are getting this kind of figure; when you think that 10 to the power of 40 possible proteins ever existed, and yet the chances of life originating by chance is 10 to the power of 40,000, you need to give it up. We are way past Disneyland imagination here. We're in Cuckoo Land.

Again

the probability that even one of these information-rich molecules arose by chance, let alone the suite of such molecules necessary to maintain or build a minimally complex cell, is so small as to dwarf the probabilistic resources of the entire universe.<sup>13</sup>

Evolution couldn't get going. The mechanism of evolution is natural selection, but that cannot be part of the equation at this critical juncture. This is nonsense.

Yet according to Hazen and Trefil in the book *Science Matters*, the first stage chemical evolution, "encompasses the origin of life from non-life." We have every right to say, "No it doesn't!"

And when we have the National Association of Biology Teachers in the USA writing such things as:

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<sup>12</sup> Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, 323

<sup>13</sup> Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell*, 222

The diversity of life on earth is the outcome of evolution; an unpredictable and natural process of temporal dissent with genetic modification that is affected by natural selection, chance, historical contingencies, and changing environments.

We have a right to ask if that is what the fossil evidence demonstrates. It demonstrates the exact opposite. We have a right to proof that genetic entropy does not far outpace beneficial genetic modification. We have a right to inquire about the circularity of the whole idea of natural selection and its power to effect the macroevolutionary change implied in the statement above.

Even if we allow them every pass, they have not come anywhere near proving macroevolution. We could even go so far as the progressive creationists and allow some form of evolution. Thus, Collins observes:

Let us grant that it is possible that some parts of neo-Darwinism are right. Say that animals today are descended from animals that lived long ago and that there has been some process of evolutionary change, the question is however is the grand theory as a whole worth believing? Well, if it depends on claims that haven't been proven, we can say that it hasn't been proven true and if it depends on things that are likely to be false then we can

say that the theory is likely to be false.<sup>14</sup>

That is putting it mildly.

### **After the Impossible Hurdle**

Evolution is the atheists' way out. It is his escape clause from having to face the God who created him. People like Richard Dawkins may convince themselves that it makes atheism intellectually respectable, but they must first convince themselves that naturalism is intellectually respectable.

The problem here is that, as in many walks of life, it is possible to arrange our arguments selectively and with rhetorical conviction while ignoring the issues, even the most obvious ones. So if we begin to stack up the problems: – something does not come from nothing; life does not come from non-life; the mathematics of sequence space (not enough time); the contradiction of using target-oriented computer programs to "simulate" discrete non-targeted chance scenarios; the logical fallacies (question-begging, composition, reification), etc., these problems make the intellectual satisfaction appear rather hollow.

But after such matters as these are engaged, there are still more difficulties. One such is irreducible complexity. First posited by biochemist Michael Behe, and, despite rumours to the contrary, not close to being refuted, this observational theory says that function in highly complex systems requires that all the necessary parts are in position and

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<sup>14</sup> C. John Collins, *Science and Faith*, 270- 271

ready to work for the system itself to be what it is. In Behe's *Darwin's Black Box*, he has looked at the incredibly complex engines in the cells and he has shown that the different features of the cell must all have been there at the same time, already manufactured, and ready to do their jobs. The blind non-teleological forces of evolution cannot explain either the design of these complex and minuscule machines, nor can it explain the simultaneity of these parts; each one functioning the way that it should function. Behe uses a by now well known illustration:

Irreducible complexity' is just a fancy phrase I use to mean a single system that is composed of several interacting parts, where the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to cease functioning. For example, the mousetrap has to have a platform, a catch, a holding bar, a spring, and a hammer in order to function as a mousetrap.<sup>15</sup>

Evolutionists have claimed that since some individual features in these systems are found to do work in other systems, that means evolution could have picked up and selected them to include in a future system. But not only does this fail to address the "irreducible" part of Behe's argument (as noted by him in an appendix to the 10th Anniversary edition of his book), it also lends evolution a prescience it actually does not have – again showing

the proclivity of evolutionists for extrapolation and reification.

### Doing what comes Naturalistically

As many a scientist will tell you, true science *must* – I say *must* – proceed along naturalistic lines. We must seek for natural explanations in the natural world for the phenomena we come across.

Now, on the face of it, the only thing which could be criticized in that sentiment is its doctrinaire flavor. The problem with it is that there are many phenomena which cannot be satisfactorily explained as arising naturally even though they are amenable to observation and experimentation. The method of science should not exclude *a priori* non-naturalistic explanations, because *not* invoking God as the Creator and Designer of nature moves the naturalist beyond experimentation and hypothesis testing into metaphysical dogmatism and its resulting blindness. Phillip Johnson well describes the metaphysical fog which methodological naturalism encourages:

Philosophical naturalism is so deeply ingrained in the thinking of many educated people today, including theologians, that they find it difficult even to imagine any other way of looking at things... Even if they do develop doubts about whether such modest forces can account for large-scale change, their naturalism is undisturbed. Since there is nothing outside of nature, and since something must have produced all the kinds of organisms that exist, a

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<sup>15</sup>Michael Behe in William Dembski & James Kushiner, eds., *Signs of Intelligence*, 93

satisfactory naturalistic mechanism must be awaiting discovery.<sup>16</sup>

Under these conditions it is impossible to do what Kepler or Newton or Maxwell or Faraday did, and do good science while leaving a route open where the facts can lead to God (if Carl Sagan believed the facts could lead to aliens why could they not lead to God?). It is exactly this cognitive rut which one so often sees in the reviews of creationist and I.D. books by methodological naturalists of all stripes. The charges, "they don't understand evolution", or "this writer doesn't know how stages of bone-growth [or whatever] follow evolutionary pathways", etc, show up this often unnoticed slavery of thought. These people cannot conceive of a situation where evolution is wrong or where philosophical naturalism does not equate to doing science.

In his thought-provoking book *Science's Blind Spot*, Cornelius Hunter demonstrates that it was aberrant theological assumptions, fueled by natural theology, that installed and sustained the illegitimate reign of naturalism over science in the first place. It was the dysteleology in the world; the imperfections and extinctions, which God had to be protected from. God, it was thought, would not have made the world less than perfect. Therefore, to invoke God would be to connect Him uncomfortably to the "wrongness" of

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<sup>16</sup>Phillip E. Johnson, "Evolution as Dogma", in *Uncommon Dissent*, William A. Dembski, editor, 30.

nature. The deistic strain in such thinking should not be lost. Whatever, this was not *good* theology. As a result of the hardening of this resolve a questionable philosophical tenet has been turned into an established rule of science.

He observes:

Across the various fields of study, the common requirement is that explanations be naturalistic. And in this grand paradigm there is a grand blind spot. Problems are never interpreted as problems with the paradigm. No matter how implausible, when explanations do not fit the data very well, they are said to be research problems. They must be, for there is no option for considering that a problem might be better handled by another paradigm.<sup>17</sup>

Yet scientific naturalism, Hunter goes on to say,

is not a discovery of science – it is a presupposition of science as currently practiced.<sup>18</sup>

And it is a presupposition which, though it now maintains the naturalistic paradigm, cannot in fact support the the scientific enterprise as a meaningful endeavor. In fact, it is the materialist outlook on life and mind that poses perhaps the biggest obstacle to any sound philosophy of science.

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<sup>17</sup>Cornelius G. Hunter, *Science's Blind Spot: The Unseen Religion of Scientific Naturalism*, 46

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 47

In contrast, the Biblical Worldview provides a basis for the uniformity of nature in God's unchanging character and His covenant with Noah. But it also insists the the existence of the supernatural (God) is the precondition of the natural; that reason must precede unreason because the reverse scenario is impossible, and so non-demonstrable. It has never been experienced by anyone anywhere. This has to do with the laws of information which I shall discuss in the last post. So, something does not come from nothing (law of causality); matter is not eternal (first 2 laws of thermodynamics); life does not come from non-life (law of biogenesis); amino acids cannot thrive in a reduced (oxygen free) atmosphere (2nd law of thermodynamics), but neither can they thrive in a water-based environment (law of hydrolysis). Finally, (though more could be added) reason implies information which cannot come from mindless particles (laws of information). These are laws because they have never been countermanded in our experience.

### **The Definition of Science**

In the course of writing about the idea of science in his Systematic Theology, Reformed writer Michael Horton notes that "Britain's Royal Society was founded by Puritans."<sup>19</sup>

The Puritans saw no clash, either ontological or methodological, in pursuing science as a response to God's

revelation. The fact that God created the world and created man in His image meant that to find out what God had done was both legitimate as to fueling an expectation of discovery, and meaningful because Creation had been endowed with its own integrity apart from God while being supervened by God. In this they were in line with the Reformers like Calvin, who said:

Meanwhile being placed in this most beautiful theater, let us not decline to take a pious delight in the clear and manifest works of God. For as we have elsewhere observed, though not the chief, it is in point of order, the first evidence of faith to remember to which side, so ever we turn, that all which meets the eye is the work of God, and at the same time to meditate with pious care on the end which God had in view in creating it.<sup>20</sup>

Hence, the pursuance of science as *scientia* (knowledge) was seen to be a full-orbed task, unpartitioned as yet by the bifurcation of phenomenal and noumenal; natural and supernatural: all knowledge had some revelatory significance. Alas, the Royal Society does not see the world through the same eyes as its founders.

Saying this does not mean that scientists should not follow certain methods for discovery. These methods will differ depending on the phenomena under investigation, but the thing to be kept in

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<sup>19</sup> Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith*, 339 n.48

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<sup>20</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I. 14, 20

mind is that Christians were *for* science while at the same time seeing no problem with bringing God the Creator into the conversation; not as a replacement for scientific descriptions of the world He has made, but as THE Reality which makes sense of every other reality, and the study of that reality. Indeed, to insist that to evoke God as Cause means science comes to an end usually entails bad theology and falls foul of the law of the excluded middle. To make the issue either/or is both to show ignorance of the rise of the Christian-theistic origins of modern science and to put into practice the blunder of begging the question. If God created the world and He invites us to explore it and to analyze it, most assuredly He does not want us to emit the cry "God did that!" and walk away from our scientific experiments and hypotheses. At the same time He does not want His creatures to do science as if He was not the Designer, Creator and Sustainer of both man's faculties and the extended world which those faculties investigate. Indeed, the dominant idea of science as naturalism cannot itself uphold science as a pursuit because naturalism as metaphysical dogma fails to give a coherent account of either. As Horton rightly says,

The natural sciences... excel in weighing, measuring, observing, and predicting, but they exceed the bounds of their competence when they reduce all phenomena to natural causes.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Horton, *The Christian Faith*, 340

Doing science in God's world as if God isn't there is no less culpable today than it would have been had Adam named the animals while pretending God did not exist. Further, it is no less irrational.

A Big Problem with Scientific Naturalism (In these posts scientific, philosophical and methodological naturalism are used interchangeably).

Cornelius Van Til observed that,

Non-Christian science has worked with the borrowed capital of Christian theism, and for that reason alone has been able to bring to light much truth.<sup>22</sup>

The reason for this is because philosophical or scientific naturalism is not self-justifying. Just because persons of all different persuasions *can* do science does not mean that these same persuasions are competent to act as an apology *for* science and/or the search for truth. David Hume's arguments against cause and effect reduced everything to habitual practices within a state of affairs which could change tomorrow. We are merely "a bundle of perceptions." We cannot know for sure that tomorrow will be as today. In fact, the standard Copi & Cohen *Introduction to Logic* (11th edition) lists that very belief as a classic example of the fallacy of begging the question! Hence, on naturalistic presuppositions the logic of testing

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<sup>22</sup>Cited in Greg L. Bahnsen, *Van Til's Apologetic: Readings & Analysis*, 377

hypotheses breaks down, because it relies on a belief about the future which is empirically closed-off and logically fallacious. A *sine qua non* for science; the principle of uniformity, is not itself open to the vaunted "scientific method" – within the naturalistic approach.

If Steven Pinker, Daniel Dennett or Richard Dawkins are to be believed, we are nothing more than brain chemistry. But if that is "true" then nothing is true and science is a futile self-delusion.

If the rational human mind is merely a biological product, which it must be if naturalistic evolution were true, then the mind is not an independent observer, no matter how complex or sophisticated it may be and it is therefore not truly free to explore or examine reality. The functions of the mind would be produced and controlled solely by the genetic chemical makeup of, and the environmental influences on, each individual. Because of the complexity of the mental faculties, the brain itself being incredibly intricate, there would be some natural variation in thought patterns, So not everyone would think exactly alike but the variations would be like the multitude of variations found in roses or in dogs. Just as 'Peace' and 'American Beauty' are both roses despite their significant differences, and Great Danes and Yorkshire Terriers are both dogs despite their differences, so atheism and theism would simply be examples of natural

variations of human thought and one could not be more true than the other in any objective or absolute sense.<sup>23</sup>

This is science played on purely naturalistic instruments: no strings, no composer, no instruments.

Many philosophers of science have shown that there is no one agreed upon or completely serviceable definition of science (the pronouncements of scientists notwithstanding). The literature is vast (See e.g., Del Ratzsch, *Science and Its Limits*). Stephen Meyer demonstrates well in his books *Signature in the Cell* and *Darwin's Doubt* that he and other I.D. advocates employ the very same tools which Darwin used and which scientists today use. The real issue is not how scientists operate, but which worldview these people operate within.

### Scientists Aren't Fools

A common defense which is heard when evolution and its mother philosophy are questioned is that scientists are not fools. Setting aside the obvious truth that all of us, scientist or no, can and have been fools, I shall narrow the definition down to the meaning that "scientists are aware of what they are doing." And the reply one should give to that sort of answer is, "so what?"

If that seems unkind let me clarify. To the objection that naturalistic scientists have good reasons for pointing to the Big Bang, or homology or the fossil record as proof

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<sup>23</sup> L. Russ Bush, *The Advancement*, 39

that they are on the right track it may be pointed back that this is another *non sequitur*. Michael Polanyi, the famous chemist and philosopher of science, used the example of the premise "all men must die" to drive this home. Speaking of "primitive peoples" he said,

Such people believe that no man ever dies, except as a victim of evil magic... Their denial of natural death is part of their general belief that events which are harmful to man are never natural, but always the outcome of magic wrought by some malevolent person. In this magical interpretation of experience we see some causes which to us are massive and plain... or even irrelevant to the event (like the passing overhead of a rare bird)... The primitive peoples holding these beliefs are of normal intelligence. Yet they not only find their views wholly consistent with everyday experience, but will uphold them firmly in the face of any attempts on the part of Europeans to refute them by reference to such experience.<sup>24</sup>

Are these people fools? No. But then perhaps Polanyi is trying to get us to see that the question is inappropriate. The real question is, "is the worldview true?" to that question the Christian must answer the evolutionary naturalist as he would answer the "primitive" native:

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<sup>24</sup> Michael Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society*, 25.

assuredly not! They have both cut off access to much truth by adopting a false perspective on the world. For as Phillip Johnson observes,

Natural science is thus based on naturalism. What a science based on naturalism tells us, not surprisingly, is that naturalism is true.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Neutrality Myth**

Another popular misconception touted by atheists and naturalistic scientists is that they are neutral in all of this. But that very opinion is a product of their naturalism. As we have said, and as others like Phillip Johnson have shown, within their outlook neither evolution nor the methodology it needs to sustain it are open to falsification. Certainly the rhetoric is there, but the reality something else.

To help them keep the blinders on they are enthusiastic advocates of the unbiblical Kantian dichotomy of phenomenal and noumenal, science and religion, or fact and value. The pragmatic dividends for doing this are immense. What it means is that the naturalist evolutionist can introduce teleology and design to his hearts content within the safe parameters of naturalistic method, while shoving teleological concerns which have Theistic implications into the non-scientific hinterland of "Faith." Thus, it has been shown that,

Historically, purpose (or teleology) was a primary explanation or interpretive category in science. The

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<sup>25</sup> Phillip E. Johnson, *Reason in the Balance*, 8

connections between underlying purposes and observable things were perceived as being strong enough to allow the empirical study of nature to be a source of knowledge about God. Tracing such connections was a popular project for scientists until well into the twentieth century.<sup>26</sup>

One need only think of Faraday's public experiments or Maxwell's having a Latin motto from the Psalms engraved over the doorway of the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge to see the truth of this assertion. Van Til put his finger on the real problem:

The difference between the prevalent method of science, that is scientific materialism, and the method of Christianity, the method of Copernicus and Pasteur, that is theistic science, is not that the former is interested in finding the facts and is ready to follow the facts wherever they lead, while the latter is not ready to follow the fact. The difference is rather that the former wants to study the facts without God, while the latter wants to study the facts in the light of the revelation God gives of himself.<sup>27</sup>

Agnostic writer David Berlinski describes the quandary this bifurcation of reality (more accurately, the exclusion of God) leaves the naturalistic evolutionist in. He

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<sup>26</sup> Del Ratzsch, *Science and Its Limits*, 95

<sup>27</sup> Greg L. Bahnsen, *Van Til's Apologetic: Readings and Analysis*, 176

needs mindless processes to be purposeful:

The Darwinian mechanism neither anticipates nor remembers. It gives no directions and makes no choices. What is unacceptable in evolutionary theory, what is strictly forbidden, is the appearance of a force with the power to survey time, a force that conserves a point or a property because it will be useful. Such a force is no longer Darwinian. How would a blind force know such a thing? And by what means could future usefulness be transmitted to the present?

He concludes:

It is a rule which cannot be violated with impunity; if evolutionary theory is to retain its intellectual integrity, it cannot be violated at all. But the rule is widely violated, the violations so frequent as to amount to a formal fallacy.<sup>28</sup>

So where does the problem lie? In which realm does the penny drop? Van Til tells us,

Eve was compelled to assume the equal ultimacy of the minds of God, of the devil, and of herself. And this surely excluded the exclusive ultimacy of God. This therefore was a denial of God's absoluteness epistemologically. Thus neutrality

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<sup>28</sup> David Berlinski, in *Uncommon Dissent*, ed. W. Dembski, 277

was based upon negation. Neutrality is negation.<sup>29</sup>

The first and last resort of unbelief is to send believing scientists to Coventry by defining "Science" along strictly naturalistic lines. The problem of pretended neutrality as the problem of naturalistic philosophy generally, is a theological one.

### **Natural Theology and Methodological Naturalism**

How can scientific naturalism be a child of Christian theology? That is a good question. One would think that such a methodology, disposed as it is to serve the worldviews of materialists and atheists, and presented by them as indispensable to good science, would have been contrived by them, but such is not the case.

In fact Cornelius Hunter contends that,

What we need...is a clear understanding of what naturalism is. Naturalism's adherents think that it is a scientific discovery, and its detractors think it is atheism in disguise. In fact, it is a rationalist movement built on a foundation of religious thought and traditions that mandate a world that operates according to natural laws and processes.<sup>30</sup>

If this is so, it was thought that those laws and processes would be primed to produce

perfect symmetry – IF God was working within them!

Having said this it has to be noted that although methodological naturalism is seized upon by materialists with fervor, it is not identical with philosophical cum metaphysical naturalism. It was brought into the rule of science by theists. The problem was though, these well-intentioned theists were not paying as much attention to their Bibles as they ought to have done. Hunter notices the case of the great Botanist John Ray, who "would argue on the one hand that nature revealed design but on the other hand that the world was not directly created, as evidenced by its errors and bumbles." (Ibid, 53). These "errors and bumbles" in nature could not, it was thought, be laid at the feet of God. Logically, therefore, they had to come about via purely natural processes.

The erroneous notion under which these theistic naturalists were operating stemmed itself from the dictates of a form of natural theology. In their book *In Defense of Natural Theology*, James F. Sennett and Douglas Groothuis define it this way:

The attempt to provide rational justification for theism using only those sources of information accessible to all inquirers, namely the data of empirical experience and the dictates of human reason. In other words, it is defensive theism without recourse to purported Special Revelation.

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<sup>29</sup> Cornelius Van Til, *A Survey of Christian Epistemology*, 21.

<sup>30</sup> Cornelius G. Hunter, *Science's Blind Spot*, 50

I am not claiming that Sennett and Groothuis endorse Ray's position, but this definition does serve to show how such a position might come about, especially at the dawn of the modern scientific era. As time went on the anti-theists of the Enlightenment took hold of what the theists handed them and employed it with relish. Would that these theists had understood that the Natural Theology which they used to divine nature's "errors and bumbles" was itself shot through with the same.

What causes still more friction is that those who like Natural Theology commonly call it General Revelation. But the two are very different. There is not an awful lot that I would agree with when it comes to the work of William Abraham, but he is quite right in separating the disciplines of General Revelation and Natural Theology. He says it well:

It has been common to run together General Revelation and Natural Theology, but this is clearly a mistake. The doctrine of General Revelation involves an assertion that God is revealed 'generally' in creation – Natural Theology involves an argument from general features of the universe to the proposition that God exists.<sup>31</sup>

The term General Revelation has often been co-opted by natural theologians to *mean* Natural Theology. But General Revelation is a doctrine which is subject to

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<sup>31</sup> William J. Abraham, *Crossing the Threshold of Divine Revelation*, 67 n.7

Scripture while Natural Theology self-consciously is not.

Why this digression to talk about Natural Theology? Because it furnished the original conditions and the rationale for naturalism in science and is still often invoked (sometimes without knowing) by people, be they Christians or unbelievers, to defend methodological naturalism in science. Methodological naturalism came about through poor theology; it is a bastard-child of ill-understood doctrines, and it now legitimates itself through its associations with established scientific procedure and the requirements of evolutionary dogma. Nobody questions its credentials. It serves a bigger purpose.

Indeed, on some grounds not immediately dependent upon Natural Theology, even the evolution hypothesis is not incompatible with Christianity. For instance, Alvin Plantinga, though no evolutionist, in the first part of his *Where The Conflict Really Lies*, has shown that there is no *necessary* conflict between evolution and Christianity. But this is not to say that when it comes down to it there is no incompatibility. Agree with him or not, all Plantinga is saying is that certain approaches to Christian Theology – approaches dispensing with plain interpretation and the problem of death and thorns before the Fall – can theoretically incorporate Neo-Darwinian views.

### **Two Large Obstacles**

Of course, two very large obstacles get in the way of "Theistic Evolution". The first is

the actual text and theology of the Bible, which, if it can perhaps be understood to permit old-earth scenarios, cannot without rude discomfort accommodate evolution and the survival of the fittest. But I am not concerned with that here. It is the second obstacle which I wish to ponder; and that is, the illogic of evolution and evolutionary descriptions of origins.

In these articles I have tried to pinpoint several logical errors in standard evolutionary ideas. I have shown that without the biblical God to ensure that the future will be like the past the whole scientific edifice teeters upon the fallacy of begging the question. I have shown several other incoherences along the way. Still another one is provided by Hunter when he explains about the use of predictions to fortify a theory which is wrong. He gives the example of Ptolemy and observes,

In fact, the idea that an evidence proves a theory is a logical fallacy known as affirming the consequent. So we need to be careful when using predictions to evaluate the truth value of a theory.<sup>32</sup>

This second problem of incoherence will only intensify over time. The tide is turning. Design and Information-theory are pressing their claims. One such designed marvel which was discovered using the tools of science, but fully detectable without methodological

naturalism is the Kinesin<sup>33</sup>. The kinesin is a sort of micro-robotic lacky which walks up and down microtubule highways on two globular feet, hauling things many times its size from one place to another within the cell.

We all know about DNA, but most are not aware of the fact that the "junk" DNA predicted by evolutionists like Philip Kitcher have been shown up to be false, while the predictions of creationist and intelligent design advocates that there would be hardly any surplus has been verified. Here is a articulate description of DNA:

Everyone agrees on how DNA functions; it is a system for coding and storing information. The information is the specific makeup of proteins that the cell manufactures as well as for retrieving that information and sending it to the protein-making factories in the cell. But if what it stores is information, then the message cannot itself be a property of the system. For example the English behind the words on this page doesn't come from the paper and ink that carry the words, it comes for me and not from the paper. In the same way, the information doesn't come from the DNA or the chemicals that make it up and this means that something imposed the information on the DNA and the natural process can't do that because natural

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<http://www.discovery.org/multimedia/video/2014/05/the-workhorse-of-the-cell-kinesin-2/>

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<sup>32</sup> *Science's Blind Spot*, 74.

process just works by the properties of the things involved and information transcends these properties.<sup>34</sup>

The information is even stored on smaller “files” within larger “files” just like on our computers. It is irrational to put this down to undirected non-teleological forces.

Energy must be controlled and directed to achieve particular goals and complete certain tasks, often entailing detailed specificity. This is to say, in every instance we have observed it requires a code and finely-tuned constants to produce complex specific characteristics such as we see all around us in the world, from photosynthesis to DNA and a thousand instances beside. Our increasing awareness of this fact, in tandem with what is now known of the amazing complexity and breathtaking precision of living systems has brought the concept of *information* center-stage.

To give just one example: Every cell contains at least 10,000,000,000,000 bits of information. It contains the whole code needed to build the organism of which it is a part! It contains factories and distribution systems which make two thousand proteins every second! It would take (at time of writing) a supercomputer 10 to the 127<sup>th</sup> power (10 followed by 127 zeroes) years to achieve what real proteins do in *seconds* in terms of generation! And we are supposed to believe matter and motion and the laws of physics evolved it?

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<sup>34</sup> C. John Collins, *Science and Faith*, 276-277

The onset of the computer age has put Information on the map as a third aspect of reality which must be contended with. A worldview that ignores the science of information or that cannot account for information at the most rudimentary level of existence is not a coherent account of the world. Indeed, Bruce Alberts, former President of the National Academy of Sciences in the U.S. has said that scientists will have to take design courses in order to help them comprehend what is being uncovered.

Everyone knows that matter is the main vehicle for information. But as Varghese rightly asks,

How did it become a vehicle for codes and blueprints? We know it takes intelligence to decode the information transmitted by matter. But if decoding requires intelligence, how about the encoding? If information exists prior to matter, what is its source?<sup>35</sup>

A little earlier he notices that Noam Chomsky says that human language cannot come from animal communication systems because of the presence of syntactical and semantic rules (Ibid, 417). Indeed, anyone who knows anything about the languages of the ancient world is aware of the fact that the further back one goes, the more complicated the languages become.

Professor Werner Gitt, former Head of the Dept. of Information Technology at the

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<sup>35</sup> R. A. Varghese, *The Wonder of the World*, 423.

German Federal Institute of Physics & Technology, has said, "Information originates as a language; it is first formulated, and then transmitted or stored." – *In The Beginning Was Information*, 60.

Dr Gitt's presents a set of scientific Theorems in his book, among which is this one:

*Theorem 23: There is no known natural law through which matter can give rise to information, neither is any physical process or material phenomenon known that can do this. – Ibid, 80.*

Further down the page he comments:

Any natural law can be rejected the moment a single counter example is found, and this also holds for these information theorems. After many talks by the author at colleges and universities, both abroad and at home, no researcher could mention one single counter example.

In their essay entitled "Complexity, Chaos and God," Wesley Allen and Henry Schaefer state that,

Complexity theory views the essence of life as *independent* of its particular *physical medium*, consistent with Christian belief.<sup>36</sup>

Schaefer is one of the most oft quoted scientists in the academic literature and is

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<sup>36</sup> *Darwin's Nemesis*, ed. William A. Dembski, 300.

a recognized expert on chaos theory. The author's also note that naturalistic science cannot explain the presence of information in systems. They cite approvingly the words of Overman who said, "The paradigms for the emergence of life are algorithms which must contain at least as much information content as the genetic messages they claim to generate." (Ibid, 299).

Here we encounter the issue of "Garbage In=Garbage Out". To put it more positively, nothing can arise from a thing that does not already have this property in it, or the power to produce it. As Varghese quips, "a collection of...systems can only produce what is collectively present in them. Rocks can produce pebbles, but not flowers or minds."<sup>37</sup>

No, nor can the blind watchmaker make anything but debris. Calling evolution the blind watchmaker is like calling Richard Dawkins mute opera singer. It too is incoherent!<sup>38</sup>



Source: [SpiritAndTruth.org](http://SpiritAndTruth.org)

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<sup>37</sup> *The Wonder of the World*, 131.

<sup>38</sup> Portions of this article are taken from an exchange with an atheist a few years ago. Citation of an author does not necessarily mean endorsement of their work.