REFLECTIONS ON

THE "GOD VS. SCIENCE" DEBATE

MARK M. HANNA, Ph.D.

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Mark M. Hanna, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and World Religions

Our generation is seeing a more determined, more sophisticated, more concerted, and more unrelenting attack on the Christian faith than at any time in the last 2000 years. And the diatribes are often vicious and marked by intellectually deplorable *ad hominems*, invective, special pleading, and an egregious distortion of facts.

The spate of anti-Christian books and articles continues to grow day by day. And they come from a wide variety of angles—from philosophers, scientists, historians, psychologists, sociologists, university professors in religion departments, former "evangelicals," apologists for non-Christian religions, secular academics and non-academics of every stripe. They should be answered in accordance with the mandate of I Thessalonians 5:21, "Test everything," and I Peter 3:15: "Give the reason for the hope that you have."

From November 5 to7, 2006, a group of anti-theist scientists and philosophers met at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California primarily to advance their claim that science can and should replace God. That gathering was one more indication of the aggressive, quasi-religious zeal that increasingly animates growing numbers of atheists and agnostics. Among the more prominent, current anti-Christian writers are Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett, Michael Martin, and Richard Dawkins. Harris and Dawkins were speakers at the meeting.

Nevertheless, God has raised up an army of capable, sophisticated philosophers and scientists to combat the flood of contemporary critics. When I earned my Ph.D. in philosophy forty years ago, I was one of a small handful of evangelical philosophers in the world. Now there are more than a thousand and they are doing an outstanding job in defending the Christian faith and exposing the errors of its opponents. In fact, the same is true of virtually all the academic disciplines. There are many Christians who are highly credentialed scientists. Biblical and theological scholars are also numerous, and they are effectively combating attacks on the Bible and the historic doctrines of Christian orthodoxy. We can thank God for the impressive quality of the work that all of these scholars are producing in defense of biblical theism and the Christian faith.

Richard Dawkins appears to be the most influential atheistic scientist at present—not in terms of original research but in terms of his semi-popular books. His writings are

superficially persuasive to multitudes who have little or no sophisticated education in philosophy, theology, or the empirical sciences. His influence is due in large part to his academic credentials as a zoologist and his position as the Charles Simonyi Professor of the Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University. It is also due to a rising tide of secularism that makes significant sectors of the public eager to find a purportedly scientific and authoritative rationale for a naturalistic worldview.

Melvyn Bragg, Chancellor of Leeds University, said of Dawkins, "Richard has done more than anyone to clarify one of the most fundamental and enduring ideas in all of science—the theory of evolution by natural selection"("The Selfish Gene: Thirty Years On," www.edge.org/3rd_culture/selfish06/selfish06_indexx.html, p.22).

A recent book, consisting of a collection of essays by scientists, philosophers, and writers, pays tribute to his wide-ranging influence. It is titled, *Richard Dawkins: How a Scientist Changed the Way We Think.*

In his first book, *The Selfish Gene*, Dawkins wrote:

> They are in you and me; they created us, body and mind; and their preservation is the ultimate rationale for our existence. They have come a long way, those replicators. Now they go by the name of genes, and we are their survival machines.
>
> We are survival machines, robot machines, blindly programmed to preserve the selfish molecules known as genes.

Notice his choice of words: "created," "body and mind," "the ultimate rationale," "we are their survival machines," and "blindly programmed." These are far-reaching claims, and despite Dawkins' dogmatic pontifications about them, they are being vigorously debated among his fellow scientists. Nevertheless, Dawkins and others who believe in evolutionary naturalism often cover up or soft-pedal the problematic nature of many of their claims.

However, some biologists who would identify themselves as Darwinians are candid enough to admit that evolutionary theory is in great trouble today. Biologist Michael Denton's book, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, sparked considerable debate among scientists after it was published in 1986. In his 1998 book, *Nature's Destiny: How the Laws of Biology Reveal Purpose in the Universe,* he presented a powerful rationale for his conviction that "the cosmos is a specially designed whole with life and mankind as its fundamental goal and purpose" (p. 389).

Nevertheless, secularists, and especially atheists, seek to co-opt science as their ally in the battle against religions, especially against Christianity. Exploiting the prestige and authority of science, they often frame the issue in terms of "reason versus faith," "knowledge versus ignorance," and "science versus religion." The hubris implicit in their claim that they alone represent reason, knowledge, and science is bad enough. But even

worse is their tendency to take refuge in *scientism*, which is a fallacious epistemology and not science at all. Worse still is their predilection for substituting a straw man for authentic, biblical Christianity and its historical and logical grounding of the entire enterprise of modern science. From beginning to end, these errors permeate Dawkins' most recent book, *The God Delusion* (2006).

In this paper I focus my attention primarily on major errors and inadequacies that appear in a debate between Richard Dawkins and Francis Collins, Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute since 1993 and an atheist until he became a Christian at the age of 27. He is the author of a recent, best-selling book, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief.* Excerpts from the debate are found in the November 13, 2006 issue of TIME magazine. As respected scientists both men have written influential books that present their views. Since TIME has an immense readership all over the world and since its editorial board made the debate its feature article, I felt constrained to analyze it and some of its far-reaching ramifications.

I. The Misleading Title of the Debate

First, it is important to understand that TIME has done a great disservice to the cause of truth by misnaming the debate "God vs. Science." The title is regrettable, for at best it begs the question, and at worst it asserts an erroneous antithesis. Not only are God and science not opposed to one another but science has its roots in biblical theism. This has been irrefutably established by numerous scholars, such as E.A. Burtt, Alfred North Whitehead, and R.G. Collingwood, who have explained why the origin of the empirical sciences required a unique matrix, namely, the biblical worldview which provided ontological grounding for rationality, an objectively real, ordered, and stable world of cause and effect, and the ability of human rationality to grasp the structures and entities of the natural world.

This precise ontological grounding is found in no other religion or worldview—unless it is parasitic on the biblical doctrines of divine transcendence, ethical monotheism, creation, providence, anthropology, and axiology (especially ethical values, without which science is impossible).

The origin of science is not only rooted in biblical theism historically but also ontologically. By this I mean that the reality of the biblical God is the necessary source and justification for the logic, rationality, and methodology which are integral to the scientific disciplines. No other alleged foundation has answered the demand of the principle of sufficient reason. Only the reality and attributes of the God of the Bible constitute an adequate explanation for the existence and structures of both the natural world and human knowledge.

The title of the debate should have been something like "Theism vs. Naturalism" or "The Relevance of Science to the Debate between Theism and Atheism." Unfortunately, the rubric used by TIME implies that one must choose between God and science. Nothing

could be further from the truth. By such an infelicitous and misleading title, TIME's ostensible purpose of having the debate shed light on an important issue was obfuscated. It only contributed to the widespread confusion and ignorance that already befuddle the untutored.

II. The Misleading Initial Question

The question posed near the beginning of TIME's article is misconceived: "Can religion stand up to the progress of science?" It must be said again and again, with great emphasis, *there is no such thing as "religion."* There are religion**s,** but nothing that corresponds to the singular, omnibus term "religion." There are great differences among the religions of the world—so great, in fact, that any attempt to subsume them under a rubric like "religion" betrays profound ignorance. Some are theistic, for example, and some are atheistic.

Dawkins has repeatedly stated that "religious education is brainwashing and child abuse." This kind of statement reveals the folly of lumping all religions together as if there are no fundamental differences among them. Of course, Dawkins denounces all of them as forms of ignorance, materialistic science being the only sound way to gain knowledge about everything. However, when proper distinctions are made among the religions, it is certainly the case that some "religious education" is brainwashing and child abuse—most egregiously seen in the indoctrination of many Muslim children with murderous hatred toward all non-Muslims.

The basic question is one of truth. This means that not only all devotees of false religions are brainwashing (a better term would be "brainpolluting") children but atheistic scientists like Dawkins are doing the same, only with a different worldview. He wants all children to be taught atheistic materialism, and he sees his books as contributing to this aim. Unless he knows, *per impossible,* that atheism is true, he is "brainpolluting and abusing" children by indoctrinating them with his dogmatic point of view.

Atheism is a philosophical assumption that has nothing to do with the study of science itself. Yet some science teachers smuggle in atheism as part of science. That is surely a form of "brainpolluting" and "child abuse." There is nothing in all of the *scientific data and scientific theories* discussed in Dawkins' books that require atheism or materialism either as a presupposition or as an implication. However, he is a propagandist, and this leads him to interlard his scientific analyses and reports with his extraneous philosophical view. To the unwary, this endows atheism with the prestigious aura of "science."

As I point out later, the curious thing is that Dawkins makes a value judgment that something is "evil," although he adheres to a materialistic worldview that makes it impossible to justify even the distinction between good and evil. He simply has no rational basis for saying that so-called religious education is *evil* and atheistic science education is *good*. And he cannot justifiably say that "brainwashing and child abuse" are *evil*. He can say what his preference is and he can say that he wants everyone to agree

with him, but he is not entitled to say that everyone *ought*—logically or rationally ought—to adopt his materialistic atheism. He has not proved his worldview nor has he presented a cogent reason for believing it.

Dr. Lawrence M. Krauss, a physicist at Case Western Reserve University and a staunch critic of teaching creationism, told Dawkins and others at a recent meeting, "Science does not make it impossible to believe in God. We should recognize that fact and live with it and stop being so pompous about it" (quoted in "A Free-for-All on Science and Religion," an article in the New York Times, November 21, 2006). Also, in the same article, Charles L. Harper, Jr., the senior vice president of the Templeton Foundation denounced Dawkins' book, *The God Delusion*;" as "commercialized ideological scientism," because it promotes for profit the philosophy that science has a monopoly on the truth.

The question about "religion's" viability in the face of scientific progress is also ambiguous in another way, for it could be asking either a cultural question or an apologetic question. In the former case, it is asking whether some religion—such as Christianity, which is what Francis Collins defends—will survive culturally in the face of scientific progress. In the latter case, it is asking whether Christianity will survive intellectually, i.e., whether it can rationally justify its claims in view of the putative ability of the empirical sciences to give a naturalistic account of things that were formerly thought to have only a supernatural explanation.

A variety of causes may conspire to make a religion persist as a social phenomenon even when it is intellectually indefensible. Numerous contemporary religions fall into this category. The important question is whether a particular religion—namely, biblical Christianity, which is at issue in the Dawkins-Collins debate--can sustain its truth-claims with integrity in view of the increasing findings of the sciences that seem to be inimical to it.

This question is to be distinguished from another one that is often confused with it: Is Christianity intellectually viable in view of the ever-increasing assaults on its credibility by opponents who utilize scientific data and theories in an effort to undermine it? Especially pertinent to the latter question is the important distinction that should be drawn between *the limited number of empirically corroborated scientific theories* and the *speculative theories of scientists,* especially their philosophical conjectures that often masquerade as "scientific" discoveries or implications.

Contrary to the public's naïve view of science as rigorously objective and comprehensively certain, many, if not most, scientific theories—even many that appear to have a substantial degree of empirical support—are provisional and susceptible of refutation, revision, or replacement. Unfortunately, much of the public also does not realize that *none of the best established findings of science present any challenge whatever to biblical theism. As I will explain later, such findings actually correlate with biblical theism more than with any other worldview.*

III. The Mistaken Reduction of the Soul to the Body and the Mind to the Brain

The TIME article under consideration says that "antireligion" scientists are angered by intelligent design and excited and intoxicated by "their disciplines' increasing ability to map, quantify, and change the nature of human experience." The latter ability is especially seen in brain imaging, which supposedly "challenges the concept of a soul independent of glands and gristle." However, four great errors are implicit in the materialistic scientism that is promoted by such a claim.

1. THE ERROR OF MISUNDERSTANDING *INFORMATION*

It is ironic that scientists (some, maybe most, but not all) are angered by intelligent design and yet are amazed at the complexity of brain chemistry, which "could account for the ecstatic states of visionary saints." The more we learn about the brain and about DNA, the more we see evidence of intelligent design! Francis Crick, one of the discoverers of DNA, said that he could not see how naturalistic evolution could ever account for a single cell because of its mind-boggling complexity. However, not wanting to retain God in their thoughts (Rom. 1:26), he and other scientists have resorted to a variety of rationalizations, such as "panspermia," to support their philosophical naturalism.

Not only Sir Francis Crick but also Sir Fred Hoyle and other highly qualified scientists have explicitly or obliquely conceded that the *information* needed for a single cell cannot be accounted for naturalistically. If that is true of a single cell, what shall we say of the complex collocation and interaction of the trillions of cells that make up the human brain? What is often missed is that *information* is distinct from matter. *Information cannot be reduced to matter or energy,* for it is ontologically different.

It orders matter and accounts for the differentiation of one class of material entities from another class of material entities. A grain of sand and a living cell are different because of the distinctive information that has structured them. One exemplification of information is what we call the laws of nature. These laws, which are statistical patterns, are ontologically distinct from the atoms that constitute physical objects. The number, arrangement, and relations of atoms that constitute various kinds of physical objects *and* the atoms themselves are all structured by information.

Since the important difference between information and the matter-energy it structures is unclear to so many, a simple illustration may elucidate it. Consider a Boeing 747 jet airplane. All of the parts that constitute it exemplify information, for they are designed to be a certain way in order to fulfill a particular function. Now envisage *all* the parts of a

given 747 spread out on a vast warehouse floor. In order to assemble them so that the end product will be a properly structured and functioning 747 airplane, they must be put together in a certain way. In order to achieve this end, one must have already learned how to properly assemble the parts or he must have a manual with detailed instructions that can be followed step by step. In either case, it is the application of *information* that is necessary. Neither the material elements that constitute the parts nor the parts themselves provide the information that is needed. *Although information is exemplified in the parts and in their proper assemblage, the information itself transcends the material parts.*

When we look at the world and its differentiated objects, including the human brain, we are not looking at matter-energy units that have all come together willy-nilly or haphazardly. We see physical objects that have a certain structure and particular properties and ordered relations internally and externally. Matter is not self-organizing on the level of complexity that is exemplified in a vast array of physical objects, especially organic entities. Even on the most primitive level of apparent self-organization, such as simple crystals, information is involved. Such low-level self-organization follows certain natural laws. The more complex the organization on higher levels, the more complex is the information that is necessary.

Assuming that the standard Big Bang theory is correct, as a dozen lines of evidence indicate, the complex processes and objects that we now see did not merely result from subatomic particles randomly bouncing around. A mammoth amount of information had to be involved originally and continuously applied in order to produce not only the structures, properties, and relations that we see in the world but also the degree of stability and self-identity that physical objects exhibit. Unqualified randomness precludes stability and results in chaos. The degree of ostensible randomness that we see in nature is only recognizable in contrast to the stable order which is its context.

It will not do for ontological naturalists to claim that randomness has produced our universe and all the objects within it. At some point the *alleged, original* randomness had to be replaced with ordering stability; otherwise, we would not have a universe and earth with their relatively stable entities and processes. We would have nothing but randomness, and we could not even exist to know that there is nothing but chaotic flux. Our existence and knowledge are only possible because of information that has produced relatively stable order. To assume, as Dawkins and other atheists do, that "natural selection" can account for specified complexity and stable persistence through a block of time, is to make an egregious category mistake.

The question that inescapably confronts us as thinking beings could not be more crucial: *"What is the source of the information that has resulted in a world that has these undeniable features?"* Of course, one must account, as well, for the Big Bang and the existence of matter-energy. But even if matter-energy were eternal, one is still confronted with the question of the origin of information that has made the universe and its objects the kind of structured entities which exemplify an enormously complex order and specified function.

Even the speculative appeal to possible worlds or a multiverse cannot nullify the need to account for the information that has made our universe what it is. Cosmologists have pointed out that not only do we not know of any universe other than our own but that the General Theory of Relativity demonstrates the impossibility of knowing about any other alleged universes. In a desperate attempt to account for the mind-boggling fine-tuning of our universe, galaxy, solar system, earth, etc., Dawkins "suggests" that our universe is a lucky accident that emerged from a virtual infinity of universes.

By his own admission, the notion of a multiverse is not scientific, for he does not have a scintilla of evidence that there are other universes, and there is no way to test the supposition. *He resorts to sheer speculation because he refuses to accept any alternative to his philosophical naturalism.* He does not want to acknowledge God; therefore, no alternative is too absurd as long as it provides an ostensible way of supporting his atheism or what he otherwise describes as being "almost" certain that there is no God.

Dawkins also admitted in a recent interview—a video excerpt of which is online--that his claim that natural selection advances the assumed evolutionary process by "choosing" advantageous mutations (which are extremely rare) is a matter of *faith*. That is his word, for he stated that he has faith that natural selection operates in this way. Dawkins repeatedly emphasizes "natural selection" as the essential key to evolutionary progress from the simple to the complex, including all speciation. *He is known for his long-standing denunciation of faith, which he contrasts with knowledge (i.e., science), and yet he is compelled to admit that the fundamental claim made for natural selection is not a matter of science but of faith.*

Dawkins' materialism confronts the vexing problem posed by the necessity of information, which cannot be accounted for by sheer matter-energy or by a fortuitous concourse of atoms. *Information can only be adequately understood as having a hierarchy of loci. Information itself is first abstract before it is exemplified in the laws of nature, and then concretely in physical objects, which constitute another hierarchy of complexity whose apex is the human brain.*

Initially, information consists of certain kinds of *meaning*. As such, it only qualifies minds, not matter. Only the biblical theist can make sense of the universe and its contents, for an Intelligent Being alone can account for the origin of the universe and the information that has structured it and its constituent objects. *Since information is necessary for explaining the universe, its natural laws, and its specific, differentiated contents, and since information qualifies minds and not matter, which can only exemplify it, then there must be a Supreme Mind, namely, God who is the source of it.*

Not only is God's omniscience reflected thereby but His omnipotence is also exhibited, for He has the power to apply the information to material objects, to sentient organisms, and to animals and humans. Human consciousness is not only a unique form of transcendence over matter but it is also aware of the surpassing *Transcendence* over itself and over the universe (Romans 1:18-20). This awareness of God as transcendent Creator

is the foundational apprehension referred to in Ecclesiastes 3:11: "He has also set eternity in the hearts of men."

2. THE ERROR OF CONFUSING MIND AND BRAIN

Although in some religions the soul is described as being "*independent* of glands and gristle," that is not the case in the Bible. It is a more apt description of Platonic and Cartesian anthropology—which philosopher Gilbert Ryle lampooned as "the ghost in the machine." "Independence" is in need of qualification, for by itself it is ambiguous. Something may be ontologically independent, but not functionally independent. Something may be functionally dependent in a certain context and functionally independent in another context. According to Scripture, the soul (spirit, mind, the immaterial component) has an integral relation with the body. The two *ontologically distinct* components that constitute a human being—body and soul—are so intimately related by God that one can rightly speak of a human being as a personal, psychophysical unity characterized by interaction between the two poles.

Although there is some disagreement among theologians about this aspect of biblical anthropology, I think that Scripture teaches that human beings are *ontologically bipartite* (i.e., having material and immaterial components) and *functionally tripartite* (i.e, the human soul and human spirit denote a functional difference within the immaterial component, the human spirit being "dead" unless regenerated by the Holy Spirit). The significance of the ontological distinction is that the soul (i.e., the immaterial, personal self) can be separated from the body—such as in II Corinthians 5:8 and 12:2-4--and can be rejoined by resurrection. The important point here, however, is that TIME's article presents a characterization of the soul that is not descriptive of the biblical teaching about the integral relation and two-way interaction of the distinct, substantive entities of body and soul.

Understanding the soul or mind (terms I am using here as equivalent) as a distinct, immaterial entity precludes equating it with consciousness, which is the primary *function* of the mind. It can be affected by the brain due to interaction in our present state when it is conjoined with the body. The mind should not be reduced to consciousness, for it is always a serious error to confuse the ontological with the functional. In certain states, like sleep or a coma, the mind is still present as an entity even though it is not conscious.

One of the most frustrating problems that must be faced by eliminative materialism is how each of us could come to have a unified sense of identity if we are composed solely of physical constituents. In a recent volume, *Conversations on Consciousness* (2006), psychologist Susan Blackmore presents her interviews with 21 leading scientists and philosophers who specialize in the study of consciousness. They all admit bafflement in their attempt to understand how neural processes create subjective experiences and how the brain could be the source of a conscious "I."

The brain consists of a vast number of physical parts with diverse, distributed functions. Yet we are conscious of a unified *self*, not only at any given moment but also through the course of many years despite the replacement of all the cells in our brain and body every seven years. At seventy years of age, a person is conscious of being the same person he was at seven years of age. Through countless physical and psychological changes in one's lifetime, an enduring sense of the self's sameness and unity persists.

The best explanation of this indisputable fact is to be found in the immaterial "plus factor" of the soul. It also makes sense out of our ability to make rational, free choices which entail moral responsibility. One cannot justifiably argue that he is not responsible for a crime that he committed ten or twenty years earlier on the presupposition that he is not the same person since his brain and entire body now consist of an entirely different set of cells. Such an assumption would make havoc of our moral assessments and our judicial system, both of which are predicated on a person's self-identity that continues through all the vicissitudes of one's life.

Animals do not have the *qualitatively unique*, *reflexive consciousness* which characterizes human beings. That is, humans can be aware of their awareness, and they are able to think about their conscious states and processes, such as inferring,, remembering, anticipating, believing, doubting, regretting, fearing, etc. An incorporeal self, interactively related to the corporeal brain, is the best explanation of how it is possible for one to experience consciousness and to be capable of reflecting on an act or stream of consciousness.

Although one can distinguish such processes and properties of the mind, it cannot be analyzed into parts because it is not physical like the brain. Therefore, attempts at analytically reducing the mind into smaller ontological components are futile. Nor can the mind be reductively analyzed as parts of the brain or an emergent function of the brain. The mind is an indivisible ontological unity which contrasts sharply with the multicellular brain.

By equating the mind with the brain, physicalists (materialists) commit an egregious category mistake. Of course they will continue to seek for a credible explanation of how the brain putatively gives rise to consciousness. The *quest* is a legitimate scientific endeavor, and even in the face of failure to accomplish a materialistic reduction, such investigation may shed more light than we now have on the cerebral processes that *correlate* with the mind's activities.

3. THE ERROR OF MISCONSTRUING THE LIMITS OF SCIENCE

Limitations of the empirical sciences prevent them from refuting the existence of a substantial soul or, to put it in another way, they will never succeed in proving that the soul is reducible to the body or that the mind is reducible to the brain. This is entailed by the *biblical* doctrine of interactionism. No matter how much we come to know about the brain, no matter how much we alter the chemicals in the brain, no matter how much we

manipulate the physical functions of the brain (e.g., as neurosurgeon, Dr. Wilder Penfield did with electrical currents), no one can justifiably infer that the mind *is* the brain. The most we can warrantably say is that the variegated activities and changes in the brain are the *physical correlates* of mental states and processes.

The strongest electron microscope can magnify an object 500,000 times. But focusing it on a brain will never allow one to see an idea, a concept, an intention, referentiality, a choice, an emotion (fear, anxiety, joy, etc.), a mental image, etc. Even with unlimited magnification, these realities will not be seen. They are of a different ontological order from physical entities. One may see changes in chemicals, brain activity, synapses, neurons, etc., but these things are ontologically distinct from the former items and, at most, we may be able to map increasingly precise physical correlations with mental activities. The ontological distinctiveness of the two categories is indicated by their respective properties which cannot cross over and qualify the other category. For example, ideas, thinking processes, and emotions do not have spatial dimensions. Nor do they have other properties that characterize spatial entities in the physical world, such as color, size, shape, and measurable, external relations.

Matter is not conscious, has no emotions, cannot make free choices, cannot be morally responsible, cannot apprehend abstractions or meanings or logical necessities, and cannot be "about" something else in the sense of referential directedness. But the human mind, by virtue of having these properties, is ontologically distinguishable from the brain to which it sustains an intimate relation.

4. THE NATURE AND ROLE OF SCIENCE

There are two extreme positions in regard to the nature and role of science. One views science as a quasi-enemy of the humanities, artistic creativity, and social and personal values. Accordingly, it quantifies, depersonalizes, and dehumanizes mankind's existence both by its reductionistic methods and its diverting of our attention from values like love, beauty, and goodness that are far more important than cold scientific data and their technological progeny.

Abetting this negative stance toward science is post-modern relativism, which sees science as merely a pretender to objectivity and truth—ideals that are simply not achievable by anyone or anything. Thomas Kuhn's book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962)*, was also interpreted by many as supporting a relativistic view of science. He later denied that his view relativized science, although he did cast doubt on science's claim to objectivity. His work showed in an unprecedented way that a positivistic view of science with its comprehensive claim of pure objectivity is a myth.

The other extreme is scientism—the view that Dawkins espouses and promulgates. This view not only claims that science is the only avenue to knowledge but it also assumes that if there is no scientific solution to a problem, there is no solution at all. Both extremes are to be rejected in favor of a mediating position that recognizes the value and limited

objectivity of science, on the one hand, and the inability of its methods to answer all questions, on the other hand. Indeed, the most important questions in our lives cannot be answered by science.

5. THE ERROR OF OVER-GENERALIZATION

It is a frequently committed logical error to assume that if "spiritual visions" can be caused by altering the chemical balances in the brain or by stimulating certain areas of the brain with electrical currents, then *all* spiritual visions and "religious experiences" are reducible to these physical processes and entirely explicable in terms of them. The fact that Penfield's invasion of the brain with electrical currents produced vivid memories along with the feelings and emotions that originally accompanied the remembered events does not entail materialistic reductionism. We obviously have veridical memories without such electrical stimulation. *The most that Penfield's experiments show is mind-body interaction, for just as there are instances of physical correlates of thoughts that originate in the mind, there are instances of mental correlates of physical alterations that originate in the body.*

One can acknowledge that subjective states which mimic spiritual experiences may be physically or psychologically induced, but it is a patent *non sequitur* to infer from that fact that no spiritual experiences are supernaturally caused or that all of them are devoid of an objective relationship with God who transcends our bodies and minds. No one will ever be in a position to rule out a supernatural cause of "spiritual events," for our cognitive finitude precludes us from knowing that there are no supernatural realities, such as God, angels, and demons. Of course, it is a different matter to present a *positive* case for the involvement of extra-subjective, supernatural realities in certain instances.

If there are supernatural realities, any one of them may be a cause of such a "spiritual" experience. Denying this is a matter of subjectivity and does not determine objective states of affairs. One can deny this all day long, but denial is a subjective decision that does not determine objective states of affairs. People believe all sorts of claims that are false and disbelieve all sorts of claims that are true. At one time apparently everyone believed that the earth was flat and not round, but the fact that it is round was unaffected by their mistaken belief. Knowing the truth requires our minds to conform to reality, i.e., to believe what is the case, in contrast to post-modern notions that claim we "create our own reality."

The prior question, therefore, is an ontological one, i.e., "What is the nature of ultimate reality?" Only if one gratuitously assumes that ultimately reality is naturalistic—that the space-time, matter-energy cosmos is all there is and all there ever was—will he then presume that he can reduce all experiences, including all "spiritual experiences" to natural causes. The philosophical-theological issue must be addressed before any comprehensive assessment of causes can be made. Besides, the implied reduction of religions to "spiritual visions" or "spiritual experiences" is misleading, for each religion also consists of a set of defining propositions (i.e., truth-claims) and certain behaviors.

These create an important context that must be taken into consideration whenever spiritual experiences are evaluated.

IV. MIRACLES AND SCIENCE

Dawkins was asked the first question in the excerpted debate, namely, whether God is a delusion. The question should have been more precise—whether *belief* in God is a delusion. Despite all their efforts to prove atheism, no philosopher or scientist has ever disproved the existence of God--nor can anyone ever succeed in such an endeavor. Belief in God would be a delusion only if we knew that God does not exist. No one is justified in claiming that the God of biblical theism does not exist; therefore, no one is justified in asserting that belief in God is a delusion. If God exists, then *disbelief* in God is a delusion. The belief-disbelief question is not the same as the question of God's existence, although it is inextricably tied to it.

1. THE RELEVANCE OF SCIENCE TO THEISM

Dawkins is mistaken when he asserts, "I think that it (the existence of God) is a scientific question." This answer is indicative of his scientism—a view that has been decisively refuted by more than one philosopher. Of course, Dawkins is a scientist and not a philosopher. But does that mean we should cut him some slack when he makes elementary philosophical blunders? I will not take the time here to elaborate on why *scientism* is self-refuting other than to point out that the judgment about the supposed omnicompetence of science is itself not a scientific judgment. *It is a philosophical judgment—specifically, it is an erroneous epistemological judgment with false ontological implications.*

Collins responds to the question about God's existence with an answer that is on the right track but, at the same time, turns out to be quite inadequate. Collins is right to say that God transcends nature, but he is wrong—or at least unclear--in saying that "God's existence is outside of science's ability to really weigh in." His answer seems to imply that neither the enterprise of science nor the findings of science have any relevance to the question of God's existence.

Assuming that "science" means the empirical sciences (such as physics, chemistry, biology, etc.), they surely are relevant to the question of God's reality. They cannot prove or disprove the existence of the God of biblical theism, for by their very nature they are limited to propositions about the physical world. *Nevertheless, there are features about the physical world that point to the necessity of intelligent design as the only adequate explanation of their origin. And the necessity of intelligent design carries metaphysical implications that lead to an Intelligent Designer, apart from whom there is no sufficient, ultimate explanation.*

Although God, the ultimate Intelligent Designer, is omnipresent, he is spirit; therefore, even in his immanence in the world, he ontologically transcends the visible, physical world. To grasp this, imagine a dimension intersecting the dimensions of the physical universe but different from them and therefore transcending them. God is not a dimension, nor should he be thought of as confined to some dimension; but the analogy of an intersecting dimension beyond the dimensions of space and time that characterize our universe should help us to understand the concept of God's immanence in the world while being distinct from it.

The important point here is that the existence, methodologies, and findings of science *are* relevant to the question of God's existence. An example of this relevance is Michael Behe's advocacy of intelligent design on the basis of molecular biology (see his book, *Darwin's Black Box*).

2. IS BELIEF IN MIRACLES COMPATIBLE WITH SCIENCE?

Dawkins focuses on belief in miracles as "contradictory not just to the facts of science but to the spirit of science." This kind of objection has a long history, reaching its apex in the writings of David Hume. However, Hume's contentions have been soundly refuted by other philosophers. Dawkins' claim can be shown to be specious by the following observations.

A. MANY SCIENTISTS BELIEVE IN MIRACLES

There are thousands of scientists who are Christians and believe in miracles. They do not deny the "facts of science" nor are they antithetical to the "spirit of science." In fact, the originators of many of the branches of science were Christians or theists who believed in miracles. Dawkins is either ignorant of the history of science or he chooses to ignore it. Despite the fact that the historical data falsify Dawkins' contention, he wrong-headedly pontificates that "If ever there was a slamming of the door in the face of constructive investigation, it is the word miracle" and it causes you to lose "all of your natural skepticism and your scientific—really scientific—credibility." Although there may be some isolated instances of this kind of religious close-mindedness, the history of science unequivocally disproves Dawkins' generalization. Therefore, his assertion can only be considered a witting or unwitting propaganda ploy which he uses to promote his arbitrary naturalism.

B. DEFINITIONS ARE CRUCIAL

Whether a belief in miracles is inimical to the facts or spirit of science depends on how a miracle is defined. It also depends on how scientific methodology and scientific laws are defined. Scientists typically employ methodological naturalism—i.e., they *seek* for natural causes and natural explanations of all phenomena. The heuristic tools limit the

purview of science to natural entities and natural events. This limitation is a necessary consequence of the general scientific *guidelines* of empiricality, testability, and repeatability.

Although methodological naturalism does not entail or support ontological naturalism, many people confuse the two. To make the leap from the former to the latter is entirely unjustified. Even confining science to methodological naturalism is debated by philosophers of science, with some affirming it and others denying it. Like so many issues, this debate hinges, to a great extent, on how one defines the relevant terms. For example, is human or finite intelligent design to be defined as a natural or a non-natural cause of irreducible, specified complexity?

Of course, not everything that is considered "scientific" meets the requirements of empiricality, testability, and repeatability. Theories about a whole host of issues are not presently susceptible to these criteria—and may never be. Cosmogonic and cosmological theories abound, for example, and although empirical data are relevant to evaluating them, they are insusceptible of the more direct, decisive application of empirical testability and repeatability that are normative for the more restricted domains of laboratory sciences. Although Darwinian and neo-Darwinian theories (which postulate "macroevolution," i.e., speciation) cannot meet the three criteria, they fall under the rubric of "science," a lack of corroboration notwithstanding.

3. DISTINGUISHING METHODOLOGICAL FROM ONTOLOGICAL NATURALISM

A. WHOSE HAT IS HE WEARING AND WHEN?

It needs to be repeated often to those segments of the public who credulously embrace scientism that brilliant scientists are sometimes philosophically naïve and unwittingly slip into the egregious error of illicitly inferring ontological naturalism on the basis of methodological naturalism. Looking for natural causes does not entail that they are the only kind of causes there can be. No one is in a position to rule out the possibility of a supernatural cause behind natural causes. Medieval theologians emphasized this point by their *distinction between ultimate and proximate causes*.

When scientists make pronouncements about the nature of ultimate reality and ultimate causes, they set their scientific hat aside and don the hat of the philosopher. Dawkins does not seem to be self-critical enough to recognize how frequently he does this. No less serious is the consequent hoodwinking of his readers who lack the discernment to notice how often he unjustifiably shifts from one hat to the other.

A corollary of the fallacious leap from methodological naturalism to ontological naturalism is the often overlooked fact that even if one provides corroboration for a credible, natural cause for a phenomenon, it does not follow that it is the *only* cause that

can produce a given effect. Even apart from the consideration of supernatural causes, this sometimes applies to causes and effects on the horizontal level of the natural world.

Consider an illustration of how some events can result from different causes. The lights in a house all go out at the same time. How many causes of this occurrence are possible? One can name a variety of causes: interference from lightning, a technical problem in the transmission of electrical power, overloaded fuses, a truck that crashes into a power pole which is necessary for conveying electricity to the house, etc. All of these are natural causes—indeed, they are *physical* causes.

B. UNDERSTANDING CAUSES

But there may be another cause—a cause transcendent to mere physicality even as it impinges on the physical. A human being may cause all the lights to go out by *choosing* to flip the main breaker in the electrical panel on the side of the house. The breaker is physical and the hand that flips it is physical, but a *non-physical* thought, intention, and choice are the antecedent cause of the physical, proximate cause. Simply because a scientist comes up with a plausible, natural cause does not entail that it was the actual cause. In some cases, it may be the cause; in other cases, it may not be. Furthermore, a natural explanation may be correct as far as it goes, but it may not be the entire explanation. It might be partial or concomitant or instrumental relative to the primary cause. A cause is often complex, including a number of contributing factors.

Consider another simple example. The law of gravity is a natural law. I drop a penny with my left hand, it falls to the floor, exemplifying the law of gravity. One can assume that every time I drop the penny, it will fall to the floor. But I drop it again. This time I catch it with my right hand before it hits the floor. The law of gravity is still exemplified, for when my left hand dropped it, it did not fly up to the ceiling. Gravitational force drew it downward, but my personal choice and power interrupted its movement so that it did not reach the floor.

Such antecedent, mental causation occurs countless times everyday all over the earth by billions of people. In a great variety of ways, these occurrences impinge on the effects of natural laws. However, these interventions do not contradict the facts of science or the spirit of science. To bring about alterations and even preemptions like these does not destroy or violate natural laws. In my examples, it is personal intervention that effectuates a different result from that which would have occurred without it.

C. THE UNIVERSE: CLOSED OR OPEN?

In Christian theism, God is a personal Being who can act in the natural order of the world—and in addition to his general providence over the world, *he sometimes acts in a way and in a context and for a purpose that is rightly called a miracle.* There is no reason to think that the universe is closed off from God anymore than there is a reason to think that the falling penny was closed off from me. In fact, since an omniscient,

omnipotent, omnipresent *God created the universe and the natural laws that order it in such a way that allows him to act in and upon the world whenever he chooses to do so*, he is in an infinitely superior position to my interventions, for mine involve numerous limitations.

Dawkins adopts the *philosophically untenable position* that the universe is a self-existent, closed system or that the laws of nature are immutable. However, it is universally recognized among philosophers of science that we are only warranted in claiming that the laws of nature are *statistical regularities*. Science can freely carry on its investigation into the natural world without any concern that a belief in miracles is an obstacle to its progress. After all, *authentic miracles are very rare occurrences which, by their very rarity, do not serve to destroy natural patterns of regularity*. It is not the mere nonconformity to a natural pattern of regularity, however, that makes something a miracle. A special, theistic context and purpose are necessary to distinguish it from a mere anomaly that has no spiritual significance.

Contrary to Dawkins' claim, when has anyone ever heard a scientist say, "Since I believe in miracles, I won't look for a natural explanation for a natural phenomenon"? It is simplistic to think that a scientist's belief in miracles *ipso facto* destroys his pursuit of natural causes. He is as free and as motivated as a non-theist scientist to look for natural explanations. However, the other side of the coin should not be dismissed, namely, that the universe in general and certain features of the world in particular point to an Intelligent Designer, and science can do much to uncover these features. They are manifestly important to making the judgment that the ultimate cause of the universe and its features is intelligent design rather than blind randomness.

D. FINDING THE BEST EXPLANATION

When the empirical sciences discover phenomena with properties that *persistently resist credible explanation* in terms of blind randomness, scientists are not thereby barred from continuing their search for a naturalistic explanation even as they acknowledge that intelligent design is the *prima facie best explanation.* In the final analysis, of course, the proffering of speculative, naturalistic possibilities may prove feckless. The longer the search continues and is unsuccessful, the greater the corroboration for intelligent design as the best explanation.

The non-theist, however, will almost always deny intelligent design no matter how high the degree of corroboration may be for it. Like Dawkins, he will say that he may not understand what accounts for a particular phenomenon at present, but science will someday find the real explanation, which, *ex hypothesi*, will always be a natural cause. This not only amounts to a blind faith in scientism but it is contrary to the way science works.

After *rigorous* testing of a hypothesis (which includes peer review), the best explanation is conceded by scientists unless it is possibly revised or falsified in the future. If one

refuses to make this kind of provisional concession, then he ceases to function as a scientist, who ought to follow the evidence wherever it leads, and, instead, functions as a dogmatic philosopher whose *apriori* assumptions will invariably preclude him from ascertaining an adequate explanation. For him, it is not evidence that is decisive but philosophical palatability.

Unfortunately, he may be deluded into thinking that his perspective is "methodologically scientific and in the spirit of science." More tragically, multitudes buy into the same delusion as they naively embrace the philosophical dicta of such scientists when they attain the prominence and visibility of men like the late Carl Sagan and like Richard Dawkins.

E. MT. RUSHMORE AND INTELLIGENT DESIGN

What is an adequate or best explanation of a phenomenon? One can scour the rock formations of the world, for example, and find some very unusual configurations. Virtually all of them can be credited to the effects of the laws of nature, such as seismic activity or erosion by wind and water. But when one confronts the unique specificity and irreducible complexity of the faces carved into the side of Mt. Rushmore in South Dakota, he doesn't think for a moment that they appeared there by blind, natural causes over the course of millions of years. Nor does he imagine that they just popped into existence without any cause. Mt. Rushmore is an apposite example of intelligent design for good reason. Archeological and other historical traces, such as the Rosetta Stone, as well as SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence) which involves listening for signals from outer space that are information-intensive, serve as other clear examples of how we justifiably infer intelligence as the source of certain types of data.

There are obviously many rock formations in the world that show no direct indications of intelligent design. There may be others whose causes are initially problematic—i.e., it is difficult to know, at first, whether they were formed according to natural laws or whether they resulted from more direct intelligent design. However, as soon as we see the artistic finesse of Mt. Rushmore's sculptures, we don't have any doubt that the faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln were the result of intelligent design. *We immediately infer this because no other explanation can adequately account for the specified complexity of the facial formations.*

One can imagine, for a moment, geologists coming up with some ingenious speculations that attribute the presence of the rock faces to natural processes. They don't do it, however, because they *know* that the best explanation is that of intelligent design. Even if a geologist conjured up a naturalistic theory that allegedly explained their appearance on the side of Mt. Rushmore and if he dressed up his conjecture in the most impressively technical jargon so that it sounded quite plausible, would any of us be fooled?

The falsity of a proposed, naturalistic explanation would never be doubted, not only because we have incontrovertible historical data, pictures, and eyewitnesses who have

verified that Gutzon Borglum and scores of his assistants carved the faces into the rock, but because of the *objective features* of the sculptures themselves.

The point of this example is not to say that the fine tuning of constants in the universe and the complexity of DNA, for instance, are as obvious and as "simple" as the Mt. Rushmore sculptures. It only indicates that even in hard cases, which may be initially problematic, rigorous examination may bring scientists to the point at which they recognize that no natural processes can account for such extraordinarily complex phenomena, leaving intelligent design as the only reasonable explanation.

Since much of science is provisional and revisable, naturalistic scientists will continue to search for natural causes on the assumption that some new discovery about nature or natural laws will weigh decisively against intelligent design. But some cases are so clear and incontrovertible that their expectation will remain unfulfilled with regard to such physical entities. In such cases, *incorrigible* resistance to intelligent design is a manifestation of dogmatic, doctrinaire naturalism—an unscientific attitude that refuses to admit what is undeniable before one's own eyes.

F. WHAT MAKES A MIRACLE?

Dawkins misses the most important aspect of an event that makes it a true miracle with theistic implications. He says that "to a medieval peasant, a radio would have seemed like a miracle. All kinds of things may happen which we by the lights of today's science would classify as a miracle just as medieval science might a Boeing 747." He assumes that if we knew more about certain events which some call "miracles," we would see that there is nothing supernatural about their occurrence. This is an entirely gratuitous, naturalistic presupposition. Of course, no one is interested in quarreling with the banal assertion that the world is filled with extravagant claims of "miracles" that are, upon analysis, explicable in naturalistic terms.

However, the more we know about certain extraordinary or unique events that have reportedly occurred in a special, historical context to fulfill a specific purpose, the more we may come to see the untenability of a purely naturalistic explanation. This has especially been the case regarding the resurrection of Christ. Scores of skeptics who denied or doubted the event became convinced believers in its authenticity after a thorough and honest inquiry into the relevant evidence. Harvard professor, Simon Greenleaf, a Jewish agnostic and leading authority on legal evidence, was challenged by one of his students to make an exacting investigation into the claim that Christ rose from the dead as reported in the New Testament. As a result, he became a Christian, for his skepticism was replaced by an unshakeable conviction of its factuality.

Dawkins has decided in advance, not on the basis of evidence or science, but on the basis of a philosophical worldview, that a supernatural cause of any event is not possible. If God exists and can act in and upon the world, then a naturalistic presupposition arbitrarily closes the door on finding the truth. If Greenleaf had been locked into such a

philosophical assumption, he would have either refused to examine the evidence for the miracle of Christ's resurrection or he would have assiduously rationalized the evidence away in an effort to maintain his preconception. A scientist should be interested in finding the truth, no matter how distasteful it might be to him.

Since the most crucial feature that makes an extraordinary event a true *miracle* is not merely its anomalous or extraordinary character but its specific context that gives it theistic significance, the miracles reported in the Bible are set apart from all other alleged "miracles"-- including those claimed by other religions and Dawkins' examples of the radio and the Boeing 747 as they would be viewed from the standpoint of medieval science. No adequate evaluation of reported miracles can be conducted without a scrupulous and careful assessment of the role of its *context and purpose* as well as a thorough investigation of all relevant evidence.

V. DAWKINS AND OCCAM'S RAZOR

Dawkins' response to a question about Darwinian evolution reveals an underlying assumption that is often made. In contrast to the theistic account of the book of Genesis, he claims that "Darwin provided a simpler explanation." Dawkins believes that this alleged simplicity undermines "the most powerful argument for God's existence," namely, "the so-called argument from design, which contends that living things are so beautiful and elegant and so apparently purposeful, they could only have been made by an intelligent designer."

Referring to Darwin's assumption of gradual, incremental progress from simplicity to complexity, Dawkins avers, "each step is not too improbable for us to countenance, but when you add them up cumulatively over millions of years, you get these monsters of improbability, like the human brain and the rain forest." He contends that we should not assume "that because something is complicated, God must have done it." However, this assertion amounts to a *caricature* of that which proponents of intelligent design actually claim. Crucial to their main argument is the distinction between mere complexity and *specified, irreducible complexity*, which they define carefully. Later in this essay I will address the point more fully.

I turn now to a critical evaluation of Dawkins' foregoing claim of evolutionary simplicity.

1. OCCAM'S RAZOR IS A GENERAL GUIDELINE WITH EXCEPTIONS

Dawkins makes the unwarranted assumption that Occam's razor is a universal norm that always leads us to truth or at least to a greater approximation of truth. William of Occam

summarized his directive by saying that one ought not to multiply entities beyond necessity. However, one cannot appeal to "simplicity" without having an implicit *theory of simplicity.* How simplicity should be understood is open to debate—particularly about where one should draw the line between necessity and superfluity.

Occam's razor is not a philosophical panacea that can be applied uncritically to every problem. What one philosopher or scientist may claim to be superfluous, another sees as necessary for an adequate explanation of a phenomenon. One can only decide between these contradictory judgments by making a careful, meticulous analysis of both the phenomenon in question and the scope, coherence, and adequacy of each of the conflicting explanations.

Furthermore, if Occam's razor is applied with the inflexible rigor of an inviolable, heuristic mandate, it can result in the obscuration of important distinctions among different types of realities. Thus, it could easily lead to illicit reductionism that would undermine Occam's own rationale for his razor—which rationale includes the irreducible distinctiveness of conceptual abstractions, rational free choice, and the prescriptiveness of the law of parsimony (namely, that one *should not* multiply entities beyond necessity)..

A misapplication of Occam's razor could lead one to assume that these items are superfluous and completely explicable in terms of matter. But such reductionism would nullify the meaning and usefulness of Occam's razor, for physical causes cannot account for the ontological uniqueness of conceptual abstractions (which include the principles of logic and all other meanings), the reflective freedom to decide between that which is necessary and that which is superfluous, and the categorical difference between "ought" and "is" " (i.e., the normative in contrast to the descriptive).

These considerations highlight the important difference between *legitimate reduction*, which seeks to *explain* a phenomenon by analyzing it into its lower-level constituents and *illicit reduction*, which attempts to *explain away* ontological and qualitative differences. Dawkins engages in both types of reductionism, either without being aware of it or without acknowledging it if he does realize it.

One crucial aspect of scientific progress is the ascertainment of distinctions where none were previously recognized. *Making legitimate distinctions is as important in science and in every other academic discipline as the quest for assimilation in unifying theories.* Wittgenstein observed that there is something about the human mind that seeks for an ultimate, unifying principle of reality. However, distinctions, even if encompassed by such unification, are no less important. *In fact, unity is sought because distinctions are real and we want to know how they are related in the most ultimate sense.*

More than one theologian has noted that the Trinity exemplifies and ontologically grounds the equal importance of oneness and multiplicity, thereby answering the philosophical conundrum about the one and the many. *One may not only err by multiplying entities beyond necessity but also by eliminating entities beyond sagacity.* The current scientific quest for a Unified Theory of Everything exemplifies the quest to

which Wittgenstein referred. Even if the scientific goal of this quest were to be achieved someday, it would not eliminate all distinctions. It would only show that quantitatively and qualitatively distinct entities are related in a comprehensive way that was hitherto undiscovered.

If such a quest for a theory were to be extrapolated from the "everything" of the material world to include non-physical realities (such as conceptual abstractions and psychological phenomena), it would encounter insurmountable obstacles to such wholesale reductionism. Two radically different forms of monism are found in the history of philosophy, namely, materialism and idealism. The former denies the existence of anything that transcends matter and the physical universe. Idealism denies the existence of anything that is distinctively material—all physical entities being considered "ideas," as exemplified in George Berkeley's (1685-1753) philosophy ("To be is to be perceived"). As one philosopher stated the difference between them, "One says, 'Never mind,'" and "The other says, 'No matter.'"

Both materialist and idealist ontological theories are illicitly reductionistic, but in antithetical ways. Materialism is preferred by many because it precludes the possibility of God's existence, leaving man's presumed autonomy unchallengeable. It was Berkeley's concern to counter atheism that led him to idealism. Although it was contrary to what Occam intended by his principle of parsimony, atheists have found it to be a useful tool to buttress their position. Like any tool, however, Occam's razor can be misused, leading some philosophers to call it "Occam's eraser."

Albert Einstein brilliantly observed, "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not a bit more so." Some things refuse to yield to the desideratum of simplicity. The pre-Socratic philosopher, Thales, thought that literally everything could be reduced to one substance, namely, water. Simple enough, but wrong. Empedocles later assured us that everything could be accounted for in terms of four elements: earth, air, water, and fire. More complicated, to be sure, but still naively simple. In regard to matter, there are some one hundred *known* elements. If one wants to understand these elements, he must put truth and objectivity above simplicity and reductionism.

Even the fact that all the elements are composed of atoms does not serve to reduce the elements *qua elements,* i.e., in regard to their qualitative differences. Moreover, the inner structure and processes of atoms are so enormously complex that merely referring to the fact that all elements are composed of atoms does not achieve final simplicity. The four fundamental forces of electromagnetism, gravity, and strong and weak interaction are a crucial aspect of the complexity of the atom and its sub-atomic particles. The point is that the quest for simplicity is a useful, *general* guideline, but it must be applied critically and cautiously if one is to avoid the fallacy of illicit reductionism. The qualitative differentiations of physical entities are hardly superfluous to the quest to understand the physical world.

It is not difficult to see why Occam's razor has been a favorite instrument of atheists who claim that the universe is self-existent and self-sufficient and assert that believing in God

is adding an "entity" beyond necessity. It is well known that when Napoleon asked astronomer, Pierre-Simon Laplace why he didn't mention God in his book on astronomy, he replied, "I have no need of that hypothesis." Ever since then, this famous, or infamous, statement of his has been the watchword of many astronomers and other scientists. *However, Laplace knew very little about the science of information and about the exquisite, fine-tuning of the universe that science has only recently discovered. And he knew nothing about the intricate nature of DNA.*

Robert Jastrow, Founding Director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, documented science's "return to God" in a statement that is now almost as well known as Laplace's. In *God and the Astronomers,* Jastrow wrote:

> For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries (p. 116).

It is often forgotten that when Occam gave formal expression to the law of parsimony, he was concerned to avoid facile recourse to pseudo-explanations. *To the end of his life, he firmly believed in God, and considered Him to be the ultimate reality, not an unnecessary or superfluous hypothesis. For Occam, ontological naturalism was a pseudo-theory, because it excluded, not a superfluous "entity," but the most important and necessary reality of all—God.*

We now have vastly more information about the nature of life and the universe, from microcosm to macrocosm, than Occam had, and it provides stunning support for biblical theism in contradistinction to the pseudo-explanation of ontological naturalism which Dawkins complacently claims to be the simpler of the two worldviews. Although Occam's razor has an important heuristic role if used critically, *one must always be wary of substituting simplicity for truth.* The simple is not always the truth, and the truth is not always simple. It's that simple.

When one understands the distinction between truth and simplicity, he will recognize that even *if* "Darwin provided a simpler explanation" than theism, it is a *non sequitur* to infer, on that basis, that Darwinian evolution is *true.* Einstein stated the point succinctly: "*If you are out to describe truth, leave elegance to the tailor"* (italics added for emphasis).

2. META-LEVEL INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Dawkins seems to be insufficiently aware of a theistic argument from design that is on a meta-level relative to the physical world's ordered structures and processes—the latter being the focus of the traditional argument from design. For example, William Paley was not wrong to elaborate on the complexity of physical objects, such as the human eye, as indexicals of design. But beyond physical complexity is the information that has made it complex and functionally specific.

Immanuel Kant contended that the order we seem to discover in the world is actually the result of the structure and activity of our minds as they transform unknowable noumena (things-in-themselves)) into phenomena. So for Kant and other philosophical idealists, the order that we suppose is in the world is actually the product of our minds.

This has been shown to be fallacious for a number of reasons, not least of which is the impossibility of making sense of his notion that the mind "imposes" its putative intuitions of space and time and "the 12 categories of the understanding" on the raw data of noumena. He was also unable to escape vicious circularity in his contention that the subjective structure and activity of the mind "created" the world of phenomena, for he had to assume that he objectively apprehended not only the structure of the mind itself but also its organizing activity on the welter of nourmena. Turned on itself, the mind supposedly discovered intellectual structures that were not "created" or altered by the mind's own subjectivity. He could not adequately explain why the mind "distorted" all other objects but excluded itself from cognitive distortion. Kant also *assumed* that the mind is structured in the same basic way for all human beings. He could only assume this, because his own epistemological starting-point precluded any possibility of apprehending objective evidence for such a claim.

Kant never provided an adequate answer to the following questions: "If the human mind is incapable of knowing *anything* objectively and as it truly is, on what grounds could the mind itself and its organizing function in relation to noumena be excluded as an object of subjectively distorted knowledge?" To know something as it truly is, rather than as one's own subjective creation, does not entail that one must know it *exhaustively* but, *to the extent* that one can know it, it can be known *veridically.* Realist phenomenology, which was not developed until a hundred years later than Kant, presented a cogent case for explaining and rationally defending the epistemological case against all forms of idealism.

Karl Popper (1902-94), one of the most influential philosophers of science of all time, was basically Kantian in his assumption that the mind's subjectivity interferes with all attempts to understand objects veridically, for, he claimed, it can never circumvent its own interpreting—and, therefore, distorting—activity. He claimed that even the most basic sensory observation involves a degree of interpretation, entailing the possibility of its own refutability. Some of his followers (e.g., W.W. Bartley, III) went even further and universalized this assumption and applied it to literally every knowledge-claim, including logic and mathematics. This involves vicious circularity, however, for in any attempt to refute fundamental logical principles, one must utilize them—and, therefore, implicitly acknowledge their veridicality.

Logic cannot refute logic and refutability cannot refute refutability. Refutation is a logical process, for it is a structured, rational procedure that proves that a proposition or set of propositions (i.e., truth-claims) are false. *Refutation* of a truth-claim is not to be confused with *rejection* of a truth-claim, for *logic* cannot be reduced to *psychology*, as Edmund Husserl demonstrated so effectively in his epoch-making book, *Logical*

Investigations. No philosopher or scientist has been able to logically dispense with the implicit or explicit recognition of some kind of objective order that is not reducible to distortion caused by subjectivity and its interpreting activities.

Every attempt to explain away objective order is doomed to failure. The only remaining questions of importance have to do with the nature of the order (i.e., what kind of objects—whether physical, psychological, or abstract—display order and to what degree of complexity and specificity) and with its proximate causes and ultimate cause.

For Darwinian evolutionists like Dawkins, the order that we find is objectively there in the world, but it is assumed to be the result of a purely naturalistic process, which itself emerges from nothing but matter. It only has the *appearance* of design. If he were to admit that there is *real* design in the world, it would lead him exactly where he refuses to go, namely, to God. As we have seen, however, to invoke God as the explanation for it, according to Dawkins, is to add "an entity beyond necessity." Nonetheless, as we have also noted, his claim begs the question.

The prior issue is whether a purely naturalistic account is true. There is simply no way that Dawkins or anyone else can establish that it is. One would have to be omniscient to rule God out of the picture. Nevertheless, Dawkins, who tries, at times, to soften his atheistic claims by saying that "God almost certainly does not exist," has been such a dogmatic opponent of theism and Christianity that he can only be described as philosophically naïve in his close-minded adherence to ontological materialism.

Dawkins deprecates the traditional argument from design without an adequate appreciation of the meta-level argument which emphasizes *information* as its fundamental focus as demonstrated in the laws of nature and as encoded in various phenomena. In other words, the *information* exemplified in the laws of nature and in irreducible, specified complexity is both ontologically distinct from the physical world that it orders and indicative of design on a "transcendent level."

Complex, specified information cannot be generated from the bottom up, but must come from the top down. The twentieth-century findings of the entire spectrum of the sciences together with the formal development of information theory have put this observation beyond dispute. And it correlates magnificently with what the Bible stated thousands of years ago:

> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1).
>
> In the beginning was the Word (Gr., "Logos"), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God….Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men (John 1:1-4).

To restate the crucial point, it is not merely the undeniable order found in the physical world but the specified complexity found in certain aspects of it that most patently indicate the necessity of intelligent design. The latter is qualitatively distinct from mere order, and it points to an intelligent designer in an extraordinarily powerful manner.

Simply put, *irreducible, specified complexity means that the parts of an entity, organic or inorganic, are so intricately interwoven and interdependent that they could not fulfill a specific function without their simultaneous presence and precise arrangement.* This is fundamentally incompatible with the gradualism on which evolutionary theory depends. Apart from intelligent design, no adequate explanation can be found. In fact, Darwin himself admitted that if such irreducible complexity were to be discovered in nature, it would undermine his entire reconstruction of biological history—a reconstruction that required billions of years of slow, incremental changes by natural selection acting on random mutations.

Darwinism does not even account for *that* design; it merely presupposes it. "Natural selection," "random mutations" (some of which putatively result in positive alterations that enhance evolutionary progress) and "the survival of the fittest," for example, reflect *postulated* laws of nature. Darwinian evolution is, by definition, progress from "very simple beginnings" to "more complexity, more elegance, more adaptive perfection," in Dawkins own words, and even to "monsters of improbability, like the human brain and the rain forest." The *overarching unidirectional development* from simplicity to complexity exhibits a presupposed, teleological law of nature—which cannot be explained by the evolutionary process itself. It transcends it, directs it, and is, therefore, *information* that is ontologically distinct from it and logically prior to it.

Notice that I have used terms like "postulated" and "presupposed" in reference to the claims of evolutionary theory. At this point, my criticism of Darwinism, on which Dawkins bases his entire case, is internal to its theoretical framework. I am not agreeing with the supposed laws of nature that it presupposes. Rather, I am pointing out that any such theory must presuppose some laws of nature, and whatever the truth-value of a presupposed law of nature may be, the information that constitutes the law is of a different ontological order than the physical components of the evolutionary process itself.

Presupposing laws of nature transcendent to an ordered process in which they are exemplified is not only unavoidable but it is also an implicit recognition of *specified, irreducibly complex order on a meta-level*. This order includes the very teleology that naturalism abhors, for Darwinian evolution aims at achieving ever-increasing levels of complexity *in order to ensure survival and reproduction.*

Only complete, random chaos in the world could conceivably be devoid of laws of nature and the information that they exemplify. But if there were that kind of chaos, we could not be here to think about it or about anything else. It is simply undeniable that there is a significant degree of order and stability in the world. Our existence depends on it. Such order and stability encode information that requires explanation.

3. THE UNIQUENESS OF INFORMATION

In the following paragraph, Dawkins confuses the two levels of design, thereby missing the significance of the meta-level to which I have been referring.

> I've used metaphors like the idea of *alien beings* from outer space who wish to travel to a distant galaxy and can't, because they can't travel that fast, so what they do is beam *instructions* at the speed of light, and those *instructions* make people on some distant planet build a computer in which the *instructions* can be run. *Instructions* are all you need in order to re-create the life-form. It's controlling its *programming* in advance, given that you cannot program the day-to-day running of the thing. …You send a *program* that anticipates all possible eventualities so that it doesn't need to have instructions sent to it; the *instructions* are all there. That's what the genes are. Success in evolution is building *programs* that don't crash….The best way to look at an individual animal is as a robot survival machine carrying around its own building *program* (www.edge.org/documents/Third Culture/j-Ch.3.html, p. 5; italics added for emphasis).

Notice the italicized words in the foregoing paragraph, especially the words, "alien beings," for Dawkins falls short of recognizing their full significance. Of course, there is generally a substantial degree of complexity in a computer program, which is the organized list of instructions that causes a computer to behave in a certain predetermined way when its directions are executed. The instructions are a specialized code that enables a computer to manipulate information. Both the code and the manipulation of information are specified, complex, ordered processes. They do not occur haphazardly or randomly but according to *intentional design*.

Keeping with the computer metaphor, we are led back to Dawkins' mention of the "alien beings," the source of the entire process. Both rational choice and intelligent design are essential, because a mind must choose a source code (a formal programming language), from among a number of alternatives. And the instructions themselves originate in a mind before they can be written down, and then they must be translated into a machine language that a computer can utilize.

A program is like a recipe that has variables and statements (directions), and like a recipe, *it is first formulated in a mind*, and then it is written down so it can be applied and used. The complex information of a program is the meta-level of design relative to the computer itself. Like the metal, wires, and electrons of a computer, which are incapable of originating software programs, mere matter can never produce the enormously complex information encoded in DNA, for example.

The human brain is the most complex *physical* entity we know. Its trillions of cells and biochemical functions and relations have a mind-boggling magnitude of information encoded in them to make it what it is and to enable it to function. The point at issue is whether a purely materialistic account or supernatural, theistic cause is the most adequate

explanation of the brain and other entities. In the final analysis, questions of ultimate origin cannot be decided in a laboratory. Everything that is relevant to a theory of origin must be considered, and then the norms of rationality require acceptance of the theory with the greatest explanatory power relative to all alternatives.

Information includes both qualitative and quantitative specificity. Focusing on the quantitative, Galileo said that the book of nature is written in the language of mathematics. Profoundly impressed by this same feature of the universe, physicist and astronomer, Sir James Jeans, said, "God is a mathematician." Einstein said, "I am convinced that God does not play dice." Metaphorically, God is the Great Programmer, the creator of software that He programs into the computer of the space-time universe.

Neither quantum physics nor astrophysics is possible without high-level mathematics. From the infinitesimal world of sub-atomic particles to the macrocosm, *the applicability and exemplification of mathematics* are patent. In addition to physical constants in the universe, there are mathematical constants, which are *dimensionless*, fundamental "physical" constants. If the values of these constants were not incredibly fine-tuned and diachronically stable, human life would not be possible.

If one realizes that *massive information is the indispensable pre-requisite of the order, stability, and complexity of the world that we all inescapably recognize,* he will be led to the God of biblical theism as the only adequate explanation for it and for the world's existence. Such information must be ontologically and logically prior, originating ultimately in a transcendent Mind, i.e., the personal God who is biblically described as *spirit* (John 4:24). *Derivatively*, information comes from human *minds*, i.e., persons created in the image of God.

The kind of information that is encoded in material complexity is *contingent,* i.e., the laws of nature could have been different, and, in fact, the Bible reveals that they will be different when God creates a new heaven and earth (Revelation 21-22). Another kind of information, however, refers to states of affairs that are necessary and could not be otherwise, specifically the nature and attributes of God and the laws of logic. This kind of information could not be otherwise and is not subject to change. The laws of logic are rooted in the nature of the God of biblical theism, for He can neither lie nor deny Himself (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Titus 1:2; II Timothy 2:13).

Therefore, the fundamental principles of logic (such as the laws of identity, noncontradiction, excluded middle) are universal and absolute, because they have transcendent grounding in the nature of God. Both necessary and contingent information, although distinguishable, consist of meanings. These meanings (idealities, intelligibilia) are ontologically distinct from matter, which can exemplify them by instantiation and encoding but it can never originate them. In the last one hundred years, phenomenology, especially realist phenomenology (Husserl, Reinach), has done a great deal to clarify these all-important distinctions.

The fact that there are rival *subordinate theories* of information has no effect on the ultimate *ontological* status of information *per se.* Any attempt to deny its distinctive status must implicitly acknowledge it in the very endeavor to reject it, for "denial" is not merely a matter of words (physical "tokens") but an instance of asserting a particular *meaning*. It is of crucial importance, therefore, to recognize the uniqueness and the indispensability of information as distinguished from the physical entities by which it may be expressed or in which it may be instantiated or encoded.

4. THE IRREDUCIBILITY OF INFORMATION

The irreducible nature and role of information provide crucial corroboration of biblical theism and is an integral part of the overall case for it. It can provide cogent solutions to problems that are impossible to solve on the basis of a Stratonian universe (i.e., the notion that the space-time universe is the totality of reality, named after the atheist, Strato of Lampsacus, c. 340-c. 268 B.C.).

In contrast to Dawkins' Stratonian assumption, theism maintains the following.

> Without God, there is no information. Without information there is no *cosmos*. There is a *cosmos.* Therefore, there is a God who is its creator and explanation. To put it another way: "The cosmos (i.e., the ordered universe from microcosm to macrocosm) could not exist without information. Information comes ultimately from a transcendent, personal God. Therefore, the cosmos comes ultimately from God who is the source of the information that is exemplified in it.

The only God who fits that role is the God of the Bible. The God who is witnessed to by the created order (Romans 1:20) is the same God who is revealed in the Bible (John 1:1-4, 18; 17:17; II Timothy 3:16). Psalm 19 clearly states this dual revelation and implies their mutual corroboration.

It is precisely the *categorial* difference of information that puts a viable theistic argument from design on a radically different level from the traditional case. In referring to the patently undeniable fine-tuning of the universe, Dawkins says that rather than accepting God as the author of these awe-inspiring features of the world, he prefers to have faith that science will eventually explain them all naturalistically: "Physicists have come up with other explanations. One is to say that these six constants are not free to vary. Some unified theory *will* eventually show that they are as locked in as the circumference and the diameter of a circle. That reduces the odds of them all independently just happening to fit the bill." (italics added for emphasis).

Notice the fallacies in the foregoing statement made by Dawkins. He displays a Pollyanna faith in science that reflects the naivete of scientism. He does not say that some unified theory *may* eventually show…, but that it *will* eventually show…. He does not know that it will; it may not. His scientistic optimism is unwarranted. He cannot deny that the constants "fit the bill," for they constitute the fine-tuning that makes human life

possible ("the anthropic principle"). He also admits that at present scientists cannot explain how they have come about concomitantly with one another. But his prior commitment to materialism prevents him from acknowledging their metaphysical implications.

Furthermore, his analogy of the relation between the circumference and diameter of a circle is hardly apropos. He is saying that the constants may be indissolubly necessary ingredients of the universe itself. However, unlike the contingency of the laws of nature, the circumference and diameter are "locked in" as a necessary, analytic part of the definition of a circle. If it were ever found that the six constants to which he refers are "not free to vary," their invariability would hardly be equivalent to logical necessity. There are numerous kinds of invariability in physical causes and relations, given certain initial conditions. But such invariability is not analytically self-explanatory, for *contingent* invariability exemplifies the application of information from an outside source who could have designed it differently.

The same qualification of contingency applies to the six constants. Dawkins' error stems from his failure to understand the crucial difference between contingent invariability and logical necessity. This failure corresponds with his materialistic assumption that all intelligibilia (logic, concepts, propositions, numbers) and all psychobilia (thinking, inferring, remembering, anticipating, imagining, emoting, etc.) are the products of mere matter. Therefore, his fallacious reductionism disallows any kind of necessity but physical necessity, thereby making havoc of rationality, including his own reasoning processes. Even the denial of logical necessity and its differentiation from contingent invariability must implicitly acknowledge logical necessity in order to make the denial.

5. DAWKINS' BLIND FAITH IN SCIENCE

Instead of making the slightest concession that God may be the creator and designer of the mind-boggling fine-tuning of the universe, Dawkins has blind faith in the supposed omnicompetence of science. Therefore, he has abandoned a basic rationality norm by refusing to follow the evidence where it leads. He is telling us that he has made a prior decision to disallow God's existence no matter what the evidence may be. Doctrinaire Dawkins is a striking contrast to the late Sir Fred Hoyle and philosopher Antony Flew, both of whom were atheists at one time but embraced theism on the basis of the astounding, exquisite design in the universe that has been discovered by science in the last fifty years.

In response to literally anything and everything that is adduced as theistic indexicals, Dawkins has *resolved* to say that science *will* eventually show that there is a naturalistic explanation. Although a scientist should not be barred from *seeking* for natural explanations, he can never be guaranteed that they are there to be discovered. Seeking is one thing; finding is something else. To assume that a naturalistic explanation *will* be found is to beg the most crucial question of all. Dawkins' close-minded dogmatism is the

very antithesis of the open-minded attitude that should characterize every scientist. He is clearly an unscientific scientist on the profoundest level.

Just as he has unquestioning faith in the ability of science to resolve all current scientific conundrums, so Dawkins has blind faith in gratuitous cosmological speculations—specifically, the speculation that there may be an indefinite number of parallel universes (the multiverse theory). It is more than a little astounding that Dawkins would make the following statement: "But as the number of universes climbs, the odds mount that a tiny minority of universes will have the right fine-tuning." Who is he trying to hoodwink? That there is even one universe other than the one we know is completely unknown and almost certainly unknowable forever.

If there are other universes, we have no way of ascertaining their existence. Any scientific discovery we make is only possible because it is within the one universe in which we live. His statement is ludicrous, therefore, for it gives the impression that we know of some other universes. If the term "universe' is used in a univocal, non-metaphorical sense, every scientist and every philosopher admits that *we have zero knowledge of any other universe.* And yet Dawkins has the temerity to say "as the number of universes climbs…" The number is not only zero, but from all we can tell the number will always remain zero.

His recourse to postulating our universe's *chance emergence* from multiple, possible worlds is like saying that the more you throw the dice, the greater the possibility that both will come up with sixes *although we have no dice to throw* and we almost certainly never will have any. Dawkins says that "maybe the universe we are in is one of a very large number of universes." Maybe—but that is all one can say, just maybe, for there is not a scintilla of evidence that there is any universe but the one we are in. All else is gratuitous speculation.

Of course, if someone does not want to retain God in his knowledge or submit to His will, he will find any naturalistic speculation, no matter how baseless or absurd, to be preferable to theism. Preference, however, is hardly a scientific criterion. Besides, when it suits Dawkins, he finds Occam's razor a convenient tool for "justifying" his preferences, but when its application is inconvenient, he ignores it. Otherwise, how shall we account for his multiplying entities ("possible universes") beyond evidence and beyond necessity?

One personal, intelligent Creator is a "simpler" explanation of the fine-tuning that every scientist now recognizes than a vast number of postulated universes and the chance that ours would have all the mutually necessary instances of stupendous fine-tuning essential for making human life a reality. Collins stated his challenge to Dawkins in the following disjunction: "You either have to say there are zillions of parallel universes out there that we can't observe at present or you have to say there was a plan."

Even if our universe was one of zillions, we still have to give an account of its features and its stability. If our universe emerged from an array of parallel universes, its

mystifying emergence from the pack would be one thing. Its subsequent persistence with stability and order must also be explained, especially in view of the over-arching caprice that brought it to fruition out of the welter of life-denying and chaotic "universes." It could have been overwhelmed by chaos one second or one day after its inception. Also, one must still account for the information that had to precede, logically if not temporally, our universe coming into existence.

Even a "chance" universe with our features depends on information. The problem posed by information is not eradicated or circumvented by the multiverse theory. To refer to one *uni*verse or a zillion *uni*verses entails the recognition of *order* that makes each one a *uni*verse and not a mere "bundle of chaos." By definition, a universe is a structured entity with a certain kind of unity. That unity exemplifies its particular laws of nature, which, in turn, encode information, which must come from a Mind. Therefore, Dawkins' recourse to the multiple universe speculation doesn't give him the slightest support. No chimera can do that.

Piling one assumption on another, Dawkins insists that the complexity of "improbable monsters" does not require a supernatural explanation. He glosses over the claim of scholarly advocates of intelligent design who maintain that such marvels exhibit a distinctive kind of complexity that cannot be explained naturalistically. That Dawkins does not understand this qualitative distinction—or that he simply chooses to ignore it—is clear from his statement that subsumes all complexity under the undifferentiating locution, "something complicated." He says, "It should warn us against ever again assuming that because something is complicated, God must have done it."

No scholarly advocate of intelligent design makes such a simplistic claim. Wittingly or unwittingly, Dawkins has constructed a "straw man." Michael Behe and other ID advocates have taken great pains to emphasize that it is *irreducible, specified complexity* that challenges naturalistic, evolutionary hypotheses. Even Collins seems to misunderstand the meaning of "intelligent design" as it is used by its chief advocates. He and Dawkins both confuse it with "the god of the gaps" notion, among other things. Furthermore, the question of design on a meta-level, which is even more crucial, is not adequately addressed by either Dawkins or Collins.

6. DOCTRINAIRE DARWINISM IS DISHONEST

Dawkins is much too optimistic about the credibility of Darwinian evolution. He suppresses or ignores the serious problems that call it into question. In all of his writings, Dawkins displays a doctrinaire commitment to Darwinian evolution that implicitly stipulates that nothing can falsify it—or, for that matter, even count against it.

Briefly stated, some of the better known flaws of evolution are the contrafactual assumption of abiogenesis, the lack of transitional forms among fossils, the lack of evidence for speciation, the inadequacy of very rare positive mutations to add the novel features needed for speciation, the anomaly of the Cambrian explosion, entropy, and the

appearance of phenomena that are inexplicable in terms of the properties of mere matter and in terms of the survival of the fittest.

Furthermore, Dawkins and other Darwinian evolutionists assume that random mutations and natural selection can account for literally every biological phenomenon and every dimension of human experience, individual and social. In fact, when one reads the conjectures of various evolutionists in their attempts to "explain" moral values and altruistic motives, he will find that the diversity of conflicting opinions calls the entire enterprise into question. That is a clear indication of how speculative they must be in trying to make sense of aspects of human existence that frustrate attempts to fit them into their Procrustean bed.

Not only conflicting theories but also the implicit, and sometimes explicit, assumption that nothing can falsify their "explanatory" principle show how tenuous their claims are. If nothing is allowed to falsify the evolutionary touchstones of natural selection, then it is hard to see how anything can corroborate it. If nothing is permitted to count against it, how can anything count for it?

That is the problem with every attempt to take a *simplistic* point of reference, which is what Dawkins' criterion is, as the all-encompassing explanation for the prodigious array of baffling phenomena that constitutes human life and experience. Other attempts in the history of philosophy and science that sought to do the same thing with different simplistic points of reference have all failed because they have led to arbitrary "explanations" and artificial reconstructions as they tried to force even the most intractable phenomena into their preconceived molds.

7. THE PROBLEM POSED BY ENTROPY

Naturalistic evolutionists have also made desperate and unsuccessful attempts to resolve the problem caused by entropy, the second law of thermodynamics that says that order leads to disorder—not the reverse—for everything is running down so that less and less energy is available. It is just a matter of time until there will be maximum entropy when no energy will be available to effect any changes. The life-span of an individual human being, animal, or plant is a case of temporary negentropy to the extent that the individual draws on energy from outside itself. What this means in such instances is that there is viability and growth in a living organism as long as energy is available and the organism has the capacity to effectively utilize that energy.

One is not warranted in extrapolating negentropy to the universe, however. Eventually all instances of negentropy will succumb to entropy's complete triumph in the death of all organisms--humans, animals, and plants. Despite all of the variegated changes occurring from the microcosm to the macrocosm in which the production, storage, and utilization of energy are occurring, the overarching effects of entropy will prevail, along with "black holes" to bring an end to the universe and everything in it. Given the fact of entropy, naturalistic evolution could never have started because the universe itself could have

never begun without a transcendent source of energy to account for its existence, organization, and sustainment.

From absolutely nothing, nothing comes. We know that something exists. The current consensus among scientists is that the universe began around 14 billion years ago. Naturalistic attempts, such as the one that has been proposed by Stephen Hawking and others, to account for its beginning from a vacuum or quantum waves are entirely speculative. Even the vacuum or quantum waves or anything else that is postulated as "prior" to the universe or as the source of the universe is still *something* and not nothing. Since science cannot penetrate behind the initial Big Bang barrier of 10 to the minus 43rd power, cosmogonists have no option but to *speculate* about conditions "prior" to it.

An attempt to designate any postulated, originating source by the term "*nothing"* is fatuous legerdemain. Either its proponent does not know the meaning of *nothing* or he is deliberately misusing the term to hoodwink others. The universe did not "pop into existence" out of absolutely nothing. If it did, why did it do so some 14 billion years ago and not billions of years sooner or later? To ask this question is to ask for some explanation that transcends its alleged "popping into existence out of nothing." Such a notion is even more baffling than abiogenesis, which *must* be postulated, against all the evidence, by every ontological materialist.

Not only is there no instance of anything popping into existence out of nothing in all of human experience, the notion itself is inherently absurd. It amounts to a denial of the most fundamental insight of rationality. Every cosmogonist must have "something" that is the source of the universe. Even the theory of a cyclical universe that explodes with a big bang and then eons later implodes with a whimper has no credibility since astronomer Alan Sandage and other scientists have shown that all of the evidence is against it. In fact, his discovery pointed so unequivocally to the one-time creation of the universe that he was led to seek the Creator, eventually embracing the Christian faith. Both the expansion of the universe, which is paradoxically accelerating, according to the latest data, and the insufficiency of the mass in the universe to effect an implosion argue against the oscillating theory.

The only question is whether the claimed source of the universe is adequate to account not only for the existence and persistence of space, time, energy, and matter but also for the mind-boggling diversity, fine-tuning, and complexity of both it (those features that make it a *uni*verse) and many of its constituent entities. How much of this is the result of the laws of nature encoded at its beginning and how much is the result of ongoing involvement by God in its processes is not nearly as important as the recognition that all such natural laws and continuous application of information are explicable only in terms of the Mind of the transcendent Creator and Sustainer of the universe. "Natural" does not mean and does not imply "naturalistic." In fact, "natural laws" entail the very opposite, namely information that can only be accounted for adequately by the kind of God disclosed in the Bible.

8. THE SUBTLE SEDUCTION OF PREFERENCE

Since the sinful mind of human beings does "not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God" (Romans 1:28), it will not shrink from postulating the most fanciful speculations conceivable in order to avoid acknowledging Him. Huxley exhibited just such an attitude when he said that he and many other scientists "leaped" to embrace Darwin's evolutionary theory, not because it was scientifically corroborated but because it set them free to indulge their sexual appetites without being concerned about a God who would judge them. Dostoevsky observed that if there is no God, everything is permitted.

For the person who is determined to be his own god, the autonomous measure of all things, any alternative, no matter how bizarre and gratuitous, is better to him than conceding biblical theism. Although biblical theism is the only adequate, rational ground for explaining the objective data that we find in the universe and in ourselves, fallen human nature will reject it because man's mind is not neutral but "hostile to God" (Romans 8:7). The mind is the slave of the will, and even when the mind recognizes that God exists and has the right to be Lord of our lives, our will is incompliant: "We *don't want* Him to be our King" (cf. Lk. 19:14). Everyone must choose either the true God or an idol--the chief idol of secularists being supposedly autonomous man, either one's *self* or human beings collectively, and correlatively, the impersonal, physical universe, which alone gave birth to mankind.

As long as evolutionary naturalists are unwilling to seriously consider an alternative to their perspective, they have no choice but to be reductionists, making the assumption that everything is explicable in terms of impersonal matter-energy. For them, every physiological process and every part of our anatomy *must* be explained in terms of "the survival of the fittest." More importantly, *every* aspect of human life and knowledge *must* be accounted for in terms of the survival of the fittest, i.e., our rationality, our aesthetic sense, and our moral experience must be forced into the Procrustean bed of natural selection.

9. THE CONUNDRUM OF RATIONALITY

How minds and their rational properties could emerge from primordial matter has never been explained by any naturalistic evolutionist. Nor have attempts been successful to justify our confidence in rationality, since it is the result of natural selection and randomness. Unless rationality has its locus in a mind that is ontologically distinct from the body, it, like the body, is the product of blind forces. How can it be trusted to know anything, including its own supposed origin from a mixture of randomness and natural selection? In fact, as a consequence of blind, mindless matter in motion even reconstruction of an evolutionary process cannot be trusted.

A materialist cannot hold his worldview on the basis of reasons, for even putative reasons are effects of material causes. A materialist worldview makes it impossible to rationally

justify anything, including materialism itself. There is no *reason* to believe in materialism, simply because there are no reasons at all. There are only causes—*material* causes—which, in the final analysis, totally determine all of our beliefs.

Naturalistic evolution, therefore, carries the seeds of its own destruction, for it supposedly produces a mind that has no alternative but to think and believe as evolution has predetermined by a purely materialistic process. Since ontological materialism is deterministic, it cannot account for the human capacity to make *free* decisions about anything.

In a recent article, "Do We Have Free Will?" in the journal, *New Scientist,* "neurophilosopher" Patricia Churchland, who has long advocated eliminative materialism, "suspects" that the more we find out about how the brain works, the less room there appears to be for personal choice or responsibility. Of course, she is not telling us anything new, for from the beginning of philosophy and science in ancient Greece it has been suspected that ontological materialism preempts them and necessitates their reinterpretation as subjective illusions.

However, it is more than a matter of suspicion for Churchland, because she recognizes that her presupposition of eliminative materialism allows for no other credible possibility. The diffidence implied by her term "suspects" may stem not only from the constraint of her personal sense of freedom and moral responsibility but also from two other unresolved problems: (1) the inability of materialism to rationally justify itself, for it is ultimately the result of blind *causes*, not of enlightened *reasons,* and (2) the inability of materialism to explain how and why matter has caused the ineradicable "illusion" of self-determining freedom with its concomitant sense of moral responsibility.

Apparent randomness on a sub-atomic level is of no help. The freedom entailed in rational decision-making is inexplicable in terms of both materialistic determinism and capricious randomness. In addition to the limiting parameters of the atom which precludes extrapolation of its immanent features to macroscopic levels, the projection of the indeterminism implied by Heisenberg's principle is no less inimical to human freedom than determinism. Consequently, Dawkins appeals to his "god of the gaps," namely scientism, which, *ex hypothesi*, "will" someday discover the solution to the problem.

Even the probabilistic descriptions provided by quantum mechanics do not account for our capacity for self-determination. Dawkins admits that he has not found a resolution to this problem. In view of his materialist ontology and the determinism it entails, it is puzzling that evolution has produced some "minds" (read "brains") that don't believe in evolution while other "minds" do believe in it.

Since impersonal, materialistic antecedents have fashioned the human "mind," according to Dawkins and other evolutionary naturalists, we do not believe in evolution or anything else because such things are true or rationally inferred from considering evidence, but

because it has been naturalistically programmed by the motions of matter to believe and disbelieve the way it does. J.B.S. Haldane stated the problem neatly:

> If my mental processes are determined wholly by the motions of the atoms in my brain, I have no reason to suppose that my beliefs are true…and hence I have no reason for supposing my brain to be composed of atoms (*Possible Worlds,* p. 209).

Believing and disbelieving, therefore, are based on *unalterable* ***causes*** *and can never be based on objective* ***reasons***. Causes and reasons are not the same. If we are to knowingly arrive at the truth about anything, our minds must be able to transcend material causes and apprehend intelligible reasons (i.e., immaterial, propositional meanings) for and against truth-claims. We must be able to reflectively choose relevant, cogent reasons and reject irrelevant, implausible reasons. But how can we make such reflective choices when we have been *predetermined* to think only as dictated by blind evolution?

According to Dawkins, nothing about human beings is ontologically transcendent to the matter which has mysteriously formed human beings in every respect. How the freedom that is necessary for moral choice and moral responsibility could emerge from naturalistic evolution defies any credible explanation. Therefore, on the basis of naturalistic evolution, one must say that we are not free and we cannot make moral choices, and if we think otherwise, we are deluded. Biologist William Provine had no reservations about stating this conclusion baldly:

> Modern science directly implies that there are no inherent moral or ethical laws, no absolute guiding principles for human society….There is no way that the evolutionary process as currently conceived can produce a being that is truly free to make moral choices ("Evolution and the Foundation of Ethics," *MBL Science* 3:25-29, 1988).

Accordingly, as we have seen, our profound sense of freedom and moral responsibility must be viewed as illusory. Human dignity is baseless, and this means that an ontological naturalist can give no adequate justification for treating human beings differently from animals. But is it not morally acceptable for me to sell my dog but morally reprehensible for me to sell my child? Why? Furthermore, if someone murders another human being, he has committed a capital crime and must receive capital punishment—or at least the severest punishment. Why is this not the case if a human being kills an animal?

"Cultural convention" is a pseudo-answer to these questions. Fundamental values apply transculturally and justify *moral* evaluations of the good and bad, the rights and wrongs of cultures, whether one's own or others, irrespective of time or place. Dawkins looks for a solution in the impersonal activities of genes, which, according to Dawkins' thesis in *The Selfish Gene*, use us, among other organisms, for their own survival. However, as I have indicated, his unwarranted reductionism signally fails to explain the qualitative distinctiveness of moral values. *By locating their source in impersonal determinism, both*

moral values and moral valuations are explained away. Dawkins states this view categorically: "…there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference" (*River Out of Eden,* p.133).

This is why Dawkins replies to Collins' question about the independent status of moral values by saying, "Even the question you're asking has no meaning to me." This is one more example of a *post hoc, ergo propter hoc fallacy* ("after this, therefore, because of this"), for by excluding God as the transcendent source, Dawkins has no alternative but to say that "moral values" are the product of our genes like everything else that has supposedly developed from a single cell, which, in turn, somehow emerged from lifeless matter. No wonder evolutionary naturalism has been called "a fairy tale for adults"!

The great tragedy is that adults continue to impose this fairy tale on children from kindergarten to the university. Most biology teachers, especially on the pre-university levels, simply follow their assigned biology text, with little or no awareness of how much skepticism and debate are to be found among scholars in the vanguard of research and theoretical construction. Such textbooks are almost invariably fraught with tendentiously imaginative interpretations and groundless assumptions.

All evolutionary products, including moral values, are entirely immanent, transitory, relative, and changeable. Therefore, Dawkins pulls the rug out from under his own feet. He concedes that human beings have "moral responsibility," but his reductionistic evolutionary theory empties his admission of meaning and justification. He cannot have it both ways, however.

10. EVOLUTION TURNS ON ITSELF

If survival of the fittest on the basis of random mutations and natural selection is the ultimate explanation for the course that evolution has taken, it seems very odd that the most viable creatures on earth are not human beings but insects, which are on a substantially lower rung of the evolutionary ladder. Entomologists have assured us that insects—of all species above microscopic organisms--have a far better probability than human beings of surviving the worst natural disasters that can devastate our planet.

Why, then, didn't evolution stop with insects, since, as far as we know, they are the most robust survivors ever produced by it? After all, if survival of the fittest is its "aim," it would have achieved the pinnacle of its progress with insects. Besides, there are many more animals that survive quite well without any aesthetic sense or moral awareness or the kind of rationality possessed by human beings. Such distinctive qualities are *manifestly unnecessary for survivability and reproducibility. Moreover, ever since evolution produced insects, all animals and humans represent a decline and diminution in viability and replication.* This, too, flies in the face of the evolutionary assumption that natural selection is steadily producing creatures with ever-increasing capacity for survivability and reproducibility. If Dawkins' claim that genes are using animals and

humans as the organic matrix for their own perpetuation, insects would serve their "purpose" far better than other animals and human beings.

It is also curious that survival and reproduction, which are the supreme factors in the march of evolutionary development, have produced, as its most advanced species, *creatures that cannot only destroy themselves completely but also destroy all other life on earth—and even destroy earth itself.* If that is not paradoxical enough, consider that this means that evolution has produced a species that can destroy evolution itself. Evolution, whose supposedly unstoppable drive is for greater and greater survivability of genes and species, results, ironically, in its own potential destruction. This is one more example of the severe, cognitive dissonance that results from claiming a naturalistic, evolutionary theory.

In view of the many severe problems that defy naturalistic evolution, it is nothing short of amazing that Dawkins is so assumptive and dogmatic in his anti-theistic pronouncements. How fitting is Isaiah's observation that "the Lord who has made all things…overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense" (Isaiah 44:24, 25)!

11. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PAST REQUIRES MORE THAN COHERENCE

Reconstructing the past, especially the distant past, is a daunting task. Virtually no human being alive today was around prior to 1900. All efforts to put together a reliable history of the preceding centuries must rely on historical traces, written accounts, artifacts, and the like. Without current observational data or decisive experimental tests, enormous problems attend any attempt to reconstruct the past of the universe, earth, and the postulated course of evolution, which, according to the latter theory's advocates, took place during millions of years before the dawn of human civilization. The limitations this imposes on attempts to reconstruct the supposed evolutionary past has led to conflicting theories among evolutionists themselves.

In regard to the history of the universe, the problems are considerable. The evidence that the universe had a beginning is now so abundant that hardly any scientists dispute it, although there are diverse views about the enormously complex processes involved from the beginning of the Big Bang until now. In order to reconstruct a scenario of the origin and history of the universe, a certain degree of speculation is unavoidable. Some speculative theories may be corroborated eventually and others may be refuted, but some of the most crucial problems may defy resolution indefinitely.

The essential point that I am making here is that even an initially plausible reconstruction of an event or series of events is not necessarily true. On a mundane, human level, for example, some convictions of alleged criminals have been accepted as "beyond a reasonable doubt" (i.e., as having a high degree of credibility), resulting in their incarceration or execution. Only later, if and when new evidence turns up—especially DNA evidence—is it shown that both jury and judge were wrong in assigning culpability

and imposing a sentence on a defendant. Without the mutual corroboration of two or three *fully qualified eyewitnesses* or other *incontrovertible evidence,* what may be considered to be a highly credible, circumstantial case falls short of certainty.

Even a most persuasive reconstruction, therefore, may turn out to be false. Since no human being was an eyewitness to the origin and history of the universe or of the beginning of life and its pre-human period, the dogmatism of naturalistic evolutionists betrays their abysmal ignorance about the logic of their claim and their dishonesty in foisting their absolutistic claims on an unsuspecting public.

The upshot of this observation is that even if an evolutionary reconstruction of the origin and development of life were a thoroughly self-consistent scenario, it would remain an imaginative theory rather than a verified blueprint of what actually occurred. *A theory can be coherent—and. therefore, "plausible" and persuasive—and yet have no instantiation or corroboration in the real world.* In addition to internal coherence, a theory needs correspondence with external data. *Therefore, questions about primordial origins can only be answered by inference to the best explanation in comparison to other proposed explanations.* The "best explanation" must have both a high degree of internal coherence *and external correspondence* to data.

I recall reading an article years ago that sought to analyze how psychotherapy works. After presenting various arguments and specific examples from the annals of working psychotherapists, the author concluded that "healing" (therapy), such as the relieving of guilt-feelings or stress or anxiety resulted from the *coherent picture* that a counselor, as an authority figure, persuasively presented to the counselee as the cause for the latter's psychological malaise. The author emphasized the fact that it did not matter whether the etiological reconstruction was true—in fact, he surmised that in most cases it was false. *Its efficacy hinged entirely on its seeming plausibility and the psychotherapist's aura of authority as long as both individuals were embedded in a positive relationship between the counselor and the counselee.*

The late Stephen J. Gould, leading evolutionist and professor of zoology and geology at Harvard University, described an all too typical rationalizing tendency of committed evolutionists: "Paleontologists (and evolutionary biologists in general) are famous for their facility in devising plausible stories, but they often forget that plausible stories need not be true" (www.members.iinet.net.au/-sejones/mechns05.html, p.2).

Even apart from considerations of bias, the cognitive limitations of human beings entail that a particular reconstruction of the distant past cannot be considered to be veridical *unless the evidence for it is cogent and insusceptible of equally plausible interpretations.* In view of the fact that intelligent design can provide an interpretation of the relevant data that is better than any naturalistic, evolutionary theory, advocates of the latter are intellectually dishonest when they promulgate their reconstruction as if it is the best or *only* credible explanation of the origin of species.

Even with the achievement of intellectual impeccability, which no evolutionary theory even comes close to exhibiting, one cannot justifiably argue that the claimed scenario actually occurred. After all, various phenomena can be produced by more than one cause or type of cause—either natural or supernatural or a combination. Purporting to be defenders of sophisticated education, such dogmatists are actually anti-intellectual propagandists.

12. THE DEBATE OVER TESTABILITY

Evolutionists who may be uneasy due to the unjustifiability of a dogmatic, naturalistic ontology find it more intellectually respectable to denounce intelligent design as "unscientific" rather than as untrue. They typically describe it as an attempt to smuggle "religion" into the domain of science where it has no legitimate place. For once a supernatural agent is introduced into science, the *sine qua non* of empirical testability becomes inapplicable. Therefore, the dominant assumption of those who argue against intelligent design is that there is no way to test it.

However, one should not gloss over "testability" as if its meaning and criteria are patently obvious. Everyone who talks about testability has an underlying *theory of testability*, whether implicit or explicit. Persuasive definitions are often given to justify one's own position while imposing a different definition, usually more stringent, on those who claim an alternative position. The alleged testability claimed by advocates of evolutionary theories turns out to be radically deficient in comparison with standard forms of testability in the empirical sciences. All attempts to formulate a decisive test for *evolutionary speciation* have failed to corroborate that it has occurred or that there is any probability that it could occur.

It is for this reason that it is correctly observed that "the problem of novelties" is the fundamental problem for evolutionary naturalism. Accordingly, mathematician Granville Sewell, asks*, "How can natural selection cause new organs to arise and guide their development through the initial stages during which they present no selective advantage?"* (Postscript in *Analysis of a Finite Element Method: PDE/PROTRAN,* Springer Verlag, 1985, quoted in www.discovery.org/scripts, p.7; italics added for emphasis). In the same article, Sewell points out that a Darwinist tries to bridge both functional and fossil gaps between biological structures through "a long chain of tiny improvements *in his imagination."* "Major changes to a species require the intelligent foresight of a programmer" (*ibid).*

Comprehensive evolutionary speciation remains an imaginative postulation asserted in the face of massive counter-evidence. Despite this fact, there are some evolutionists who are theists (a position widely represented among members of the American Scientific Affiliation). They are theists primarily because they know that one cannot naturalistically account for the staggering amount of information that evolution requires. So they maintain that even if macroevolution (speciation) occurred, it would support

intelligent design by God rather than blind randomness and natural selection. However, I see no viable reason, scientific or otherwise, for believing in macroevolution.

In corroboration of the foregoing, consider what the late Stephen Gould of Harvard had to say: "Indeed, it is the chief frustration of the fossil record that we do not have empirical evidence for sustained trends in the evolution of most complex morphological adaptations" ("*Species Selection: Its Range and Power,"* p. 19, an article co-authored with prominent evolutionist, Niles Eldredge). Unfortunately for them, their speculative *ad hoc* theory of "punctuated equilibrium" does not save them from their chief frustration.

Steven.M. Stanley, Professor of Paleontology at Johns Hopkins University, is no less candid when he admits, "Species that were once thought to have turned into others have been found to overlap in time with these alleged descendants. *In fact, the fossil record does not convincingly document a single transition from one species to another*" (*The New Evolutionary Timetable: Fossils, Genes, and the Origin of Species,* p. 95, italics added for emphasis).

I am familiar with some of the recent articles which *claim* that a rare instance of speciation has been found, whether in the laboratory or in the wild, but beyond the problematicity of the claim itself (due either to how a new species is defined or due to some degree of inaccuracy or dissimulation in the report) is the countervailing fact that a rare, putative instance of speciation is not probative of the mind-boggling speciation from a single cell to literally millions, if not billions, of different kinds of species that have inhabited earth. One does not have to deny that there may be an *ostensibly* new species found here or there, but if they are like the mule, which cannot reproduce and perpetuate its "species," such anomalies actually serve, by their very rarity and self-stultification, to undermine the evolutionary hypothesis which requires both survivability and reproducibility on a massive scale.

If a naturalistic, evolutionary theory of speciation, in contrast to the intra-species instances of so-called microevolution, were true, its proponents also need to present a credible reason why it has not continued ubiquitously during humanity's presence on earth over the last few thousand years up to the present. After a century and a half of intense endeavors to prove evolutionary speciation, it remains nothing more than an uncorroborated postulation. Textbooks that draw causal lines of transitional development from one species to another are patently unscientific and dishonest. What is put down on paper, in this case, has no counterpart in reality.

No clear lines of descent by transitional, incremental steps have ever been discovered in the fossil record despite the fact that literally millions of fossils have been found and analyzed. Many biology teachers and textbooks that promote evolutionary speciation, which is often artistically illustrated by the imaginatively contrived "tree of life," are contradicted, as we have seen, by the candid admissions of leading evolutionary advocates, the late Stephen Gould, Niles Eldridge, and Stephen Stanley—all three of whom have stated unequivocally that it lacks empirical verification.

Within the last several months, scientists Hugh Ross and Fazale Rana, have devised a test for intelligent design in answer to the evolutionists who have claimed that it lacks scientific status either because it does not meet the requirement of testability or that it cannot meet it. It will be interesting to see how the scientific community responds to their claim and to see any results that issue from actually conducting and repeating the test. Peer review will come fast and furious.

Anyone familiar with Dawkins' books—mostly written on a semi-popular level—cannot gainsay the fact that he goes far beyond hard evidence in his quasi-religious zeal to promote his awe-inspiring god of naturalistic evolution. He frequently waxes rhapsodic as he describes the wonder, elegance, and grandeur of evolution's power to produce the complex world we inhabit. But rhapsody, no matter how poetically effusive, is no substitute for truth. He simply attributes such elegance and grandeur to the wrong source, which can never account for such awe-inspiring features of the world or for our capacity to recognize and appreciate them.

VI. GOOD AND EVIL

When commenting on "humanity's moral sense," Dawkins falters badly, as we have seen. Evolutionary naturalism does not allow any appeal to causation transcendent to evolution and matter. Of course, this raises a serious question. If a struggle for survival is so fundamental, why should any organism, animal or human struggle for the survival of its species, as Dawkins claims it does, rather than for itself alone. If an individual is struggling for its own survival, how can it escape coming into conflict with the struggle of fellow members of its species for their own survival? Why should there be any concern to struggle for the survival of others, especially in view of the fact that others even of its own species have the potential of destroying any individual member and sometimes do so?

Philosopher David Stove, who was not a defender of creationism, wrote *Darwinian Fairytales* (1995), which is an incisive critique of Dawkins' views presented in *The Selfish Gene.* Stove made the following assessment.

> There is no reason whatever apart from the Darwinian theory of evolution, to believe that there ever was in our species an "evolution of altruism" out of a selfish "state of nature." People believe there was, only because they accept Darwin's theory, which says that there is always a struggle for life among conspecifics, whereas there is no such struggle observable among us now, but a great deal of observable altruism instead. *The right conclusion to draw, of course, is that Darwin's theory is false*. But the conclusion usually drawn is the Cave Man one: that there *must have been* an evolution—admittedly difficult to explain—from an originally selfish human nature into our present altruistic and tax paying state (p. 96, italics added for emphasis).

1. STIPULATED IRREFUTABILITY

Dawkins contends that "Altruism probably has origins like those of lust [i.e., 'people engaged in sex with contraception are not aware of being motivated by a drive to have babies']. In our prehistoric past, we would have lived in extended families, surrounded by kin whose interest we might have wanted to promote because they shared our genes….the reason for do-gooding is based in the fact that our primitive ancestors lived in small groups."

Notice that he speculates that this explanation of altruism is "probable." Of course, his theory has initial plausibility only if the truly important questions about altruism and other moral values are ignored or suppressed. He assumes that in our "prehistoric past," which is itself an imaginative reconstruction, we lived in "extended families." How should an extended family be defined? Why not a family of three or four? Wouldn't that suffice to create an interest in promoting the interests of others besides oneself due to common genes? On what basis can he credibly assert that people lived in larger social groupings of common genes, namely an "extended family"?

Extended families can be found today in many parts of the world, but not all of their members display altruism toward sharers of their genes or toward others. Clear counter-examples show that a common genetic pool does not guarantee altruism. How at some point altruism would emerge in such an evolutionary social context is an opaque mystery. And how it would transpose from those of one's own kin to others outside of the gene pool is also puzzling. The ostensible answer to these "how questions" is simply that morally indifferent, mindless evolution dictates that individuals should be concerned about one's own extended family and that at some point they will blindly and inevitably extrapolate this concern to others. Dawkins expects us to believe this! Not all of us are so credulous, however.

For Dawkins it is not a question of altruism being *intrinsically* good. Although human beings have never been able to dispense with the distinction between the value terms "good" and "evil," a consistent advocate of evolutionary naturalism denies that anything can legitimately be considered good or evil in itself. His worldview makes it necessary for him to interpret such terms as simple euphemisms for the mindless products of natural selection, which, of course, is entirely *amoral*. They are simply the result of evolution's drive for perpetuation of the species of which one is a member. If this is so, from whence did evolution derive this drive? Why is it considered to be "morally good" by us, including Dawkins himself, rather than morally neutral, like fingernails, which also have survival value? Why, if we are programmed to be altruistic by evolution, do some individuals live radically selfish lives in contradiction to any altruistic drive?

Dr. Stove sees the same incongruity in Dawkins' position: "Incredibly, Dawkins insists at one and the same time that altruism 'has no place in nature,' but nonetheless asserts 'let us try to *teach* generosity and altruism' (*Darwinian Fairytales,* p. 126). But how can we? How are we to acquire altruism if it has no place in nature, let alone teach it? And

remember, we are but puppets of our genes. At this point, it is fair to say that Dawkins isn't making any sense" (www.arn.org/blogs/index.php/2/2006/03/26/, p.2).

2. AN IMPOVERISHED ASSUMPTION

Worst of all, in striking contrast to the infinite richness of the being and character of the Creator-God revealed in the Bible, an impersonal, simple presupposition that purportedly explains *everything* actually explains nothing. For if nothing is allowed to count against it, nothing can count for it. *It antecedently dictates how all phenomena should be interpreted, and if they are not easily subsumable under the demands of the presupposition, one must put a spin on them that coerces them into compliance.*

The data are not allowed so "speak" for themselves. The presupposition tells the data in advance what to "say." Therefore, one cannot arrive at the truth. He already has "the truth," and data have nothing to do with it. No data are allowed to challenge the presupposition, because they are always data interpreted in terms of the presupposition itself. All that is required is greater and greater imagination to bend everything to fit into the preconceived mold. Therefore, for those who share Dawkins' commitment to evolutionary naturalism, a vast amount of "evidence" is seen by them as supporting it, but it is actually a case of vicious circularity.

If falsifiability is one of the chief methodological factors of science, evolutionists implicitly acknowledge that their theory is non-scientific insofar as they *proscribe* the very possibility of its refutation. That ideological proscription has been revealed again and again in the last 150 years as evolutionary theory has been defended by one *ad hoc* notion after another. "Punctuated equilibrium" is a prime example of this tactic. Attempts to "explain" the anomalies and gaps in the fossil record have often consisted of the claim by some that evolutionary development was too slow and by others that it was too fast for its transitional stages to be discovered.

Despite the severe problems that plague evolutionary reconstructions, and despite molecular biology's astounding, recent discoveries, evolutionists, with few exceptions, have refused to admit the untenability or even the fundamental problematicity of the theory. It is enough to make one suspect that they are not interested in objective data at all.

Instead of capitulating to the data or even lessening their dogmatism, most committed naturalistic evolutionists dig in their heels because they know that there are unpalatable, far-reaching implications if they relinquish their theory. It is especially their distaste for these metaphysical implications that directly impinge on their lives that is the driving force behind their unyielding attachment to evolutionary naturalism and behind their refusal to allow anything to call it into question. It is a situation quite unlike other cases of disproved scientific theories that were readily relinquished because they had little or no bearing on the ultimate questions of human existence. Without an evolutionary

theory, atheists, agnostics, and other secularists would find it next to impossible to maintain their cherished worldview and way of life.

People who have an interest in preserving and promoting a naturalistic worldview easily fall for Dawkins' skewed evolutionary reconstruction as if it is factual truth. From "it could have happened this way," they are happy to infer simplistically, "it did happen that way." Anything that appears to contradict it is coercively reinterpreted in order to transform it into a supporter rather than a defeater of their views. Once a position is dogmatically adopted without adequate ontological and epistemological grounding—as are philosophical and evolutionary forms of naturalism—defensive rationalization sets in with a vengeance.

3. THE MEANING AND STATUS OF MORAL VALUES

It is important to return to the topic of moral values to see another aspect of Dawkins' explicit denial of moral absolutes like good and evil. After saying that a question about the ontological status of good and evil has "no meaning" to him, he asserts that "*good* things happen and *bad* things…happen." This incoherence is supposedly resolved by interpreting bad and good solely in terms of suffering and its absence. Here he is committing a version of the error ethicists have called "the naturalistic fallacy," namely the error of defining good and evil in reductionistic, non-moral terms.

For Dawkins, suffering itself and whatever causes it is evil, and pleasure and whatever causes it or whatever prevents suffering is good. But what humans recognize as good and evil substantially transcends this simplistic equation. Besides, whose suffering determines goodness and badness? If one person suffers so that others can be spared suffering, was the individual's suffering good or evil? Life is filled with instances of pleasure (and the absence of suffering) that are, nevertheless, evil or caused by that which is evil.

Furthermore, are we to determine good and evil according to the number of people who are affected by one or the other? If so, we fall into all of the fallacies of utilitarianism with its entailment that it is acceptable to kill an innocent person if others will benefit from his murder. It also flagrantly disregards the rights of minorities—and it even grants justification for oppressing and annihilating minorities—in the interest of the majority.

What reflective human beings recognize, however, is that good and evil are not reducible to utilitarian terms. They are absolute standards that stand in judgment over utility and over individuals, societies, and cultures. It is morally wrong to kill innocent people who are undesirable or inconvenient to the majority or because such an act will benefit the larger population.

If people are treated as mere means to an end rather than as ends in themselves, evolutionary naturalism has no basis for condemning such utilitarian depersonalization. On its worldview, one also cannot justifiably say that the suffering of human beings is a greater evil than the suffering of any other sentient beings (animals). Consistency would

seem to compel naturalistic evolutionists to be vegetarians. Furthermore, it is a curious worldview that, on the one hand, praises a process defined by the survival of the fittest with the incalculable suffering it necessitates, and, on the other hand, laments as evil all the suffering in the world which has resulted from the evolutionary process.

Dawkins has made it clear that he not only believes that the claim of intelligent design is mistaken but also that it is "evil" to teach it to students. However, the unintended consequence of his reductionistic notion of morality is that it serves to justify teaching people anything as long as it diminishes their suffering, physical or psychological. If one suffers psychologically from thinking that he will be judged by a righteous, personal God, then, according to Dawkins' theory, he should never be taught this or he should be taught that there is no such God or no such judgment. The belief that there is a God who will judge us, even if true, shouldn't be taught, on Dawkins' premise, for it causes much psychological distress to people.

On the other hand, people who believe in God are often accused of doing so for the comfort and diminution of psychological suffering that such a belief brings. Even in the same individual, belief in God may produce feelings of dread at one time and solace at another time. Should those who are psychologically distressed over personal extinction be taught a comforting view irrespective of questions of truth and falsity? Should others who are distressed over posthumous judgment by God be taught a different view in order to remove such psychological suffering regardless of truth and falsity?

Dawkins' view leads ineluctably to the wrong answers to these questions. Such entailments follow from making the prevention and diminution of suffering the ultimate value, thereby eclipsing the greater value of truth. Knowing the truth may sometimes cause suffering. Believing falsehoods may sometimes prevent or mitigate suffering. The assumption that falsehood should trump truth or that we should assess them in terms of suffering is contradicted by the most fundamental rationality norm.

It is not surprising that evolutionary naturalism is a prime contributor to the moral relativism and secularization that currently pervade the western world. As much as Dawkins touts his objectivity, his inconsistency cancels it out. I have never met or heard of a professed moral nihilist or moral relativist who did not become a moral absolutist once his own rights and interests are trampled on by others. Dawkins is no exception.

As a result of his ontological naturalism, he is left with no resources to explain the unique nature and distinctive status of moral values. Like all attempts to explain them in terms of naturalistic evolution, his endeavor to do so founders and ensnares him in devastating self-contradiction. His muddled thinking is demonstrated in his evasive answer to Collins' question whether humans have "a different moral significance than cows in general." Dawkins replies by saying that "humans have more moral responsibility perhaps, because they are capable of reasoning." However, his appeal to the capacity for "reasoning" is disingenuous, for materialism's absolute determinism precludes *authentic reasoning,* making the cognitions of both animals and humans the inevitable consequence of blind, impersonal causes.

Dawkins' ontology of materialism, therefore, contradicts his claim that the capacity for reasoning demarcates humans from animals, thereby entailing "greater" moral responsibility of the former. If everything, including all so-called reasoning processes, is predetermined by physical and chemical antecedents, there is no true reasoning after all. Without genuine reasoning, there is no valid criterion of demarcation between humans and animals. *Neither can be morally responsible, for without the capacity for self-determining freedom, both authentic reasoning and moral responsibility are impossible.*

Dawkins' worldview is bereft of any criterion for demarcating the value of humans from the value of animals. In fact, Stephen Gould was convinced that evolutionary naturalism could not even justify a claim that humans are more valuable than a dead twig.

Nothing could be more fatuous than doubting that human beings have moral responsibility and cows do not. It is ludicrous to suggest, as he does, that cows have a lesser degree of moral responsibility. Does it make any sense to hold a cow responsible, to any degree, for committing a moral infraction? Does it make any sense to doubt that human beings—with the exception of infants, very young children, and the seriously retarded—are morally responsible for their actions? The answer given by Dawkins to Collins would merit a failing grade in a beginning course in philosophy.

Furthermore, Dawkins seems oblivious of *a moral standard that transcends mere altruism*, as important as the latter is. Altruism involves concern and action for the needs and interests of others on the basis of mutual empathy. For Dawkins this supposedly derives from genetic affinity and is somehow extrapolated from one's extended family to those outside of it. When we read the words of Christ, however, we find a moral standard that surpasses simple altruism. Although Christ presents a standard that makes us uncomfortable—due both to our own failures to fulfill it and to our realization that our propensities militate against it—our reflection on it leads us to recognize its moral superiority and universal normativity. No affinity, genetic or social, can account for it. Here are the words to which I am referring:

> Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you….Do to others as you would have them do to you (Luke 6:27, 28, 31).

When Jesus was on the cross, having been consigned to that most ignominious and excruciating death by his *enemies*, he embodied the ultimate expression of the love that he had taught: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). The surpassing love of Christ, demonstrated throughout his life and ministry and in the gift of his redeeming death for his *enemies* (Romans 5:6-10), can never be explained or comprehended on the basis of evolutionary naturalism. Romans 5:7 describes *altruism*; Romans 5:8 describes *grace*, which far surpasses it. Dawkins' worldview cannot even justify his own incongruous but correct judgment that altruism is *good* and selfishness is *bad*. *What shall we say, then, about his inability to recognize the moral superiority of a love that far exceeds humanitarian altruism and which precludes reduction to consanguineous or affinal relationships?*

4. MORE COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

When Collins asked about the moral significance of human beings relative to cows, he asked a sensible question, whereas Dawkins' answer was defensively cagey. Another way of putting Collins' question is to ask if human beings have more *intrinsic* value than animals. A cow certainly has more *instrumental* value than a human being when it comes to producing milk. Since various animals can be used to do work and perform feats beyond the capacity of human beings, they can have more *utilitarian* value in these respects. But Collins is not asking about a utilitarian comparison; he is asking about human dignity, i.e., intrinsic value in contradistinction to instrumental value.

Since everything that was created by God was *originally* pronounced "good" by him, everything has some degree of intrinsic value even if it has little or no instrumental value. In the hierarchy of relative degrees of intrinsic value in the created order, human beings occupy the highest position because we alone are made in the image of God.

Dawkins is uncomfortable answering a question like the one asked by Collins, just as any evolutionary naturalist would be. After all, if human beings and animals are the products of blind chance and natural selection, what could possibly make the former more valuable than the latter? In fact, what could possibly make anything intrinsically valuable? How could there be values at all? *On what basis can a materialist account for the values of truth, beauty, and goodness, which are not reducible to matter-energy and are not necessary for survival and reproduction?*

A widespread error is the confusion of values with valuations, i.e., value judgments. The former are objective and unaffected by human opinion. The latter are subjective and consist of human decision. The former have an ontological status that transcends the psychological act of valuing. Only on the basis of this objective distinction does it make sense to say that people *ought* to choose values over disvalues and that they ought to choose higher values over lower values. Just as our thinking *ought* to conform to reality, valuations *ought* to conform to values, but often they do not. Both of these are *rationality norms.* Axiology (the hierarchy of values) is dependent on ontology (the nature of reality).

Since God is perfect goodness and the highest reality, He is the supreme value. Therefore, He should be supremely valued, i.e., He should be loved above all else. That is why Christ said that the first and greatest commandment is that we should love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:29, 30). Valuing anyone or anything more than Him is idolatry, which is based on a mistaken value judgment, for it does not correlate with the nature of *ultimate* reality, namely, God the Creator who is revealed in the person of Christ. Isaiah states such mistaken valuations in unequivocal terms: "the things they treasure are worthless" (Isaiah 44:9).

No value judgment is more wrongheaded and reprehensible than idolatry. Materialists like Dawkins, and all philosophical naturalists, have an ontology that is idolatrous, for it ascribes to blind, impersonal, and indifferent matter-energy the ultimacy and attributes

that belong to God alone. It is significant that Dawkins does not shrink from quasi-worshipful rhapsodizing about the awe-inspiring mysteries of the universe.

Christian theism sees all human beings as intrinsically valuable by virtue of their creation in the image of God. In terms of *this* intrinsicality, human beings are of equal value, and we are just as clearly of greater value than animals and plants. But evolutionary naturalism makes such differentiations impossible. In fact, on its basis it is *impossible* to justify the claim that human beings have greater *intrinsic* value than animals—and even than a dead twig!

Why shouldn't human beings be intrinsically *valueless* if they are nothing more than the excrescences of a totally impersonal, blind, uncaring, purposeless process called evolution? This is true of all the products of naturalistic evolution; they are all devoid of *intrinsic* value. Comparing one of its products with others in such terms, therefore, is truly an exercise in futility. In the final analysis, ontological naturalism has no way to ground *intrinsic* value at all. Since it holds that there is nothing beyond an indifferent, uncaring, blind universe of space-time and matter-energy, there is no ultimate, personal God to give intrinsic value to anyone or anything. Evolution and even the universe itself, on the basis of a naturalistic worldview, are devoid of intrinsic value. Their existence or non-existence is a matter of indifference except to humans whose valuations will perish along with the final demise of the universe.

If evolutionary naturalism were correct, we would have to say, "It's unfortunate that we can't avoid making a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic value and that we believe that humans have more intrinsic value than animals. Evolution has done its work and none of its products can rise about the material forces that gave birth to them. We can strive for greater *instrumental* value, but we are left with no alternative but to say that human dignity is an illusion."

Ironically, Dawkins' most recent book, *The God Delusion*, leads ineluctably to that conclusion--the very opposite of what he intends. Instead of elevating man by dismissing God, his view ends in annihilating all intrinsic value in human beings. Furthermore, "instrumental value" can only be understood in terms of the end that is to be instrumentally served, which, according to Dawkins, is the survival and propagation of our genes! In the final analysis, according to him, humans are nothing more than a *means* to the *end* of perpetuating genes!

Nevertheless, some ends or goals are undeniably evil and others are undeniably good. Mere instrumentality becomes a disvalue, therefore, when it serves the accomplishment or furtherance of an evil end. Dawkins' much vaunted "science" is a means to an end, but it remains to be seen if the ends that it serves will be more good than evil in the final analysis. In reflecting on the malevolent potential that his scientific discoveries made possible, Einstein feared that they would eventuate in more evil than good, especially as a result of weapons of mass destruction. He lamented, "If I had known, I would have been a locksmith."

Unquestionably, science has been the means to technological advances that have brought increasing convenience and comfort to human beings. But if it eventually results in the demise of mankind by destruction of our environment or by weapons of mass destruction, science and its technological progeny will proved to be the means to an evil end.

Although virtually all human beings would see mankind's complete demise as *evil*, Dawkins and his fellow ontological naturalists, have no basis for making such a judgment. For them, no such *moral* judgment is warranted, for it would only be the indifferent consequence of evolution. Yet, even they cannot square their theory with their ineradicable, primordial sense that it would be an evil.

Dawkins expresses regret over the inevitable end of the human race: "Within 50 million years, it's highly unlikely humans will still be around and it is sad to think of the loss of all that knowledge and music" (quoted in "Richard Dawkins: Beyond Belief," by John Crace; www.education.guardian.co.uk). He clearly values knowledge and music, which valuation cannot be sustained by evolutionary naturalism. Their termination, like the end of the human race, is a matter of complete indifference to evolution and to an impersonal universe. If no one will be around to experience knowledge and to enjoy music, for whom could the loss be?

Of course, on the basis of ontological naturalism, when Dawkins dies he will suffer the total loss of knowledge and music. In striking contrast, on the basis of biblical theism, genuine Christians will not only survive death but will find themselves in the presence of God where knowledge and music will reach consummate fulfillment and never end (I Corinthians 2:9; 13:12; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Revelation 5:8, 9; 14:3).

Profound cognitive dissonance alone should cause evolutionary naturalists to re-think their paradoxical worldview. Apparently they prefer not to address it or even think about it, for the psychological distress that accompanies such profound dissonance is a kind of suffering that they do not want to experience—at least not for very long. If finding and acknowledging the truth is a *good* end, then the instrumental value of the dissonance which should lead them to question their ontological assumptions will be good, despite the psychological suffering it causes.

The universal recognition of the intrinsic value of human beings presents a strong argument against evolutionary naturalism. Consider a concrete illustration to get at the nub of the issue. Suppose you are driving a heavily loaded truck on a remote, narrow mountain road. You are going 60 miles an hour as you round a blind curve. In front of you are a dozen sheep on the left side of the road and their shepherd on the right side of the road. The sheep were bleating so loudly that neither they nor the man could hear the truck bearing down on them. You have only a matter of a few seconds to make a quick decision. You know that you cannot stop the truck in time to keep from colliding with either the sheep or the man. You have to swerve in one direction or the other. You are fully aware that the heavy truck you are driving will kill the man if you do not swerve to avoid him. You also know that several or perhaps all of the sheep will be killed if you don't swerve to avoid them.

If you are a utilitarian, evolutionary naturalist, you should be predisposed to swerve to avoid the flock of sheep since they are more numerous than the lone shepherd who is of no more intrinsic value than they are. Whatever your predisposition might be, what do you think you *ought* to do? Faced with the necessity of choosing one of the two alternatives, which do you think is the *morally justifiable* choice?

Even apart from consideration of the felony charges you might face for choosing to kill the man rather than the sheep, you know that you *ought* to spare the man even if it means killing all the sheep. *There are some things that we know with more certainty than we have about any opposing theory.* Such a test case is an example of moral knowledge of which we can have no justifiable doubt. It indicates that we do recognize that a human being not only has inherent worth but also that his or her intrinsic value is greater than that of animals. Apart from Dawkins' bizarre implication that cows have moral responsibility, he acknowledges that human beings do. But he cannot explain why they do.

Since vast numbers of animal species exist and thrive without a moral sense and without moral responsibility, how can the all-encompassing presupposition of the evolutionary struggle to survive account for the emergence of a *conscience* that apprehends a *moral ought*. Evolutionary naturalism cannot explain either how or why moral awareness and moral responsibility should be part of the fabric of the universe. Insects and all other animals are amoral; yet, without a conscience, they have no problem surviving and reproducing. Since a conscience is unnecessary for the achievement of this sole goal of evolution, why then should evolution have produced a conscience? And how could it have done so? It begs the question to say that since we have a conscience, evolution must have produced it even if we do not know why or how.

Human awareness of moral "oughtness" cannot be explained or justified in terms of its alleged contribution to viability. Moral values and moral imperatives encompass far more than considerations of survivability, reproduction, and species perpetuation. In some contexts, Dawkins does his best to suppress or minimize the moral dignity and correlative moral responsibility of human beings. It is in his interest to do so, for the evolutionary naturalism that he embraces is utterly feckless in justifying and ontologically grounding them.

Dawkins cannot have it both ways. Either he will have to deny moral values altogether or he will have to repudiate evolutionary naturalism. At times he seems ambivalent because he tries to have it both ways, but despite his occasional and incongruous efforts to salvage moral values, he ends up with their total relinquishment. If mankind acted on such a worldview, human civilization would be impossible and, in fact, the termination of human life would occur on short order.

VII. GOD VS. EVOLUTIONARY NATURALISM

I began my reflections with a comment about the question-begging and radically misleading title of the debate, "God vs. Science." Any informed Christian knows that there is no conflict between the God revealed in the Bible and authentic science. In fact, without God, science is inexplicable. The conflict is clearly between God and naturalistic speculations that masquerade as science.

It would require a huge volume to isolate and trace all of the philosophical assumptions and *ad hoc* postulations interspersed in the writings of major scientists from the time of Francis Bacon to the present. I have already emphasized the often uncritical shift that many scientists make from their specific scientific discipline to philosophy—sometimes in the same paragraph or even in the same sentence! More often than not, the unwitting shift involves recourse to bad philosophy. This not only confuses and misleads the public but it also gives science a bad name, for that which was assumed to be a finding of science eventually turns out to be untenable philosophical speculation.

1. EMPIRICAL SCIENCE CANNOT ESTABLISH ONTOLOGICAL NATURALISM

As I have been indicating throughout this article, evolutionary *naturalism* is not scientific; it is a philosophical assumption that is not supported by science at all. The more we learn about the world, the more questions we have and the more problems we become aware of, especially relative to the reconstructions of the past by various evolutionary theories. Although philosophers of science are still debating the legitimacy of restricting science to methodological naturalism, there is no dispute about ontological naturalism being a philosophical rather than scientific hypothesis.

Science *qua* science can never establish ontological naturalism, for it is a claim about the *totality* of reality—reality that encompasses literally everything, including the question whether there is a reality that transcends the space-time limitations of the universe. The tools and methods of science are restricted by parameters that definitively limit the extent of its reach and preclude it from discovering ultimate, metaphysical truths.

However, the findings of the sciences are relevant to metaphysical claims despite their inability to establish a comprehensive view of reality. Physics is not metaphysics, but it and all the sciences uncover features of the world that point unmistakably to the reality of God. There is much more to human existence and awareness than that which can be caught in the net of any of the physical sciences.

Certainly reality includes space-time and the panoply of physical objects within it, but as soon as a scientist claims that reality is exhausted by them—which means that he is

claiming that there is nothing other than the space-time universe, as Carl Sagan repeated *ad nauseam*--he has ceased to speak as a scientist. Unfortunately, the prestige and authority that people like Sagan and Dawkins may have acquired as scientists carry over, in the perceptions of a philosophically unsophisticated public, to their gratuitous philosophical pronouncements.

In fact, geneticist Richard Lewontin, says that scientists should seek to convince the public that scientism is correct:

> *Science*, as the only begetter of truth….We take the side of science…, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism….Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door (in Lewontin's Review of Carl Sagan's book, *The Demon Haunted World,* "The New York Review of Books, January 9, 1997).

Lewontin's statement is an honest confession about the *prior* commitment of many scientists to ontological materialism. However, that commitment is extrascientific and philosophically untenable. Therefore, for scientists to try to persuade the public that materialism is entailed by science or that science is the only avenue to truth is either arrant ignorance or blatant dishonesty.

A prior commitment to materialism not only betrays an aversion to allowing a Divine foot in the door of science but also, and primarily, antipathy toward allowing a Divine foot in one's personal life. If one is intent on maintaining his presumed autonomy, it should not be surprising if he assumes that science is the only path to truth. No matter what scientific inquiry discovers, he will also seek to exclude all theological implications because he sees the latter as the vestibule to the fortress of his own heart. To change the metaphor, if the camel gets his nose in the tent, it is going to be hard to keep him from coming in all the way. Prideful human nature is opposed to surrendering any measure of its autonomy.

Dawkins is insufficiently critical about the distinctions delineated in the foregoing paragraphs. In one statement he says, "my mind is open to the most wonderful range of future possibilities, which I cannot even dream about….," and in the next sentence he completely closes his mind to the possibility that a particular religion will turn out to be true.

On what basis can he make such an exclusion? He tells us in no uncertain terms: "people happen to have dreamed up" *all* religions. And what justification does he provide for such a sweeping claim? None. Of course, since religions contradict one another, they cannot all be true. But that does not preclude one of them from being true. All religions but that one could be the products of human imagination.

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES

I would not demean Dawkins' credentials as a scientist or his skill as a writer, but in philosophy and theology he is a dilettante. Dilettantes entering into any specialist field on their own are bound to make serious mistakes. Dawkins does this and errs repeatedly and even on the elementary levels of philosophy and theology. Contrary to his claim that the empirical sciences in general, and biology in particular, are inimical to biblical theism, they have actually uncovered data in the last fifty years that significantly support the biblical worldview. Numerous evolutionists, even many of those in the forefront of evolutionary research, are questioning the Darwinian perspective as never before. A wide spectrum of recent data discovered in the field of astrophysics down to molecular biology supports biblical theism decisively more than any other worldview.

On a macrocosmic scale, astrophysicists have isolated scores of specific instances of fine-tuning which have made possible the distinctive location and features of our galaxy, our solar system, and our planet. The confluence of such precise factors is so mind-boggling that our planet is rightly called "Rare Earth," the title of a recent book by geologist Peter Ward and astronomer Donald Brownlee, and "The Privileged Planet," the title of a recent book by astrophysicist Guillermo Gonzalez and philosopher Jay Richards.

The outstanding books of astronomer Hugh Ross also detail many of the specific instances of fine-tuning in our universe. They all conclude that the requirements for the kind of complex life that we have on earth are so exquisite and rare that most probably no other such planet exists. Physicist Stephen Webb comes to the same conclusion in his book, *If the Universe is Teeming with Aliens…Where is Everybody?"*

On a microscopic level, intelligent design is just as undeniable. DNA consists of a pair of molecules in the shape of a double helix—single-stranded DNA is found only in viruses. The DNA macromolecule is the most complex molecule of all. A human body contains trillions of cells, each one including a DNA blueprint consisting of an estimated 25,000 genes, which are units of heredity. The genetic code in the cell determines sequences of amino acids and sequences of nucleotides. Genetic information is determined by the sequence of base pairs (made up of A, C, G, T nucleotides) that are arranged along the length of double-stranded DNA. These bases encode messenger RNA, which then encodes amino acid sequences.

In *The Hidden Face of God,* Dr. Gerald Schroeder, describes some of the complexity involved:

> Other than sex and blood cells, every cell in your body is making approximately two thousand proteins every second. A protein is a combination of three hundred to over a thousand amino acids. An adult human body is made of approximately seventy-five trillion cells. Every second of every minute of every day, your body and every body is organizing on the order of 150 thousand thousand thousand thousand thousand thousand [*sic*] amino acids into carefully constructed chains of

> proteins. Every second, every minute, every day. The fabric from which we and all life are built is being continually rewoven at a most astoundingly rapid rate. (p. 189; quoted on p. 4 of www.y-origins.com/article5.htm).

Dr. Stephen C. Meyer, History of Science Philosopher, explains the importance of information content as distinguished from chemical bonding in DNA: "Amino acids alone do not make proteins, anymore than letters alone make words, sentences or poetry ….the chance of one hundred amino acids hooking up to successfully make a functional protein is one in 10 to the 30^{th} power" (quoted on p. 4, *ibid*). "That means that the odds against a protein being manufactured randomly are astronomical. *It would be easier for a blindfolded person to find one special grain of sand hidden on one of the world's beaches than to have a protein appear by chance"* (*ibid.,* italics added for emphasis).

Physicist Paul Davies wrote: "The peculiarity of biological complexity makes genes seem almost like impossible objects….I have come to the conclusion that no familiar law of nature could produce such a structure from incoherent chemicals with the inevitability that some scientists assert" (p. 20, *The 5^{th} Miracle,* quoted on p. 5, *ibid).*

Amir Aczel, mathematician and evolutionist, makes the following candid admission: "Having surveyed the discovery of the structure of DNA…and having seen how DNA stores and manipulates tremendous amounts of information (3 billion separate bits for a human being) and uses the information to control life, we are left with one big question: What created DNA?" (p. 88, *Probability 1,* quoted on p. 5, *ibid.*).

In the course of studying philosophy as an undergraduate and graduate student, I read virtually every book and article that then influential atheist Antony Flew wrote. When it became public knowledge recently that he had repudiated atheism and embraced theism, it was a stunning announcement. Acknowledging that undirected natural processes could not account for DNA, he observed: "What I think the DNA material has done is show that intelligence *must* have been involved in getting these extraordinarily diverse elements together. The enormous complexity by which the results were achieved look to me like the work of *intelligence*" (quoted on p. 6, *ibid.*).

Evolutionist and science writer, Dr. Matt Ridley, emphasizes another surprising finding of genetics research, namely, an organism's complexity bears very little relation to the size of its genome (www.edge.org/3rd_culture/selfish06/selfish06_indexx.html). Simply stated, a genome is the set of genes an organism has, whether human, animal, or plant. For example, grasshoppers have at least three times as many genes as the human genome and deep-sea shrimp have ten times more DNA than ours. "Salamanders get even bigger, and the king of the genomes…is the marbled lung fish….it has as much digital information in it as about ten British Museum reading rooms" (*ibid.*, p.17).

In one of the philosophy courses I was teaching, a student raised his hand and smugly challenged the uniqueness of human beings with the oft-repeated observation that chimpanzees and humans have only a 2-4% difference in their genomes. He suddenly fell silent, however, when I surprised him by saying that I would not mind if there were no difference at all between them in the 3 billion base pairs of DNA that they each have.

Then I explained that *core sameness and maximally close similarity in genomes between humans and animals not only fail to prove common descent but also point to a plus factor in human beings—a non-physical plus factor without which the uniqueness of human beings cannot be fully understood.*

It is one of the unproven and unprovable assumptions of evolutionary naturalism that similarities (homology) indicate a common biological origin. With the incontrovertible discovery that the fossil record is completely devoid of an incremental, transitional chain connecting species from the root to the branches of the so-called "tree of life," genetic overlap and similarities, no less than differences, among organic species are only adequately explained by a common Creator rather than by common descent. It is to be expected that creatures sharing the same general environment of the earth's ecosystem would have similar genomes.

One of the most important books written by Dr. Mortimer Adler is entitled, *The Difference of Man and the Difference it Makes.* Although it could be supplemented with a delineation of additional, distinctively human properties than the ones he isolates, Adler presents a solid case against materialistic, evolutionary reductionism in regard to mankind's uniqueness. The Bible describes the plus factor in the following terms: "The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). Notice that human beings are a composite of matter *plus* "the breath of life." "So God created man in his own image,…male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). *Since God is spirit, the "image" referred to here is a unique set of immaterial (spiritual) properties*.

The foregoing is not meant to diminish the relative importance of the information encoded in various organisms in contrast to genomic size, which alone does not account for differential information. In the minds of the public, a 2-4% difference may seem almost negligible, but the amount of information in that small percentage is enormous—almost mind-boggling. Even so, it alone cannot account for the profound differences between human beings and chimpanzees.

Comparative genomics is still in its infancy, but its findings already have proven to be of great significance. For example, it has been found that the average size of the genome of *plants* is about the same as that of human beings. Mice and humans share the same basic set of genes, both containing about 3.1 billion base pairs (i.e., 3 gigabases of chemical letters). In fact, *most mammals have roughly the same number of base pairs—about 3 billion.* The surprising discovery of recent research is that genomic size alone does not account for the many differences among species. There are other complexities in the way genomes are structured, irrespective of size, which must be taken into consideration. And beyond this, one must do justice to the multifaceted chasm that exists between humans and animals.

By way of summary*, it can be stated unequivocally that scientific discoveries, especially in the twentieth century up to the present, have given dramatic and unprecedented*

support to theism. The supporting evidence is formidable, emanating from four main avenues of exploration:

(1) *Cosmogony*, i.e., the evidence is overwhelming that the universe is not eternal but had a beginning, thereby decisively pointing to a transcendent, personal Creator;
(2) C*osmology*, i.e., the discovery of the comprehensive fine tuning in the universe, especially with respect to the astronomical environment and ecosystem of the earth, thereby convincingly pointing to a caring, personal God who has structured the world to make human life possible,
(3) *Biochemistry*, i.e., the finding of the irreducible, specified complexity in DNA, which powerfully points to an Intelligent Designer, and
(4) *Scientific and Philosophical Anthropology*, i.e, a recognition of the uniqueness of human beings, which defies reduction to materialistic causes and points to a transcendent, personal Creator.

The convergence of these discoveries, coupled with a proper view of the nature of information, has brought about profound changes in our view of reality. Many naturalistically inclined scientists and philosophers have been challenged as never before, resulting in significant numbers of them replacing their naturalism with biblical theism.

Contrary to the long-standing and even stubborn proclivities of eminent thinkers like Albert Einstein, Fred Hoyle, Robert Jastrow, and Antony Flew, they and many more like them saw their formerly smug case for naturalism crumble. After a period in which materialism reigned supreme, especially in the latter part of the nineteenth century and during the early twentieth century, there has been a significant shift among scientists and philosophers to a fresh consideration and deep respect for theism as the most adequate explanation of the world in which we live.

Although Stephen Hawking has waffled over the years in his attitude toward the creation of the universe by God, attempting at times to propound a speculative, naturalistic explanation for the Big Bang, he has, at other times, made significant admissions like the following:

> The odds against a universe like ours emerging out of something like the Big Bang are enormous. *I think there clearly are religious implications* (quoted in *Stephen Hawking's Universe,* by J. Boslough, p. 121; italics added for emphasis).

Only diehard zealots like Dawkins prefer to cling to gratuitous speculation and unbounded faith in scientism in their attempts to circumvent the theistic implications of the hard evidence uncovered by science, especially in the four areas of scientific inquiry I referred to above. B.D. Wiker correctly observes, in his review of *Rare Earth,* that since the authors, Ward and Brownlee give no evidence of being Christians, "No one can accuse them of stacking the deck in our (Christian theistic) favor. *The cards are dealt by nature itself*" (quoted in www.creationevolutiondesign.blogspot.com, p.7, italics added for emphasis).

This is crucial to understanding what has transpired to turn the tables on evolutionary naturalism—namely, the data are unchallengeable, for "the cards are dealt by nature itself." Those who insist on playing with another deck of cards put themselves outside the "game" of knowledge, truth, and integrity.

3. DAWKINS' FAULTY CONCEPTION OF GOD

Dawkins reveals his philosophical ineptitude by assuming that if the complexity of the world needs God as its cause, God must be more complex, thereby requiring an explanation for His complexity. This is sophomoric. Philosophers and theologians have answered this kind of anti-theistic objection from the time of Augustine.

A. DAWKINS' CATEGORY MISTAKE ABOUT COMPLEXITY

First, the most basic error that Dawkins makes is *his unwarranted extrapolation of the "complexity" which is found in the universe to a Being who is outside the universe.* The God of biblical theism is *spirit* and He is not composed of parts like a physical object. To be sure, He is far more "complex" than the universe and everything in it, but His complexity is unique and in total contrast to matter and its properties.

God's complexity, therefore, is radically different from all other kinds of complexity because His is of an ontological order that is *sui generis.* This means that His nature cannot be assimilated to anything else—which is precisely the error that Dawkins commits. He has explicitly stated that he is a materialist. Accordingly, when he refers to "God," he seems to be unable to conceive of Him as anything but physical. This *category mistake* is why he thinks that God is even more improbable than the universe, because God would have to be more complex than the universe in order to explain it. And since Dawkins wrongly assumes that God's complexity is on the same order as the universe's complexity, it needs an explanatory cause.

To clarify the meaning and importance of category mistakes, consider the consequences of confusing a number and a numeral. Other examples would be the confusion of a concept with a word or a proposition with a sentence. These contrastive terms refer to different ontological categories. The properties that belong to one do not belong to the other. A number, for example, has no spatial dimensions, no mass, no weight, and no color. A numeral has some or all of these properties. The properties of the universe's complexity include both contingency and a plurality of spatio-temporal parts. Neither these properties nor any other spatio-temporal and material features apply to God.

The naïve assumption is often made that causes must be like their effects. However, we know of many causes that are radically different from their effects. For example, some people have fainted and others have had a heart attack when they were told that a loved one had died. In such instances, it was the apprehension of certain meanings that was the primary cause of the fainting and heart attack, yet both the meanings and their cognitive apprehension are ontologically different from their physical effects. It is simply

wrongheaded to suppose that the God who is the cause of the universe must be like it—specifically, like its physical complexity—as Dawkins assumes.

Dawkins' arbitrariness in ruling out God is seen in his following comments.

> I further suspect that evolution by natural selection is also a necessary condition for all of life, wherever life may be found anywhere in the universe. This is my Universal Darwinism claim, and it's the one that Dennett was quoting as getting me into trouble with a fellow biologist for being too philosophical.
>
> Now if you take your science as narrowly evidential, you'll say something like, "Since you've never seen life on another planet other than this one, how can you possibly say anything about the way life might be universally on other planets?" On the face of it that sounds like a reasonable complaint, but on the other hand there surely must be some things that theory tells us must be so. *And it can't be right to rule out of bounds everything that we can't see with our own eyes.*
>
> ("The Selfish Gene: Thirty Years On," www.edge.org/3rd_culture/selfish06/selfish06_indexx.html,p.24).

The last sentence in the foregoing quotation is highly significant. Dawkins' ontological materialism denies, by definition, what he affirms in that statement. He might claim that he is not being inconsistent because he is simply extrapolating from a particular to a universal, i.e., from what can be seen on earth to that which we do not yet see—if it is there on other planets to be seen at some point in the future.

But this way of countering my criticism is relevant only up to a point. The more fundamental observation is the general principle he states, namely, that simply because we cannot see something with our own eyes, we are in no position (epistemologically) to say that it does not exist. This principle applies to minds and to all meanings, such as logical principles, concepts, propositions, and numbers. These things are *something*, although they cannot be seen or otherwise apprehended by sensory means. Similarly, God cannot be perceived by our senses, because He is spirit. Nevertheless, He is not only real; He is the ultimate Reality.

On what *rational* basis can God be ruled out of bounds by Dawkins or anyone else? Philosophical prejudices don't count, for that is all they are—arbitrary prejudices. His ontological materialism is nothing more. Neither logic nor science rules God out of bounds as being both real and the best explanation of all that we have discovered, including logic and science themselves. The import of Dawkins' assertion actually rules out his own ontological materialism, which denies what the statement in question affirms. He can't have it both ways.

B. THE GOD OF BIBLICAL THEISM CANNOT HAVE A CAUSE

Second, Dawkins' assumption would lead to an infinite regress which can *explain* nothing. A "god" in need of explanation because of his complexity would require a more

complex god to account for him, *ad infinitum*. An infinite regress can never arrive at a sufficient explanation, for every cause in the chain is explanatorily deficient, as indicated by its endlessly regressive dependence on a previous cause.

Only a self-existent, self-sufficient God can be *the ultimate explanation* of contingency and complexity, such as we find in the universe. God is described exactly in terms of this ultimacy in the Bible: "I am who I am" (Exodus 3:14). He is "eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God" (I Timothy 1:17). It can only be said of a God who needs nothing outside Himself that "from Him and through Him and to Him are *all* things" (Romans 11:36; italics added for emphasis). Therefore, because of His eternal ultimacy, God does not need a cause—in fact, He cannot have a cause. But He can be and is the Creator of the world with all of its complexity.

C. THE LAWS OF NATURE DO NOT APPLY TO THE NATURE OF GOD

Third, Dawkins wrongly assumes that the kind of causal relations that obtain *in the universe* can be applied to God who is *transcendent to the universe*. As the Creator of the laws of nature, God is not subject to them. Both the contingency of the universe's existence and the contingency of the specific complexities found within it require an adequate explanation. They are not self-existent or self-explanatory, for the universe has not always existed, and its encoded information could have been different. Both of these facts need explanation.

D. A CAUSE CAN BE KNOWN WITHOUT BEING FULLY UNDERSTOOD

Fourth, one can know that A causes B without knowing much if anything about the complexity of A. People flip a switch and turn on a light every day without understanding electricity. In fact, a chimpanzee can be taught to flip a switch in order to turn on a light. Its knowledge of electricity is nil. In principle, we could know that God is the cause of the universe or the cause of specified, irreducible complexity without understanding His nature or the way in which He causes things. Recall the illustration of the carved faces on Mt. Rushmore. We can know that they were caused by human beings, although we may not know any more than that they were human, and we may not know exactly how they sculptured them or what tools they used, etc. Dawkins is simply mistaken in his assumption that we are faced with the problem of explaining God if we invoke Him as the explanatory cause of the complexity of the universe.

Dawkins sets up a straw man when he maintains the following: "The problem is that this says, because something is vastly improbable, we need a God to explain it. But that God himself would be even more improbable." It is a straw man because it consists of the defects that I have pointed out, namely, mistaken assumptions that have formed his skewed conception of God. Whether he has done this deliberately or not makes no difference, for his conception itself is fundamentally flawed and contrary to the God of biblical theism.

E. NOTHING CAN BE MORE UNIVERSAL THAN THE GOD OF BIBLICAL THEISM

Dawkins also betrays his ignorance of biblical theology when he concludes TIME's excerpted debate with these words: "Jesus coming down and dying on the Cross…strike(s) me as parochial. If there is a God, it's (*sic)* going to be a whole lot bigger and a whole lot more incomprehensible than anything that any theologian of any religion has ever proposed" (*TIME,* November 13, 2006, p. 55).

It is evident that he has no understanding of the universality of the biblical God or of the meaning of the crucifixion of Christ or of the message of the Gospel.

> "In the beginning God created *the heavens and the earth* (Genesis 1:1);
> "The Lord…said to Abram…*all peoples on earth will be blessed through you*" (Genesis 12:1, 3);
> "Will not the Judge of *all* the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25);
> "God so loved the *world* that He gave His one and only Son" (John 3:16);
> "There is no difference between Jew and Gentile…the same Lord is Lord of *all* and richly blesses *all* who call on him" (Romans 10:12);
> "God…commands *all people everywhere* to repent, for he has set a day when he will judge *the world* with justice" (Acts 17:30, 31).

How can anyone get more universal than that! However, instead of finding out what the Bible says, Dawkins imposes his own fallacious presupposition of parochialism on the Bible. It is difficult to be more unscholarly.

F. THE GOD OF BIBLICAL THEISM IS PARTIALLY COMPREHENSIBLE AND UNSURPASSABLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE

Dawkins' reference to "incomprehensibility" actually highlights an important difference between the God of the Bible and all other putative gods. It is hard to imagine any incomprehensibility greater than that found in the God of the Bible. He is spirit, eternal, triune, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, transcendent-immanent, and holy love. In contrast to the gods of all the world's religions, biblical theism alone rightly depicts God as transcendent to space and time, which were created by him. False gods are almost always depicted as being bound by space and time. Such "gods" are made in the image of man and are nothing other than anthropomorphized postulations (Isaiah 44:6-20).

In striking contrast, the radical discontinuity between the Creator and man is the unequivocal teaching of the Bible. His eternal incomprehensibility, coupled with His self-revelation in Christ and in the Scriptures, is foundational to his worthiness to be worshipped. An alleged deity that can be comprehended by finite man is manifestly inferior to man and is thereby disqualified from genuine worship.

Not only does Dawkins fail to grasp the Bible's universality but also its revelation of a personal God whose nature, attributes, and sovereign actions are the *ne plus ultra* of incomprehensibility; yet He can be known and understood to the extent that He has chosen to reveal Himself to us in the person of Christ and in the written revelation of His word. Consider the unsurpassable incomprehensibility of his knowledge and wisdom: "Great is our Lord and mighty in power; *his understanding has no limit*" (Psalm 147:5); "The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator…, and *his understanding no one can fathom*" (Isaiah 40:28); "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! *How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out"* (Romans 11:33).

Albert Einstein once remarked that the most incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible. When one acquires even an elementary understanding of biblical teaching, he will discover that *one of the most comprehensible things about God is that he is incomprehensible.* That is, no human being can acquire exhaustive knowledge of God. Although the depths of God's being and knowledge can never be fathomed by any creature, he has condescended to reveal himself and his will to us: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever" (Deuteronomy 29:29). "No one has ever seen God, but God, the one and only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known" (John 1:18); therefore, the Son could say, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

For Dawkins to imply that the biblical God is like the gods of the world's religions--finite, parochial, conditioned by space and time, or tainted with an array of anthropomorphic defects--reveals his radical misunderstanding of the divine disclosure in the Old and New Testaments. Nothing will ever be "more incomprehensible" than the true God who is revealed in Christ and in the Bible. And nothing will ever be more amazing than his condescending grace to reveal himself, his love, his forgiveness, and his salvation that is graciously provided for wayward, rebellious human beings.

G. THE INCOMPARABLE GOD OF BIBLICAL THEISM

One can search all the religions and philosophies that this world has ever known and never come upon anything that is comparable to the person of Christ and the holy love of God embodied and displayed in him. As a professor of philosophy and world religions, I have spent much of my life investigating the claims found in both the world's religions and philosophies. Dawkins is deluded by the notion that there could be something higher and greater than the biblical Creator-God revealed in Christ, for neither the longest passage of time nor the greatest discoveries of science can make it possible to surpass *the unsurpassable*.

Obviously, much more can be said about the rational and evidentiary justification of biblical Christianity than the limited amount of information included in the narrow scope of this article. Nevertheless, after more than five decades of study, reflection, and analysis—and an assiduous endeavor to consider every anti-theistic case I could find—I

am fully convinced that biblical theism is true and that it has decisively more explanatory power and positive, practical application than any other perspective.

CONCLUSION

First, we can thank Richard Dawkins for making the absurdities of evolutionary naturalism more patent than any of its other promoters.

Second, it has apparently never dawned on Dawkins that the science he extols owes its existence to Christianity; therefore, he owes his profession and salary to Christianity; he owes his freedom and the cultural benefits of his country to Christianity; and he owes the benefit of an Oxford University education and his academic position to Christianity. Oxford was founded on Christian theism, as the motto of its Coat of Arms clearly indicates: *Dominus Illuminatio Mea* ("The Lord is my Light," Psalm 27:1).

Third, in a real sense, like all of us in the western world, Dawkins almost certainly owes his very life to Christianity, which has brought more enlightenment, freedom, moral purity, and compassion to the world than anything in mankind's history. Without Christ, there would have been no Christianity, and without the culturally transforming effect of Christianity, Dawkins might have never been born or have been free or have been educated. If this seems overstated or puzzling, reading *What if Jesus Had Never Been Born,* by Kennedy and Newcombe, will provide the factual information that explains how much all of us, particularly in the western world, owe to Christ.

Due to abysmal ignorance about the history of mankind, most people have no idea how the coming of Christ has profoundly changed the world. The greatest irony of all, however, is when human beings use Christ's manifold benefits in opposition to him instead of glorifying God and giving thanks to Him (Romans 1:21). As a result, "their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools….They exchanged the truth of God for a lie [one of which is evolutionary naturalism], and worshipped and served created things [matter, genes, self, man, the universe, etc.] rather than the Creator who is forever praised" (Romans 1:21 22, 25; my comments are inserted in brackets).

Can Dawkins be converted to Christ? Not by man nor by human wisdom, but with God all things are possible!

Accessed at: http://www.forananswer.org/Top_Ath/Hanna_ReflectionsOnGod+Science.pdf