

“Teen Rebellion is Just Individuality”

I read your article on teen rebellion [When Your Teen Rejects Your Values](#). What you call “rebellion” is actually called individuality, not wishing to conform to society’s opinions. Don’t get me wrong, some people just like to go with the flow, nothing wrong with that. It’s just that I don’t think parents should inadvertently squish their son/daughter’s individuality by believing that there is something wrong with them and therefore punishing them for simply being who they want to be and believing what they want to believe. My name is _____ and I’m a High School Student.

Dear _____,

You’re right that some parents define any individuality as rebellion, and that is incredibly sad. The teenage years are a time for you to find out who you are and who you want to be, and it requires people to pull away from their parents in order to do that healthily.

However, the point of our article isn’t to have parents squash individuality, but to deal with truly harmful rebellion. Taking drugs is something more than simply finding out who one is. It causes harm to body, mind and soul. If a girl whose parents have taught her to respect her body and wait for marriage sleeps around with boys, or even “services” them with oral sex in junior high (something which has become an epidemic), that’s not expressing her individuality, that’s being rebellious. (However, it may also be an expression of her need for her daddy’s affection and approval that she didn’t get when she was younger.) And if a teen raised in a Christian home declares herself a Wiccan, that’s way more than individuality, that is rebellion.

Expressing individuality is saying “I want to wear my hair long and green,” which is something our son did when he was in high school. It may be uncomfortable for parents, but there’s no harmful after-effects. Rebellion can be (and usually is) harmful, either to body or soul or both. Rebellion also tends to be disrespectful toward parents and other authority figures, and that is very painful and destructive to the relationship(s).

I just want you to know I DO hear your request that parents honor their teens’ desire to be different from them, but please don’t dismiss the heartbreak of true rebellion as something innocent and necessary for emotional growth.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Should a Woman Work or Stay Home with Children?”

Dear Sue,

I was wondering if you could help me to understand more about your studies from the Bible on the lies of the church. From my understanding from Titus women are called to be at home and bring up the children. Of course some single mothers have to work. But, when the husband is the bread winner, the woman is called to bring up the children, and maintain the home. Of course our society tells us for a woman to be productive she must work to be fulfilled. Can you explain a little bit more about what the implications are from the Bible. Thank you. Because I don’t know what to think? My mother has taught me to work, and the church teaches to stay home.

I'm so glad you wrote me!! I can understand why you might be confused since there are MAJORLY conflicting views on the role of women in our society and even in many churches.

You're right, Titus does instruct women with children to be industrious and to take care of our children. It's important for women to keep our "Focus on the Family," so to speak, because God has ordained for the family to be the place where children are loved and taught and raised to become the people He intends for them to be. I think that whenever possible, in whatever way possible, mothers should be the caretakers of their children because no one can do as good a job as a parent.

But feminism has changed the view of the wife and mother. That worldview says that the only work that matters is work for which you get paid money. It says that the only way to be fulfilled is to produce something that has economic value, either products or services. That's because the feminist viewpoint values material things above people. And the feminist viewpoint really disrespects children and the women who care for their own children. For a philosophy that is supposed to empower women, it's actually very disrespectful toward women unless they agree with feminism's very narrow perspective on what is acceptable.

A big reason for that is that feminism is, at its heart, humanistic. That means that they value mankind as the highest thing there is. No room for the God of the Bible or for God's values and commandments, nor for His heart toward women and the family. So feminism doesn't care that God longs for children to feel safe and loved and cared for, and the best place for that to happen is with a mom who's intensely THERE, with and for her children, instead of a daycare center. Feminism also doesn't understand that a Christian woman who invests her time and energies and gifts into her family will receive eternal rewards. The only thing that matters to a feminist mindset is money and the approval of the world.

Should a woman work? I don't know any who don't. Some get paid for their labor in dollars, and others get paid in other ways. Like the joy of creating a well-run, balanced home for a family that's not stressed out all the time because there's never enough time to get everything done.

In Proverbs 31, the "excellent wife" has several home-based businesses. She keeps a well-run home, is a great wife and mother, and she works at a business. The biblical pattern is that godly women are industrious workers (as opposed to busybodies who gossip and chatter all day). There are business women mentioned in the New Testament whom Paul praises as godly women. And then, young women are instructed to be homemakers, taking care of their children and homes. (There weren't many choices for employment for women in that culture.) There is no one-size-fits-all pattern for all women.

God's plan is that we all work. It's a sin to be a lazy do-nothing. The question isn't about working or not working, it's WHERE you work and how you get paid. The other question is, will your children suffer because you work? Or does the fact that you work mean your children will have food to eat and clothes to wear? It's not a cut-and-dried answer. What you need to do is what God leads YOU to do after praying and seeking His face.

I heard a pastor say on the radio recently that a young mother came to him and said, "I would love to stay home and care for my toddler, but I have to work. We don't have enough money for me to stay home." He had occasion to visit her and was stunned; they lived in a large, new home, with two late-model luxury vehicles in the driveway. Their problem wasn't that they didn't have enough money for her to be her child's caretaker; their problem was that they had chosen a standard of living that put things above people. If they moved to a smaller house and older, less expensive cars, they could have done it.

But then, there are people who literally cannot make it on the husband's salary because it really isn't enough. God understands that, too. And in that case, a wife's outside job is His gift and His provision for a family. That's why it's not a cut-and-dried issue.

If you have children, you might ask why working outside the home is so important. Because you can? Because you're smart? Because you're trained? Because Mom thinks you should? It's pretty cool when gifted, smart, capable women pour all those strengths into their children instead of the workplace. The whole family benefits. Especially in the long run. Because, now that my children are young adults, I see the benefits of pouring myself into them, and I am so very glad I did.

I hope this helps. Feel free to write back if I didn't really answer your specific needs or questions.

Sue

“Is It a Good Idea to Marry Someone I'm Not Attracted To?”

I've been dating a long time friend of mine for three years, and the subject of marriage came up. She is my best friend and we are both saved. Both of us have never married and are 45 years old. We enjoy each other's company, and go to church together. But sometimes I don't think she is pretty. I find myself looking at other girls at times. Would this be hindrance to marriage? I realize that beauty and brawn change over time. But I can't date her forever and don't want to lose

her friendship. Do you have any advice?

It sure sounds like the Lord has blessed you with a wonderful friend. It's quite possible you would be better off friends than spouses. If you don't think she's pretty, does that mean you're not really attracted to her? If you're not attracted to her after three years of dating, it's probably not going to happen. And marriage to someone who only makes a good friend can range from empty and colorless to downright miserable when your heart longs for passion.

The fact that you find yourself looking at other girls is not a problem. It would be a problem if you LUST after other girls. And it would be a problem if your girlfriend catches you looking at other girls in her presence because I assure you, women's egos are really just as fragile as men's.

Read the Song of Solomon. Do you experience that kind of intense love and longing for your girlfriend? That's God's intention for marriage. If what you have is nothing more than a comfortable friendship that has been a convenient base for dating, and if it hasn't developed into real romance after three years, then do yourself and your girlfriend a favor and find someone that you CAN feel that kind of passion for. I'll tell you a secret about women: we long to be wanted. We long to be thought of as beautiful. We long to be lusted after with a holy lust. If you can't give that to your girlfriend, you are cheating both yourself and her. And that's no way to treat a friend.

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“What Does the Bible Say about Interracial Marriages?”

What does the Bible say about interracial marriages, and what are your thoughts on this subject?

The Bible does not prohibit interracial marriages, but that has not stopped people in the past from trying to “make” the Bible teach that it is wrong.

Here are some biblical principles that apply to race and interracial marriage:

1. We are one in Christ Jesus. The Bible teaches that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. Galatians 3:28 – “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

2. We are one in creation. Acts 17:26 – “He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation.”

We know that racial differences amount to very small changes in skin color (amount of melanin in skin), eye shape, hair color and texture. The differences that exist are often created by those with prejudices against particular groups of people.

The Bible does teach that Christians are not to be unequally yoked (2 Cor. 6:14). But that applies to the spiritual condition of your intended marriage partner.

Mixed marriages (due to cultural or social differences) may face problems. So it would be wise to seek premarital counseling to consider how these differences might affect your

communication in marriage and other important issues.

I hope that answers your question.

Kerby Anderson

Probe Ministries

See Also *Probe Answers Our Email:*

["My Racist Parents Disapprove of My Boyfriend"](#)

“What Do You Think About Surrogate Mothering?”

My wife is considering acting as a surrogate mother for a friend who is having difficulty with in vitro fertilization. Her embryos won't implant. Both of us couples are Christians. My wife and I have 3 kids and although she doesn't want another child for us she is willing to carry one for her friend. What are your thoughts about entering into this relationship?

First, I consider surrogate parenting a very risky venture. Just because your wife is able to intellectually say she will give up the baby to your friends when the time comes, does not mean she will be able to do so emotionally. Carrying a baby for nine months creates a powerful bond that is not easily broken. This is easily seen in teenage mothers who often change their minds about giving their baby up for adoption after birth. The surrogate mom can rationally say and believe "this baby is not mine," but her emotions find it difficult to

believe this after carrying the child for nine months.

Since there is also a relationship among friends here the risk is even greater, because even just a hint of wavering as the time of birth approaches could be interpreted as betrayal. The mother acting as the surrogate would also be faced with seeing this child regularly and having the pain of separation renewed frequently.

Second, there is the sacrifice of the family of the surrogate mother. Her husband and children will need to endure the difficulties of a pregnant mom and wife for a child that is not theirs. How is this explained to her children particularly? Pregnancy always involves risk and this is asking a lot of the family. All parties would need to seek God's peace before proceeding. If anyone is hesitant, I would not proceed.

Third, I am troubled by the implications of surrogacy to the concept of a couple becoming one flesh through marriage and child-bearing. I would want to be sure of the Lord's leading in this regard because I just have a suspicion that surrogacy may violate this principle by having someone outside the marriage carry a baby from another union.

While I do not see a clear and unambiguous reason to say no, that is my advice due to the number of potential problems and pitfalls. We sometimes have to face difficult decisions with couples dealing with infertility because we seem to say we are unsympathetic to their dilemma. But we must also be realistic to realize that God does not promise that all potential solutions to all our problems are Biblical. Having a child of our own is not promised or demanded. Often a family's unwillingness to adopt is not just rooted in the natural desire to have children but in a selfishness that only wants "our" child.

If it were me, I would not do it.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Aren’t We Sidestepping the Question of a Beginning?”

I just read Sue Bohlin’s [Answering the Big Questions of Life](#). I appreciate having this article available, and as an evangelical, I agree wholeheartedly with her perspective. However, there is a concept in the article that needs tightening up. She states pantheism sidesteps the issue of “why is there something rather than nothing” by claiming an impersonal beginning. But couldn’t Christian Theism be accused of the same thing? When asked where God came from we reply that He is the eternally existent one. Why is our answer any less of a sidestep (in their mind) than theirs is to us?

A couple of reasons, none of which I am convinced are enough for those who don’t want to believe them, but that’s the way of faith. <smile>

First, there is a big difference between believing in an impersonal beginning and claiming that a very Personal Being has always existed. The difference between impersonal matter+space+time always “being there” (actually, then, there WAS no actual “beginning” for the pantheist) and an actual “Person with personality” existing before matter, space and time, is a huge one.

Secondly, our belief that God is the eternally existent one answers the problem of “First Cause.” Before anything happened

or existed, something else had to be there, causing it to happen or exist. We live in a cause-and-effect universe. Eventually, if you go back far enough, you have to come to what philosophers call the “First Cause,” an “uncaused cause,” who (or that) simply WAS. If there was ever a time when God did not exist, then something or someone would have had to create Him. But that’s not the way it is; God is the “the buck stops here” First Cause where everything starts, except for Himself. It’s logical, but for those who don’t want to accept their accountability to God, they can blow it off. It doesn’t make it any less true, though.

Boy, you make me glad I’m “preaching to the choir!”

I hope this hasn’t clouded the issue further. But thanks so much for writing!!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Did the Human Genome Project Prove that Darwin Was Right?”

Help! I read Arthur Caplan’s article [“Darwin Vindicated!”](#) about the results of the Human Genome Project and it is seriously shaking my faith!

Caplan has never been a friend of Christians or creationists. In this inflammatory article, designed to stimulate public opinion, he has outdone himself. If Darwin were alive today, he would be astounded and humbled by what we now understand about the human genome and the genomes of other organisms. In some respects, it is difficult to know where to begin. So

let's just pick a few of the more glaring statements to help us understand that little else should be trusted.

First, he says, "Eric Lander of the Whitehead Institute in Cambridge, Mass., said that if you look at our genome it is clear that evolution must make new genes from old parts."

While it may be true that we can see some examples of shared sequences between genes, it is by no means true that we see wholesale evidence of gene duplication throughout the genome. According to Li, et. al., (*Nature* 409, 15 Feb 2001:847-848) less than 4,000 genes belong to superfamilies that show sequences sharing at least 30% of their sequence. Over 25,000 genes demonstrated less than 30% sequence identity, indicating that as much as 62% of the human genes mapped by the Human Genome Project were unique, i.e., not likely the result of gene duplication. Determining that similar genes are the result of gene duplication is tricky business, not the least of which is trying to find out just how duplicated genes (which does occur) ever arrive at a new function. There are lots of guesses out there, but no observable mechanism exists at this time.

Second, he says, "The core recipe of humanity carries clumps of genes that show we are descended from bacteria. There is no other way to explain the jerry-rigged nature of the genes that control key aspects of our development."

Not everyone agrees. The complexity of the genome does not mean necessarily that it has been jerry-rigged by evolution. There is still so much we do not know. Caplan is speaking more out of ignorance and assumption than data. "Junk DNA" used to be a common term in genetics circles. Since only about 1.5% of the total human genome sequence codes for actual genes and proteins, the rest was thought to be junk, useless DNA. The term "Junk DNA" is rarely used in academic papers anymore because much of this "junk" is now known to have a purpose, usually a regulatory function. Even the highly repetitive

elements are demonstrating patterns that indicate some kind of function. Listen to this comment from Gene Meyers, one of the principal geneticists from Celera Genomics:

“What really astounds me is the architecture of life,” he said. “The system is extremely complex. It’s like it was designed.” My ears perked up. Designed? Doesn’t that imply a designer, an intelligence, something more than the fortuitous bumping together of chemicals in the primordial slime? Myers thought before he replied. “There’s a huge intelligence there. I don’t see that as being unscientific. Others may, but not me.” (“Human Genome Map Has Scientists Talking About the Divine – Surprisingly low number of genes raises big questions,” Tom Abate, Monday, February 19, 2001, *San Francisco Chronicle*)

Jerry-rigged? Hardly! Confusing at the moment? Certainly! But more likely to reveal hidden levels of complexity than messy jerry-rigging.

Finally, Caplan says, “No one can look at how the book of life is written and not come away fully understanding that our genetic instructions have evolved from the same programs that guided the development of earlier animals. Our genetic instructions have been slowly assembled from the genetic instructions that made jellyfish, dinosaurs, woolly mammoths and our primate ancestors.”

This comes partly from the documenting of fewer genes (30,000-45,000 genes instead of the expected 100,000 or more) and the fact that some of these genes are indeed very similar in nearly all species looked at. Are there similarities? Certainly! Are the similarities only explainable by evolution? Not at all!

First, the fewer genes are not a given number yet since the computer programs used to look for new genes relied on already known gene sequences to spot potential genes. Only crude

estimates were used for the possibility of completely novel genes. Even if the number is correct, this means that the organization of the genome is as important as the actual genes. We already know that many genes can be used to make several different proteins through complex patterns of regulation. This only raises the stakes for evolution. More organization, more complexity are the hallmarks of design, not messy natural selection.

Also even though we only have two or three times as many genes as a fruit fly, Svante Paabo, writing in *Science* (Feb. 16, 2001, vol 291, p. 1219) said, "A glimpse of what this will show us comes from considering the fact that about 26,000 to 38,000 genes are found in the draft version of our own genome, a number that is only two to three times larger than the 13,600 genes in the fruit fly genome. Furthermore, some 10% of human genes are clearly related to particular genes in the fly and the worm."

Basic cellular processes require many of the same proteins and therefore the same genes. Even if flies and humans are not related, why would these genes be expected to be dissimilar? Human engineers frequently reuse common elements because they work. Besides, Paabo states that only 10% of the genes show any relationship. That means 90% do not. Far too much attention has been focused on the similarities and not enough on the differences. I welcome a sequence of the chimpanzee genome because I expect that among the many striking similarities, there will be uniquenesses unexplainable by Darwinian natural selection.

Arthur Caplan simply shows himself to be a part of the evolutionary establishment that appears to be worried by the inroads of intelligent design theory and is fighting back using only authority and bluster. "If I, Arthur Caplan, a bioethicist and Ph.D., say something loud enough and forcefully enough, some will believe it simply because of the position I hold." This strategy is slowing falling apart as

the clear and ever increasing weight of the evidence causes more and more people to say, "Wait a minute, these guys (Phil Johnson, William Dembski, Mike Behe, Jonathan Wells, etc.) aren't dummies. Surely they can't be dismissed as easily as that." The bluster and appeals to authority are wearing thin and some are asking hard questions. Some will stop and begin to reevaluate; others, like Caplan, will only shout a little louder and ultimately lose credibility.

Stay tuned.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Cracking of human genome confirms theory of evolution

By Arthur Caplan, Ph.D.

SPECIAL TO MSNBC

Feb. 21, 2001 – The media flubbed the headline for the biggest news event in the past 50 years of science. The reporters and TV talking heads who crammed the Washington, D.C., press conference on Feb. 12 did not understand that the details they were hearing about the human genome offered the story of a lifetime. But, they missed the real headline. Their stories should have simply said, "Darwin vindicated!"

Most reporters ballyhooed the fierce competition between scientists working for the publicly funded Human Genome Project and those employed by the privately funded Celera Genomics Corporation of Rockville, Md., to gain credit for the discovery. Others wondered about the financial implications of allowing human genes to be patented.

Still other headlines were meant to give us pause about whether it would be good or bad to know more about the role genes play in determining our health. Knowing more about our

genes, after all, might not be so great in an era in which there is not much guarantee of medical privacy but a pretty good chance of discrimination by insurers and employers against those with “bad” genes.

There were even a couple of headlines that suggested that humanity should not be quite so arrogant since we do not have as many genes as we thought relative to other plants and animals. In fact, as it turns out, we have only twice as many genes as a fruit fly, or roughly the same number as an ear of corn, about 30,000. Reductionism may not be all that it has been cracked up to be by molecular biologists.

But none of these headlines capture the most basic, the most important consequence of mapping out all of our genes. The genome reveals, indisputably and beyond any serious doubt, that Darwin was right—mankind evolved over a long period of time from primitive animal ancestors.

Our genes show that scientific creationism cannot be true. The response to all those who thump their bible and say there is no proof, no test and no evidence in support of evolution is, “The proof is right here, in our genes.”

Eric Lander of the Whitehead Institute in Cambridge, Mass., said that if you look at our genome it is clear that evolution must make new genes from old parts.

The core recipe of humanity carries clumps of genes that show we are descended from bacteria. There is no other way to explain the jerry-rigged nature of the genes that control key aspects of our development.

No one can look at how the book of life is written and not come away fully understanding that our genetic instructions have evolved from the same programs that guided the development of earlier animals. Our genetic instructions have been slowly assembled from the genetic instructions that made jellyfish, dinosaurs, woolly mammoths and our

primate ancestors.

There is, as the scientists who cracked the genome all agreed, no other possible explanation.

Sure the business side of cracking our genetic code is fascinating. And we all need to be sure that our government does not leave us in the genetic lurch without laws to ensure our privacy and protect us against genetic discrimination.

All that, however, is concern for the future. Right now the big news from mapping our genome is that mankind evolved. The theory of evolution is the only way to explain the arrangement of the 30,000 genes and three billion letters that constitute our genetic code.

The history of humanity is written in our DNA. Those who dismiss evolution as myth, who insist that evolution has no place in biology textbooks and our children's classrooms, are wrong.

The message our genes send is that Charles Darwin was right.

Arthur Caplan, Ph.D., is director of the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

“How Should I, as a Non-Christian, React to Creationist Claims?”

Hello, I'm a French science student interested in the creation/evolution debate. I have had no religious upbringing,

and don't take the Gospel as gospel truth, so I guess I must be an Evil Darwinist. Where I live, there doesn't seem to be a great "debate" about evolution: I haven't heard of any creationist scientists, besides from when I find Religious sites on the Internet. So I guess we haven't yet been blessed with Pseudoscientific Creationists. True we have fanatics, but they're Catholic and tend to be old Nazis dressed in black who want to go back to saying Mass in Latin, so don't even go near calling themselves scientists. OK I'm being facetious ☐

Anyway, how do you advise me, a non-christian, to react to creationist scientific claims? I hope you'll provide an answer other than "convert to Christianity" – you won't get away that easily: If your claims are scientifically sound, I should be able to accept that. However I often find them a mere imitation of the scientific method, a rational method I understand and respect more than your personal interpretation of the Bible.

By the way I worked on Genetic Algorithms a little (programs using genetic mechanisms to solve specific problems), and have therefore witnessed how complexity and ingenious patterns can arise out of chaos – and how the dominant pattern will switch in a fairly short time, not showing so many intermediate genomes (punctuated equilibrium, generally used to explain holes in the fossil record). I am aware that you don't seem to disagree with microevolution, but I don't believe that "micro-" and "macro-" evolution mean anything. You seem only to use that definition by defining "macroevolution" as what can't be witnessed directly at our scale, and is therefore false. Why not "micromechanics" and "macromechanics"?: We can't prove that planets follow Newtonian mechanics, therefore the sun goes around the moon, 'cos I think the Bible says so.

Anyway, what should I think of your site? It seems cunningly made, maybe even honest. I wouldn't mind discussing this.

PS: I hope I get a better answer than "Go look at our site –

it contains all the answers you need”.

PPS: I hope you don't get too much of these. Actually I wish you get a lot and read them all. I don't want to be a nuisance, I'm just curious.

Thank you for your interesting message. I am glad to know a little of your background and familiarity with our site. I will therefore assume a few things as I talk with you and rely on you to let me know if anything needs clarification. I certainly do believe that the Intelligent Design movement has something to offer science today. I think the contributions of Michael Behe and William Dembski in their books, *Darwin's Black Box* and *The Design Inference*, lay the critical theoretical and evidential groundwork for a scientifically workable theory of design. It is crucial to realize that this does not mean a complete overhaul of science. Design is only meant to allow for design to be a legitimate hypothesis when addressing questions of the origin of complex systems. Some systems will carry the earmarks of design and some will not.

Behe's concept of "irreducible complexity" claims to identify molecular machines within cells that require a design hypothesis due to the fact that they are composed of multiple parts which rely on each other for any activity. Our own experience tells us that when we see such things, like a mousetrap, an intelligence was necessary to put it together. Even things as ridiculous as a Rube Goldberg machine, inefficient and wasteful as they appear, are still designed. Arguments about the intent and intelligence of the "designer" are theological and superfluous to the scientific merit of the hypothesis.

Dembski's emphasis on complex specified information being an indicator of design is another crucial piece of the puzzle. The DNA code is both complex and specified. All other codes we know of from experience require an intelligence to bring them about. These codes may operate on their own once in existence,

but require intelligence to put them together. Now this does not in itself require an intelligence to bring about the DNA code, but it should at least be a viable option. Science will currently categorically rule out this possibility since it does not propose a naturalistic process for bringing about the DNA code. I believe this is done out of a philosophical prejudice as opposed to a legitimate scientific problem.

The connections between irreducible complexity and intelligence, and complex specified information and intelligence, are the crucial components of a viable theory of Intelligent Design (ID). I think there is plenty of data from molecular biology and astronomy (fine-tuning parameters of the universe) which already make Intelligent Design a worthwhile scientific pursuit.

Even Richard Dawkins admits that biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose. Maybe it isn't just an appearance. If they have been designed for a purpose, we should be able to tell and it should fall under the umbrella of science since science is primarily a search for truth.

Genetic algorithms are still operating from a computer program utilizing the designed computer itself to arrive at its designs. In other words the potential for design is built into the program and the computer. The genetic algorithm program will not write itself and the program will not run itself apart from the computer, a designed machine.

This perhaps provides a starting point. There are other places on our site that can give you some more details but this should do for now.

BTW, the micro-macro distinction is one that many evolutionists recognize and use so it is not just some creationist invention. But you are correct that it does have to do with the distinction between the minor changes we see

happening all around us and the unobserved changes that must have occurred in the past which there is often no discernible fossil evidence for. There is also an embryological component to the distinction. Currently observed microevolutionary changes are all changes that would occur late in embryological development; the overall body plan is not affected. Body plans are determined very early in embryological development which, if all life is descended from a common ancestor, must have also changed in the past. But nearly all mutations observed that occur early in development result in catastrophic deformities. You can't just add up microevolutionary, late development changes and eventually get an early developmental, body plan mutation. They are very different things.

Respectfully,

Dr. Ray Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Your Articles on Intelligent Design Have Given Me Hope!”

Wow! I feel like I have hope! Lately I've seriously been having doubt about the Christian faith. A big reason for this is the creation/evolution controversy. I'm a freshman at Baylor University. I've been working on my research paper on Christians' reservations on evolution. It's a topic I picked. . . I thought it might help me out with my struggle. Thank you so much for the articles that you have posted on the Probe Ministries website. After all the negative things I've read about evolution and even Jesus, denying that He was even a historical person, I feel more hopeful now. I feel like there's something with this intelligent design theory! It's a

much better sounding alternative than some of the other stuff I've read.

Thanks again!

“I Have No Problem Deriving Meaning in Life as an Evolved Biological Organism”

Dear Raymond Bohlin,

I am also a graduate of the University of Illinois and found your article on the Probe Ministries website interesting reading. I was surprised at the low-quality answers you had received from evolutionary biologists about morality and meaning. To me it is absolutely wonderful, amazing, and awe-inspiring that you and I, or any human beings can have actual conversations and exchange ideas. It is amazing to me because I believe that we are a result of evolution unguided by any supernatural god. To me there can be deep conviction that we are biological organisms and that there is no god while also maintaining a deep sense of meaning and purpose. It seems to me that if you believe God created everything around us, then He did an embarrassingly poor job. Why have around 50% of our DNA be wasted garbage from a violent evolutionary past? If people are created in God's image, why give them an appendix? Surely if you were truly an all-powerful being capable of anything, you should have done much better. But, if we are a result of random chance and evolutionary process unguided by a supernatural power, then the world is amazing. It is awe-inspiring to have such amazing diversity of life and to have a

species with the power to be aware of itself. That 50% of our DNA actually works becomes amazing and wonderful testimony to the glory of the evolutionary process. If we are merely a creation of an all-powerful god, then we are clearly his rejects, because he should have been able to do much better. But if we are a result of an evolutionary process then we are amazing and valuable.

Similarly, I see the same problem with meaning. You claim that if we are "merely" biological then there is no real meaning. I would argue just the opposite. If we are merely the result of a supernatural god, then the best we can do is discover God's predetermined meaning. We are unimportant and can never create any meaning in our lives. But if we are biological organisms in the absence of a supernatural god, then we are the creators of meaning. We are the meaning pioneers who must establish meaning, value, and morality as we go. To me, my life seems so much more meaningful if I feel that I can create meaning and values, and be one of the first species to truly experience love, beauty, and understanding. If I am just some all powerful-god's creation, then my personal life seems meaningless because all meaning has been pre-established by some supernatural force beyond my meager comprehension. To say we are "merely" or "just" biological to me is insulting. Being biological does not prevent me from having as much meaning and purpose as I want in my life. But now, the responsibility lies on me. If I have a meaningless life, then it is my own fault for not creating any meaning. I personally find deep meaning and purpose in the love, compassion, and discovery of ideas that I share with my fellow humans who are also creating meaning and purpose in their own lives.

Whether you consider the answers I received from evolutionary biologists to be disappointing or not, they are the standard answers. Your willingness to reach for something more and create meaning is what I would categorize as the third response, that of an existential leap for hope and meaning.

But first to your criticisms of the Creator's workmanship. Please be aware that the previous estimates of useless DNA were closer to 90%. I would not be so quick to assume that the remaining 50% unaccounted for will remain so. We have only begun to unravel the mystery of DNA and its organization. My prediction is that there will be little left without some function after the next 100 years. One of the principal geneticists with Celera Genomics, the private company that arrived at its own independent human DNA sequence, was quoted in the *San Francisco Chronicle* saying,

“‘What really astounds me is the architecture of life,’ he said. ‘The system is extremely complex. It’s like it was designed.’. . . There’s a huge intelligence there. I don’t see that as being unscientific. Others may, but not me.” (February 19, *SFC*, Tom Abate, “Human Genome Map Has Scientists Talking About the Divine”).

So what we already know reveals not some clumsily ordered mess thrown together by natural selection, but a highly ordered and specified arrangement.

Over 100 years ago, there were dozens of reputed vestigial human structures such as the appendix, tonsils, and tailbone, but all of these have since yielded a function. The tonsils and appendix are members of the integrated immune system. Can we live without them? Yes, but we are better off with them. Surgeons rarely take out the appendix anymore as part of routine abdominal surgery unless absolutely necessary. The more we learn about our bodies the more complex and truly amazing they are. The power of adult stem cells is proving to be truly amazing and they have resided inside us all the time. I think it is rather presumptuous of anyone to suggest that they could have done a better job of designing our bodies. Our knowledge of how everything works is still progressing. What may seem sloppy today may soon be revealed as the right combination of characteristics to achieve an amazing design. That at least seems to be the pattern. We used to think cells

were simple accumulations of membrane, protoplasm, and protein. The last sixty years have revealed ever increasing levels of complexity and organization never even dreamed of. I just don't see how you can view our bodies as rejects. What would you change? What could have been done better in your mind?

If we are the product of an evolutionary process than we truly are amazing. I will grant you that. So amazing that I would suggest that we are alone in the universe. The odds are so stacked against any kind of unguided evolution producing sentient beings such as ourselves, that there just isn't anybody else out there.

I don't understand your revelry in the ability to create meaning. What are we to create it out of? Nothing? Something doesn't come from nothing. Meaning grabbed out of thin air is still air no matter what you call it. In an evolutionary world view all that matters is survival and reproduction and as I said in the article, this ultimately fades away at death which is nothing more than extinction. So what good is the meaning you create? It is ultimately an illusion. A survival device and nothing more. How is that exciting? I am sorry if you are insulted by the characterization of being merely biological, but again, in an evolutionary worldview, that is reality. Your brain has evolved only as an aid to survival and reproduction, not as a truth- and meaning-creating machine.

If we share this meaning and purpose creating capacity with our fellow humans, certainly we arrive at different conclusions. If our conclusions are different, how do we judge who is right? Or does it really even matter? I would suggest that it doesn't matter at all. You are left with the post-modern dictum of "it may be true for you but it's not true for me." The statement is self-contradictory because it assumes that at least that statement is universally true, but how can it be?

Theism can provide true meaning and purpose through the One who is self-existent. Why you think God's assignment of true meaning and purpose somehow cheapens it baffles me. If I were to create a robot, I the creator determine its function and usefulness, not the machine itself. Remember also, that something must be eternal. As I said earlier, something does not come from nothing. So the fact that something is here means something has to have always been here. That something can be either material or immaterial. The material universe, according to current Big Bang cosmology, had a beginning. Therefore it certainly seems reasonable to assume that God is eternal. I don't suggest that the Big Bang proves God, but it does make the assumption eminently reasonable.

You may choose to create your own meaning if you like, but I cannot see how it can be anything but an illusion in an evolutionary, purely materialistic worldview.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D.
Probe Ministries