“So What Evidence IS There Against Evolution?”

Dr. Bohlin,

I just read an article by yourself condemning evolution and the teaching of it. You state your opinion that scientists should teach the controversy behind the teaching thereof. Is this the job of scientists? They cannot teach the issues in every discovery ever made and every theory they believe.

They would be teaching a course on the history of science rather than a course on science if they did. Evolution is accepted as proven in the scientific community, so why should scientists justify teaching it? We teach science in science classes and theology in theology classes. And what information is in conflict with it? You made frequent reference to it, but never said exactly what it is.

> *You state your opinion that scientists should teach the controversy behind the teaching thereof. Is this the job of scientists? They cannot teach the issues in every discovery ever made and every theory they believe.*

Actually, science textbooks do this all the time, especially with the more important and central theories. Check out a high school or college introductory biology text that emphasizes evolution and I can just about guarantee that there will be some discussion about just what Darwin was attempting to overthrow in proposing his theory of natural selection. You’re not really teaching science unless you also teach some of its history as well.

> *They would be teaching a course on the history of science rather than a course on science if they did. Evolution is accepted as proven in the scientific community, so why should scientists justify teaching it? We teach science in*

science classes and theology in theology classes. And what information is in conflict with it? You made frequent reference to it, but never said exactly what it is.

The list of problems with evolution is long and has everything to do with science and nothing to do with theology. It has to do with evidence, both the lack of evidence for evolution on the broadest scale, and the presence of evidence for design.

Lack of Evidence for Evolution:

- No workable system for a naturalistic origin of life.
- Inability of evolutionary mechanisms to explain anything but minor variation in finch beaks and moth coloration.
- Rapid origin of nearly all animal phyla in Cambrian period with little or no evidence of ancestors.
- Early life is now known to not be monophyletic, a classic prediction of Darwinian evolution. Molecular evolutionists have had to invent a polyphyletic origin of life and massive gene transfers in earth's early history to explain the molecular data.
- Despite the presence of a few putative transitional forms in the fossil record, transitions are rare (Darwin expected them to be everywhere). The invertebrate fossil record is virtually devoid of any transitional forms (BTW, invertebrates comprise around 90% of the fossil record) .
- The fossil record demonstrates stasis, not a gradual process of origin for new forms.
- We see a lot of evidence for structures falling into disuse in organisms but no examples of new organs appearing.

Evidence for Design:

- Irreducible complexity of many cellular molecular structures and pathways.
- The genetic code is an informational code and informational codes only arise from an intelligent source.
- Junk DNA, a label derived from Darwinian interpretations

of non-transcribed DNA, is junk no longer. The "junk" continues to be found functional in surprising ways.

• The overall complexity of the cell was not anticipated by Darwinists, and the last 50 years has yielded surprise after surprise as to the order and complexity of living cells.

• Embryology is looking more and more like a biological process with a goal that cannot be arrived at by natural selection. Body plans are determined early in development but mutations in early development are the harshest and most deleterious mutations of all. An early mistake renders a ruined organism.

I have other articles on our website, www.probe.org, that will elaborate with references most of the above claims.

Everything I have cited is known in the scientific community, but textbooks and media reports are routinely devoid of these evidences because the scientific community believes that science must only seek natural causes for all the biological realities they discover. (How the physical operates is reasonably to be assumed to be naturalistic, but the origin of physical and biological objects may not be so.) This is nothing more than a philosophical bias and not a scientific one. A scientist should be willing to follow the evidence wherever it leads and not wherever he wants it to lead. One of Richard Feynman's basic principles for scientists was that a scientist must not fool him or herself, and he is the easiest person to fool. Evolutionary biologists are fooling themselves with an errant definition of science which leads to a suppression of real evidence to the contrary. Teaching the controversy is the only way at the moment to get around the naturalistic filibuster going on in science and in science education. Evolutionists are now fighting back hard because, I believe, that deep down they realize that a fully open and public discussion of the evidence is not to their advantage.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D.
Probe Ministries

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God and CSI, Take 2

At our house, conversations about ID usually aren't about "identification." It means "Intelligent Design."

My husband Ray's entire education is in science, including a Ph.D. in molecular biology. Early in his Christian walk, learning there was evidence against evolution lit a fire under him that has only grown in the 35 years since. Today, he is thrilled by advances in science that on an almost-monthly basis reveal more and more evidence that an intelligence is the only reasonable explanation for many aspects of the natural world.

But that doesn't sit well with people who don't want to be accountable to the God they know perfectly well is there, but spend endless hours and countless books (and YouTube videos) denying it.

The anti-God attitude was well known to the apostle Paul, who said in Romans 1:19-20, ". . .that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse."

Eventually, it poisoned the very core of most science today. The early scientists like Galileo and Newton made important discoveries about the Creation because their starting point

was a belief in an intelligent, orderly Creator who wove orderliness into His creation. They believed that the orderliness and principles of the natural world were knowable because our God is knowable. But then, Darwin's theory of evolution allowed people to embrace science without buying into the "God part" of it. Richard Dawkins (*The God Delusion*) said that "Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist." And today, it is now assumed that the very nature of science excludes anything supernatural. This has nothing to do with the evidence and everything to do with people's hearts.

When we "X" God out of our thinking, we feel free to redefine things any way we want, since we no longer feel beholden to His view of reality. I was thinking the other day that if Las Vegas decided it didn't like its crime statistics, all it needs to do is define crime away. Can you imagine if the city went to the CSI investigators and said, "You know all those dead bodies you deal with? From now on, you need to find a natural explanation for those deaths."

And the CSI people would say, "But most of the deaths we investigate aren't naturally caused. They are caused by human beings."

LV: Not any more. If all people die from natural causes, then we've done away with crime. And we are totally committed to doing away with crime in Las Vegas.

CSI: But we're committed to following the evidence no matter where it leads. If the evidence implies a killer, we can't say it's a natural death.

LV: Our commitment is eliminating crime. If you can't come up with natural causes for these deaths, we'll bring in CSIs who can.

CSI: So when we find someone face down on a desk, with a wound indicating something long and sharp was stabbed from the back

of the neck into the victim's mouth. . .?

LV: Keep researching until you find a completely natural explanation. And stop using needlessly prejudicial words like "victim." There is no more crime in this city because we have declared it so. Your findings have to be consistent with the new city policy.

And that's what it's like to be a scientist these days. Don't believe me? Watch Ben Stein's movie *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* .

And go "Arrrrgggggggghhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!"

This is a revised version of the blog post originally published on October 7, 2008

God and CSI:

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Eventually, it poisoned the very core of most science today. The early scientists like Galileo and Newton made important discoveries about the Creation because their starting point was a belief in an intelligent, orderly Creator who wove orderliness into His creation. They believed that the orderliness and principles of the natural world were knowable because our God is knowable. But then, Darwin's theory of evolution allowed people to embrace science without buying into the "God part" of it. Richard Dawkins (*The God Delusion*) said that "Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist." And today, it is now assumed that the very nature of science excludes anything supernatural. This has nothing to do with the evidence and everything to do with people's hearts.

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And go "Arrrrgggggggghhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!"

This blog post originally appeared at blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/god_and_csi on October 7, 2008.

Intelligent Design and the Bible

Jan. 16, 2006

Psalm 19 tells us that the heavens declare the glory of God. Romans 1 reminds us that the creation shows His divine attributes. So we shouldn't be surprised that scientists are finding evidence of design in nature.

The subject of intelligent design is in the news due to school board decisions and court rulings. So it is important that Christians be thinking clearly about this important topic.

When I have an opportunity to speak on the subject of intelligent design, I find that most Christians don't exactly know what to make of this research. On the one hand, they appreciate that scientists working in such diverse fields as astronomy and biology are finding evidence of design. Whether you look in the telescope at the far dimensions of space or in a microscope at the smallest details of life, God's fingerprint can be found.

But I also find that Christians are ambivalent about the idea of intelligent design. If you go to the websites of many creationist groups, you will find them to be critical of intelligent design research because it doesn't identify a creator. They want the scientists to connect the dots of their research to the God of the Bible. I would like to suggest another way of looking at this issue.

Those of us who defend the historical reliability of the Bible often use the good work done by archaeologists. These archaeologists uncover historical evidence that gives us a better picture of the ancient near east. We then take their research and show how it fits with the biblical description of

history. Although some archaeologists are Christians, many are not. But that doesn't keep us from using their research to show the truthfulness of the Bible.

We can think of scientists working on intelligent design in the same way. They are pursuing a line of research that shows design in nature. We can then take their research and show how it fits with the biblical description of creation. Although many of the scientists working on intelligent design are Christians, some are not. That shouldn't keep us from using their research. We can take their research and connect the dots.

In their book *The Privileged Planet*, Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay Richards show that the earth is positioned in the best place in our galaxy for complex life to exist. They also show that the earth is also positioned in the best place for scientific discovery. Christian theologians and apologists can take this research and point to the fact that God created the heavens and earth and they show His divine care.

Michael Behe in his book *Darwin's Black Box* shows that there are numerous molecular motors within the cell that intricately assembled. He demonstrates that they have irreducible complexity. Christian theologians and apologists can take this research and show that there is evidence of design. Design implies a designer, and the Bible tells us that God is the designer of life.

Scientists working on the subject of intelligent design may not be willing to identify the Creator. But that shouldn't keep us from using their research to connect the dots and lead people to the Creator.

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Myths About Intelligent Design

January 1, 2006

In December a decision by U.S. District Judge John Jones in Dover, Pennsylvania once again put the topic of intelligent design in the news. He ruled that the school board's actions were unconstitutional and merely an attempt to smuggle religious views into a science classroom.

Media coverage of the Dover case and the broader topic of intelligent design have often been inadequate. When I have spoken on this subject, I have found that many Christians don't have an accurate perspective on this subject. So let me take a moment to address some of the myths surrounding this scientific theory.

First, proponents of intelligent design are not trying to smuggle religion into the classroom. While that may have been the intent of some of the Dover school board members, it is clear that is not the desire of scientists working on intelligent design. The Discovery Institute is one of the leading think tanks in the area of intelligent design and it actually opposes the idea of requiring it be taught in the classroom. They are pursuing it as a scientific theory not as a public school curriculum.

It might be worth noting that what Judge Jones struck down was a requirement that a short statement be read in class that mentioned the phrase "intelligent design" twice. It also allowed students to look at a supplemental text on intelligent design titled *Of Pandas and People*. The students would be instructed from the standard biology textbook published by

Prentice Hall, but would be allowed to also read from the supplemental text if they desired.

Second, intelligent design is not just the latest modified attempt to introduce creationism into the classroom. Judge Jones and the media make it seem like the same people who promoted scientific creationism in the 1970s and 1980s are the same people pushing intelligent design now. That is not the case. None of the leaders of the intelligent design movement have been involved with creationist groups like the Institute for Creation Research or Answers in Genesis or Reasons to Believe. In fact, if you go to the websites of many creation groups, you will find they are often critical of intelligent design because it does not specifically identify a creator.

Third, intelligent design is much more than a refutation of evolution. It provides a positive model that can be tested. Judge Jones argued that "the fact that a scientific theory cannot yet render an explanation on every point should not be used as a pretext to thrust an untestable alternative hypothesis grounded in religion into a science classroom."

Scientists pursuing intelligent design are doing much more than just criticizing evolution. They are proposing new ideas that can be tested. For example, Michael Behe (author of the book *Darwin's Black Box*) suggests that molecular motors within the cell exhibit what he calls irreducible complexity. He shows that the bacterial flagellum requires numerous parts to all be present simultaneously for it to function. It is a testable model that other scientists can verify or refute using scientific data.

The ruling by Judge Jones won't end the debate about intelligent design. But at least when we debate its merits or flaws, we should get our facts straight.

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“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

"The Creation/Evolution Controversy is Keeping Me From Believing"

Dear Ray Bohlin,

I read your article Christian Views of Science and Earth History, and at the end it said about how you have been researching about this for twenty years, but still haven't come to a conclusion about it. If (macro)evolution isn't proved true, then why would people involved in science treat it as a fact? Two people who come to my mind are Michael Behe and Phillip Johnson. I guess Behe believes in macroevolution and Johnson doesn't, but they still both support Intelligent Design theory. Does Johnson just not know enough about science, or is Behe perhaps wrong? Maybe I've just become way too skeptical. I don't like being like this, but it's hard not to be! How can I not let this controversy about evolution keep me from believing? How do you do it? Maybe you just have more faith than I do. I don't know.

Basically, my only question is concerning the age of the earth and universe. I do not consider this the critical issue so I am willing to live with a certain amount of tension here. There are many good Christians, both theologians and scientists who disagree on the time frame of Genesis, so you are not alone.

Macroevolution is treated as fact primarily because it is necessary for a naturalistic world view. If there is no God then some form of evolution must be true. This is why so many evolutionists are not troubled by evolution's problems. They are firmly convinced that some form of evolution has occurred and the problems will be solved some day. Here their faith is in their world view and not necessarily science. Phil Johnson does a good job of talking about this in his first two books, *Darwin on Trial* and *Reason in the Balance*.

Being skeptical is OK. If Christianity is really true, then it can stand up to the scrutiny. I encourage you to continue to ask your questions and seek for answers. I have never been disappointed when I have felt the need to dig a little deper. The Lord won't disappoint you either.

An excellent book you may want to pick up is by Lee Strobel called *The Case for Faith* (Harper Collins/Zondervan). It's a series of interviews with top Christian scholars looking for answers to the toughest challenges to faith. One of the interviews is with Dr. Walter Bradley from Texas A & M about evolution and the origin of life. Because each chapter is a retelling of an interview it's not overly technical but extremely helpful and honest.

I certainly don't feel I have all the answers about the evolution question either. I am convinced however, that evolution certainly doesn't have all the answers and some of the missing answers are to the most crucial questions such as a workable and observable mechanism of change.

In the past when I was feeling threatened as you are I would frequently need to return to the basics which I knew were true. The facts of Jesus historical existence, the reliability of the New Testament, the historical reliability of his resurrection, and God's clear direction and presence in my life. Then I would combine this with Jesus own confirmation of the historicity of Genesis (see Matt. 19:3-6, Matt. 23: 29-37,

and Matt. 24:37-39 and "Why We Believe in Creation") and Paul's clear statement of the creation exhibiting his character in Romans 1:18-20 and it was obvious that something was very wrong with evolution and somehow God's creative fingerprints are evident in the natural world. That would keep me going. Now the more I have studied and probed, the more bankrupt evolution has become and the reasonableness and scientific integrity of design becomes more and more self-evident.

Hope this helps.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin

Probe Ministries