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My first reaction when opening the package that the book came in was that I bought a coffee table book. It was big and glossy with a lot of pictures and large print. I was wrong. The author has a PhD in physics and has worked as a nuclear physicist for many years. That qualifies him to write about nuclear decay. He is also committed to a recent 6-day creation.

In short chapters, the book examines several of the methods that secular scientists use to determine the age of rocks and organic material. Each method is described and the assumptions they are based on are listed. All assume a closed system. Neither parent nor daughter isotopes are added to the material from outside sources and none are removed. Cupps feels that this closed system assumption is unrealistic given the amount of time the secular model requires. Another frequent assumption is that the nuclear decay rate is a constant. Cupps cites ICR’s RATE study that demonstrated that there are factors including the Genesis Flood which may alter decay rate.

He also shows that ages calculated by different methods can vary significantly. He cites an example of rocks produced by a volcanic eruption in New Zealand about 65 years ago. These rocks were dated as 197 plus or minus 160 million years old (page 86).

Most of the calculations are put in sidebars so those who do not want to follow the mathematical details can skip them. Most calculations can be followed by anyone with an understanding of high school algebra, but some are more advanced. The book is well documented so that it can lead to more detailed follow-up.

The book seems to advance the flawed idea that we can prove evolution false using science alone. With that warning, I still found this book to be a useful apologetic tool.

James A. Schloff
Evidence for Evolution

Mark Bergemann

Creationists often say, “There is no evidence for [insert a part of evolution here].” I do this sometimes too, but we should consider how others can take these claims. Such claims are often poor apologetics. If we present this claim to a student, and then that student hears about transitional fossil or other evidence when we said there is none, that student may conclude that we do not know what we are talking about.

It is a far stronger claim to accept that there are some transitional fossils and that there is evidence for evolution, but to mention the great weakness of that evidence, or how that evidence is based on the unprovable assumptions of “no God,” “no Flood,” and/or “deep time” (millions of years). Point out how the same fossil, rock, etc. is not only evidence for evolution, but also evidence for creation.

Learn a Lutheran response to evolution by reading the LSI Journal. Important articles include:
“Assumptions of Evolutionists” (www.LutheranScience.org/2017fall)
“Natural Selection” (www.LutheranScience.org/2016fall)
“Geologic Column” (www.LutheranScience.org/2018winter)
“Evolutionists and Creationists Often Agree –There are many points of agreement on natural selection” (www.LutheranScience.org/2019spring)

Evolutionists present much evidence and many fossils as supporting evolution. For us to simply say there is none, is to be incorrect. We need to address the evidence evolutionists present, or the assumptions on which that evidence is based.

Weak evidence is still evidence. Weak evidence can be very convincing to many. Also, not all evidence for evolution is weak. Pointing out the unprovable assumptions on which that evidence is based is a solid apologetic, even against the strongest evidence for evolution.
Dawkins: My book is a “Seduction of the Mind”

Mark Bergemann

I love reading books by champion evolutionist Richard Dawkins, since he so bluntly describes how difficult it is to accept evolution as true.

Dawkins calls evolution an “implausible theory.”1 He says that evolution is “a leap of imagination so large, that to this day, many people seem unwilling to make it.”2 These quotes were previously discussed in the LSI Journal.3

Dawkins also says he takes his readers down the “primrose path” through a “step-by-step seduction of the mind,” as he explains why evolution is true. The first paragraph of chapter three in his best-selling book, The Greatest Show on Earth-The Evidence for Evolution, includes these amazing words,

This chapter embarks on a step-by-step seduction of the mind as we pass from the familiar territory of dog breeding and artificial selection to Darwin’s giant discovery of natural selection, via some colorful intermediate stages. The first of these intermediate steps along the path of seduction (is it over the top to call it a primrose path?) takes us into the honeyed world of flowers.4

4 Dawkins, The Greatest Show, 45.
DANGER: Polite Evolutionists from NSTA

Mark Bergemann

A National Science Teaching Association (NSTA)\(^1\) book states,

[Science teachers] have an ethical responsibility to help students learn science without feeling that their religious beliefs are being challenged or contradicted by us or their peers. Students may have questions about the interaction between science and religion, but no student in a public-school classroom should feel as though he or she needs to choose between science and faith.\(^2\)

[Science teachers should] consider a teaching approach that guides students to understand evolution but not necessarily to believe it.\(^3\)

These points are advanced in a new 217-page book published by the NSTA, *MAKING SENSE OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION –Strategies for the Classroom and Beyond*.\(^4\) The four lead authors, and the sixteen authors of individual chapters, represent a wide swatch of US science ed-

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1 NSTA “is the largest organization in the world committed to promoting excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning for all. NSTA’s current membership of 50,000 includes science teachers, science supervisors, administrators, scientists, business and industry representatives, and others involved in and committed to science education.”


At first this may seem like a good development, but it is not as it seems. This NSTA proposal seeks to destroy students’ faith that God created as He says He did. As we will soon see, the authors’ purpose is that Scripture be interpreted so that it conforms with evolution. The authors wish to define what constitutes correct Christian doctrine.

Many champions of evolution, like Howard Bloom (*THE GOD PROBLEM*), biologist Richard Dawkins (*The God Delusion*), and biologist Jerry Coyne (*Faith vs. FACT*), are atheists who openly mock God. Other champions of evolution are seemingly more accepting of a god who may have initiated the Big Bang. Some of these polite evolutionists belong to scientific groups like the National Academy of Sciences and the National Science Teaching Association (NSTA). Both organizations include Christians who believe God used billions of years of death and suffering to create.

The *LSI Journal* previously showed that the National Academy of Sciences, while more polite than Bloom, Dawkins, and Coyne, still has as its goal that students reject their Creator God. This is also the case with the NSTA, as demonstrated in their new book.

The book points out that classroom tension often exists when students who believe in a 6-day creation and a young earth are taught about billions of years and common descent. Meadows, the second lead author

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5 Authors include teachers from ten universities and two high schools, five administrators from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and two representatives from the Smithsonian. Religious views are represented in this group of twenty authors, such as by a Baptist university science professor (Mark Bloom) and a Baptist high school science teacher (Josh Hubbard). The lead author (Joseph Shane, a college professor of chemistry and science education) mentions his teaching of Sunday school at Christian churches, “In 2007, the pastor at my church asked me to teach a three-week adult Sunday school class on science and religion, and I have been teaching similar courses ever since at regional Christian churches” (page vii). He also describes himself as a “practicing Christian” in the “Presbyterian denomination” (page 13).

Many American science teachers know the issues faced by students who are resistant to learning about evolution. We have seen them struggle. We have had a student raise her hand and say, “You mean God didn’t create the world?” We have seen a little bit of fear in her eyes. We have watched a bright student take his first zero ever because he would not even attempt the evolution test.7

The book proposes a solution: “a teaching approach that guides students to understand evolution but not necessarily to believe it.”8 Classroom questions should ask how scientists explain the earth’s origin, not what the student believes about it. The authors tell their students (grade 9-12), and the students’ parents, that students do not have to “compromise their articles of faith” while learning about evolution [italics not in original],

Even with carefully constructed questions, Lindsey and Nathan have had occasions when a student answered in a religious sense. They use these as opportunities to have a conversation with the student to clarify how they do not intend to force students to choose between their beliefs and learning science. They point out the intentional wording of assignment and test questions to the student as an example of their commitment to honoring students’ journeys as learners and a sign of respect that they deserve the space and freedom to learn new science without being required to discard or compromise articles of their faith. Similar conversations have helped concerned parents feel more at ease with this approach to science instruction, even when it seems to conflict with their views. Ultimately, when students are allowed to walk between both worlds, they stand a much greater chance of understanding and accepting scientific ways of thinking.9

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7 Meadows, 77.
8 Meadows, 80.
9 Meadows, 85.
Notice the last sentence in this quote. It hints at the authors’ goal behind their recommendations: They hope that in the future the student will change his religious views so that they conform to evolution. Shane, the first lead author shows this goal in clearer words. He will “often direct students” to learn about two Christian scientists who think God used billions of years of death and suffering to create [italics not in original],

Like many scientists from the past, Francis Collins (2006), current director of the National Institutes of Health, and Kenneth Miller (2007), cell biologist and public advocate for evolution, view their scientific work as a form of worship and argue for the general consistency of science and their religious faith. *I often direct students* to these two scientists, and the following statement from Collins (2007) is something I recite in every science-religion course that I teach: “*But why couldn’t this [evolution] be God’s plan for creation?*” True, this is incompatible with an ultra-literal interpretation of Genesis, but long before Darwin, there were many thoughtful interpreters like St. Augustine, who found it impossible to be exactly sure what the meaning of that amazing creation story was supposed to be. So attaching oneself to such literal interpretations in the face of compelling scientific evidence pointing to the ancient age of Earth and the relatedness of living things by evolution seems neither wise nor necessary for the believer. I have found there is a wonderful harmony in the complementary truths of science and faith.”

The NSTA advertises *MAKING SENSE OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION* to grade K-12 teachers. In its 68-page fall 2019 print catalog, the NSTA claims that “science and religion can co-exist.” Its description of this book begins with these words,

It’s inevitable: If your lessons deal with evolution, genetics, the origin of the universe, or climate change, some

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10 Shane, 16.
students are bound to question whether they can reconcile what you teach with what they believe about religion. *Making Sense of Science and Religion* is the book that will help you anticipate and respond to their questions—and help students learn science while maintaining their religious beliefs. Understanding that science and religion can co-exist can also make students more willing to learn, regardless of the messages to the contrary that they may hear outside your classroom.\textsuperscript{11}

The NSTA leads Christian students to adapt the false religious doctrines of liberal Christians

The NSTA website goes even further. It claims that this book will “help students reconcile their religious beliefs” with evolution. It claims that there is only a “perceived conflict between science and religion.” It claims that “educators have an ethical obligation to minimize” the students’ belief that such a conflict exists. The NSTA website states,

The book will help you anticipate and respond to students’ questions—and help students reconcile their religious beliefs even as you delve into topics such as evolution, geochronology, genetics, the origin of the universe, and climate change. …[The authors] know that educators have an ethical obligation to minimize the perceived conflict between science and religion. As the authors write, “When students hear a consistent message during science instruction—that they can learn science while maintaining their religious beliefs—they are much more willing to learn regardless of messages to the contrary that they might hear outside of your classroom.”\textsuperscript{12}


Leading Students to Reject What God Reveals in Scripture

By insisting that Christianity and science are not in conflict, and that students can “reconcile their religious beliefs” with evolution, the NSTA leads Christian students to adapt the false religious doctrines of liberal Christians. These unbiblical teachings include:

- Scripture must be interpreted in a way that agrees with science (human reason is above Scripture).
- Jesus knew that creation and the Flood are not true, but he taught them anyway, because that’s what people wanted.
- Writers of Scripture did not understand modern science, so they got some things wrong.
- God used billions of years of death and suffering to create.
- The Bible reveals why God created, not how God created.
- Death and suffering are not the result of sin, they are the means God used to create.

Science is NOT neutral about the supernatural
Rejection of the supernatural is an unprovable presupposition of science

Is Science Neutral About God?

The authors describe science incorrectly when they write, “Humans often use supernatural explanations, but students understand that science has to stay neutral about the supernatural, arguing neither for nor against it.”13 These authors certainly know that science is based solely

13 Shane, 11.
on natural explanations, rejecting supernatural ones. They actually state that in the very next paragraph\textsuperscript{14} and several other places in the book.\textsuperscript{15} Rejection of the supernatural is an unprovable presupposition of science. Science is NOT neutral about the supernatural; it rejects the supernatural (miracles and a creator) before any science is started.

While the above quote was from the chapter on professional teaching responsibilities, here is a somewhat similar quote by another author, this time in the chapter on college instruction,

Science is limited to empirical questions and cannot be used to support or refute supernatural explanations. After instruction emphasizing how acceptance of a scientific theory does not necessarily preclude the existence of a supernatural entity, college freshmen were less anxious about learning about evolution. Some students with spiritual views integrated their religious understandings into scientific ones and others claimed that their faith was strengthened upon learning that evolution does not necessarily conflict with religion.\textsuperscript{16}

Here we see that students are instructed that science need not conflict with religion. It is falsely claimed that science “cannot be used to support or refute supernatural explanations.” The truth: Evolution IS used to refute the supernatural explanation of biblical creation. These students

\textsuperscript{14} “Now, if you continue that focus on evidence as you begin the evolution unit, students are less apt to cry foul that you are teaching offensive content. Instead, you can make clear that they are going to be looking first at actual evidence for evolution, basing all of their learning in real data, and then working together to see how scientists explain that evidence \textit{limiting themselves to natural processes}” (bold added), Shane, 11.

\textsuperscript{15} Two additional examples: “Additionally, science can only provide explanations that employ natural processes and cannot invoke supernatural causes” (Binns and Bloom, 69), “Science is limited to natural phenomena and natural explanations of them. This characteristic of science is critically important for discerning science from non-science, particularly when it comes to interactions between scientific and religious claims” (Binns and Bloom, 75).

are being misled into rejecting their Creator God.

**Conclusion**

Evolution is incompatible with the Christian faith. Christians who accept evolution place their Christian faith in jeopardy. False teachings about creation are just like all other false teachings, they lead away from Jesus. They are extremely dangerous to a person’s Christian faith. … Evolution attacks the gospel and the need for a Savior. Evolution denies the doctrines of sin, the law, and death. Evolution dispenses with the need for a Creator. … Even though parts of the evolution story are true, much of the evolution story goes against Scripture. We can be CERTAIN that the parts of evolution which go against Scripture are FALSE, because we know that the Bible is true.¹⁷

In some ways, I think it may be better for our students to have an outspoken atheist teacher closer to Dawkins than a more polite Christian teacher like NSTA author Shane. At least Dawkins lets you know to keep your guard up, because you know he intends to destroy your faith in God. Shane hides his intension to destroy your faith in the Creator God of Scripture, and you may not notice how he slowly damages your faith day by day.

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Faulty Logic Led to the Darwinian Revolution

Jeffrey Stueber

Back in the 1990s, I was reading Phillip Johnson’s book *Darwin on Trial*, a critique of supposed evidences for materialistic evolution, and discovered Johnson’s suggestion that evolutionists of Darwin’s day did not want the scarcity of evidence to disprove Darwin’s arguments. I became interested in how this happened among Darwin’s contemporaries, but realized that reading what they wrote would be difficult because of how long ago they lived. My work here and now would have to focus on contemporary evolutionist writers—Richard Dawkins, Stephen Gould, and Michael Ruse, for instance.

Because of this, my interest remained on the back burner until 2019 when I discovered Edward Larson’s book at one of my local bookstores, *Evolution: The Remarkable History of a Scientific Theory*. This book, by an historian, features the history of scientific thought before, during, and after Darwin, explaining the reasoning behind Darwin’s believers as well as his critics. I quickly read his book, paying particular attention to the evidence that Larson cites as the reasons for the triumph of evolution among scientists of Darwin’s day.

An evaluation of the evidence is important, because, as Larson documents, scientists of that day often were quite critical of Darwin’s ideas. By 1900, biologists, Larson says, were speaking of Darwin’s demise. Despite that, as Larson tells it, Darwin was very quickly uncritically accepted as the only plausible explanation for life’s origin and development. Larson says that “by the 1870s, Darwin was an international celebrity.” A dozen years after the publication of Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, American paleontologist Edward Drinker Cope concluded that Darwin’s theory was “ascertained fact.”

I came to the conclusion that the evidence and reasoning that led them to their convictions was, in Darwin’s day, often philosophically flawed. Often the evidence did not exist, and it continues to not exist to this day. Some of the evidence was later found to have been fabricated. Some of these arguments, despite being no longer valid, are advanced today by modern evolutionists.

Let’s take a brief survey of some of the flawed evidence evolutionists use to advance their claims.

To reason as atheistic evolutionists do, is to beg the question by only allowing conclusions they like and dismissing as inadmissible divine explanations.

The Nature of Science

Entire books can be filled with discussions on the nature of science (what is scientific and what is not). One reason, according to Larson, that evolution was accepted so early is that Darwin and Huxley (and most likely others) claimed special creation is unscientific. Larson doesn’t explain in detail what evolutionists of that day considered scientific, and so it’s difficult to assess their opinion on this matter. However, a revealing quotation, from Larson, of geologist George Frederick Wright, I think sums up their attitude.

We are to press known secondary causes as far as they will go in explaining facts. We are not to resort to an unknown (i.e. supernatural) cause for explanation of phenomena till the power of known causes has been exhausted. If we cease to observe this rule there is an end to all
science and all sound sense.\textsuperscript{2}

This is exactly how atheistic evolutionists reason today. To give just one example, materialist skeptic and professor of neuropsychology, Berry Beyerstein says (as quoted in Thomas Kuhn’s book \textit{Close to Truth}),

The brain and the kidneys are both physical organs. Both have anatomical structures and physiological processes that generate particular things. And, yes, the output of one is urine and the output of the other is thought.\textsuperscript{3}

This is clearly illogical because it would make impossible any rational thought, including the supposition that our thoughts are merely internal secretions (incretions) in our brain. What leads Beyerstein to argue this way is devotion to the same type of materialism as Wright. Again, Beyerstein (as quoted by Kuhn) says,

I can’t see anything that we need to bring in from the outside to explain anything in neuroscience. I’m going to push the materialist position as far as it will go. It’s conceivable that someday I could come up against something that doesn’t fit the neuroscience model of mind, and if that happens, then I’ll have to change my mind.\textsuperscript{4}

Clearly materialistic evolutionists see science as the only path to truth. Since their science rules out anything non-natural like a divine work, any act by God cannot be an explanation for anything in our world. Is this, however, a valid way of looking at science or even searching for truth regarding the origin and development of life? Creationist scientists claim their conclusions about life come from scientific studies of nature, and even though they do not invoke a natural event or process as an explanation for life’s origin and development, they say their scientific studies

\textsuperscript{2} Larson, 110-111.
\textsuperscript{4} Kuhn, 22.
lead to the supposition that God acted to create life. To reason as atheistic evolutionists do, is to beg the question by only allowing conclusions they like and dismissing as inadmissible divine explanations. Creationist Henry Morris, I think, explained the situation perfectly,

Although many people teach evolution as though it were a proven fact of science, it is obvious that this is false teaching. There are literally thousands of scientists and other educated intellectuals today who reject evolution, and this would certainly not be the case if evolution were as obvious as many scientists say it is. The same is true of creation, of course. ...Neither evolution nor creation can be either confirmed or falsified scientifically. Furthermore, it is clear that neither evolution nor creation is, in the proper sense, either a scientific theory or a scientific hypothesis. ...This is because neither can be tested. A valid scientific hypothesis must be capable of being formulated experimentally, such that the experimental results either confirm or reject its validity. ...All of these strictures do not mean, however, that we cannot discuss this question scientifically and objectively. Indeed, it is extremely important that we do so, if we are really to understand this vital question of origins and to arrive at a satisfactory basis for the faith we must ultimately exercise in one or the other.5

Morris goes on to point out that we should consider different scientific models which agree with Scripture. The model that explains the most data is the preferred model.

Useless Organs

Darwin wrote about rudimentary organs (also called vestigial organs) as remnants of a blind process and not the intelligent work of a creator. Larson writes,

Useless organs and less-than-optimal homologies made perfect sense as by-products of evolutionary development but little at all as the artwork of an Intelligent Designer. Seizing on this evidence for evolution, comparative anatomists and evolutionary morphologists found an ever-increasing number of such features throughout the animal kingdom, and then moved beyond Darwin by using them to investigate genealogical relationships among species in a bold effort to diagram the evolutionary tree of life.6

There is a philosophical problem with this approach. Evolutionists often criticize theistic and, in general, Christian claims that God made everything in the universe as a “god of the gaps” claim. What they mean is that in places where creationists find it difficult to explain a biological fact, they invoke God as the explanation, and they only invoke God as an explanation because they have none better. As scientists find more and more natural explanations for biological facts, things that require God as an explanation become fewer and fewer. Yet, this evolutionist claim that organs are vestigial is itself a claim that particular organs are useless because they cannot find a use for them. It’s a claim based on lack of knowledge, and as scientists find uses for these supposedly vestigial organs, the number of organs that are vestigial declines.

Also, many organs once considered vestigial have been shown to be useful. Leonard Brand notes that, around 1900, there was a long list of about 80 vestigial organs considered evidence for macroevolution. However, the list has shrunk because of later discoveries, and Brand gives examples. The human appendix was once thought vestigial, but it is now known to be part of the immune system. The tailbone once was thought to be useless but is now known to be an attachment point for the muscles that allow us to walk upright. Hind limbs of whales are the attachment points for muscles used in the reproductive system.7 Jerry Bergman goes so far as to say that the list shrunk to zero in 1999 and gives additional examples

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6 Larson, 112.
of organs once thought to be vestigial. They include the thymus which functions similarly to the appendix in helping the immune system and the pineal gland which secretes a hormone important in our circadian rhythm and has other functions. Bergman notes that evolutionists, to salvage their theory, have changed their definition of “vestigial” to any organ whose use has diminished over time. Bergman goes into detail on why this new definition is flawed.8

**Negative Theology**

Larson notes that Darwin also, to bolster his evolutionist ideas, used arguments based on what he thought God would or would not create. “Darwin,” he says, “pressed the case for natural selection over special creation by citing examples of self-serving cruelty and lack of perfection in nature.” One particular instance that troubled Darwin was the fact ich- neumon (parasitic wasps) deposits its eggs in the living bodies of other insects.9 Two other scholars, Robert Clark and James Bales add to this by describing Darwin’s form of argument this way: “Either all was designed in the most minute events and details or nothing was designed.” Darwin wrote to uniformitarian Charles Lyell in 1861 asking Lyell if he could honestly tell Darwin whether the shape of his nose was ordained and guided by an intelligent cause. Darwin could no more believe in creation than he could believe that the spot where each rain drop lands was designed.10 It would seem to me that Darwin set up his arguments so he had no choice but to reject Biblical creation.

The major problem with this argument is that atheists who make this argument will on one hand claim God is unknowable while on the other hand claim they know what God would or would not do. This is a major flaw that, to this date, no atheist has confronted or even acknowledged is a flaw in their arguments—at least not that I have seen. To know what God

9 Larson, 91.
would not create is to also know what God would create, and this implies knowledge that could only come by divine revelation thus implying that God does indeed exist.

A 2009 example of this claim by evolutionists is Geoffrey Berg’s book *The Six Ways of Atheism*, which I critiqued in a 2011 LSI article.\(^\text{11}\) Berg argues,

God, being by definition supremely good and omnipotent and our creator, would if he existed have created the best possible world. Yet we can be sure...that the world taken as a whole throughout the ages is not the best possible world. Therefore it is logically shown that God cannot actually exist. Therefore as God cannot exist within the parameters of Logic, God cannot and does not exist at all.”\(^\text{12}\)

Yet, he also claims that we cannot identify God even if God exists. If this is true, then how are we able to know what God would or would not do? Berg does not acknowledge this contradiction in his book.

**Haeckel’s Embryos**

German biologist Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) included illustrations of the embryological stages of vertebrates in a series of books published between 1868 and 1908.\(^\text{13}\) Darwin, who was not an embryologist, said that Haeckel “had recently brought his great knowledge and abilities to bear on what he called phylogeny, or the lines of descent on all organic beings.” Darwin wrote,


[The] leading facts in embryology ...are explained on the principle of variations in the many descendants from some one ancient progenitor, having appeared at a not very early period of life, and having been inherited at a corresponding period.14

Larson notes that Haeckel has “greatly exaggerated the similarities of the early embryos.” However, as he notes, Haeckel’s argument served as a powerful argument for evolution and his sketches of these embryos were widely reproduced. They also served as scientific support for racism, as Larson documents.15

Jonathan Wells provides more detail in noting that Haeckel faked his drawings. Vertebrate embryos never look as similar as he made them to be, and the stage he labeled as the first stage actually appeared midway through development. The similarities he exaggerated are preceded by striking differences in the early stages of development. He chose only those vertebrate embryos that came close to fitting his theory. He showed only five of seven classes of vertebrates omitting jawless and cartilaginous fish. To represent amphibians, he used a salamander rather than a frog which looks very different. Half of the embryos are mammals and all from one order (placentals) while some other orders are omitted. Writing in 2000, evolutionist Stephen Gould said that Haeckel “exaggerated the similarities by idealization and omissions,” and Gould concluded that Haeckel’s drawings are characterized by “inaccuracies and outright falsification.”16

Similarities as Proof of Evolution

It is certainly true that different animals resemble each other, and Larson lists this as one of the reasons Darwin’s contemporaries accepted evolution. Darwin, Larson notes, felt that human mental faculties differ

15 Larson, 113-114.
in degree not in kind, and he attempted to bridge the gap by stressing the human-like feelings of some animals and the animal-like qualities of savages. “Can we feel sure that an old dog with an excellent memory… never reflects on his past pleasures in the chase? And this be a form of self-consciousness,” Darwin wrote as quoted by Larson.17 Despite that, some scientists of Darwin’s day did not accept this reasoning because humans are unique because of their mind and emotions, things non-humans lack.

Evolutionists believe that animals share common organs and limbs because they inherited them from a common ancestor. For instance, the arms of humans, legs of cats, and wings of a bat were supposedly inherited from a common ancestor because they look so much the same. However, where animals share common organs and limbs that do not come from a common descent, that is explained as the “convergence”18 of evolution on a particular body plan.

What I learned from George McGhee’s book Convergent Evolution is the difficulty in deciding what is convergent and what is not. He begins his book describing how much the porpoise looks like a fish: a streamlined body like a tuna, fins on its side, and so forth. Yet, he tells us, it is not a fish but a mammal: it gives live birth and nurses its young, for instance. The mammal traits, he tells us, are derived from the mammalian ancestor, but the fish traits, he says, “are independently derived convergent traits.” McGhee shows us several diagrams to explain the difference between convergent evolution and others types of evolution (discussed below) but then makes a stunning admission:19

In real life, however, evolutionary relationships are not

17 Larson, 96.
18 Evolutionists normally assume that two different creatures having a similar feature (such as four limbs) descended from a common ancestor (“divergent evolution”). Often, evolutionists place creatures with a similar feature (such as feathers) on their “tree of life,” so that those creatures do not have a common ancestor (“convergent evolution”). In those cases, evolutionists imagine that the same feature evolved separately in two (or even in dozens) of different creatures. 19 George McGhee, Convergent Evolution: Limited Forms Most Beautiful (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), 1-4.
known beforehand, and we must carefully analyze all traits that we see are shared by different species. Do these species share these traits simply because they all inherit them from a common ancestor? Or are these traits convergent—have they independently arisen in species that belong to separate evolutionary lineages, in separate clades? A porpoise is not a fish, even though it looks like one.20

That’s precisely the point. We don’t know the evolutionary relationships, but we infer them from similarity of organs and limbs. Wouldn’t we be as correct in saying the porpoise is descended from a fish based on morphology when, after all, that’s exactly how we decide that the human arm, bat, and cat share a common ancestor. Likewise, if we can’t assume the porpoise is descended from the fish or mammal based on morphology, what confidence can we place in other judgements we make based on morphological similarities?

There is also the phenomenon of reverse evolution which is loss of function in body parts instead of their increasing complexity. Jenny Morber suggests that penguins are an example of reverse evolution in that they are birds that lost their flight ability. However, these birds have larger muscles and denser bones for strength which allow them to swim. Snakes, she suggests, lost their legs although they do have the structures needed to hear prey. Birds no longer have teeth although Morber suggests the loss of teeth helped beaks grow as a precursor to flight.21 It should appear to anyone these animals are excellently designed for their habitats, but evolutionists think that, if their theory is true, these animals should have more limbs and organs than they do that point to greater ongoing complexity, not regression.

Furthermore, there are many genes that are present only in some

20 McGhee, 5.
21 Jenny Morber, “5 Times Evolution Ran in ‘Reverse’ -Hagfish, penguins, and aphids are just some of the creatures that have been shaped by what’s known as regressive evolution,” National Geographic, www.LutheranScience.org/MorberReverseEvolution (accessed 2-20-20)
plants and animals but not in others. These are called “orphan genes.” Evolutionist Richard Buggs states that orphan genes “comprise a sizeable proportion of each new genome sequenced.” He says that scientists expected to find these genes present in assumed ancestral populations, but that has not happened over the past 20 years of looking. These genes are called “orphans,” because they seem to have no evolutionary parents. Buggs found that 9,604 of the 38,852 protein-coding genes in ash trees were orphan genes. He and his coauthors published this research in the premier science journal Nature. Buggs comments about his Nature article in a paper with a telling title: “The Evolutionary Mystery of Orphan Genes—Every newly sequenced genome contains genes with no traceable evolutionary descent—The ash genome was no exception.” This evidence fits created kinds and goes against evolutionary common descent. Evolutionist Buggs writes,

Orphan genes are “the hard problem” for evolutionary genomics. Because we can’t find other genes similar to them in other species, we can’t build family trees for them. We cannot hypothesize their gradual evolution; instead they seem to appear out of nowhere. Various attempts have been made at explaining their origins but ...the problem remains unsolved.

**Evidence Against Evolution Is Re-Purposed as Evidence for Evolution**

So, as always, evolutionist theory drives the assumption of what biology *should* show us, not what biology actually shows us. Some features are claimed to show descent from a common ancestor, *except when they don’t*—in which case they are examples of “convergent” evolution.

22 Richard Buggs, “The Evolutionary Mystery of Orphan Genes -Every newly sequenced genome contains genes with no traceable evolutionary descent –the ash genome was no exception,” Ecology and Evolution, www.LutheranScience.org/BuggsOrphan (accessed 2-20-20)
24 Buggs.
Some features are claimed to show a progress of animal forms to greater function and complexity, except when they don’t—in which case they are examples of “regressive” evolution. Genes should have previous ancestral forms, except when they don’t—in which case they are called “orphan” genes. There should be intermediate links between different animal groups according to evolutionist theory, except when there isn’t—in which case the missing links are supposedly due to “punctuated” evolution (rapid jumps in evolution between long periods with no change).

What I realize when studying evolution in this way is that the evidence does not validate Darwin’s central theory of descent with modification. Rather, theory comes first and the data is labeled in a special way (convergent, regressive, orphan, or punctuated, for instance) to re-purpose what could be falsification of Darwin’s theory into an exception to Darwin’s theory. In this case, it would be incorrect to say similarities in bodily organs or limbs validate Darwin’s theory.

Furthermore, DNA often does not agree with morphology. Homologous structures (bodily features shared by numerous animals that come from a common ancestor) should be specified by homologous genes. However, Michael Denton, writing in 1986, says homologous structures are specified by quite different genes in different species. This, to me, suggests something else controlled the generation of the organs of these animals other than DNA. Perhaps they were divinely created that way.

**Progress in the Fossil Record**

Finally, Larson notes that Darwin, in his book *The Origin of Species*, claimed “the fossil record displayed a recognizable continuity in the succession of species within contiguous areas and a tendency toward greater organic variety and complexity over time.” This demands a great deal of intermediates between simple and complex animals, of course. With further research, Larson says, Darwin felt paleontologists would find missing links in the evolutionary tree of life.

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26 Larson, 139.
What scientists have found, however, is that there are gaps in the fossil record often with alleged transitions between major groups of animals—between the reptiles and birds, for instance. Darwin suggested that the fossil record was incomplete, and to this day some evolutionists argue this way even after more than 150 years of fossil discovery. Other evolutionists have replied, as evolutionists Stephen Gould and Niles Eldredge did in 1972 and college text books still do today, that these gaps are due to the phenomenon of punctuated equilibrium where animals evolve quickly leaving few if any intermediate fossils.

One of the prominent examples of this phenomenon is the Cambrian explosion. In Precambrian rock, few if any fossils survive, but in the Cambrian rock an explosion of life is present challenging evolutionists to explain it. An article on the PBS web site indicates this is still a problem, arguing that one reason for the missing fossils is the lack of fossilized remnants. So, Darwin’s explanation of poor fossilization persists even after over 150 years of fossil research. The fossil record is not documenting the fossils that Darwin felt we would find to ratify his beliefs.

**Conclusion**

What struck me upon reading Larson is how easily evolution was accepted by Darwin’s contemporaries, and evolutionists today, without the realization that the cart was put before the horse. Evolution was accepted and continues to be accepted for personal reasons as part of a rebellion against God. The truth is that the evidence isn’t there any more now than it was in Darwin’s day. That’s what we should realize when studying the history of evolutionist thought.

*Jeffrey Stueber, a free-lance writer, serves as secretary of the Lutheran Science Institute. He is a member of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Watertown WI.*

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Mark Bergemann
President, Lutheran Science Institute
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www.LutheranScience.org/donate

or mail your check to Lutheran Science Institute,
13390 W. Edgewood Ave., New Berlin WI 53151

2020 Budget: $11,400
### Operating Fund

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### LSI in Your Will

The LSI Trust Fund is ready to receive estates of all sizes, whether $3,000 or $300,000. The Trust Fund accumulates funds for larger ministry programs and possibly for a paid staff to do tasks our volunteer staff is unable to do. It also ensures LSI operating expenses are met in years of income shortfall, as occurred in 2016 when the trust provided $2,000 toward operating expenses. The LSI Trust Fund was created in late 2014 and is governed by the document at: [www.LutheranScience.org/Trust](http://www.LutheranScience.org/Trust)
Evolution

a Lutheran Response

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