

Code Systems Evidence A Creator and Declare the Glory of God

Richard W. Stevens

Released on Christmas Day, 2014, *The Imitation Game* movie compellingly portrayed the difficulties faced by codebreakers during World War II. The Nazi German military had developed a code system, called Enigma,¹ for sending information and directions to its field units and ships. The movie presents a somewhat fictionalized account of the work of Alan Turing and the team of codebreakers who successfully developed a machine to decode the Germans' messages. The breaking of Enigma is considered among the top accomplishments leading to Allied victory in the War.²

Consider now that the field of code-making and code-breaking, formally called cryptography, unveils fundamental evidence of intelligence.

Step One for the British cryptographers in World War II: Receive the German military's radio message. Immediately then the cryptographers started working to convert the message's sequence of characters into its original meaningful German text. *Notice what everyone presumed:*

¹ One renowned authority states "a code refers to a cryptosystem that deals with linguistic units [only]: words, phrases, sentences, and so forth. ... [In contrast,] [c]iphers are useful for any circumstance. If your code has no entry for 'ANTEATERS,' then you can't say it. [But you] can say anything with a cipher." Bruce Schneier, *Applied Cryptography: Protocols, Algorithms, and Source Code in C*. 2nd ed. (New York: Wiley, 1996), 9. For simplicity, the term "code" is used in this article as synonymous with "cipher," and consistent with a common dictionary definition. "code." Dictionary.com., s.v. "code," accessed April 27, 2015, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/code> (Random House, Inc. (definition 1).

² <http://www.bletchleypark.org.uk/content/hist/worldwartwo/enigma.rhtm>

- The received string of characters was a coded message.
- The original message was in German text and military abbreviations.
- The message had a meaning for the sender.
- The message's (encrypted) meaning would have the same (decrypted) meaning for the receiver.

Turing and his colleagues in the movie did not once stop to ponder: "Is this a coded message?" No one in the movie's audience would blurt out: "Wait! How do they know the 'message' isn't just random radio noise?"

Those questions don't arise because modern educated humans realize code systems exist and are used all the time. Written and spoken English are code systems, just as are all human languages. Computers exist everywhere, constantly creating, storing, transmitting, receiving and decoding streams of electrical and magnetic charges that carry coded messages. Daily e-commerce operates securely because all of the financial information is communicated via encrypted (encoded) messages.

We don't stop to think about codes, and that leads to our ignoring their immense importance to our worldview. A code system (formally, a "cipher") is found when there exists a systematic way to convert information elements into symbolic forms and then later to convert the symbolic forms back to the original information elements. Using a code system, an initial message can be converted (encoded) into symbols that later can be converted back (decoded) to the initial message.³

³ The set of uniquely defined abstract symbols that represent elements of information is the "code." The set of rules that define what structures of symbols are allowed in a coded message is the "syntax." Together, the code and syntax include all symbolic units and properties used to place information in a message. The two together may be called "cosyntics." Werner W. Gitt, *Without Excuse*. (Atlanta, Ga.: Creation Book Publishers, 2011), 40-42.

A traditional example of a code system is Morse code. Roman alphabetic letters and Arabic numerals can be converted to their unique predefined series of “dots” and “dashes,” which are transmitted as short and long tones, respectively. The receiver of a Morse code message decodes the dots and dashes to reconstitute the original letters and numerals.

More modernly, there exists the ASCII chart that underlies computer data storage and transmission.⁴ Each Roman letter, Arabic numeral and other special character is represented as a unique series of seven binary digits (usually stored and transmitted electromagnetically). Unicode is an eight bit system that includes ASCII and allows for many more characters to be represented in binary digit code.⁵

Because Codes Exist, The “Naturalistic” Explanations Cannot Be True

The “naturalistic” worldview contends all things can be explained as the results of natural causes and laws.⁶ But code systems are everywhere in the modern world. As we come to understand code systems, we see how they confirm the existence of an intelligent creator and thus refute any theory of life originating from undirected natural forces.⁷ Military codes, Morse Code, software program “code,” even children’s decoder ringers, all of these point to intelligent creators: human beings. No naturalist or scientist can disagree. Those codes originated from intelligence, so the vastly more complex encoded information within DNA also originated from intelligence, in this case from the Creator God.

⁴ www.ascii-codes.com

⁵ www.unicode.org

⁶ *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (5th ed.), s.v. “naturalism,” accessed Aug. 30, 2015,

<https://www.ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=naturalism> (4th definition).

⁷ Cf. Rom. 1:19-20 (God’s invisible attributes are clearly evident to mankind).

Two key facts about codes show that when we find a code system in existence, we have found evidence of an intelligent creator at work.

1. Observation: There are no undirected material forces known that can: (a) create a code; and (b) create the corresponding encoder and decoder devices. With all the scientific knowledge we command, we cannot conceive of a purposeless, undirected process that can design a code and assemble the coding devices.⁸ Code systems simply do not occur naturally among the non-living, non-intelligent elements of the universe.⁹

2. Logic: A non-intelligent, undirected actor, a Thoughtless Thing, cannot and will not create a code system. Why not? Because creating a code system requires:

- (a) Having a body of information, i.e., a message;
- (b) Creating a conversion scheme that converts elements of the message information into symbols;
- (c) Converting the message into the symbols using the scheme, i.e., actually encoding the message;
- (d) Expecting another entity *in the future* to receive the encoded message; and
- (e) Expecting the receiving entity to decode the message *using the same scheme* and *make a decision or act upon* the content of

⁸ Indeed, there is no known undirected material force or process that can create a code. This article argues more conservatively to produce irrefutable evidence of intelligent design, i.e., that undirected purposeless forces cannot create the code *and* the corresponding encoder and/or decoder devices.

⁹ Donald E. Johnson, *Programming of Life* (Sylacauga, AL: Big Mac Publishers, 2010), 27, 36-37, 48-50, *citing, inter alia*, Albert Voie, "Biological Function and the Genetic Code are Interdependent," *Chaos, Solitons and Fractals*, 28:4 (2006): 1000-1004.

the message.

None of the five logically necessary elements of encoding and then transmitting encoded information will occur within a Thoughtless Thing. Being purposeless, unintelligent and undirected, the Thoughtless Thing:

- Won't know it possesses information
- Won't know to create a scheme for encoding information into symbols
- Won't know to convert the information it has into the corresponding code symbols
- Won't know to transmit the encoded message
- Won't foresee an *entity existing in the future* to receive, decode, and/or act upon the message

The hallmarks of intelligent action are *intentional acts* and *expecting or anticipating a future change in conditions because of the intentional acts*. The science of economics, rightly understood, starts with the same premise. The fundamental axiom of economics is that human beings act to make changes in behavior or decisions with the expectation or hope of a changed future condition.¹⁰ There should be no debate about what constitutes intelligent action, at least as humankind understands it.

Without intelligence and action, an entity would never create a code system. Therefore, when a code system is discovered, the first conclusion about its origin should be that it was created by an intelligent entity. As it is unquestioned that DNA and related cell

¹⁰ "Action is always directed toward the future; it is essentially and necessarily always a planning and acting for a better future. Its aim is always to render future conditions more satisfactory than they would be without the interference of action." Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action: A Treatise on Economics* (Irvington-on-Hudson, NY: The Foundation for Economic Education, 1996); Library of Economics and Liberty [Online] available from <http://www.econlib.org/library/Mises/HmA/msHmA5.html>; accessed 24 June 2015; Internet. Section 1.V.6.

systems use code systems,¹¹ it follows that the first conclusion about the origin of DNA is: An intelligent actor created it.

Talk About DNA, The Ultimate Code System, In Your Witness

DNA, the code system that underlies life itself, declares the glory of God. When the question is, “what evidence is there of God,” talking about code systems and DNA can lead to talking about the DNA creator, Jesus, and what he has done for us.¹² While only the Good News about Jesus our Redeemer brings people to faith, DNA can serve as a great discussion starter.

In addition, some Christians are lured by naturalistic scientism and evolution with their claims that there is no creator God. Talk about code systems and DNA with fellow Christians. These subjects reveal the physical evidence of God’s handiwork in ways many believers and non-believers have not considered. Learning how the very existence of code systems points to creative intelligence, and how the DNA code system points to the Creator of all life, can help to dim the attraction of naturalism and evolution.

Richard W. Stevens holds a computer science degree from UC San Diego, and a J.D. with high honors from the University of San Diego Law School. He has practiced civil litigation in California and Washington D.C., taught legal research and writing at George Washington University and George Mason University law schools.

¹¹ Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell* (New York: Harper One, 2009), 113-135, citing, *inter alia*, Jacques Monod, *Chance and Necessity: An Essay on the Natural Philosophy of Modern Biology* (New York: Vintage, 1972), 143; Stephen J. Freeland and Laurence D. Hurst, “Evolution Encoded,” *Scientific American*, 290(4) (2004): 84-91.

¹² Romans 1:19-20 (ESV): “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”