



## Commentary

# A Neurosurgeon, Not A Darwinist

Michael Egnor 02.05.09, 6:00 PM ET

I am a professor of neurosurgery and a medical scientist. As an undergraduate biochemistry major, I was uncomfortable with Darwinian explanations for biological complexity. Living things certainly appeared to be designed. Yet evolutionary biologists asserted that the scientific evidence was clear: All biology could be explained by random variation and natural selection.

So I accepted the Darwinian explanation. I considered religious explanations for biology unscientific at best, dogma at worst. But Darwin's explanation, too, was a matter of faith because I did not know the evidence.

Several years ago, I came across Michael Denton's book *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*. Denton's argument--that the biological evidence for Darwin's theory was much weaker than evolutionary biologists claimed--rekindled my doubts. Just how strong was the evidence that all biological complexity arose by chance and natural selection?

I read all that I could find. Johnson. Dawkins. Wells. Berra. Behe. Dennett. Dembski. What I found is this: The claims of evolutionary biologists go wildly beyond the evidence.

The fossil record shows sharp discontinuity between species, not the gradual transitions that Darwinism inherently predicts. Darwin's theory offers no coherent, evidence-based explanation for the evolution of even a single molecular pathway from primordial components. The origin of the genetic code belies random causation. All codes with which we have experience arise from intelligent agency. Intricate biomolecules such as enzymes are so functionally complex that it's difficult to see how they could arise by random mutations.

I saw that Darwinism was a Potemkin village. But it wasn't clear to me why evolutionary biologists were so passionately devoted to such pallid science. The evidence that the Darwinian understanding of biological origins was inadequate has been in hand for quite a while.

Why, when the genetic code was unraveled, didn't scientists question Darwin's assumption of randomness? Why didn't Darwinists ask the difficult questions that are posed for their theory by the astonishing complexity of intracellular molecular machinery? Why do Darwinists claim that intelligent design is untestable, and simultaneously claim that it is wrong?

Why do Darwinists claim that intelligent design theory isn't scientific, when both intelligent design and Darwinism are merely the affirmative and negative answers to the same scientific question: Is there evidence for teleology in biology? Why do Darwinists--*scientists*--seek recourse in federal courts to silence criticism of their theory in public schools? What is it about the Darwinian understanding of biological origins that is so fragile that it will not withstand scrutiny by schoolchildren?

When I read about the ostracism of Dr. Richard Sternberg, a biologist and editor of a biology journal at the Smithsonian Institution who dared to approve the publication of a paper that was sympathetic to intelligent design, I contacted Sternberg and expressed my sympathy and support. He introduced me to the Discovery Institute, which is a think tank devoted to raising the important questions about biological origins, and I began blogging for them.

I came to learn why evolutionary biologists are so fiercely devoted to Darwinism. I was vilified on the Internet. Calls came to my office demanding that I be fired.

And much of the venom was ideological. The vast majority of evolutionary biologists are atheists. I'm Catholic, and my religious faith was mocked by my fellow scientists. Many Darwinists openly express their hatred for Christianity--atheist biologist P.Z. Myers desecrated a Eucharistic host [on his Web site](#).

In 1989, Oxford evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins wrote in the *New York Times* book review section that people who don't accept evolution are "ignorant, stupid, insane ... or wicked." [He has described](#) the religious upbringing of children as "child abuse."

In his book, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, atheist philosopher and Darwinist Daniel Dennett has written that "[s]afety demands that religions be put in cages too--when absolutely necessary." The fight against the design inference in biology is motivated by fundamentalist atheism. Darwinists detest intelligent design theory because it is compatible with belief in God.

But the evidence is unassailable. The most reasonable *scientific* explanation for functional biological complexity--the genetic code and the intricate nanotechnology inside living cells--is that they were designed by intelligent agency. There is no scientific evidence that unintelligent processes can create substantial new biological structures and function. There is no unintelligent process known to science that can generate codes and machines.

I still consider religious explanations for biology to be unscientific at best, dogma at worst. But I understand now that Darwinism itself is a religious creed that masquerades as science. Darwin's theory of biological origins is atheism's creation myth, and atheists defend their dogma with religious fervor.

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