

Darwinism and Truth

Darwinism and the Fact/Value Split

Nancy Pearcey writes in her book *Total Truth* that Christians must counter the effects of our secular culture and mindset by developing a consistent and comprehensive biblical worldview.[{1}](#) In the middle chapters of her book, she demonstrates how Christians should do this with the question of origins.

Earlier in her book she notes that our society has divided truth into two categories. She calls this the sacred /secular split or the private/public split or the fact/value split. They are different ways of saying the same thing. Religion and moral values are subjective and shoved into the upper story where private opinions and values reside. And in the lower story are hard, verifiable facts and scientific knowledge.

There is another key point to this split. The two spheres should not intersect. In other words, it would be bad manners and a violation of logic to allow your personal and private choices and values to intersect with your public life. As the popular saying goes, that would be “shoving your religion down someone’s throat.”

Ray Bohlin’s [review](#) of Pearcey’s book provides further explanation for how this idea plays out in society.[{2}](#)

Darwinists accept this split and have even tried to convince Christians that in this way religion is safe from the claims and conclusions of Darwinian evolution. But a brief glance at the best seller list shows that evolutionists regularly invade this upper story of values with their harsh criticism.

In *The God Delusion*, Richard Dawkins says that religious belief is psychotic, and arguments for the existence of God

are nonsense. Sam Harris echoes that sentiment in his bestselling book, *Letter to a Christian Nation*. Daniel Dennett, in his book *Breaking the Spell*, believes that religion must be subjected to scientific evaluation.

Nancy Pearcey shows that Darwinism leads to naturalism. And this is a naturalistic view of knowledge where “theological dogmas and philosophical absolutes were at worst totally fraudulent and at best merely symbolic of deep human aspirations.”[\[3\]](#) In other words, if Darwinian evolution is true, then religion and philosophical absolutes are not true. Truth, honesty, integrity, morality are not true but actually fraudulent concepts and ideas. If we hold to them at all, they were merely symbolic but not really true in any sense.

Daniel Dennett, in his book *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea*, says that Darwinism is a “universal acid” which is his allusion to a children’s riddle about an acid that is so corrosive that it eats through everything including the flask that holds it. In other words, Darwinism is too corrosive to be contained. It eats through every academic field of study and destroys ethics, morality, truth, and absolutes. When it is finished, Darwinism “eats through just about every traditional concept and leaves in its wake a revolutionized world-view.”[\[4\]](#)

Darwinism and Naturalism

Pearcey writes that “Darwinism functions as the scientific support for an overarching naturalistic worldview.”[\[5\]](#) Today scientists usually assume that scientific investigation requires naturalism. But that was not always the case.

When the scientific revolution began (and for the next three hundred years), science and Christianity were considered to be compatible with one another. In fact, most scientists had some form of Christian faith, and they perceived the world of diversity and complexity through a theistic framework. Pearcey

points out that Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, and others sought to understand the world and use their gifts to honor God and serve humanity.

By the nineteenth century, secular trends began to change their perspective. This culminated with the publication of *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin. His theory of evolution provided the needed foundation for naturalism to explain the world without God. From that point on, social commentators began to talk about the “war between science and religion.”

By the twentieth century, G. K. Chesterton was warning that Darwinian evolution and naturalism was becoming the dominant “creed” in education and the other public arenas of Western culture. He said it “began with Evolution and has ended in Eugenics.” Ultimately, it “is really our established Church.”[\[6\]](#)

Today, it is easy to see how scientists believe that naturalism and science are essentially the same thing. They often slip from physics to metaphysics. In other words, they leave the boundaries of science and begin to make philosophical statements about the nature of the universe. While scientists can tell us how the universe operates, they cannot tell us if there is anything outside of the universe.

But that didn’t stop astronomer Carl Sagan in the PBS program “Cosmos.” The first words you hear from him are: “The Cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.”[\[7\]](#) In other words, the universe (or Cosmos) is all there is: no God, no heaven.

Now, Carl Sagan’s comment is not a scientific statement. It’s a philosophical statement. And it set the ground rules for the rest of the program. Nature is all there is. In many ways it sounds like a creed. It is as if Carl Sagan was attempting to modify the *Gloria Patri*: “As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever will be.”

Do those ideas end up in our children's books? Nancy Pearcey tells the story of picking up a science book for her son, *The Bears' Nature Guide*, which featured the Berenstain Bears. The Bear family goes on a nature walk. Turn a few pages in the book and you will see a sunrise with these words in capital letters: "Nature . . . is all that IS, or WAS, or EVER WILL BE!"[\[8\]](#) Sounds like a heavy dose of Carl Sagan's naturalism packaged for young children courtesy of the Berenstain Bears.

If you are looking for a resource to counter this Darwinian and naturalistic indoctrination, let me recommend Probe's DVD series on "Redeeming Darwin." It will give you the intellectual ammunition you need.

In *Total Truth*, Nancy Pearcey discusses many of the so-called "icons of evolution" that Jonathan Wells documents in his book by that title.[\[9\]](#) These examples show up in nearly every high school and college biology textbook. But these examples which are used to "prove" evolution are either fraudulent or fail to prove evolution.

Let's start with a piece of evidence for evolution that was found where Charles Darwin first got his inspiration for his theory of evolution: the [Galapagos Islands](#). The islands can be found off the coast of South America. On those islands are finches, which have come to be known as Darwin's finches. It's hard to find a biology textbook that doesn't tell the story of these finches.

One study found that during a period of drought, the average beak size of these finches increased slightly. The reason cited for this is that during these dry periods, the most available seeds are larger and tougher to crack than at other times. So birds with larger beaks do better in conditions of drought.

I spent an afternoon looking at specimens of Darwin's finches when I was in graduate school at Yale University and should

point out that the changes in beak thickness is minimal and thus measured in tens of millimeters (thickness of a thumbnail). Moreover, the changes seem to be cyclical. When the rains returns, the original size seeds appear and the average beak size returns to normal.

This is not evolution. It is an interesting cyclical pattern in natural history. But it's not evolution. Nevertheless, one science writer enthusiastically proclaimed that this is evolution happening "before [our] very eyes."[\[10\]](#)

If this is evolution occurring then we should be seeing macro changes that would allow these finches to evolve into another species. But this cyclical pattern shows just the opposite. These minor changes in beak size and thickness actually allow them to remain finches under changing environmental conditions. It does not show them evolving into another species.

So what has been the response from the scientific establishment? The National Academy of Sciences put out a booklet on evolution for teachers. The booklet did not even mention that the average beak size returned to normal after drought. Instead the booklet makes unwarranted speculation about what might happen if these changes were to continue indefinitely for a few hundred years. "If droughts occur about once every ten years on the islands, a new species of finch might arise in only 200 years."[\[11\]](#)

Is this an accurate conclusion based upon the facts of natural history? It seems to be a clear example of misleading teachers (who in turn will unintentionally mislead their students). The booklet teaches that the beak sizes in Darwin's finches are directional and evolutionary rather than cyclical and reversible.

A column in the *Wall Street Journal* made this point. "When our leading scientists have to resort to the sort of distortion

that would land a stock promoter in jail,” Phillip Johnson said, “you know they are in trouble.”[{12}](#)

Ray Bohlin’s [review](#) of Jonathan Well’s book, *Icons of Evolution*, provides further detail on some of these examples.[{13}](#)

Peppered Moths

One example that appears in most biology textbooks is the story of the peppered moths in England. The moths appear in two forms: dark gray and light gray. During the Industrial Revolution, the factories produced pollution that darkened the tree trunks. This made it easier for birds to catch and eat the lighter colored moths. Later, when pollution was cleaned up, the tree trunks were lighter and it made it easier for the birds to catch the darker colored moths.

On its face, all this example proves is that the ratio of dark colored and light colored moths changed over time. In many ways, this is nothing more than another example of cyclical changes that we just discussed concerning Darwin’s finches.

But there is much more to the story. Peppered moths don’t actually perch on tree trunks. Actually they are quite torpid during the daylight hours and rest in the upper canopy of the trees.

If you have ever been in a biology class you have seen pictures of these moths on the tree trunks. You might even have seen a film that was made decades ago of birds landing on the trees and catching moths. It turns out that in order to create the photos and the film scientists put the moths in a freezer to immobilize them and then glued them to the tree trunks.

How did this example become such an enduring icon of evolution? Scientists accepted it for many years uncritically

because they wanted to believe it and needed a visual example to show evolution. The peppered moth story fit the bill and quickly became “an irrefutable article of faith.”[\[14\]](#)

Now there are journal articles, and even books, that document the scientific scandal surrounding the story of the peppered moths. One leading evolutionist noted that the story was a “prize horse in our stable of examples.” He goes on to say that when he learned the truth, it was like learning “that it was my father and not Santa Claus who brought the presents on Christmas Eve.”[\[15\]](#)

But what is so amazing is that this example still shows up with regularity in biology textbooks, even though most scientists and textbook writers know the story is untrue. One reporter even interviewed a textbook writer who admitted that he knew the photos were faked but used them in the biology textbook anyway. “The advantage of this example,” he argued, “is that it is extremely visual.” He went on to add that “we want to get across the idea of selective adaptation. Later on, they can look at the work critically.”[\[16\]](#)

The examples of the falsified “icons of evolution” demonstrate the extremes to which many Darwinists will go to “prove” the theory of evolution. They keep an incorrect example in the textbooks simply because it is visual and supports the theory of evolution and worldview of naturalism.

Fraudulent Embryos

Nearly every textbook has pictures of developing vertebrate embryos lined up across the page to demonstrate an evolutionary history being replayed in the womb. These pictures are placed there to show common ancestry and thus prove evolution. During this day, Charles Darwin called the similarity of vertebrate embryos “by far the strongest single class of facts in favor of” his theory of evolution.[\[17\]](#)

In biology class many of us learned the phrase “ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.” That means that these developing embryos go through similar stages that replay the stages of evolution. So this supposedly was embryological proof of evolution.

But it turns out that the pictures were and are an elaborate hoax. German scientist Ernst Haeckel drew them in order to prove evolution. He deliberately drew the embryos more similar than they really are.

What is so incredible about this hoax is that it was known more than a century ago. Scientists knew the drawings were incorrect, and his colleagues accused him of fraud. An embryologist, writing in the journal *Science*, called Haeckel’s drawings “one of the most famous fakes in biology.”[\[18\]](#)

Now you would think that a hoax uncovered more than a hundred years ago would certainly not make it into high school and college biology textbooks. But if you assumed that, you would be wrong. Many textbooks continue to reprint drawings labeled as a hoax a century ago.

So why do Darwinists continue to believe in the theory of evolution and even use examples to “prove” evolution that are not true. It may be due to a bias in their worldview. The only theories that they believe are acceptable are those that are developed within a naturalistic framework.

Richard Dawkins noted: *“Even if there were no actual evidence in favor of the Darwinian theory . . . we would still be justified in preferring it over rival theories.”*[\[19\]](#) Think about that statement for a moment. Even if there were no evidence for evolution, Darwinists would still believe it because it is naturalistic.

Another professor made an even more incredible statement. He said: “Even if all the data point to an intelligent designer, such an hypothesis is excluded from science because it is not

naturalistic.”{20} Now think about that. Even if the evidence points to intelligent design rather than to evolution, it is excluded from consideration because it is not naturalistic.

As you can see from these two quotes (as well as from some of the other material presented here), the commitment to evolution is more philosophical than scientific. Nancy Pearcey concludes that “the issue is not fundamentally a matter of evidence at all, but of a prior philosophical commitment.”{21}

Again, let me also recommend Probe’s DVD series on “Redeeming Darwin” that is available through Probe’s website www.probe.org.

Notes

1. Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2004).
2. Raymond Bohlin, “Total Truth,” Probe, 2005, www.probe.org/total-truth/.
3. Edward Purcell, *The Crisis of Democracy* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1973), 8.
4. Daniel Dennett, *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 63.
5. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 207.
6. G. K. Chesterton, *Eugenics and Other Evils* (NY: Dodd, Mead, 1927), 98.
7. Carl Sagan, *Cosmos* (NY: Random House, 1980), 4.
8. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 157.
9. Jonathan Wells, *Icons of Evolution* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2000).
10. Jonathan Weiner, “Kansas anti-evolution vote denies students a full spiritual journey,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 15 August 1999.
11. *Teaching About Evolution and the Nature of Science*, National Academy of Sciences, chapter 2, page 19, www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/evolution98.
12. Phillip Johnson, “The Church of Darwin,” *Wall Street*

Journal, 16 August 1999.

13. Ray Bohlin, "Icons of Evolution," Probe, 2001, www.probe.org/icons-of-evolution.

14. Peter Smith, "Darwinism in a flutter," book review of: *Of Moths and Men: Intrigue, Tragedy, and the Peppered Moth*, *The Guardian*, 11 May 2002.

15. Jerry Coyne, "Not black and white," book review of: *Melanism: Evolution in Action*, *Nature* 396(5 November 1998), 35.

16. Bob Ritter quoted in "Moth-eaten Darwinism: A disproven textbook case of natural selection refuses to die," *Alberta Report Newsmagazine*, 5 April 1999.

18. Michael Richardson, quoted in Pennisi, "Haeckel's Embryos: Fraud rediscovered," *Science* 277 (5 September 1997), 1435.

19. Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker* (NY: Norton, 1986), 287, emphasis in original.

20. S.C. Todd, "A view from Kansas on that evolution debate," *Nature*, 30 September 1999, 423.

21. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 169.

© 2007 Probe Ministries

"Help Me Counter My Prof's Teachings on Horse Evolution"

I'm a senior at _____ in Agricultural Business Management. In one of my Range classes the professor has laid the foundation for the entire class on evolution. Using the common picture of horse evolution (hyracotherium to equus) he is saying that rangeland plants and systems have co-evolved with large ungulates. I'm struggling on just how he can give the theory of evolution such validity, the difference between

adaptation and evolution, and finding information that I can use to refute some of his ideas. I don't want to argue with him but just want a chance to exchange ideas. If you can direct me to any information or resources on this specific topic, I would appreciate it. Thanks.

The best source of information on the horse series can be found in Jonathan Wells book, *Icons of Evolution* (2000) from InterVarsity Press. He has a full chapter on the subject as well as a chapter on Archeopteryx and the bird-like fossils. The book is easily obtainable at Amazon.com and some Christian Bookstores. Wells has also responded to some of his critics and negative reviews on the Discovery Institute's website at www.discovery.org. He also has other material at Access Research Network, www.arn.org. I would check on both sites for other helpful material.

Respectfully,

Dr. Ray Bohlin
Probe Ministries

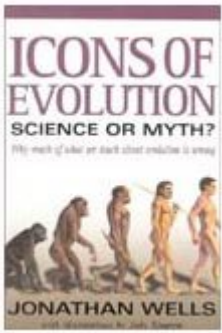
Icons of Evolution

Dr. Ray Bohlin reviews Jonathan Wells' book Icons of Evolution, which exposes the lies and distortions that constitute evolution's best textbook "evidence."



This article is also available in [Spanish](#).

Lies and Distortions Masquerading as Truth in the Halls of Science



Most everyone was required to take biology in high school, and many who went on to college likely took an introductory biology course as an elective, if not as a beginning course for a biology major. Required in most of these courses, mainly because of its inclusion in the textbook, was a section on evolution. Therefore, most people with a secondary education or above are familiar with the more popular evidences and examples of evolution nearly all textbooks have been using for decades. These include the peppered moth story of natural selection, Darwin's finches as an example of adaptive speciation, and the ubiquitous tree of life with its implied common ancestor to all life forms.

These familiar evidences of the creation story of our early 21st century culture are what Jonathan Wells (Ph.D., UC Berkeley, molecular and cell biology; Ph.D., Yale University, religious studies) refers to as the *Icons of Evolution* in his book by the same name (Regnery Publishing, 2000). Wells focuses on ten of these icons and meticulously exposes them to be false, fraudulent or at best, misleading. Many of these difficulties have been pointed out before and are known to a few, but Wells adds a level of sophistication and packages them in a form certain to get the attention of everyone in the educational establishment. This book is not a plea for creation in the schools or a selective and picky rant against trivial details. It is a frontal assault against some of the most cherished and revered "proofs" of the evolution story. There will be no shortage of controversy around this extensively researched and well-written exposé. If these "Icons" are the best evidence for evolution, or at least the easiest evidence to explain, then one is left wondering what the future of evolutionary instruction could be. Even further, what future might there be for evolution itself?

Wells begins with an icon that itself starts at the beginning,

the Miller-Urey experiment. This purports to show that molecules necessary for life could have arisen by simple chemical reactions on an early earth. The Miller-Urey experiment uses an atmosphere of reduced gases: ammonia, methane, water vapor, and hydrogen. Then it adds some energy in the form of sparks, and produces as Carl Sagan said, "the stuff of life." Dating back to 1953, this experiment has been around for nearly fifty years. The problem is that for at least the last twenty-five years origin of life researchers realized that this atmosphere does not reflect that of the early earth. Many textbooks will begrudgingly admit this, but include the experiment anyway. One can only guess the reason: no other simulated atmosphere works. I suppose that textbook writers would suggest that since we "know" some form of chemical evolution happened, they are justified in not representing the facts accurately!

Tree of Life, Homology, and Haeckel's Embryos

The tree of life is ubiquitous in evolutionary literature. The notion that all of life is descended from a single common ancestor billions of years ago is how many would define evolution. But the actual evidence argues strongly against any such single common ancestor, and most animal life forms appear suddenly without ancestors in what is known as the Cambrian explosion of nearly 543 million years ago in evolutionary time. The Cambrian documents life forms so divergent that one would predict a fossil record covering hundreds of millions of years just to document the many transitions required from the first multicellular animal ancestor. Current estimates suggest this change took place in less than 5-10 million years. Yet the tree of life, documenting slow gradual changes, persists.

Another critical evidence for evolution over the years has been homologous structures. The forelimbs of all mammals, indeed all vertebrates, from bats to whales to horses to

humans, possess the same basic bone structure. This is routinely held up as evidence of having descended from a common ancestor. The different forms simply tell of different adaptive stories, resulting in their unique functions relying on the same basic foundation. What becomes puzzling is, first, a confusion of definitions. *Homology* is **defined** as structures having arisen from a common ancestor.^[1] But then homology cannot be used as an evidence of evolution. Something is very wrong, yet textbook orthodoxy concerning homology continues to perpetuate a myth that has been exposed for decades. Second, supposed homologous structures do not necessarily arise through common developmental pathways or similar genes.

Next, Wells turns his attention to perhaps the most inexcusable icon of all: similarities in vertebrate embryos originally pointed out by Ernst Haeckel in the 19th century and used by Darwin in *The Origin of Species* as a powerful evidence for common descent. Haeckel's vertebrate embryos are shown passing through a remarkably similar stage early in development and only later diverging to the specific form. This passage through a common form early in development was seen as obvious evidence for a "community of descent." Yet, once again, the evidence gets in the way.

Since before the dawn of the 20th century, embryologists have known that Haeckel misrepresented the evidence. Vertebrate embryos never pass through a similar stage. What's more, Haeckel left out the fact that the earlier stages of embryonic development between classes of vertebrates pass through remarkably different pathways to arrive at this supposedly similar intermediate stage. The fraud was recently "rediscovered," though most embryologists have been aware of the inaccuracy all along. This shows the longevity of even falsified evidence, due to its persuasive appeal even in the hallowed halls of science. Perhaps scientists are human after all, seduced by a fraud simply because it makes such a good case for a treasured theory.

The Peppered Moth

Probably the granddaddy of all the icons of evolution is the peppered moth story. In pre-industrial England, the peppered moth was common in entomologists' collections. By the 1840s a dark or melanic form was increasing in frequency in populations across England. By 1900 the melanic form comprised as much as ninety percent of some populations. In the 1950s experiments by Bernard Kettlewell clearly established that this change in frequency from a peppered variety to a dark variety was due to two factors.

First, the surface of tree trunks had changed from splotchy, lichen-covered patchwork, to a uniform, dark complexion, due to increased levels of pollution. The pollution killed the lichens and covered the tree trunks with soot. Second, the peppered variety was camouflaged from predation by birds on the lichen-covered tree trunks, and the melanic variety was camouflaged on the dark tree trunk. Therefore, the switch from peppered variety to melanic variety was due to natural selection, acting through selective bird predation as the trees changed from lichen-covered bark to soot-covered bark. Then with stricter air quality standards, the lichens are returning and the peppered variety is predictably coming back strong.

The peppered moth story became legendary as a classic example of Darwinian natural selection. But within 20 years of Kettlewell's work, cracks began to appear. It was soon noted that the characteristic switch from the peppered form to the dark form happened in areas where the lichens still grew on tree trunks. In other areas, the dark form began to decrease before the lichens began returning on trees. A similar pattern of a switch from a light form to a dark form was observed in ladybird beetles. Birds don't like ladybird beetles. Therefore, predation is ruled out as the selector. It all began to unravel when it was observed that peppered moths of

both varieties **never** rest on tree trunks!

Essentially all photographs of moths on the trunks of trees were staged using dead or sluggish moths. They are not active during daylight. If that were the case, how could birds find them on tree trunks at all? Kettlewell released his moths in his mark-recapture-predation experiments in daylight hours, when the moths are naturally inactive. They simply found the nearest resting place (tree trunks in their sluggish state), and the birds gobbled up the non-camouflaged moths. We still don't know exactly where moths rest or whether lichens play any significant role in the story. Yet many biologists insist that the traditional story makes a good example of evolution in action. "To communicate the complexities would only confuse students," they say. Once again, flawed, yet cherished, examples persist because they are just too good **not** to be true!

Birds, Dinosaurs, Fruit Flies, and Human Evolution

The reptile-like bird, Archaeopteryx, has long been heralded as a classic example of a true ancestral transitional form. The improbable change from reptile to bird has been preserved in snapshot form in this remarkable fossil from Germany. Possessing a beautifully preserved reptilian skeleton with wings and feathers, Archaeopteryx was a paleontologist's dream. This would certainly explain why Archaeopteryx has found its way into just about every textbook. But Archaeopteryx has fallen on hard times. As happens with so many perceived transitions, it is universally viewed now as just an extinct bird, an early offshoot of the real ancestor.

Surprisingly, bird-like dinosaurs from much later geologic periods are hailed as the real ancestors. This is based on structural similarities despite their existence after Archaeopteryx. Never mind that the child exists before the

parent. So enamored are some, that birds are just today's feathered dinosaurs. *National Geographic* was recently caught red-faced by perpetrating a fraudulent dinosaur/bird fossil as the real thing in its pages. Scientists have even accepted molecular evidence indicating an *identical* match between turkey DNA and Triceratops DNA. Never mind that the identical DNA match is more likely the result of contamination from a turkey sandwich in the lab and that Triceratops is in the wrong dinosaur family for bird evolution. Such is the power of *wanting* to believe your theory is true.

In the next four chapters, Wells visits the familiar icons of Darwin's finches, fossil horses, mutant four-winged fruit flies, and the ultimate icon, diagrams of the progressive change from ape-like creatures to full human beings. Like the others above, these icons turn out to be far less than what the textbooks suggest. In each case, as in the six discussed above, there are plenty of experts willing to expose the lack of evidence for each icon. But they remain staples in the arsenal of evidences of the evolutionary process. Fossil horses and human evolution turn out also to be indicators of the difficulty evolution has in separating philosophical preferences from conclusions drawn from the evidence.

Textbook writers are either ignorant of current data, which prompts one to be skeptical of the accuracy of the rest of the textbook, or they are willfully misrepresenting the evidence in order to present a united front on the factualness of evolution. Unfortunately for our children, Wells is able to provide direct quotes indicating that at least some see no problem with including misleading or false data in order to make a point. After all, we know evolution is true, so just because we don't have easy simple stories to tell, doesn't mean they aren't out there waiting to be discovered.

The Scientific Academia Reacts

The reasoning behind these *Icons of Evolution* exposes much of the standard story of evolutionary theory to be mythology rather than science. And if these ten icons have been viewed as the best evidence for evolution, the entire theory needs to be questioned and made accountable to the evidence. It will be interesting to watch the evolutionary community react to these revelations. Evolutionary propagandist Eugenie Scott has already reportedly predicted that the book will be a “royal pain in the fanny” for biology teachers. Will the scientific community be able to respond with an appropriate *mea culpa*, or will there be a battery of excuses and obfuscations? I predict the latter. In the last ten years, the evolutionary establishment has been exerting a great deal of effort to demonstrate that evolution is confirmed to such a degree as to be beyond rational dissent. Organizations such as the National Academy of Sciences, the National Association of Biology Teachers, and the National Center for Science Education have lobbied long and hard for the scientific integrity of the standard evolutionary story. They have held up most, if not all, of these ten icons as the principal pillars of the unassailable evidence for evolution.

Evolution is the principal foundation of the naturalistic world view, presented by many in academia as the only scientific, and therefore, objective, view of reality. Without evolution, metaphysical naturalism cannot stand. As Richard Dawkins has said, Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.[\[2\]](#) Without evolution, the naturalistic worldview is in serious trouble. Therefore, the scientific community can be expected to rally fiercely behind the evolution story. Just how they do it will prove interesting indeed. *Icons of Evolution* will help draw the evolutionary establishment out from behind the protective bulwark of its authority and force it to defend its theory on the basis of the evidence. This is a fight I believe it must

eventually lose in the court of scientific and public opinion.

There are two minor, yet unfortunate, problems with the text. The first, actually a book design problem, regards the difficulty finding the legends for some figures and distinguishing them from the regular text. The second involves an unnecessarily inflammatory discussion of the monetary support evolution receives from the U.S. tax-supported National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation. While Wells' discussion is accurate, it comes across as sour grapes and may provide a convenient target for evolutionary propagandists to dismiss the book without dealing with the evidence.

These problems aside, *Icons of Evolution* is a landmark work and deserves to be read and studied by all who have an interest in the controversy surrounding not only the teaching of evolution, but also the very theory of evolution itself.

Notes

1. "The term 'explosion' should not be taken too literally, but in terms of evolution it is still very dramatic. What it means is rapid diversification of animal life. 'Rapid' in this case means a few million years, rather than the tens or even hundreds of millions of years that are more typical. . . ." Simon Conway Morris, *Crucible of Creation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 1998, p. 31.

2. Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*, New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1986, p. 6.

© 2001 Probe Ministries International