

Evolution Debate from Philosophy Forum Feb, 2004

All quotations are in red. All responses to quotations by John Donovan unless otherwise noted.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

I am thoroughly familiar ith the scientific method.

Accusing me of not being familiar simply shows that you are willing to reach idiotic conclusions and make ridiculous accusations in order to advance your ideas.

I didn't say you don't know scientific method (although I'm dubious about that as well) I said you didn't understand evolutionary theory, which you clearly don't or you would not conflate it with abiogenesis, the existence of God and the beginning of the universe. You also would not riddle your posts with so many erroneous statements about what the evidence is and isn't.

Quote:

Speciation proves NOTHING since the animal remains essentially the same except for some slight modifications. Huh??/Wha the wha??/

Speciation *is* evolution. It's the very *definition* of evolution. Are you sure you understand what the term means? It means that one population within a species has changed enough that it has become a *different* species. That is evolution. QED. Game over.

Quote:

That these modifications would result in the ridiculous transformations that you blindly belief in is merely conjecture--actually more akin to a fairy tale.

I have no idea what you imagine that I "blindly belief in" but I assure you I do not believe in any ridiculous transformations, only in excruciating slow, incremental adaptations over huge amounts of time. I do not take this on faith or conjecture but on the overwhelming physical evidence which supports it.

Think of it like language. Pick up a book written by James Fennimore Cooper. The English is a little quaint but it's English. You have no trouble at all understanding it. Pick up some Shakespeare and it's quite a bit more archaic. There are weird words and strange phrasings. You can read it. It's recognizably English but it's a different sort of English than what you're used to. Pick up some Chaucer and now you're in trouble. It resembles the English you know. You can recognize some of the words and guess at others but you can't really read it with much comprehension. You can't really say its the same language any more. Now pick up *Beowulf* and you're completely lost. This is no longer anything you understand.

Now, you can say that the gap between Modern English and Chaucer's Middle English while definitely a "speciation" of sorts, is not a huge gap and that it doesn't show how English could be related to Sanskrit. You might even say that you can recognize the similarities between Modern English and the Old English of *Beowulf*, that it's not the same kind of crazy gap that there is between English and Sanskrit.

If you keep going back, though, through Anglo-Saxon and Old Germanic predecessors, through Latin and Greek and their predecessors you eventually arrive at Indo-European which is an ancestor language for both English and Sanskrit. There have been some extremely dramatic changes in a myriad of different directions since then, but nobody ever noticed it while it was happening. There was never any dramatic or noticeable change. People didn't just spontaneously shift from Anglo-Saxon to Old English it was just many tiny changes over time.

It's the same with biological evolution. The changes are extremely incremental but given enough time and enough adaptations one genetic line can travel extremely far afield from where it started.

Quote:

The supposedly indisputable evidence you refer to is very often one-sided inconclusive, open to various interpretations and biased. So I see no reason to have confidence in it. The reason I cannot answer all questions should e obvious. I have a life. I am only one person while you are many. So I guess many questions will have to wait until I get around to them. I do not bother to support certain assertions because they are common knowledge of which many evolutionists feign ignorance in order to avoid embarrassment.

You make all these savage claims about the dishonesty of thousands of scientists in dozens of fields yet you can't provide a single example of fallacy in evolutionary theory?

Do you honestly think there is a massive conspiracy among all the world's scientists to fabricate a massive lie about biological forms? Really? You think that? What is the motive? How and when do they let new scientists in on the scheme and how do they keep such a tight lid on it?

Quote:

BTW

Science can be used and has been used to support the most ridiculous conclusions. Then science has done an about face and decided to support another conclusion that might in the future turn out to be even more ridiculous. So unlike you, I do not feel obligated to accept everything and anything just because a scientist says so. Neither are discoveries beyond the reach of the unscrupulous as was evident by the Java Man debacle.

Java Man - ... DuBois' Java Man scandal should be a reminder to us that evidence which disproves evolution is still being withheld from the public. ...

<http://www.odsgc.net/~cornerst/biblestudies/javaman.htm>

Java Man was a hoax which was exposed by...wait for it...SCIENTISTS. Yes, scientists can make mistakes, but the great thing about science is that it is self-correcting. Java Man never had any role in proving or disproving evolution, btw. It just turned out to be a bogus find. If somebody created a fake dinosaur skeleton, and then other scientists figured out it was fake, that would not prove that there weren't any dinosaurs.

Java Man is a favorite strawman of creationists. Too bad it has absolutely no place in evolutionary theory. You might as well try to argue that we can't believe any evidence about cro-mags because you can prove that Fred Flintstone is a cartoon.

Quote:

BTW

Belief in evolution does not preclude belief in God. This hopefully will stop the unfounded accusations generated by the fertile imaginations of feverish evolutionary minds.

What unfounded accusations would those be? I have consistently and repeatedly said that evolution does not disprove the existence of God. Who are you arguing with?

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Funny that you can find a simple arrowhead and argue with me to no end that it is the product of intelligent design yet find it impossible to conclude that the infinitely more complex organisms MUST also be the product of intelligent design. In my view that is simply a contradiction of methodology.

BTW

I never said that I do not believe in natural selection or gradual adaptations.

They occur all the time.

What I don't believe is the degree to which you believe those adaptations will lead.

Also, I do not need to be a rocket scientist to know when something doesn't make any LOGICAL sense. So please spare me the "You don't know" shpiel.

Sorry to disappoint you but: replicative life processes are capable of cumulative changes, whereas a "simple arrowhead" is not. You need to learn more biology.

There is no indication of "design" in biology. Perceived "complexity" is beside the point. The question is can an object have been created by natural processes or couldn't it. There is nothing in all of biology which cannot have occurred through completely natural, non-"intelligent" processes. The same cannot be said of an arrowhead.

Quote:

The conclusion is reached based SOLELY on what is seen at the moment when the object is found and based on evidence of forethought.

Where is the evidence of "forethought" in any part of biology?

Quote:

You need to learn how to reason.

This will prevent you from believing that your ancestor was either a walnut tree or an ape

Reason can lead to no other conclusion than evolution.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

No, but it is making the case for your inconsistency in bias in applying criterion.

No it isn't. You can't show any necessity for ID in biology. I can show plenty for arrowheads.

Quote:

What you describe natural processes [mostly damaging, neutral mutations] with what you call natural selection are insufficient in my view to produce the what you claim they produce. At most a species here and there. But beyond that I don't buy it. I'm not saying that YOU shouldn't buy it. Simply that I don't and remain unconvinced and highly skeptical.

You can say you don't believe it all you want but facts are facts. Scientists are not guessing. This stuff is not unproven. You also show very little understanding of natural selection and the role of mutation, btw.

Quote:

Now, if you would tell me that the earth is a zoo where aliens deposited all manner of species for their own entertainment or simply as a resort location without our knowing it, then THAT is far more believable than what you seem to propose.

This hypothesis is easily dispensed with by the fact that common descent on earth has already been proven. There was no sudden appearance of species. Ever.

Your links are a joke, btw. They are religious sites, not scientific ones, and they are rife with lies and fallacies. I'm sorry to disappoint but there is no scientific case against evolution. Creationism is not a scientific theory.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Reproduction has absolutely nothing to do with it.

The conclusion is reached based SOLELY on what is seen at the moment when the object is found and based on evidence of forethought.

That's like saying historians should only read today's newspaper in trying to understand history.

If you can't understand the difference between replicative and reproductive life processes (self-organizing against entropy) and geological erosion (not-self organizing), then it's no wonder you don't "get" evolution.

You might find it more believable that “the Earth was populated by aliens”, but then you'd still have to explain how those alien life forms came to be.

Quoting a few fundamentalists only demonstrates that biologists, chemists, astronomers, physicists and geologists overwhelmingly and uncontroversially accept the evolution of life on Earth from common ancestors. I am sorry you can't understand that, just because you think it threatens your religious beliefs. You might consider that a great many scientists, philosophers and educated people in general find religious belief and evolution quite compatible.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Your whole theory is a joke!

So you can observe and test MACROEVOLUTION?

Actually, yes. Geologists and paleontologists do it for a living. For example, if we found a hominid fossil that gave a radiometric date that was 10 million years old, then current theories of hominid evolution would require revision.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

There are countless other scientist who don't believe in GODLESS evolution and have had and have the educational credentials which I am almost certain that you lack.

Countless? With this exaggeration my friend, I think you just blew your own "educational credentials." Oh wait- you said "countless other scientist"- well yes, there might be one scientist. Were you thinking of Fred Hoyle perhaps? He also thinks that insects are intelligent.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Similarity, both on the physical and genetric level doesn't mean irrefutable descent.

Yes, but it's just yet another aspect to the body of evidence that science has for evolution.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Your whole theory is a joke!

So you can observe and test MACROEVOLUTION?

Absolutely. The correct word is *speciation*, though. "Macroevolution" is a creationist term designed to distinguish speciation from what they call "microevolution," or small adaptations within a species. In reality there is no difference between "micro" and "macro" evolution. It's the same process. Macro is just a whole bunch of micro. Speciation can and has been abundantly confirmed without any need for direct observation, but, FYI, speciation or "macroevolution" *has* been directly observed anyway. Here are some examples of [observed speciation](#) for you. Speciation *is* evolution. It *has* been directly observed.

Quote:

That's the biggest Mother Goose, Brother Bull, Father Fish, Cousin Camel. story I have ever come accross. What you are observing is obviously adaptation on a very limited scale which your biased scientists assure you produces the ridiculous metamorphs which you eagerly choose to believe simply because it is popular to believe it--not because they have offered undeniable evidence.

What has been directly observed and overwhelmingly confirmed by every relevant field of science is that all living species are commonly descended from the same ancestral gene pool. There *is* undeniable evidence for it. There is ZERO evidence for any supernatural intervention and no necessity to hypothesize it. There is nothing in biology which cannot be explained by natural causes.

Quote:

Calling every scientist which believes in God not really a scientist is absurd.

I didn't. I called your *websites* religious and they are. Belief in God has nothing to do with scientific method. Assertions of religious belief as fact *are* unscientific, even if done by scientists.

Quote:

Einstein believed in God and was THE SCIENTIST.

Einstein was an [atheist](#).

Quote:

There are countless other scientist who don't believe in GODLESS evolution and have had and have the educational credentials which I am almost certain that you lack.

There are scientists who believe in God and who also accept evolution. I have consistently stated that evolutionary theory does not contradict theistic belief so you're tossing out a strawman.

Whatever you're "educational credentials" are they don't seem to reflect any serious study of evolutionary theory.

Quote:

So that serpent simply refuses to slither my friend.

Serpents made of straw seldom do.

Quote:

Mars?

Twisting again makes for very little effect.

I didn't say pyramids were on Mars.

I said erosion MIMICKED APPROXIMATE pyramidal structures observed on Mars which caused controversy.

No scientist ever thought there was any suggestion of intelligent intervention in any of the natural formations on mars. Such speculations are the province of crackpots and UFO enthusiasts, not scientists.

Quote:

We are all related?

Because we SHARE similar genetics?

That's illogical.

That could be simply because we share the same planet and are created by the same entity to be able to survive on the same planet.

Similarity, both on the physical and genetic level doesn't mean irrefutable descent.

There is no argument that common descent can be inferred from "similarity" alone. That's another strawman.

Quote:

The problem is that Evies tend to see indisputable evidence of descent everywhere because it fits in with their pseudo-religious ideas.

Which is fine with me since it's no skin off my Fundie nose.

Live and let live as they say.

Perhaps you could give an example of anything in evolutionary theory which is false or based on "pseudo-religious" belief?

Quote:

BTW

The reaction of Evies here toward Fundies is similar to the reaction of the Church toward heretics during the infamous Inquisitions. All they need is to don a black robe, rent a dungeon and party.

Hysterical *ad hominem*.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Calling every scientist which believes in God not really a scientist is absurd. Einstein believed in God and was THE SCIENTIST. There are countless other scientist who don't believe in GODLESS evolution and have had and have the educational credentials which I am almost certain that you lack.

First of all Einstein did not believe in a personal God as depicted in the bible, but much more importantly for your misunderstandings, evolution is science and **science that ceases to be godless, ceases to be science**. For the simple reason that saying "god did it" explains NOTHING.

The methodology of science cannot fall back to supernatural explanations because supernatural explanations do not explain anything- they just give a mystery another name. For example, saying that thunder is the sound that Zeus makes, does not explain thunder. Saying thunder is a shock wave produced by explosive heating of air by electrical discharges in the atmosphere does explain thunder.

Likewise, saying God designed species does not explain anything. But saying that speciation is produced by incremental and cumulative random changes in genetic instructions by natural selection does explain much. That's simply how science works- the same process that produces the life saving drugs we all depend on and the wonderful technologies that you use to view this post.

So even though scientists may not invoke the supernatural in their scientific explanations, as human beings, they may or may not have personal supernatural beliefs. That's why creation science or intelligent design is not taken seriously by scientists, because it is NOT science.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **JohnW**

Wow, what a thread!

I must side with Radrook on this, and simply say that I am not convinced by evolution. We have in human beings creatures who can create languages, art, entire civilizations, and have lengthy discussions like these. To eliminate the possibility of a Creator means that matter, on its own, somehow evolved into the well-designed, artistic, emotional, intelligent human species -- that matter did all this on its own without a Supreme Designer. I have spoken to many biologists and astronomers about this (most of whom were atheists) and most of them could not come up with a reasonable scientific explanation as to our existence. One astronomer (an atheist) concluded that we must be considered evolutionary freaks -- elaborate accidents that never happened before and will never happen again.

Sorry, but I just don't buy it. I am not convinced.

But biologists, paleontologists and anthropologists and geologists are convinced.

Just because you don't understand something doesn't make it wrong. You probably don't understand most of science, from quantum mechanics to the Navier-Stokes equations for turbulent flow. That doesn't make them wrong- it just means that if you want to understand why they are accepted by scientists you will need to do your homework.

There are some areas of science that are at the frontiers of understanding- consciousness (see the thread here:

<http://forums.philosophyforums.com/...31&goto=newpost>

) and the origin of the cosmos (before 10^{-37} seconds) and the abiotic to biotic transition. These are areas where there is much to be learned, but progress is being made. On the other hand, although there are many details still to be filled in, evolutionary science is not in doubt among scientists.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

The finding of a hominid fossil does not automatically prove that it is an ancestor of mankind. Only that within the context of the evolutionary theory it SEEMS to be an ancestor of mankind. Something like the stretching of the patient to fit the length of the bed scenario. Only with a different twist.

Nothing is automatic in science- but they are all parts of the puzzle that has been solved to the satisfaction of scientists.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Furthermore, what you describe is NOT observation.

It is interpretation.

Observation would be to witness the actual development of one creature into an entirely new one--not to merely find a fossil and conveniently peg it into the predetermined notch in an imagined continuum.

All science is interpretation. The historical sciences like astronomy, geology and evolutionary biology must interpret the past from the traces left today for human scientists to observe. It is no different for geologists to know that a certain volcano exploded a certain number of years ago and deposited a certain volume of debris over a certain area than it is for evolutionary biology to know the evolution of life.

It's not enough for you to say: "because I can't believe it - it must not be true." This is simply the argument from incredulity.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

I am aware that they are not literally "countless" I was using hyperbole to get my point across that there is a significant number of scientists who disagree. After all, if Evies use misrepresentation, ad hominem, tilting, snowing, invalid conclusions, false premises, at the least I can be allowed to use an occasional hyperbole for emphasis--no?

Your arguments would be less unconvincing if you left out the hyperbole.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

About the comparison of the with how geologists interpret past volcanic activity, with how evolutionists approach their findings I think that in this case you compare a mango with a kiwi. There is FAR more conjecturing and imaginative filling of gaps with evolution than there is with the study of volcanic deposits or other such inorganic geological subjects.

No, they are both science. And because they use the same scientific method, geologists agree with biologists. In many cases both fields use the same or similar techniques. Note that geologists used to not agree on continental drift and plate tectonics. Now the evidence is indisputable. It's the same for evolution.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

When first discovered, ramapithecus was put forth as a human ancestor.

This proposal was based on jawbone fragments and a few teeth.

This creature was depicted as an ape man for decades.

Later it was admitted that it was not a direct ancestor of man.

Please forgive me but upright posture can only be determined via pelvic structure. Otherwise there is absolutely no basis to assume it. Yet evolutionists assumed it on the basis of a few teeth and jawbone fragments.

So this indisputably so-called ape man was simply based on evolutionist's wishful thinking and a dash of their vivid imaginations.

This is how geology, paleontology and science in general work. No science has absolute certainty- we can only approach the truth, but never reach it. For people that need to believe absolutely I suggest religion- one never has to admit they've been wrong or change their minds.

All of science is fraught with dead ends and discarded theories- the beauty of science is that slowly progress in understanding is made. 200 years ago our knowledge of the natural world was much less certain and more fragmentary. Today we understand not only more detail but also more completely. Physics has upheld chemistry and chemistry has upheld biology and they all agree with geology. The fact that science is a uniquely progressive human endeavor is one of it's most amazing aspects.

When Darwin first presented his theories there was much controversy among scientists, but since then, fields as diverse molecular biology, biochemistry, genetics, paleontology, geology, physics, zoology, population studies, microbiology and evolutionary mathematics have convinced scientists that there is no question of the fact of evolution through natural selection.

Hominid evolution will continue to be a field where new discoveries are made (and sometimes overblown claims are made), but every discovery so far has only upheld the ideas that Darwin first proposed 150 years ago.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

BTW

I didn't say that because I cannot believe it it cannot be true.

I said that it goes contrary to logic.

Avoiding the use of misrepresenting what others say would make you more credible.

That would mean that scientists are illogical? I think logic has nothing to do with your beliefs. Unless you call your intuitive absolute certainty, logic.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Not to the satisfaction of all scientists as you claim.

You must needs qualify via quantification.

BTW

Repeatedly eplaning the scientific method to me is simply a waste of time since I am familiar with it. But if you feel must--go right ahead.

From your writings, I think you understand less about then scientific method than you think you do.

For example, science is not a popularity contest- but just to give you an idea of how many scientists support evolution, here is a list of scientists named "steve" that support evolution:

http://www.ncseweb.org/resources/ar...t_2_16_2003.asp

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Very interesting.

Explains nothing?

Sure, sure.

What you really mean is that it explains nothing to you and other atheistically minded people. For believers in God it obviously explains it all.

Exactly my point. All that those believers have explained, is that they believe in the supernatural. But we already knew that didn't we?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Also, please spare me the irrefutable sense-impression evidence that scientists can produce because it ultimately proves nothing except that they are receiving sense impressions upon which they place their faith.

Huh?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Additionally, Your use of taking an argument to the absurd does little to convince.. I never said that the scientific method is useless and that it should never be relied upon. Again, I am familiar with the scientific method despite your attempt to prove otherwise.

However, I do not believe that Evolutionists have been or are being faithful to the scientific method in various areas because if they were they would have to admit that all their beliefs are not as solid as they claim them to be.

No, you are selectively believing in science when you take antibiotics, but choosing not to when science conflicts with your religious beliefs. Scientists cannot allow their religious beliefs to interfere with the pursuit of scientific knowledge. Galileo showed that.

What do you think explains antibiotic resistance? Evolution through natural selection.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Inductive reasoning tells me that such things as complicated as the brain do not simply assemble themselves via blind hit and miss chance processes. Therefore I cannot logically accept your proposition that they do. If you call this invoking the supernatural, then that is simply your opinion--which unfortunately, in this case merely misrepresents my reasons for rejecting evolution--nothing more.

Fortunately for us, evolution does not depend ONLY on random mutations- because it is a CUMULATIVE process, small changes can make large changes given time. This is a popular creationist misunderstanding- deliberate misunderstanding or parroting of creationist propaganda, I am not sure in your case.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Below is a partial list of contents.

Cutting and pasting of titles or out of context quotations from a creationist web site (well known for intellectual dishonesty) is not how science works. Scientists do indeed argue about the DETAILS of evolution. But this does not change the fact that evolutionary theory (as it explains the development of life and biology of life on Earth) is an overwhelmingly accepted scientific fact at university, government and commercial science laboratories all over the world.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

In other words scientists who do not agree with your evolutionist scientists are not scientists.

Talk about bigotry!

No, scientists that disagree with overwhelming scientific evidence because of their religious beliefs, are not being scientists- they are believers. Scientists are human after all.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Just to show you how confused evolutionists can be here is an excerpt showing a REEVALUTION of our similarity to chimps on a GENETIC level.

Of chimps and men – more genetic difference!

Excerpt:

Previous genetic studies have shown that chimpanzee and humans DNA differs by about 1.5%. However, this difference was determined by examining the base pair substitutions within certain sequenced genes. Recently, the human genome was completely sequenced and sequencing of the chimpanzee genome is well on its way. Preliminary results confirm previous results regarding base pair substitutions (estimated at 1.4%). However, sequencing reveals that insertions and deletions result in another 3.4% difference between human and chimp DNA. Therefore, the overall difference between chimp and human DNA is nearly 5%, which represents an almost insurmountable amount of rapid evolution.

Britten, R.J. 2002. Divergence between samples of chimpanzee and human DNA sequences is 5%, counting indels. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 99: 13633-13635.

Have you actually read this paper?

What the authors of this paper (who hold no doubts about the theory of evolution and the fact that 5-8 million years a common ancestor of both chimps and humans existed) are saying is that depending on how the genetic difference actually is counted, base-pair versus chromosome level insertions and deletions, one will get different numbers that imply different details about how humans and chimps are descended from that common ancestor. I love it when creationists cite papers that discuss details of how evolution happened as though evolution is being doubted.

Once the Chimp Genome Project is completed we will even be able to reconstruct the genome of our common ancestor. All based on evolutionary theory.

In order to show evidence of ID in biology you first have to prove that no natural explanation is possible. Is there anything in any biological organism which *cannot* have arisen through natural processes?

That is the question. Natural explanations must be irrefutably eliminated before supernatural explanations can even be hypothesized. That is how scientific method works. As it stands, scientific exploration has yet to stumble upon anything in the universe which *requires* a supernatural explanation. If you can find something, you will be the first in human history.
By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

That bee just doesn't buzz.

Bacteria do change but always remain bacteria.

Viruses do change but always remain viruses.

Creationists want to observe with their own eyes something that happens over millions of years when the human life span is roughly 70. Again evolutionary biology is no different than geology. Geologists can tell what a landscape looked like millions of years ago even though no humans were around at the time. The fact that you seem to accept geology but deny biology (when it suits you) only demonstrates how your religious beliefs are affecting your judgment.

Here is an example of an animal beginning to speciate into two distinct species:

<http://www.santarosa.edu/lifesciences/ensatina.htm>

There are many other examples of speciation here:

<http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/speciation.html>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

That's why evolution is a type of religion for many people.

Sorry, in order to call science a religion you would have to prove that science is dogmatic. But the very basis of scientific progress is the refutation of existing ideas and challenges to scientific authority, which is hardly dogmatic. You really **don't** understand how science works do you?

What you and many others are also confused about is the difference between "methodological materialism" and "philosophical materialism." **The methods of science assume only natural causes, for the simple reason that scientific progress would not be possible if supernatural causes could be invoked whenever a scientific problem presents itself.** Whether a scientist (or any other person) is personally or philosophically a materialist or not, has nothing to do with the methods of science.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

I believe in antibiotics because they have proven to be based on reality.

The scientific explanation for antibiotic resistance in bacteria is based on evolution through natural selection. And you should thank god for that!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

As I CLEARLY stated at the outset, this information clearly proving that evolution STILL has many serious areas that have as yet NOT been explained and which pose significant problems to the theory's being fact is from scientists who STILL insist on believing in evolution but who are humble and honest enough to admit its glaring areas of ignorance.

Science will always have unexplained problems- at least I hope so. It would be so boring if we knew everything and there was nothing left to discover.

There are many details about evolution that are being filled in- but no serious problems with the Darwinian theory of natural selection. Gould and Dawkins argued over specific details of the mechanisms of natural selection, but both had their words twisted out of context by creationists attempting to show that evolutionary theory was on its last legs.

By the way, there would be no problem if you said you refused to believe in the evidence of evolution for religious reasons. That is your choice- just as Jews refuse to eat pork for religious reasons. But don't distort the science- it's unethical.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Maybe that's why I stupidly think that evidence of complex structural organization and evidence of forethought indicate mind!

Let's see the evidence.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

It is very noble of you to permit the possibility of such a being.

The necessity of a mind is evident TO ME in the complexity of the organisms.

The intricate organization TO ME indicates design. TO YOU it indicates POSSIBLY something else.

Which is OK by me.

We are still waiting for an example of irreproducible complexity.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Perhaps that is an impossibility for you.

Based on your continued evasions, it sounds more like an impossibility for you.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

We are still waiting to be convinced by the stuff you claim proves evolution BEYOND A DOUBT.

As usual you totally misunderstand how science works. Nothing in science is "beyond a doubt." If it was "beyond a doubt" it wouldn't be science- it would be religion.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Quite to the contrary, if it is beyond a doubt, judging by the attitude of evolutionists, then it has to be evolution.

In know precisely how science is SUPPOSED to work and what you are describing is a bit of science, sort of like a teflon coating, with a generous amounts of well-planned of quackery, thrown in for good measure.

I have no idea of what you are trying to say here, but I wish you would check your posts for spelling and grammar- but then again I think this is indicative of your sloppy scholarship in general.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

(Dr Robert Millikan, Nobel Prize winner and eminent evolutionist)

(Prof. J Agassiz, of Harvard in Methods of Study in Natural History)

(Dr Ambrose Fleming, President, British Assoc. Advancement of Science, in The Unleashing of Evolutionary Thought)

This is an example of your "countless" scientists against evolution? How typical of your dishonest tactics to select quotes from three scientists (only one of whom was actually a biologist) all born in the 19th century- couldn't you find a quote from someone born in the last century?

Who are you trying to convince- yourself? I suspect you're not convincing anyone else, much less scientists today who use evolutionary theory everyday in their work. If you're looking for knowledge with absolute certainty, you'd better stick with religion- scientific knowledge is always uncertain and tentative.

That is why no scientific theory is ever "proven" (even evolutionary theory)- theories may become accepted over time or be disproved, based on empirical evidence. But scientific ideas must always remain falsifiable, at least in principle, if they are to remain scientific ideas. That is the main difference between scientific ideas and religious beliefs.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

If you wish to persist in being illogical, be my guest.

*As I said before, my **EMPIRICAL, inductive, observations are also of value as are the conclusions of other scientists with vastly more educational credentials than you but who nevertheless reject your idea.***

First, writing in bold or large fonts all the time doesn't make your claims any more impressive.

Second, I am not trying to "force" my beliefs on anyone. If you say you don't agree with evolution for religious reasons- I won't argue with you. But if you claim there is scientific evidence against evolution I will argue with you, because evolution is as well accepted and established a scientific theory as any theory in science.

It seems as though creationists want it both ways: they want to claim that there is little or no scientific evidence for evolution and when scientists disagree with them, they cry "you're forcing your beliefs on me!"

Third, you can "quote mine" and "quote distort" all you want, but it's not going to change the fact that evolutionary theory is firmly accepted by scientists and used everyday in universities and laboratories all over the world. There is disagreement about some of the details, but no disagreement about the fact that all life on earth is descended from common ancestors.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

***Fossil evidence for evolution. . . expert says
'FORGET IT'***

'Biologists would dearly like to know how modern apes, modern humans and the various ancestral hominids have evolved from a common ancestor. Unfortunately, the fossil record is somewhat incomplete as far as the hominids are concerned, and it is all but blank for the apes. The best we can hope for is that more fossils will be found over the next few years which will fill the present gaps in the evidence.' The author goes on to say: 'David Pilbeam [a well-known expert in human evolution] comments wryly, "If you brought in a smart scientist from another discipline and showed him the meagre evidence we've got he'd surely say, 'forget it: there isn't enough to go on'."

(Richard E. Leakey, The Making of Mankind, Michael Joseph Limited, London, 1981, p. 43)

Fourth, your quote of Leakey is especially dishonest. He was referring to the admitted fact that hominid fossils are rare- this is because until a few thousand years ago, hominids as a species were pretty much on the edge of extinction. But to imply that Leakey does not agree with hominid evolution is unethical beyond the pale. Furthermore, hominid fossils are simply one of many lines of evidence that scientists use to establish that evolution occurs, and probably one of the least important as well.

I can take the time to research each of your quotes and show how they've been twisted and taken out of context, but it still wouldn't change your mind because you are religiously incapable of it. You appear to want absolute certainty and no doubt. Scientific evidence (even any hypothetical evidence against evolution) will always be uncertain to a degree. What scientists do is the best they can with the evidence at hand, without regard to religious or superstitious beliefs. This is why science is successful and progressive- because it lets the chips fall where they may- even if it flies in the face of our most strongly held personal and intuitive prejudices.

You need to ask yourself- who is the fanatic here?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Dishonest because these men lived before what?

Before MOST of the evidence we have today for evolution had been discovered.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Since that time there has not been sufficient evidence to convince many modern scientists. So what makes you so sure that these would have been convinced?

I guess evidence from radiometric dating, genetic sequencing, evolutionary mathematical modeling, observations of speciation, molecular biology, biochemistry and fossil finds since the 19th century might not have convinced them?

And we're still waiting for an example of irreproducible complexity.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

Second, I am not trying to "force" my beliefs on anyone. If you say you don't agree with evolution for religious reasons- I won't argue with you. But if you claim there is scientific evidence against evolution I will argue with you, because evolution is as well accepted and established a scientific theory as any theory in science.

It seems as though creationists want it both ways: they want to claim that there is little or no scientific evidence for evolution and when scientists disagree with them, they cry "you're forcing your beliefs on me!"

Until recently scientists believed that human evolution occurred on a linear timeline. Now, they find that it is actually a large bush, with many, many dead ends and branches. The actual link that connects man to these early, now extinct, primates is anything but clear. Anybody who looks at science must always say, "This is the best answer to explain this **right now** based on the evidence we have, something always subject to change by future discovery." I've taken both Archaeology and Evolutionary biology, and it **can** be logically argued that there evolved other primates in the distant past-- but as of now it is *believed* by most scientists that one of them is directly related to human beings.

I'm not bashing evolution in any way. Natural selection, speciation, mutation-- we **know** these things happen. But it's impossible to say that there's *no way* humans didn't evolve from a lesser species-- even though many believe we did.

By Danoz

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

My belief in a creator is based on my OBSERVATION leading to an INDUCTIVE CONCLUSION used as a premise and followed by a deductive one. So justification via logic is not missing.

No one here is discussing whether god exists or not. Evolution and science in general has no opinion on the existence of god. Science (methodological materialism), is however based on the premise that only natural explanations provide useful explanations for science. Personal philosophical, religious, and cultural beliefs are inapplicable to the scientific study of the universe.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

The only reason I provide the EXPERT testimony of scientists who disagree with the evolution theory is because of the false claims made by evolutionists that their idea is universally accepted and undeniably proven beyond all doubt--not because I rely on these testimonies for my conclusion although they are helpful in showing that this evolution idea is not as watertight as the majority of evolutionists believe.

Yet again you fail to understand how science works. No scientist claims that any scientific theory is "watertight" or "undeniably proven beyond all doubt." Even evolution is subject to refutation- just like any scientific theory.

But because evolution has withstood scientific scrutiny for 150 years, and because it continues to provide valuable insights and methods into solving difficult scientific problems and questions, scientists will continue to utilize it in their investigatory efforts whenever they can.

If evidence that evolution could be refuted did appear- every scientist worth their salt would do everything in their power to make the attempt to use it against evolution. They would do this because they could expect instant fame and a Nobel Prize for their efforts. That's the way science works.

A few quick comments from a biologist:

Evolution does not deal with the origin of life. Darwin refrained from commenting on that topic in his works, and devoted one entire *paragraph* (hehe) to his speculations about it in "The Origin of Species".

Richard Leakey most assuredly does believe in Evolution, as is obvious from any cursory reading of his works. To say that the fossil evidence is scanty in the particular case of the ape-human transition is not to say that Evolution is incorrect.

Evolution will never be "as proven" as other scientific theories that can be replicated in the laboratory. However, since the individual pieces of the theory are indeed proven (mutation, speciation, heredity), and since the theory follows as a logical conclusion from these pieces, the burden of proof is on the anti-Evolutionists, to formulate a mechanism by which evolution would NOT occur given that the pieces are proven.

If we wait for the strict demand of "proof" that requires laboratory replication, many fields will be considered "unscientific", including geology and astronomy.

And a question for Radrook:

Do you believe in the theory of plate tectonics?
By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Leakey said the fossil evidence was incomplete for hominids and practically blank for apes.

The article does not deny that Leakey was an evolutionist.

*Leakey then goes on to cite another evolutionist who states that very meagre evidence existed and that if that meagre evidence were shown to scientists from other disciplines, they would say to forget the **whole evolutionist idea** because the evidence being used at that time wasn't enough.*

The bold part is where you are wrong. This does not follow from "the fossil evidence is incomplete for hominids and practically blank for apes" -- which is what Leakey said. Lack of evidence in a particular lineage can't disprove "the whole evolutionist idea". You're reading too much into Leakey's (and Pilbeam's) words. Read books by the two of them ("Origins Revisited", by Leakey, is a great read) and you'll see that you are putting your own beliefs into their claims.

Quote:

Tectonic plates?

I see no reason to reject that idea.

These are the reasons to reject tectonic plates theory:

No one ever observed a continent moving from one place to the other;
The pieces of the theory can't ever be tested in a laboratory.

Aren't these pretty much the same reasons for your rejection of Evolution? Why do you reject Evolution and accept plate tectonics?

Also, you didn't comment about the burden of proof. If all observations point to evolution -- and they do -- then anti-Evolutionists must provide an alternate mechanism to explain why evolution wouldn't occur in natural conditions.

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Mariner**

Aren't these pretty much the same reasons for your rejection of Evolution? Why do you reject Evolution and accept plate tectonics?

I'm guessing he does because the bible doesn't say anything about plate tectonics.

As I've said before, creationists think that by attacking (or distorting) the evidence for evolution, people will automatically switch to creationism. Besides creating a false dichotomy, what they never seem to get is that creationism will never be science because creationism is religious belief. Notice how no evidence for an alternative theory is ever presented, because all they have is the belief that evolution can't possibly explain the speciation of life.

I feel sorry for anyone that has their religious faith so dependent on misunderstanding, not only such a well established scientific theory, but also one that so beautifully explains the natural world of life and all it's diversity and surprises.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

No, but it casts serious doubts on the legitimacy of the evolutionary claims as it would on any other claims made based on lack of or almost non-existent evidence. Why evolution should be considered to be an exception is beyond me.

Because the evidence is far from "non-existent". There are loads and loads of evidence proving the main points of the theory:

Mutation
Heredity
Speciation

Given that these three things are true, and other things being equal, Evolution *must* happen. This is why I insist that if you want to disbelieve in Evolution, you have to either disprove one of those things or formulate a mechanism by which Evolution would not happen (this alternate mechanism would break the "other things being equal" proviso).

Quote:

Not at all, you admit that what they said was what they said and that what they said does not reject the evolution idea. I know that what they said was not INTENDED as a basis to reject the evolution idea. After all, they did continue to believe in the evolution idea even after they said it. Nevertheless, what they said demonstrates just how much evolutionists are willing to believe in spite of having little or practically no evidence to support it.

They were not convinced of evolution on the basis of the hominid fossil record. They were convinced of it on the basis of the three points I mentioned above.

Quote:

You are right.

I am reading my beliefs into their words.

My belief that things should not be put forth as fact without adequate proof.

That a scientist should remain true to the scientific method--otherwise he will become a charlatan.

And then you must define the scientific method very carefully, otherwise you'll be taking geology and astronomy (among other disciplines) out of science. What exactly did those guys say that breached the scientific method? Without your definition of this method I can't address that claim.

Quote:

Thank you for striving to use logic to prove your point.

If indeed I based my rejection of evolution on the basis that you claim, then I would be inconsistent in accepting the tectonic plate

theory as viable. However, as I explained previously, the lack of direct observation and the lack of lab demonstrations is not the primary reason for my position.

What is it, then? When you say they "breach the scientific method" I assume that you refer to laboratory testing and direct, repeatable observations. By that standard, plate tectonics also does "breach the scientific method".

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Not all creationists hold that silly idea about the earth's age.

He's right. But they do all hold that silly idea about god creating everything (in six days for some).

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

He's right. But they do all hold that silly idea about the creation of species by god.

But if he also created the ancestor to the human species, as well as the earth, the stars, the sun, and the entire universe, what difference does it make whether or not they evolved? What does evolution have to do with God? And why on earth does it disprove special creation, that is a creation intended to produce humans, whether it be through evolution or whatever else there can be...

By Jay

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Jay**

But if he also created the ancestor to the human species, as well as the earth, the stars, the sun, and the entire

universe, what difference does it make whether or not they evolved? What does evolution have to do with God?
From a scientific standpoint- absolutely nothing.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

From a scientific standpoint- absolutely nothing.

From a religious point of view I guess it only matters where one decides to draw the line at supernatural creation. One can believe that God could have created the universe 5 seconds ago with all our memories intact and evidence for 15 billion years of cosmic and biological evolution. Or believe that God could have created the universe 4000 years ago, or 15 billion years ago.

Or believe that maybe she didn't create anything at all.

Thanks for the input, **Mariner**.

A point for **Radrook**:

Your Leaky quotation is immaterial because evolutionary theory is not dependent on fossil evidence. All the salient elements are provable without it, namely (as Mariner stated) mutation, speciation and heredity. A dearth of fossils is not surprising because fossilization is a very rare, almost fluke occurrence. If anything, it's surprising that we have as many fossils as we do. Fossils enhance our knowledge of evolution but the theory is completely supportable without them.

By Diogenes

Possibly of Interest

Unfinished letter from Richard Dawkins. Intended to be co-authored with Stephen Jay Gould and published in the New York Review of Books.

14 December 2001

Dear Editor,

Like any flourishing science, the study of evolution has its internal controversies, as we both know. But no qualified scientist doubts that evolution is a fact, in the ordinarily accepted sense in which it is a fact that the Earth orbits the Sun. It is a fact that human beings are cousins to monkeys, kangaroos, jellyfish and bacteria. No reputable biologist doubts this. Nor do reputable theologians, from the Pope on. Unfortunately, many lay Americans do, including some frighteningly influential, powerful and, above all, well-financed ones.

We are continually invited to engage in public debates against creationists, including latter-day creationists disguised under the euphemism 'Intelligent Design Theorists'. We always refuse, for one overriding reason. If we may be allowed to spell this reason out publicly, we hope our letter may be helpful to other evolutionary scientists plagued by similar invitations.

The question of who would 'win' such a debate is not at issue. Winning is not what these people realistically aspire to. The coup they seek is simply the recognition of being allowed to share a platform with a real scientists in the first place. This will suggest to innocent bystanders that there must be material here that is genuinely worth debating on something like equal terms.

At the moment of writing, the leading 'Intelligent Design' website reports a debate at Harvard under the banner 'Wells Hits a Home Run at Harvard'. Jonathan Wells is a creationist, incidentally a long-time

devotee of the Unification Church (the Moonies). He had a debate last month against Stephen Palumbi, Professor of Biology at Harvard University. 'Home Run' might seem to suggest that Reverends (sic) Wells scored some kind of victory over Professor Palumbi. Or at least that he made some powerful points and his speech was well received. No such claim is made. It doesn't even seem to be of interest.

The 'Home Run' turns out to be simply the public demonstration at Harvard that, in the words of the website's author, Phillip Johnson, 'This is the sort of debate that is now occurring in universities.' There was a victory, but it occurred long before the debate itself. The creationist scored his home run at the moment the invitation from Harvard landed on his doormat. It came, by the way, not from any biological, or indeed scientific department, but from the Institute of Politics.

Phillip Johnson himself, founding father of the 'Intelligent Design' movement (not a biologist, nor a scientist of any kind, but a lawyer who became a mid-life born-again Christian), wrote, in a letter of 6 April 2001, which he copied to one of us:

It isn't worth my while to debate every ambitious Darwinist who wants to try his hand at ridiculing the opposition, so my general policy is that Darwinists have to put a significant figure at risk before I will agree to a debate. That means specifically Dawkins or Gould, or someone of like stature and public visibility.

Well, we can condescend too, and we have the advantage that evolutionary scientists don't need the publicity such debates can bring. In the unlikely event that a significant argument should ever emerge from the ranks of creationism/'intelligent design', we will be happy to debate it. Meanwhile, we shall cultivate our evolutionary gardens, occasionally engaging in the more exacting and worthwhile task of debating each other. What we shall not do is abet creationists in their disreputable quest for free publicity and unearned academic respectability.

In all humility, we offer these thoughts to our colleagues who receive similar invitations to debate.

Richard Dawkins

You have still failed to provide an example of either irreducible complexity or a necessity for ID in biology. Just because something looks complex to you doesn't mean that intelligence is required.

I would also like to see if you can prove that one of the following does not occur in biology:

- mutation
- speciation
- heredity

In order to disprove evolution you need disprove only one of those things. Good luck. All three have been directly observed.

I also think you misunderstood **Exile's** point about the size of the universe. he was being facetious. The size of the universe is a problem for creationists. It obviously has nothing to do with evolution.
By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Benkei**

The Darwinian theory of evolution is not the accepted view nowadays to begin with. Creationism is shooting at a horse already dead.

Evolution is not teleological as Darwinian understood is. It has everything to do with mutations not adaptation. Certain mutations simply thrive better in different environments and therefore they survive. They DO NOT adapt, it's all chance and freak occurrences.

Er... Darwin never said Evolution was teleological. And "adaptation" is the result of evolution, just as mutation is the starting ground. Evolution as we know nowadays is basically Darwinian; the only "grafts" were the mechanisms of heredity and genetics (unknown in Darwin's time). Darwin postulated random mutations and inheritance of traits (he had no mechanism for those, but he observed them); he inferred selective death; and he extrapolated the results of these over time.

I don't know what you mean, then, when you say that "the Darwinian view is not the accepted view". The most famous disagreements between evolutionists concern things such as the unit of selection (genes, organisms, or populations), the rate of speciation, etc. But the three pillars established by Darwin, mutation, heredity and speciation, remain.

Darwin's genius was to "go the last step" and formulate that all and every change, even the most seemingly impossible (such as the land-water transition in vertebrates, the "complex organ" problem -- eyes and wings, multicellularity...) were effected by those three basic mechanisms. This claim of his was also the most "hard to swallow" (even today). But the more data we collect, the more plausible those "impossible transitions" seem. Darwin was (apparently, since this is a philosophy forum and science never has the final word) correct.

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

The WHOLE universe was not built for the benefit of one species on this minuscule planet. Obviously those far off quasars are not doing us any good.

Neither is most of the universe easily visible to us. The part we detect with great difficulty is said to be only a small portion of the whole. Furthermore, the outer reaches are receding close to the speed of light and will become FPREVER undetectable.

For our benefit?

Really?

The creation story in the bible would suggest it WAS built for our benefit.

Quote:

The point was that you don't see things directly in relation to your concept of evolution yet you accept it as a reality. But you require others to see directly.

I don't know what that means.

My main point is that the Universe is undoubtedly complex but either was not designed, or was designed by an incompetent, or designed by some being who had little interest in human beings.

By Exile

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

We have ample evidence that this type of organization requires a mind, an intelligent designer as you very clearly point out. That provides us with the inductive basis that we need in order to make the inductive leap.

What evidence?- we're still waiting for any evidence of design from you. Without "evidence", the only leap you're making, is a leap of faith.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Although molecular biology has been used to hasten research in many fields of biology, it has failed to confirm the evolutionary mechanisms proposed by Darwinian theory. According to Dr. Paul Sharp, "Attempt to detect adaptive evolution at the molecular level have met with little success." Although the study described one of the few molecular successes of evolutionary theory, the trend has been that molecular biology contradicts much of evolutionary theory. (Sharp, P.M.. 1997. In search of molecular Darwinism. Nature 385: 111-112).

Do you all notice how only one sentence in this paragraph is a direct quote from the paper? Yes, there is a debate in evolutionary theory at what levels of life adaptation takes place (molecular, allele/gene, chromosomal, individual or group levels), but that evolutionary adaptation is a result of cumulative mutations through natural selection and does occur at one or more of these levels, **is not questioned in this paper.**

Can you say: "out of context quote mining"? How dishonest! I guess for creationists, the ends justify the means. Is this how Jesus would behave?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **exile**

The creation story in the bible would suggest it WAS built for our benefit.

And as I'm sure you know- it's only one of many disparate creation stories from many different cultures and religions.

Creationists often claim equal time in science classes for creation stories in the name of being open-minded. But if we want to be truly open minded in our science courses, we should teach more than just the Christian creation myth. We should also teach other creation myths, including Native American, African and Asian creation myths, such as the Hindu creation myth that the world sits on the back of a giant turtle.

What about Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, Biology and Geology you might ask? Aren't these evidence based and empirically tested scientific disciplines slightly more accurate accounts of what actually happened? Heck no, they're just "other ways of knowing". The important thing is to be open minded after all.

Let me put it this way and take the value judgements out of it. No biologist (or any other scientist) has ever proposed a formal theory of Intelligent Design. No scientist has ever provided a specific *definition* of ID. No scientist has ever proposed a testable hypothesis for ID. No scientist (creationist or not) has ever identified an *example* of either ID or IC and no scientist has ever submitted any sort of research or argument along these lines for peer reviewed evaluation.

The phrase "Intelligent Design" is meaningless. It has no scientific definition or method of identification. I can tell you that *no one*, scientist or otherwise, has ever been able to identify anything in biology which requires a supernatural explanation.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Diogenes the Cynic**

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The phrase "Intelligent Design" is meaningless. It has no scientific definition or method of identification. I can tell you that no one, scientist or otherwise, has ever been able to identify anything in biology which requires a supernatural explanation.

Well I guess that explains why I'm still waiting for Radrook to provide an example to us of "irreproducible complexity." It's too bad that these creationists want so badly to be taken seriously by scientists, but then are unable to provide scientifically testable ideas or experiments. Very much like believers in other pseudo-sciences, e.g., paranormal, alien abductions, etc.

I've read enough of Dembski and Behe (proponents of ID) to not be contemptuous of them; I think **Diogenes** is overstating his case. They are indeed pinpointing areas in which our knowledge is flawed, such as the development of complex biochemical molecules; apparently (I'm not a biochemist, but Behe is) the evolution of a molecule of hemoglobin has several kinds of problems. However, and this is an enormous however, this is just a rehashing of the old problem of complex organs. People said that eyes and wings couldn't evolve because the intermediate forms would be useless or perhaps even damaging. A few decades of research showed that the intermediate forms were very useful.

These two structures (vertebrate eyes and wings) were discussed by Darwin in "The Origin of Species". Let's take vertebrate eyes. They were supposedly so complex that they couldn't be created by evolution (said Darwin's opponents). In the years after that, we not only postulated "intermediate eyes" that were useful and could be formed by evolution, we actually observed those eyes in living animals. The spectrum of "eyes" runs from a single light-sensing cell to the vertebrate eye, and there are all kinds of intermediate forms, all deemed to be "impossible", in Nature.

The point of all this is that if we don't know how hemoglobin evolved today, this doesn't mean that we won't ever know, or that it is impossible for it to have evolved. (This is one of Behe's favorite examples, I don't know if it's accurate or not, I'm just an ecologist). To refute evolution on that account is arguing from ignorance. Evolution has met challenges exactly like those in the past, and emerged unscathed.

ID'ers have yet to provide a mechanism that *prevents* evolution from taking place -- and so have you, Radrook. If you accept mutation, heredity and speciation, then how can evolution *not* occur? Given these three things, and without any outside intervention, evolution *must* occur. If you don't believe in evolution you have to offer a mechanism that will prevent it. To believe in the three items and to disbelieve in Evolution is illogical -- the reasoning that leads from them to evolution is deductive, not inductive, and it is a perfect syllogism.

Given environmental differences, reproducing organisms, mutations, inheritance of traits, and genetic separation of populations, evolution follows as surely as $1+1=2$. You have to take or add something to the equation to change the result.

Note that ID'ers mostly attack the origin of life (which is not properly in the scope of Evolution). Look at it in this way: if the first cell (complete with biochemistry) was created by an act of God, then Evolution would begin immediately after that; unless God prevented it. And the evidence shows that God didn't prevent it . Evolution took place.

Is that what you propose, God creating the first cell and evolution taking place after it? This is, in my opinion, a reasonable stance; one that accepts what is proven by science and leaves the unproven up to God. It's not a scientific stance, science would freeze if it assumed that stance, but it is reasonable. Of course, it is only reasonable if it is open to persuasion in the future -- if science finally discovers a good mechanism for the evolution of hemoglobin, then you'd have to accept it. "Reasonable" and "stubborn" can't coexist very well .

By Mariner

Non-science

Here is a statement on the Creation Research web site that all members MUST agree to sign:

http://www.creationresearch.org/stmnt_of_belief.htm

Now ask yourself: is this a statement that any honest and independent scientist would sign?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

Here is a statement on the Creation Research web site that all members MUST agree to sign:

http://www.creationresearch.org/stmnt_of_belief.htm

Now ask yourself: is this a statement that any honest and independent scientist would sign?

Most Christians would refuse to sign that statement.

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

All evidence contrary to evolution is worthless.

This is evidence contrary to evolution

This evidence is worthless.

We're still waiting for your "worthless evidence contrary to evolution"...

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Mariner**

Most Christians would refuse to sign that statement.

Exactly. I wouldn't expect any honest or independent thinking person to sign it either.

On the other hand, if scientists really are honest and independent, why would they all conspire to ignore the evidence against evolution that Roadrook claims is all over the place, but he just can't put his hands on at the moment?

If I (or any scientist I know) found evidence against evolution, I'd publish it and head straight to Stockholm to claim my Nobel Prize. Every scientist I know would give anything to be able to refute evolution by natural selection- and thereby receive more glory and fame than Darwin ever had.

As Dawkins has said: "In the unlikely event that a significant argument should ever emerge from the ranks of creationism/'intelligent design', we will be happy to debate it. Meanwhile, we shall cultivate our evolutionary gardens, occasionally engaging in the more exacting and worthwhile task of debating each other."

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Mariner**

Note that ID'ers mostly attack the origin of life (which is not properly in the scope of Evolution). Look at it in this way: if the first cell (complete with biochemistry) was created by an act of God, then Evolution would begin immediately after that; unless God prevented it. And the evidence shows that God didn't prevent it. Evolution took place.

You are correct. Creationists and ID'ers only attack- they do not provide any scientific alternative mechanisms. And yes, Darwinian evolution does not deal with the origin of life, but the abiotic to biotic transition is a fascinating question. Here is a paper that discusses how noise and instability can actually aid the creation of self-replicating molecules:

<http://bio-math10.biology.kyushu-u....B2002-noise.pdf>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Jay**

Why then, would mutation be so radical as to change into an animal?

Mutations are not so radical.

Mutations occur from copying errors or from damage due to chemical mutagens and also ionizing radiation. In fact it's been suggested that if it wasn't for the fact that potassium-40 (half-life of 1.2×10^9 years) wasn't radioactive, life on Earth might not have evolved so much (it being a biologically active element).

Jay: there is no claim in evolutionary theory that plants change into animals, only that plants and animals have a common ancestral gene pool. Your "plant into animal" question is a canard and shows that you don't have even a basic grasp of evolution.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Benkei**

Well, as I was taught his theory, it was teleological in that he viewed that mutations were effectuated by environmental circumstances, that is that organism adapted because of those circumstances. This is teleological because the adaptations would appear to be goal orientated to better survive in those changing circumstances. This is incorrect.

This is the conception of evolution that Darwin fought against. The pre-Darwinian evolutionists (most preeminent among them was Lamarck -- there were many guys thinking about Evolution in the late 18th and early 19th centuries) thought that the environment stimulated the changes. The environment in Darwinian theory, however, has a purely selective role, and doesn't stimulate any changes.

Radrook, there are some questions in my last post for you. You are now emphasizing logic. I must repeat then that given mutation, heredity and speciation, evolution is the *logical* result. It must follow. To refute evolution you have to add some other mechanism that would prevent it from happening.

The nature of the reasoning from those three concepts to evolution is deductive, not inductive, so for a guy who emphasizes logic over the scientific method, you should be even more willing to embrace evolution; given that you accept those three concepts as true, as you stated in an earlier post.

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Here is a site which has a long list of modern biologists and other scientists who believe in a creator.

<http://www.icr.org/creationscientists.html>

As we've already pointed out, any "scientist" that agrees to sign a statement that determines their "research" results in advance, is not an honest or independent person much less a person doing actual science. Since those on the ICR list are affiliated with ICR and therefore must consider the bible to be the inerrant word of god, they have already blown their scientific credentials beyond redemption.

Here is what National Center for Science Education says about lists of scientists in general and their "Steve" list in particular:

"NCSE's "Project Steve" is a tongue-in-cheek parody of a long-standing creationist tradition of amassing lists of "scientists who doubt evolution" or "scientists who dissent from Darwinism."

Creationists draw up these lists to convince the public that evolution is somehow being rejected by scientists, that it is a "theory in crisis." Most members of the public lack sufficient contact with the scientific community to know that this claim is totally unfounded. NCSE has been exhorted by its members to compile a list of thousands of scientists affirming the validity of the theory of evolution, but although we easily could have done so, we have resisted such pressure. We did not wish to mislead the public into thinking that scientific issues are decided by who has the longer list of scientists!

Project Steve mocks this practice with a bit of humor, and because "Steves" are only about 1% of scientists, it incidentally makes the point that tens of thousands of scientists support evolution. And it honors the late Stephen Jay Gould, NCSE supporter and friend.

We'd like to think that after Project Steve, we'll have seen the last of bogus "scientists doubting evolution" lists, but it's probably too much to ask. We do hope that at least when such lists are proposed, reporters and other citizens will ask, "but how many Steves are on your list!?"

The statement reads:

Evolution is a vital, well-supported, unifying principle of the biological sciences, and the scientific evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of the idea that all living things share a common ancestry. Although there are legitimate debates about the patterns and processes of evolution, there is no serious scientific doubt that evolution occurred or that natural selection is a major mechanism in its occurrence. It is scientifically inappropriate and pedagogically irresponsible for creationist pseudoscience, including but not limited to "intelligent design," to be introduced into the science curricula of our nation's public schools.

Besides, the "Steve" list is dozens of times longer than the ICR list!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

All concepts that are true must be derived via the scientific method

This concept was not derived via the scientific method

This concept is not true.

According to Radrook's "logic":

The Bible is the inerrant word of God
Evolutionary theory disagrees with the Bible
Evolutionary theory is wrong

I think that about sums it up. Oh, in case anyone is wondering about the first premise, here is a quote from the ICR website (they provided the list of so-called "scientists" that Radrook cited):

"The Bible, consisting of the thirty-nine canonical books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven canonical books of the New Testament, is the divinely-inspired revelation of the Creator to man. Its unique, plenary, verbal inspiration guarantees that these writings, as originally and miraculously given, are infallible and completely authoritative on all matters with which they deal, free from error of any sort, scientific and historical as well as moral and theological.

All things in the universe were created and made by God in the six literal days of the creation week described in Genesis 1:1-2:3, and confirmed in Exodus 20:8-11. The creation record is factual, historical, and perspicuous; thus all theories of origins or development which involve evolution in any form are false. All things which now exist are sustained and ordered by God's providential care. However, a part of the spiritual creation, Satan and his angels, rebelled against God after the creation and are attempting to thwart His divine purposes in creation. "

Need I say more?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

"The Bible, consisting of the thirty-nine canonical books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven canonical books of the New Testament, is the divinely-inspired revelation of the Creator to man. Its unique, plenary, verbal inspiration guarantees that these writings, as originally and miraculously given, are infallible and completely authoritative on all matters with which they deal, free from error of any sort, scientific and historical as well as moral and theological.

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Need I say more?

I'll say this, as a Christian:

I'd rather believe St. Augustine (who proposed a theory of evolution) and St. Jerome (the guy who translated the Bible to Latin -- he probably was "some kind of a scholar" in those matters) as regards Biblical interpretation than believe those scientists.

St. Jerome said that Genesis was "written in the style of a popular poet". This meant, in case there is still any doubt, *myth* -- that's what popular poets wrote about in those times.

The demand for a literal interpretation of the Bible (and particularly of Genesis) is a very sad mistake on the part of some Protestant currents .

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Mariner**

The demand for a literal interpretation of the Bible (and particularly of Genesis) is a very sad mistake on the part of some Protestant currents .

I'll agree with that. But it's more sad that those, who insist that evolution must be wrong, can't admit that it's religious belief that drives their "science". I'd have no problem if they just admitted that there was no scientific evidence for their views, just pious faith. That's what piety is after all- faith in spite of evidence. Now that would be real faith.

But again I think the real misunderstanding is that science has anything to do with religion or the supernatural. Science is the rational investigation of the universe (including ourselves), using **falsifiable** theories based on reproducible and empirical evidence. Since creationists will admit their ideas couldn't possibly be wrong, they simply aren't doing science.

It's sometimes hard to give up our cherished intuitions or traditional beliefs or cultural stories that have been handed down over the ages. Look at the struggle the heliocentric theory had to get accepted. I mean, isn't it **logically obvious** that the sun goes around the Earth? It certainly looks that way to me! But science can't be held accountable just because it discovers that our ancestors might not have gotten it quite right in 2000 B.C.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

That's what piety is after all- faith in spite of evidence. Now that would be real faith.

Hmm... I don't quite agree with that. The emphasis on "faith in spite of evidence" is more of a Protestant tradition. St. Paul said that we should be ready to give reasons for our beliefs, and St. Augustine's rule, "Crede ut intelligas" (I hope my Latin is correct here): Believe AND Understand, show that faith doesn't have to be blind. A bit off-topic .

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Mariner**

As sure as a guy who had to read "The Origin of Species" in the University can be ; and that is a loooooong book .

Darwin was the first to use totally mindless analogies (akin to lotteries) to describe the process. He emphasizes the blindness of selection.

There is blindness to selection. After all, to anthropomorphize, genes don't really care how they get replicated, just so long as they get replicated.

But the Gould/Dawkins debate does bring up an interesting issue of "progress" in biological evolution. Is evolution progressive in the sense that there is a direction to complexity or some other measurable property? Dawkins and Gould would both agree that over millions of years there is no discernable direction, but Dawkins would argue that there are some long time scale unreversible "ratcheting" events that once evolved, are not likely to disappear. Those would include among a few others: appearance of the chromosome, organized meiosis, diploidy and sex, multicellular organisms, and segmentation. To that I might add a centralized nervous system, but maybe I'm just being chauvinistic because I'm an animal.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Mariner**

Hmm... I don't quite agree with that. The emphasis on "faith in spite of evidence" is more of a Protestant tradition. St. Paul said that we should be ready to give reasons for our beliefs, and St. Augustine's rule, "Crede ut intelligas"

(I hope my Latin is correct here): Believe AND Understand, show that faith doesn't have to be blind. A bit off-topic .

Ok, but either way- wouldn't you say it's unethical for a scientist to decide the results of his research based on his religious beliefs? In science we have to let the chips fall where they may. It may not be easy to do, but many are the scientists that have had to admit there are times when they were wrong, after being presented with evidence to the contrary.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Benkei**

Thanks for clearing that up. I will now go and kick my old biology teacher in the shin. I'm trusting you to be a 100% sure by the way.

Mariner is correct. The environment is not a direct genetic factor in mutation, except in the sense of environmentally induced random genetic damage as a mechanism. Almost always mutations are neutral, rarely sometimes detrimental and rarely sometimes beneficial- depending on the animal and the environment (which includes others of it's own kind and other species and might not be constant).

The non-randomness is the selective pressure of the environment on reproductive success. This is cumulative over time and results in gradual change in some species. Don't forget: not everything evolves at the same rates. We have bacteria in rocks (from drill holes) that probably hasn't changed it's genetic code in billions of years because there is no reproductive advantage for it to be different.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

There is blindness to selection. After all, to anthropomorphize, genes don't really care how they get replicated, just so long as they get replicated.

But the Gould/Dawkins debate does bring up an interesting issue of "progress" in biological evolution. Is evolution progressive in the sense that there is a direction to complexity or some other measurable property? Dawkins and Gould would both agree that over millions of years there is no discernable direction, but Dawkins would argue that there are some long time scale unreversible "ratcheting" events that once evolved, are not likely to disappear. Those would include among a few others: appearance of the chromosome, organized meiosis, diploidy and sex, multicellular organisms, and segmentation. To that I might add a centralized nervous system, but maybe I'm just being chauvinistic because I'm an animal.

This would be the role of *contingency*, so emphasized by Gould in his book "Wonderful Life". (A wonderful book). There can only be a discussion of "progress in evolution" by dealing with the biosphere as a unit... if you look at a population or a lineage, "regression" (disappearance of derived characteristics) is very common. These discussions of "biosphere trends" are fun, but they are also very "loose" .

Quote:

Ok, but either way- wouldn't you say it's unethical for a scientist to decide the results of his research based on his religious beliefs? In science we have to let the chips fall where they may. It may not be easy to do, but many are the scientists that have had to admit there are times when they were wrong, after being presented with evidence to the contrary.

Oh, I sure agree with *that* .

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

The scientific method is NOT the only way in which truths are arrived at.

As I've said *ad nauseum*- science never "arrives" at truth. But with that in mind, I'll say that the scientific method is the only way scientific truth is **approached**.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **armchairphilosopher**

Another comedic item from The Simpsons:

"As to the case of Science Versus Religion, it is hereby ordered that science remain 200 yards away from religion at all times"

I thought you'd add: "..., unless accompanied by a philosopher."

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

If that is so, how do you explain that we Fundies believe that life in the seas preceded life on land as Genesis tells us? Isn't that a fact according to Evies? Or that the earth is round? Isn't that also a fact? Or that the universe is stretching itself out like a gauze? Isn't that a fact according to evies?

A stopped clock is right twice a day too, but I wouldn't use it to tell the time.

Here is a quote from Robert J. Schadewald about "Bible-science".

Reprinted from Skeptical Inquirer, Winter 1981-1982

"Whether or not there are still flat-earththers in the Creation Research Society, scientific creationism is little different from the flat earth movement. Both are based on the same kind of scientific evidence and on a more or less literal interpretation of the Bible. In fact, scientific creationism, geocentrism, and flat-earthism are respectively the liberal, moderate and conservative branches of a tree that has often been called Bible-Science. The intense hostility expressed by the scientific creationists towards the flat-earththers, does not extend to the geocentrists, who hover on the edge of respectability among scientific creationists. Indeed, though the Bible is, from Genesis to Revelation, a flat-earth book, the geocentrists have combined forces with liberal creationists to cast the flat-earththers into outer darkness."

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Where do you think that a deductive premise comes from?

They come from the inductive reasoning.

Do you really know what inductive reasoning is?

Judging by your statement which shows total ignorance of the relationship between both methods I don't think so.

Without induction deduction could not exist. The scientific method itself could not exist without induction. That is

basic knowledge. So your separation of the twain goes completely contrary to both basic science and basic logic. In other words, you really do not know what you are talking about.

Oh, you'll resort to insults now? Pity.

Do you know where those deductive premises came from? Your posts. You said that you accepted mutation, heredity and speciation. Where do these beliefs of yours come from? I don't know, and I don't care. But if you believe in them, as you said, then it is a *deductive reasoning* that leads to Evolution. This is basic logic, my friend.

As I said, *if* you want to disprove Evolution, *then* you must attack the premises. But you didn't attack the premises; you accepted them. Therefore, you must accept the deductive reasoning or look foolish.

Aristotle said that we shouldn't argue with those who don't know how to do it. I'll give you a bit of leeway to recant your foolish statements before I give you completely up.

And by the way, ALL of my questions to you remain unanswered. Are you using a tactic to throw dust in someone's eyes? The only one who caught the dust was you .

By Mariner

You really need to quit posting erroneous assertions from creationist websites. We've already explained why the fruitfly thing is a canard.

Beneficial mutation leading to speciation has already been directly observed. It is not hypothetical it is proven. The assertion in your above post that "all mutations are harmful" is a flat lie.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

First, my apologies.

I have been classed as ignorant so many times here that the bad habit is starting to rub off. I also have a root canal in a few hours with dentists whom I don't trust too much and am a bit jumpy. Sorry in any event.

No problem

Quote:

I said I accept heredity, mutation and speciation as realities.

I did not say that I accepted your conclusion that these are sufficient to metamorph creatures into other totally different ones.

Your conclusions are true only if your premise is true. But your premises are NOT true from my standpoint.

You don't accept my *reasoning* that these three things entail evolution; it is not a conclusion, it is a reasoning, which concludes in the truth of Evolution.

Quote:

BTW

speciation, mutation, and heredity are premises only if you express them as such. So let's do that to clarify.

Here are your premises.

1. Mutations result in inheritable genetic changes leading to new kinds of animals.

2. Speciation proves that new kinds will appear.

3. Heredity results in new kinds.

Those things, as you said, are the premises. They work by themselves, they don't need to "prove" anything, or those "proven" things would be the premises, themselves.

Mutations do not "result in changes"; mutations *are* changes. It's their definition.

Heredity does not "result in new kinds", quite the contrary, heredity insures that the offspring will be similar to the parents.

Speciation does not "prove that new kinds will appear" -- it is again the definition. Speciation *means* new kinds appearing.

Look how the article you posted also confuses the operational definition of mutation (a switch of bases in a DNA chain) with the evolutionary definition -- which is simply change. Remember that Darwin knew nothing about DNA, and his argument was just as compelling back then. The reasoning goes like this:

Animals breed offspring which carry their traits (heredity)

Sometimes the offspring have a new trait, not seen in the parental generation (mutation -- observe how DNA does not get into the picture),

These new traits would soon be lost in the recombination (genetic shuffling) of sexual mating, if it were not for speciation, which means simply that two populations that once exchanged genes no longer do so.

From these observations, the reasoning is clear: if a new trait appears and it is no longer shared with the "mother" population, then we have two different species, with different traits. We call that "evolution".

If you don't want to endorse the reasoning, you must find a flaw in it, or offer some other premise that will interfere with it. Your problem is probably the generation of new structures. That is not what I am arguing about here. I am just reasoning that mutation, heredity and speciation lead to the creation of populations (not "single individuals" as in the case of mere mutation) that exhibit new traits. This is evolution. If you don't want to believe that the vertebrate eye could have developed through several intermediate stages, you should open a textbook and look at those stages and check how they are functional in nature (just an example of the "complex organ argument" that has been thoroughly rebutted in the last century).

Do you know why biologists are overwhelmingly in favor of Evolution? I know your answer, we've been indoctrinated, we have no critical thinking, etc. etc. . But the truth is, we know more about nature than most people. Almost all of the objections against evolution belie an ignorance of nature. The half-eyes are "impossible", the half-wing is "useless"... one thing all biologists share is a healthy respect for the inventiveness of Nature . It's much more creative than you guess.

Of course, you may believe that some yet unaccounted-for factor (perhaps even Divine Intervention) is responsible for the appearance of new structures. But this will NOT refute evolution. It will just mean that we were ignorant of a factor. Given mutation, heredity, and speciation, evolution must occur. We could talk about developmental biology (a fascinating subject, one I almost delved into in my undergraduate years) and how the constraints of embryology regulate evolution; but this doesn't refute evolution, defined as "preserved changes in the offspring" (which is very close to Darwin's definition -- I just can't translate Darwin's definition back to English in a form that appeals to me).

By Mariner

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Given the phenomenon you mention one might reach that kind of conclusion. Yet one might conclude something else because one might consider those phenomenon as not necessarily leading to YOUR conclusion.

You mean as opposed to the Bible's "conclusion"?

I find it ironic that Radrook keeps mentioning logic, induction, deduction, facts, evidence and the scientific method constantly, since none of these tools are actually being utilized in his world view. The bible has obviously already made up his mind for him (and other creationists as well). So whatever lies, distortions, quote mining, twisted "logic" or other misrepresentations they can think of, will be seized upon to bolster their own dogmatic religious convictions. And they call themselves Christians?

It's interesting that evolutionary scientists include Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Atheists and all other faiths and non-faiths. Yet creationists consist solely of one extreme sect of fundamentalist Christians. That fact alone speaks volumes, doesn't it?

Creationists intuitively conclude that "god did it" because the "Bible says it", therefore no amount of evidence or logic even comes into the picture for him and his ilk. What is so shameful is that they can't admit that the Bible could possibly be wrong on the question of evolution (or anything else?). But I think the real problem is they still (amazingly) don't understand that science consists of falsifiable theories, therefore the bible as "inerrant word of god" simply cannot be science. Why is that so hard for these people to understand I wonder?

I suspect it's because science is so clearly successful and held in such high esteem by society in general, that creationists so desperately seek the same status for their religious beliefs.

By the way, I'm still waiting for an example of irreducible complexity.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Not surprisingly, no useful mutation has been so far observed. All mutations have proved to be harmful.

No, most mutations have been proved to be neutral in their phenotypic effect. A rare few are harmful and a rare few others are beneficial.

By the way, you pasted your mutation post, without attribution from:

<http://www.darwinismrefuted.com/mechanisms06.html>

or one just like it. Hardly a scholarly or scientific source!

I'll give one example that's already been mentioned, that you have consistently chosen to ignore: antibiotic resistance is a perfect example of ongoing beneficial mutation by bacteria. Of course it's only beneficial to the bacteria!

How does the Bible explain antibiotic resistance? God's punishment against the human race?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

3) In order for a mutation to be transferred to the subsequent generation, it has to have taken place in the reproductive cells of the organism: A random change that occurs in a cell or organ of the body cannot be transferred to the next generation. For example, a human eye altered by the effects of radiation or by other causes will not be passed on to subsequent generations.

Whoa! Radrook actually got one point right! Yes, exactly. Some mutations that occur in the reproductive process ARE passed on to subsequent generations. Mutations in other non-reproductive cells are not involved in evolution. The change might be neutral or beneficial for the lifespan of the cell, or it might kill the cell or cause cancer. **Changes (mutations) in how reproductive DNA is copied, is exactly how mutation in evolution takes place.** What is so amazing is that Darwin predicted this without knowing anything about genes or DNA.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Briefly, it is impossible for living beings to have evolved, because there exists no mechanism in nature that can cause evolution.

No mechanism? He just gave us the mechanism in the preceding paragraph! Oh, darn. And he was doing so well.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

This is getting tiresome!

I never said humans have been around that long!

The Hebrew term for "day" is not restricted to 24 hours.

If you think a day can last a billion years, as you have just stated that you believe, then why the heck are you denying evolution? If a day can be a billion years, surely the instant in which god created humans could be the several million we've been evolving for. Yet no, anything which might make your position look sane is apparently out of the question.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Are you purposefully feigning ignorance or are you really this misinformed?

The vast majority of creation "scientists" state that the earth is 6,000 years old. They offer various "scientific" evidence for the 6000 year estimate. Considering how profusely you quote them, how can you consider me misinformed for assuming that you would be consistent with the views you claim to be supporting? If you don't realize that creation science says the earth is 6,000 years old, you're the one who appears to be misinformed.

By Paul

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

It's interesting that evolutionary scientists include Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Atheists and all other faiths and non-faiths. Yet creationists consist solely of one extreme sect of fundamentalist Christians. That fact

alone speaks volumes, doesn't it?

That's not true. I've met a few Muslim biologists who adhere to the Biblical creation story. And, believe or not, I've met several agnostics/atheists who reject both evolution and the Big Bang. But rather, alike to some Christian fundamentalists, place the "beginning" of the world to be far nearer. I'm quite sure that a hefty amount of Jews believe in the literal Genesis account of Creation. You could probably try Google to find some.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Paul**

The vast majority of creation "scientists" state that the earth is 6,000 years old.

There's a little dispute. I'm not too sure, but I think the majority propose 10,000 years. Little difference.

By Dreamweaver

Quote:

Originally Posted by **jlewis44**

The fact that evolution exists or doesn't exist seems to not determine there is no god. I believe there is so much evidence now pointing to evolution that God very well may have started it like that. Who knows? Either way it doesn't go against my beliefs as a christian.

Exactly. "...there is so much evidence now pointing to evolution"- and none towards god.

Seriously, evolution (and science in general) has no opinion on god or anything supernatural- except to say that science cannot make use of them as explanations.

Yes, who knows? God could have started evolution 3 billion years ago- or she could have created the entire universe 5 seconds ago, just the way it is now. Assuming supernatural explanations does nothing to increase our knowledge or understanding of anything is the point.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

That's not true. I've met a few Muslim biologists who adhere to the Biblical creation story. And, believe or not, I've met several agnostics/atheists who reject both evolution and the Big Bang. But rather, alike to some Christian fundamentalists, place the "beginning" of the world to be far nearer. I'm quite sure that a hefty amount of Jews believe in the literal Genesis account of Creation. You could probably try Google to find some.

Ok, you're right- some Orthodox Jews are just as fundamentalist as the creationists in many respects- though interesting that it seems not to be a burning issue for them. The point is that scientists of many different faiths and non-faiths find the evidence of evolution overwhelmingly convincing, but religious fundamentalists reject evolution for strictly religious reasons. Sure there are a few nutballs like the Raelians that reject evolution because they believe that humans were "seeded" here by aliens- but then you'd have to ask (if anyone cared to listen) how did those aliens come to be?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

There's a little dispute. I'm not too sure, but I think the majority propose 10,000 years. Little difference.

Depends on how one counts generations in the Bible I guess- very scientific!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **filter**

Incidentally, current theory suggests that rather than evolution being incremental and gradual (as Darwin proposed), it is characterised by lengthy periods of equilibrium punctuated with bursts of rapid change.

Yes, this is the Gould/Dawkins debate- but remember "rapid" means "rapid" only in a geologic (fossilization) sense. We're still talking about thousands if not millions of years for speciation.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

If an argument is repeated it has no merit.

Radrook's argument is repeated.

Radrook's argument has no merit.

Your conclusion stands on it's own without premises. ;)

How about repeated evasions? Do they have "merit"? We're still waiting for one example of irreproducible complexity.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Unfortunately for atheists, reality is brimming with evidence of intelligent design. That you do not accept it as such or find it ridiculous proves nothing except that you find it that way.

"Brimming with evidence..."?

Ok, try us. Give us one example.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Question: As an evolutionist, what do you believe an organism was doing with a cornea before the rest of the eye evolved? If evolution is true, where are the animals with partially developed organs? Organs that serve no use until the rest of it comes along somewhere down the line?

Is this the example of irreproducible complexity that you are resting your case on? Because evolutionary biologists have considerable evidence for the evolution of the eye (actually a relatively simple organ compared to the liver for example). This is besides the fact that if the human eye had been designed by God, she must have been a pretty poor engineer because there is a blind spot almost in the center of our vision (as opposed to the cephalopod eye for example).

I will get to that later but first here is a simple explanation of the evolution of the eye:

http://www.cs.colorado.edu/~lindsay...eye_stages.html

Here is a Nova short video on the evolution of the eye:

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/evolution/l...1/1_011_01.html

Here is an neurobiology abstract on eye evolution:

Curr Opin Neurobiol. 2000 Aug;10(4):444-50. Evolution of eyes. Fernald RD.

Program in Neuroscience, Stanford University, CA 94305-2130, USA. russ@psych.stanford.edu

Seeing is important for most species and it has been a key selective advantage throughout evolution. Consequently, there is a remarkable diversity among types of eyes. Animals have converged on eight optical solutions for collecting and

focusing light; in contrast, all eyes share the same molecular strategy for absorbing photons. Recent studies have identified similarities in the genetic information that is used in the development of eyes, leading to the hypothesis that distinctly different eye types might have had a monophyletic origin. Across many species, there is a remarkable continuity of the developmental genes that participate in the construction of similar--but not necessarily homologous--eyes.

PMID: 10981612 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

As stated in the abstract above, here is a link that proposes evidence that the eye did not evolve as independently across animal kingdoms as is currently thought. A wonderful example of how knowledge in science is evidence based, progressive and non-dogmatic as opposed to trying to base one's "knowledge" on religious belief:

http://www.sciencenews.org/pages/sn..._10_97/bob1.htm

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Anyhow, the scientific field is actually, slightly split on the theory of the Big Bang. Fred Hoyle, an atheist and one of the greatest Geologists of all time, proposed the Steady State Theory, which suggested that things did not happen as the Big Bang would have suggested. But rather, that the Universe has always been in a "Steady State" as the name suggests.

Your sources are about 50 years out of date.

First of all Hoyle was an astrophysicist not a geologist at all. Second, Hoyle did propose the "Steady State" theory and actually coined the term "Big Bang" as a derisive put-down. However, the evidence of the Big Bang is so overwhelming that no astrophysicists today support the "Steady State" theory.

Third, Hoyle has obviously gone off the deep end in his dotage, with his criticisms of evolution and claims that insects are secretly intelligent.

Eye Evolution

Here is the introduction and last paragraph of a relatively recent scientific paper on eye evolution:

Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA
Vol. 94, pp. 2421-2426, March 1997
Evolution
Squid Pax-6 and eye development
(Pax-6 / olfactory organ / evolution mollusc / crystallin)

Stanislav I. Tomarev*, Patrick Callaerts, Lidia Kos§, Rina Zinovieva¶, Georg Halder, Walter Gehring, and Joram Piatigorsky*

* Laboratory of Molecular and Developmental Biology, National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD 20892-2730; Department of Cell Biology, Biozentrum, University of Basel,

ABSTRACT

Pax-6 in vertebrates and its homolog eyeless in *Drosophila* are known to be essential for eye development. Here we investigate the role of Pax-6 in eye development in another major systematic group, molluscs. We demonstrate that alternatively spliced RNAs derived from a single Pax-6 gene in the squid (*Loligo opalescens*) are expressed in the embryonic eye, olfactory organ, brain, and arms. Despite significant sequence differences between squid Pax-6 and *Drosophila* eyeless in the region outside the paired- and homeodomains, squid Pax-6 is able to induce the formation of ectopic eyes in *Drosophila*. Our results support the idea that Pax-6 related genes are necessary for eye and olfactory system formation throughout the animal kingdom.

INTRODUCTION

Eyes of very diverse type and structure ranging from simple light-sensitive receptors to complex image-forming eyes can be found in the animal kingdom (1-3). Most of the major animal groups comprise species with a simple eye spot. A more elaborate optical system can be found in only six of the animal phyla; these, however, contribute about 96% of the known species (2). Different explanations for the diversity of eyes have been proposed. The morphological differences of the various eyes have been considered as evidence that they did not share a common ancestor and thus are polyphyletic in origin. Indeed, it has been estimated that photoreceptors may have evolved independently 40-60 times (1). An alternative view suggesting a common evolutionary origin of the various eye types has also been proposed (4). Recent data based on the demonstration that the paired domain/homeodomain transcription factor, Pax-6/eyeless, has a critical role in eye development in vertebrates (5-10) and *Drosophila* (11) support the idea of a monophyletic origin of the eyes.

Heterozygous mutations in Pax-6 of vertebrates are associated with a variety of eye diseases, including aniridia in human and Small eye (*Sey*) in rodents (5, 6, 8). In homozygotes, Pax-6 mutations are lethal due to a complete absence of eyes and nose and severe defects in brain formation (see ref. 12 for a review). The curtailing of normal eyeless expression in the eye primordia of *Drosophila* leads to a reduction or complete absence of the compound eyes (11, 13). Targeted expression of *Drosophila* eyeless or mouse Pax-6 in various imaginal disc primordia of *Drosophila* results in supernumerary eyes (14). On the basis of these results it was proposed that eyeless/Pax-6 is the master control gene for eye morphogenesis (11, 14, 15). Taken together these data suggest that two types of image-forming eyes, complex eyes of vertebrates and compound eyes of arthropods, share at least partially developmental pathways. Furthermore, this suggests that the last common ancestor of these organisms at the protostome-deuterostome divergence possessed eyes in which a Pax-6 gene was already

active (16).

Molluscs represent a third phylum in which highly complex eyes are present. Cephalopod molluscs (squid, octopus, cuttlefish) possess a well developed nervous system and are highly intelligent (17). The complex eyes of cephalopod molluscs and vertebrates have been considered a classical example of convergent evolution (18). The eyes in these two systematic groups are remarkably similar in general appearance and organization but they are formed by different mechanisms during development and differ in many details.

A possible strategy used to evolve complex image-forming eyes from the primitive eyes present in the last common ancestor is the use of similar developmental mechanisms with the same or closely related transcription factors. If this assumption is correct, one would expect that in cephalopod molluscs a Pax-6 homolog is involved in visual system development as it is in *Drosophila* and vertebrates. In this report, we present evidence corroborating this prediction by way of the structural and functional characterization of a Pax-6 homolog of the squid, *Loligo opalescens*.

Last paragraph of the rather long Discussion section

Our data support the idea that morphologically distinct eyes of different species have arisen through elaboration of a common conserved Pax-6-dependent mechanism (11, 14, 15) that is operative at early stages of eye development and that the anatomical differences among eyes arose later in evolution. Consequently, we believe that eyes in cephalopods and vertebrates have a common evolutionary origin and are products of parallel rather than convergent evolution (56).

No where in the paper are supernatural engineering explanations offered.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **geoff23**

I don't agree. I just don't think there is any obvious alternative. Scientists have a habit of saying "the evidence is overwhelming" when what they really mean is "We are darned if we can think of any other explanation which doesn't drive a coach and horses through our belief system, so the Big Bang it must have been....."

Same goes for Higgs Boson and Qualia. There's is no "overwhelming evidence" for any of these things. There just aren't currently any alternatives which the scientific community can agree are plausible.

Overwhelming compared to the Steady State theory obviously, Geoff23. Science can only compare how well currently existing theories explain currently existing data.

But you're right- the standard model theory (and evolutionary theory) will undoubtedly get modified as new data and discoveries are made. But the point is, I doubt that these scientific theories will be modified because of some fragmentary folk tales that were written down in a book a thousand years ago.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Even if we presuppose that the Steady State theory has been proved wrong, this does not automatically suggest that the Big Bang, as proposed, is correct. I'm not sure, but based on a few comments I've seen, I would have thought that Spam (an atheist) rejected the Big Bang theory. Maybe he could clarify? Are you deadly sure that no astronomers support the Steady State theory? You'd be surprised what some people could believe.

You said, and I quote: "the scientific field is actually, slightly split on the theory of the Big Bang." But even if you found one or two crackpots like Hoyle, that doesn't indicate the field today is "split".

It was split more than 50 years ago. Even Einstein was originally a "Steady State" adherent (so much for argument from authority!). But since then, Doppler red shifts, background microwave radiation spectral characteristics, cosmic H, He and Li isotope ratios and many other lines of evidence have shifted the field over completely to the "Big Bang."

Quote:

Originally Posted by **stillmind**

I don't know, don't you believe that insects are secretly intelligent? What's wrong with you? What about 'the spiders from Mars'?

Ok, on a more serious note, I believe he was referring to the collective intelligence of insects, not individual. stillmind

To be honest with you I actually think Hoyle was more correct about intelligence in insects than he was about evolution not occurring.

I've remarked on this before and maybe you have noticed this tendency as well- but it seems to be an occupational hazard of astrophysicists that they attempt to expound on scientific fields outside their own expertise, especially in their dotage.

Fortunately the argument from authority is not the final arbitrator in science (unlike religion where the ultimate authority is God- or at least those that claim to hear voices in their heads).

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Yes; that and everything else I said (except Hoyle -> Geologist) still stands. If a field is not agreed on everything then it is split, no matter how insignificant it is; even if you had four million-to-one. Furthermore, there are probably hundreds of "Fundamentalist Creationist scientists", and they do not adhere by the Big Bang either.

"Fundamentalist Creationist scientists" "do not adhere by" evidence based scientific methods either. **The only "evidence" they "adhere by" is what is written in the Bible.** But you're right- science is not a democratic or populist process. A single critical piece of evidence can change the minds of thousands of evolutionary scientists. See the evolution of eyes posts above for an example.

As I've said before- why is it that scientists of many faiths and non-faiths all find the evidence for evolution overwhelming, but only religious fundamentalists (that claim to be scientists) find it unconvincing? Perhaps

their faith is guiding their reasoning as opposed to scientific evidence.

The fact is, evolution (and the big bang) makes religious fundamentalists very uncomfortable because these scientific theories (especially) explain the universe and life in it without relying on supernatural explanations. But that's exactly how science works- so they'd better get used to it.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

That is more than debatable, and the last part is a rather sweeping claim, and it's certainly untrue. I can explain exactly why if you want, but it should be obvious.

It is debatable but I think it explains why it's religious people that almost exclusively have a problem with evolution. They have no problem with the rest of science do they? But the fact is science is not isolated fields- chemistry, physics, geology, astronomy and biology all support each other in detailed and myriad ways. To say you believe science when it develops new antibiotics, but refuse to believe science when it explains antibiotic resistance using evolutionary theory, is selectively allowing your religious belief to trump scientific evidence, but only when it suits you. Scientists can't afford to be so blind.

My point is that Creationists might claim scientific standing, but they have yet to demonstrate it to science. I suspect (and you should too) that Creation science is less about science than religion.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

I refuted this already, and I thought that you agreed.

I agree. Did you notice I didn't say "Christian" fundamentalists! Yes, I can believe that religious fundamentalists of all stripes (Christian, Muslim, Jewish, etc.) could very well refuse to accept scientific evidence for evolution. **Because of their religious beliefs!**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Do they really though? The Big Bang, while called the Big Bang, really doesn't tell us too much about our Universe. We don't know how it happened, if it was caused/uncaused, and there's a lot of speculation of what happened near the very beginning. All of our mathematical, scientific equations and laws near the singularity all break down and not too much sense can be made of it. My Physics professor tells me that there's a reasonable chunk near the beginning, where it's all very unknown, and that, people cram in whatever they want into there.

You're right. There's a chunk of time (the first 10^{-37} seconds long) that the standard model cannot explain yet. The standard model explains pretty much all cosmological observations after that instant. Do you know scientific notation?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Evolution and abiogenesis doesn't tell us much either. Biologists study life and they do not know completely what it is.

You're right again- the abiotic to biotic transition is not fully understood yet. Evolution only explains pretty much everything we have observed after that time 3.8 billion years ago, that is, the evolution of life on Earth.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

While the Creationist model might not be complete, the evolutionist one is also far from complete. Furthermore, there is no complete scientific system, and really - there is no reason to think that there ever will be one.

"Creationist model"? "Complete"? Please tell us in detail- what is the "Creationist Model" exactly (so far)?

God did it? How scientific!

there is no such thing as a "creationist model" except for a Sumerian creation myth in the Hebrew Bible. Nothing in all the available physical evidence in biology or in the universe has ever given the slightest indication that any part of that myth is true. If you were completely unaware of the story, it would be impossible to ever extrapolate it simply from scientific investigation. To claim that creationists don't cling to the Bible is nonsense. Without ancient mythology they don't have even a pretense of a "model" for creation.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Furthermore, there is no complete scientific system, and really - there is no reason to think that there ever will be one.

Sorry- I have to rant a bit.

Why is it that creationists have it in their heads that Science consists of a complete set of facts that we know to be absolutely true? Was it bad science teachers? Were they traumatized by a scientist (as opposed to a priest) as a child?

For the 10th time- science is a progressive accumulation of knowledge that is empirically tested by observational evidence. Therefore Science will NEVER be complete! Science will NEVER have absolute certainty! Science is only the best that we can currently do, with the knowledge that we currently have.

Look around your world- science is successful and progressive because it is **not** a dogmatic, etched in stone body of knowledge that cannot be revised. Scientists don't need complete certainty- in fact without uncertainty it's NOT science!

Some people, especially religious people, need certainty in their lives. They need to feel intuitively and absolutely sure that they must be right. But science has shown us that intuitive certainty is an illusion. Humans are fallible creatures- the Bible is just one set of creation stories handed down verbally, just like many other creation stories in other cultures, probably since the time that stories started being told around fires.

Why put any credence in a story just because it's been around for a long time and makes a part of us feel better about our place in the universe? Science is not about making ourselves feel better- it's about gaining knowledge about the universe. The knowledge that comes from tradition, authority or revelation can be useful as social "shortcuts" for regulating our behavior as humans that interact with each other- but it's not scientific knowledge.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Yep; they're model of the origin of life and the Universe. Complete, as in, answering all questions.

I think you mean "their model". In any case it's clearly not a scientific model, as you seem to agree now.

It must be nice to have all one's questions answered. I guess ignorance really is bliss for some people.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**
I agree; it is.

Yep, I sure did. But, like I said, it's not only those with religious beliefs that have rejected (and still might) evolution and the Big Bang hypothesis.

Ignorance is not confined to the religious, but if you're talking about scientists then there is no movement away from evolution, quite the contrary.

Quote:

Yep; they're model of the origin of life and the Universe. Complete, as in, answering all questions.

It's not a *scientific* model, though is it? I mean it's easy to answer all the questions when you simply pull all the answers out of the air. There is no empirical basis for your "model." it's simply made up out of whole cloth with little or no regard for physical evidence.

Quote:

Quite a few Creationists I have met do not abide by "God of the gaps", so therefore, their scientific/religious model is not complete.

By "scientific/religious" model, you mean "religious" model. There is no scientific theory of creationism.

Quote:

Fundamentalist-Creation model varies between Christians just like evolution does among evolutionists.

There is no variation among scientists about the basics of evolutionary theory. What variation there is about small details, there is no scientific debate at all about the fundamental facts of common descent and natural selection. By contrast, no one has ever proposed a scientific model of creationism. It's pure religious assertion and nothing else.

Quote:

But basically, they presuppose that God created the world 6000 < x < 10000 years ago, that Macroevolution generally doesn't occur, erm, and a whole load of things like that. A good website to visit if you are looking to learn more is [The Biblical Creation Society](#)*

See what I mean, bald religious assertion which ignores proven fact. The age of the Earth and has been well established in the billions of years not the thousands and "macroevolution" (a creationist term not a scientific one. The real word is "speciation") has been directly observed as well as confirmed by overwhelming mountains of evidence. Denying that speciation occurs is like claiming that the earth is flat. It is patently and demonstrably false.

Quote:

**In fact, I have met some who accept macroevolution to a certain extent, and reject evolution as a whole. They claim that mutations can cause species to change, but only within given parameters.*

What would those parameters be and how do these people get around the physical evidence which proves otherwise?

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **wes**
(didn't read entire thread, so ignore this if someone has already stated this)

Ok I guess I can add by saying aren't genes direct evidence of evolution? Not only that but aren't we also seeing evolution occur on a more human time scale with AIDs?

Genes are the biochemical mechanism by which evolution actually occurs. Studies of AIDS virus infections showing genetic mutation and adaptation (from "wild" varieties to drug resistant varieties) during various drug treatments are easily explained by evolution.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

I do not see viruses becoming bacteria, or bacteria becoming viruses, on a micro scale. A virus remains a virus and bacteria remain bacteria. Different, yes, but bacteria and viruses nevertheless.

Once again Radrook redefines evolution in creationist terms.

Evolutionary theory does not claim that bacteria become viruses or cats become dogs. Evolutionary theory claims that they have common ancestors. This has been explained to you by so many people for so many times, I have lost count.

Your fears are unfounded. Yes, creationism is a myth for children, but your spirituality can remain intact as an adult, with a scientific understanding of evolution.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **geoff23**

My point was that sometimes scientists overstate their case. Saying "there is overwhelming evidence this is true" is not the same as saying "This is the best theory we have at the moment. The alternatives appear implausible to us." If you think that scientists never say the former when they mean the latter then you are looking at science through rose-tinted glasses.

Theories aren't theories unless they are confirmed by a *lot* of supporting evidence. In the case of evolution, every conceivable prediction which the theory makes has been invariably confirmed by biology, geology, paleontology, genetics, virology and any other field of relevant science. Not one time has anything been discovered which would falsify or contradict the theory. Any hypothetical discovery which would overturn the theory would have to account for why *all* the physical evidence matches so precisely to evolutionary theory.

No amount of proof can turn a theory into a law but that doesn't mean we can't have virtual certainty about its validity. Gravity is only a theory too. Do you doubt that it exists?

Regardless of academic and epistemological qualifications about positive proof of scientific theory, we still do have the ability to *falsify* other hypotheses with as high a level of certainty as is possible without resorting to Cartesian doubt. We *know* that the sun does not revolve around the earth. We *know* that the sky is not a solid dome and we *know* that the earth is much, much older than 10,000 years. These are all cosmological misperceptions in the Bible which have been unequivocally debunked. Special creation is another (by "special creation" I mean the assertion that species were created separately, not theistic creation of the universe in a broader sense).

Even if someone were successful at falsifying evolutionary theory, that would not make Biblical creation true by default any more than African tribal creation myths or any supernatural hypothesis at all. It's not a binary question (evolution vs. Biblical creationism), it's evolution or *something else* (that just happens to look exactly *like* evolution) and the "something else" would require convincing empirical support. As of yet, no one has ever proposed a scientific alternative to evolution.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

No, I meant just what I said. It might not be completely scientific, but they have some scientific justification (very

minimal), varying from the salt in the seas to the fact that there are spiral galaxies.

How are either of those things evidence of supernatural creation? More to the point, what do they have to do with evolution?

Just to be clear, for the purposes of this thread, I am only arguing for the validity of evolutionary theory over special creation. I am not addressing theistic creation of the universe or even the creation of life. Evolutionary theory only address what happened *after* life began.

Quote:

That is not true. The theory of Evolution, as proposed by Darwin, has progressed quite significantly. The fundamental basis might have remained, but small speculations have been subject to change. Are you proposing that the theory has not changed? Actually, I see that you've mentioned this later, so your assertions are not in harmony with one another.

Darwin was not the first to propose evolution, he only formulated natural selection as the mechanism.

What I meant was that the two most basic axioms of evolutionary theory are not and never have been in dispute among scientists, i.e. that all biological species are evolved from a common ancestral origin and that the process occurs by natural selection. The rest is just filling in the details of timing and sequence. Creationism, by contrast has never been formulated as a scientific theory and varies widely as to hypothetical "models." There are no axioms other than "God did it." There is no proposed mechanism, and it makes no testable predictions.

Quote:

I presume that you are referring to me, since you quoted me. However, I am unaware of how you arrived at the presupposition that I accept the fundamentalist Creationist model. I have neither implied nor suggested that, and I would have thought that I made it reasonably clear.

I apologize if I misunderstood you.

Quote:

Once again, I will have to presume that you are referring to me, since I surely do not think that any of my statements have attained the status of being "bald religious assertion(s)" Furthermore, I had presumed until now that you were referring to the empirical system of science, but this confused me. There is no such thing as "proven" or absolute/irrefutable facts in science. Science simply observes what occurs in a controlled environment; it does not propose absolutes.

I was referring to the claims in your linked site which makes assertions about the age of the earth and special creation based solely on the Bible and nothing else, despite the fact that both assertions fly in the face of all available empirical evidence. Biblical creationists start with a pre-ordained conclusion and then try to twist, deny or flat out lie about the evidence in order to make it fit the conclusion. They do not draw inferences from evidence and they do not propose any empirical tests for their assertions.

Quote:

I provided you a link already; you can check that.

I looked at your link and I did not see anything other than the usual fallacies and bald religious assertions. Respectfully, I must also say that rather than asking me to debunk an entire website I would rather have you post whatever points you think are strongest so that I may address them on point. I prefer to debate a person rather than a website.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by dreamweaver

Well, a little reasearch should have shown. Basically, current evidence in the investigation of salt in the seas suggests evidence contrary to the notion of what science currently proposes. Apparently, the seas should now be overbunked with salt. I'm not too sure on the credibility of the theory, but I found a link for you; it's [here](#). It proposes a beginning date of salt in the oceans as being far older than the typical Creation supposition, but far later than the evolution one too.

This argument is based on a false presumption that ocean floor stays constant. Much of the sediment is lost due to tectonic subduction, some becomes new crust and some becomes biomass. The age of the ocean

floor is always younger than the age of the earth.

<http://www.talkorigins.org/indexcc/CD/CD220.html>

http://www.talkorigins.org/indexcc/CD/CD220_1.html

Quote:

Regarding the spiral galaxies, the theorem is pretty much the same. According to recent scientific evidence, there shouldn't be nearly as many spiral galaxies as there are now, because the arms should have spun round for so long that they all go in. I heard this once from a Creationist, but my Physics professor (an atheist) has told me that it's just one of the things unexplained by science at the moment.

Tidal effects from neighboring galaxies are one hypothesis but really, this has nothing to do with evolution.

It's God of the Gaps at best.

Quote:

That is false again, and it should be obvious why.

I must be dense because it's not obvious to me at all. Who are these scientists who oppose either common descent or natural selection?

Quote:

I had never suggested that you debunk any of the superimpositions at that website. You were seeking to understand their reasoning, and I provided you with a site that might help you.

Fair enough. I misunderstood you and thought you were making a positive argument for YEC. I'm sure I don't have to tell you the site is full of holes but I won't bore you by enumerating them.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **geoff23**

My point was that sometimes scientists overstate their case. Saying "there is overwhelming evidence this is true" is not the same as saying "This is the best theory we have at the moment. The alternatives appear implausible to us." If you think that scientists never say the former when they mean the latter then you are looking at science through rose-tinted glasses.

Agreed to a point. But the creationists have no "alternative" model, so I don't get what your point is.

Looking further down I say that I agree with Diogenes when he says:

"Theories aren't theories unless they are confirmed by a lot of supporting evidence. In the case of evolution, every conceivable prediction which the theory makes has been invariably confirmed by biology, geology, paleontology, genetics, virology and any other field of relevant science. Not one time has anything been discovered which would falsify or contradict the theory. Any hypothetical discovery which would overturn the theory would have to account for why all the physical evidence matches so precisely to evolutionary theory."

To digress a bit, part of the issue that I think you are alluding to, is that there is a difference between "Science" and "Scientists", where often both of these items get conflated, partly because one hears that "science is what scientists do."

Scientists sometimes get frustrated because you have people, like the creationists and paranormalists on one hand, that have not only little or no understanding of how science actually works, but also deliberately lie and twist their religious or pseudo-scientific beliefs into sounding scientific, in order to fool the "science uneducated" general public. So scientists, being human, sometimes might say "totally accepted" when they actually mean "overwhelmingly accepted." No theory in science is totally accepted, even if only because there's always a few crackpots. It's important to consider that all new theories generally start out as one single scientist's great idea, and this new idea is sometimes greatly resisted by other scientists. Just look at the initial reception that plate tectonics received. The point is that empirical data, not religious belief, did eventually figure out what those magnetic stripe anomalies were doing on the ocean floor, so creationists can't really take heart from the way new scientific theories are accepted.

Additionally, in some cases, text book writers (and scientists) will oversimplify a particular process of scientific discovery, especially at the high school or college undergraduate level. This is because these students simply don't have the preparation to understand all the subtle controversies that raged at the time. The way the Michelson-Morley experiment is presented as a convincing demonstration is a good example. At the graduate level they will be exposed to the much messier process of actual scientific discovery, especially as they start to do their own scientific research.

Bottom line: creationists have only a religious belief based on ancient folk tales and no scientific alternative model. Therefore they can only try to twist and quote out of context in an attempt to discredit evolution for people that don't know better. Evolutionary scientists don't have time to waste on debating such nonsense; they are too busy discovering new knowledge and understanding using a valuable and fruitful scientific theory.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Regarding the salt in the oceans, I'll look into it. Glad that's answered for the moment. I disagree with you that a creationist would be proposing God of the gaps. It is evidence, at the moment, to support their hypothesis. If it was shown that galaxies cannot have been around that long since they would not have spirals, then there's a problem - most probably which has an easy explanation, but nevertheless...

There's a difference between saying we don't know *how* something occurs and saying that it *can't* occur naturally. Inserting a supernatural hypothesis into an unanswered question is the very definition of God of the Gaps. You actually have to prove conclusively that there is no natural explanation before you hypothesize the supernatural.

Quote:

I must be dense because it's not obvious to me at all. Who are these scientists who oppose either common descent or natural selection?

Are you willing to hold to the presumption that anyone who disregards evolution is *not* a scientist?

I'm saying that anyone who disregards evolution is not doing so based on scientific method.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

No, I meant just what I said. It might not be completely scientific, but they have some scientific justification (very minimal), varying from the salt in the seas to the fact that there are spiral galaxies.

Are you seriously suggesting that there is any scientific evidence for creationism? Or are you saying there is scientific evidence against evolution (which is all the creationists can possibly hope for).

The "salt in the ocean" and "spiral galaxies" arguments used by creationists neither support creationism (god did it) nor do they provide evidence against evolution.

All the arguments that I have seen by creationists are based on gross or more often, subtle misunderstandings of the scientific data. The fact that they have so many repeated misunderstandings of so much scientific data, makes one wonder how honest they really are (I'm assuming that no one is ignorant enough to be so consistently wrong).

Quote:

Originally Posted by **geoff23**

This is not quite true. "evolution" is a big subject. I would agree with what you say provided you are referring to natural selection and common ancestry. But there is more than that to evolution, most specifically there are questions about things like randomness and directionality that are not so easy to claim "lots of supporting evidence" for. Although it must be said that I was not actually referring to evolutionary theory before - I was talking about big bang theory, higgs theory and the thorny subject of consciousness. Evolution is basically unchallengeable, it is just some details up for grabs.

Like I've been saying. I'm not attempting to make an atheistic argument for the origin of the universe or of life. Big Bang and abiogenesis are not part of evolutionary theory.

Quote:

Quite a few things have caused it to be majorly revised.

Revised, yes, but the basic elements of common descent and natural selection have not been challenged.

Quote:

I was making a point about scientific over-statements in general. In the cases of common ancestry and natural selection I don't think it is possible to overstate the case.

Some individual scientists may overstate facts but science is a method, not a person and it is always self-correcting. If a better explanation than Big Bang comes along it will be scientific method which uncovers it. The method itself is not bound by human hubris or personal agendas.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

There are some who admit that their theory is far from being fact and openly discuss the serious problems that still plague this idea.

Can you give us an example of a "serious" problem with evolution? Remember though, as Diogenes pointed out, falsifying aspects of scientific evolution in no way supports religious creationism.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

These latter ones have made a veritable GOD out of evolution and feel that unless they argue that it is 100% fact they will be guilty of heresy bordering on blasphemy.

"God, heresy, blasphemy..." This sounds a bit more like your department actually.

Oh, and we're still waiting for that example of irreproducible complexity. And a creationist explanation of antibiotic resistance.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **probeman**

Are you seriously suggesting that there is any scientific evidence for creationism? Or are you saying there is scientific evidence against evolution (which is all the creationists can possibly hope for)

As I have already mentioned, I meant exactly what I said. The part that you highlighted, was me saying that there are scientific as well as religious evidence for the Creation model. The fundamentalist-Creation model doesn't *just* propose that the earth came around 10,000 years ago and that evolution is a faulty theory. In fact, they agree with science on a lot of issues; I can give you numerous examples.

By Dreamweaver

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

As I have already mentioned, I meant exactly what I said. The part that you highlighted, was me saying that there are scientific as well as religious evidence for the Creation model. The fundamentalist-Creation model doesn't just propose that the earth came around 10,000 years ago and that evolution is a faulty theory. In fact, they agree with science on a lot of issues; I can give you numerous examples.

Well I think you are exactly wrong. Creationists only agree with science when it doesn't disagree with the Bible. They are religiously selective in what they agree with and that is why they are not scientists. They are theologians- and poor ones at that.

Give us an example of scientific evidence for creationism.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

That is not true. Creationists, over the ages, have altered their positions to cope with science. For example, it is often said that theists thought the world to be round. Now, many people thought that suggesting otherwise was clearly in contrary to the Bible. Anyhow, after some time, they accepted that it was by empiricism - science. So, it is wrong to say that they only agree with science when it doesn't disagree with the Bible. Anyhow, if a creationist is to tell you that he accepts something (that science and religion agree on) because of science and not because of the Bible, it is not for you to tell him that he is lying.

Actually there still are flat earth creationists (Bible Science) though the current generation of "scientific creationists" try to distance themselves as far as possible from them for obvious reasons (but not so only 50 years ago). There are also creationists that still claim the sun revolves around the Earth because the bible says so and the scientific creationists currently have a "truce" with them. In any case, the fact that most creationists today accept the world is not flat and the sun does not revolve around the Earth is hardly grounds for claiming that creationists are scientific.

I can decide for myself if I think that someone is ignorant of science or simply being dishonest, based on the arguments they have presented. I doubt that creationists are ignorant of the overwhelming evidence for evolution, I think they simply allow their religious beliefs to trump scientific data, and fervently believe that misrepresentation and distortion of the facts is a means justified by the ends.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Evidence for Creationism. Creationism says that grass is green. My model, called the adlkjf model, says that this is an entirely faulty assumption. Furthermore, it says that the grass is really just a unicorn. Assuming we do not know anything else about my model, and using Ockham's razor, it is valid to suggest that there is more evidence for creationism than my adlkjf - based on science. It really doesn't matter how poor the evidence is, nevertheless, it remains as evidence. This is just a minor technicality that shows that one should be careful with absolutes.

I'm sorry I have no idea what you are talking about. Evidence for creationism is not "that grass is green."

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

I have come accross plenty of evidence which repeatedly puts a fatal holes in the idea of evolution. The difference is that you choose to give credence to your data while downplaying any data that might even so much as threaten to pin-prick your idea. I also have come accross plenty of evidence that indicates that evolutionists are not averse to being rather unscientific in order to give the impression of indisputable support for their pet idea. THE difference is that such routine chicanery is conveniently ignored or else explained away as understandable mistakes in the name of science.

Well then perhaps you'll share with us your evidence that puts "fatal holes in the idea of evolution"? Or perhaps you'd like to save this Nobel prize material for your soon to be published paper in Nature?

Did you by any chance hear about the offer made by a leading scientific journal a couple of years ago, to the Institute of Creation Research, for them to submit a paper demonstrating the often claimed creationist argument that the 2nd law of thermodynamics refutes evolution? The ICR has many times claimed that they are shut out of scientific publications; did they respond to the journal's offer to participate in the scientific process? Nope.

So according to you, all the biologists, geologists, chemists, physicists, astronomers, paleontologists and zoologists of the world are participating in a grand, secret conspiracy to cover up these enormous piles of devastating evidence against evolution? Would this by any chance be the same group of scientific conspirators that faked the Apollo moon landings?

We are still waiting for your claimed example of irreproducible complexity, the creationist explanation for antibiotic resistance and now we will wait for your evidence of a scientific conspiracy against creationists.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Evolutionists do NOT represent what the majority of the inhabitants of this planet believe--that there is a creator. So if the concept of a creator is doomed just because of what evolutionists claim, the population belief statistics indicate otherwise. Oh yes, I know, the evolutionist idea is what counts not the creationist one. The evolutionist objections are to be trusted ,not any counter-evidence from any wacko "scientist" who might --heaven please forbid--disagree.

Yeah! Yeah! Ahuh! Ahuh! Yeah!

When you are quite finished cackling insanely- perhaps you might consider the fact that what the majority of the inhabitants of this planet believe, has absolutely nothing to do with scientific knowledge. Most people on this planet also believe that heavier objects fall faster than lighter objects. So I suppose therefore you believe that Newton's laws of motion are wrong?

And once again, as has been pointed out to you endlessly, the fact that science does not require supernatural explanations in evolution or chemistry or physics, has nothing to do with whether or not god or gods or ghosts or fairies exist. Those are strictly religious beliefs and superstitions- I hope they bring you much bliss.

And, sigh, we're still waiting for your claimed example of irreproducible complexity, the creationist explanation for antibiotic resistance and now we will continue wait for your evidence of a scientific conspiracy against creationists.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

*"Scientists have no proof that life was not the result of an act of creation."—*Robert Jastrow, *The Enchanted Loom: Mind in the Universe* (1981), p. 19.*

You are correct, science cannot prove that the entire world, and all humanity with our memories intact, wasn't created by a deceitful and omnipotent supernatural devil 5 seconds ago. And neither can you.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Haeckel was well acquainted with this tendency

That's why he felt he was just caught going along with the general evolutionist flow or policy of hasty conclusions based on irrelevant or insufficient evidence.

By the way, Haeckel's work was published in 1874. He was wrong and his work has been excised from science as bad science is.

Here is a comment from talk.origins.org on creationists use of quotations to attack evolution:

"One of the favorite tactics of evolution deniers and other pseudoscientists is to use numerous quotations to make their case. For many people the use of quote after quote makes a very persuasive argument. However, the antievolutionist use of quotes is invalid and does not in any way provide evidence for creationism or against evolution. The reasons for this fall into several major categories: the use of quotations often is a fallacy of "argument from authority," selective quotation may be occurring, the quotations are often out-of-date, the quoted authorities are often not appropriate authorities, evolution deniers are sometimes not honest in representing who the people they quote are, and many of the quotations are misquotations. "

Quote:

Originally Posted by **dreamweaver**

Are you referring to Radrook or me? I do not remember an instance in this thread where I have not backed up an assertion or where I have claimed anything along the lines of there being many examples of irreproducible complexity.

I was referring to Radrook- you've always been forthcoming so far as I can tell.

Anyway, here are the summary points on the Haeckel issue from talk.origins.org:

"1. Evolutionary theory is not founded on Haeckel's observations or theories. Haeckel's work was discredited in the 19 th century, and has not been relevant to biology since the rediscovery of Mendel's laws of genetics. That the biogenetic law is false has been the consensus of biologists for over 100 years, and developmental biologists have been working constructively to provide alternative explanations, which have so far all been evolutionary in nature.

2. The similarities between vertebrate embryos are real. We must distinguish between observations of those similarities and hypotheses about their causes. The similarities are not in doubt; there are worthwhile studies of the degree and timing of the similarities, but none that question their overall existence. What Wells has described is one hypothesis about the cause, Haeckel's biogenetic law, which failed early and spectacularly. He has not addressed any modern hypotheses, nor has he provided a better alternative.

3. Evidence for common descent lies in the unity of form and process. We do not use Haeckel's outmoded, invalid mechanism to argue for evolution. Instead, we look at the marvelous convergence of disparate organisms on common principles: all animals use the same genes to define regions of their bodies, all vertebrates build their faces by unlikely rearrangements of odd pharyngeal protrusions, and even tailless mammals like us have to start with tailed embryos. The best

explanation for these phenomena is that they are a consequence of a common heritage. "

The whole page is here:

<http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/wells/haeckel.html>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **radrook**

So this indisputably so-called ape man was simply based on evolutionist's wishful thinking and a dash of their vivid imaginations.

No, it was the most reasonable conclusion to make at the time. Unlike fundamentalism which naively presumes to know the *truth* from a *limited* pool of knowledge, science only yields *tentative* explanations which are examined, reexamined, and modified if necessary. Perhaps this type of intellectual honesty is foreign to you, but the scientific community does not hold on to an outdated theory when better explanations or new details come to rise. Sadly, the same cannot be said of creationists.

By Unisonus

Radrook, all species are "transitional" in that evolution is never static and no species is ever finished.

You are also misinformed if you think that the fossil record is bare of intermediate steps between species. Many such fossils exist, including hominids. there are no "missing links" in evolution, that's another creationist canard.

Actually, the "transitional" fossil argument is really just God of the Gaps. No matter how many intermediate species are found, the creationists just say "yes, but what comes in between *those* species. It's an infinite regression.

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

I once went around proclaiming evolution as irrefutable fact. My belief was grounded on the textbooks that had brainwashed me into believing it is a fact.

And now you know as "irrefutable fact" that an invisible, omnipotent being created everything with a snap of his finger. I think you ought to lay off the "irrefutable" facts for a while. They don't seem to calm your fears.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

But then someone rightly pointed out that the statements I was dogmatically proclaiming as irrefutable were all preceded by qualifiers such as "It may well be that...." This may very well mean...."

"It might be...." "this seems to suggest.... "It certainly is quite possible that...." "This seems to imply or might very well indicate" "We can assume...." <"It might have been...." and many other such maybe-yes-maybe-no statements.

As hard as it might be for you to understand, scientists view such tentatively phrased explanations as the most scholarly, as Unisonus has eloquently pointed out. It is a style of writing called scientific writing. In such works, scientists try to avoid such phrases as "clearly", "obviously", or "there is no question", etc. Scientists tend to let the facts speak for themselves. And with evolutionary theory, as well as the heliocentric theory and other well established scientific theories, the facts do speak volumes.

The tracks aren't fake, they're just not human, they're another type of dinosaur. This is a creationist canard that was debunked years ago.

<http://www.talkorigins.org/indexcc/CC/CC101.html>

<http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/paluxy/tsite.html>

<http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/paluxy.html>

By Diogenes

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Such things as human footsteps next dinosaur ones or man-made tools found in the WRONG STRATA are shelved because they just don't seem to fit.

So all this time the Flintstones was a creationist documentary!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

Believe me, I see you much more ignorant for believing in evolution than you could ever possibly see me for believing creation.

Unbelievable. Is this guy for real? He believes in a Sumerian creation myth, but Diogenes is "more ignorant."

Still waiting for your evidence refuting evolution- have you found Fred Flintstone's barbecue pit covered with brontosaurus spare ribs yet?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

However, if indeed the tracks prove to have been not genuine, it still does not prove evolution. It only proves that some creationist need to not reach hasty conclusions just as some evolutionists need to do the same.

That's right, it doesn't "prove" evolution. Nothing can "prove" evolution. Scientific theories can only be disproven. So why always insist on "proof"? Every time you say "proof", you reveal your scientific ignorance. Must everything you believe, be absolutely certainly irrefutable?

Maybe that's your problem. Can't you live with some uncertainty? Scientists thrive on it.

As for "hasty", scientists have been gathering evidence that has not contradicted evolution for over 150 years. I wouldn't call that hasty- would you?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

In short, you claim that what you see as inevitable these scientists do not see because of what? Lack of scientific knowledge?

That, plus religious blinders. A deadly combination for understanding.

Denton, someone you have cited, has problems with "macro-evolution". You might be interested in this:

<http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/comdesc/>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

My belief is not based on blind faith as you suggest.

No, your belief appears to be based on a combination of blind faith, irrationality and ignorance of science. I'm assuming that you are honest, of course.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

You seem to suggest that inductive reasoning is worthless.

No, only **your** inductive reasoning is worthless. And we're still waiting for your irreproducible evidence.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **filter**

***Radrook** is incredibly reticent when it comes to sharing his views. Perhaps because then he would have to defend them?*

Exactly. A few out of context and/or outdated quotes is hardly defending a position. When he does presents data it's Haeckel from the 19th century or Flintstone evidence. Both refuted years ago and therefore strengthening the case for evolution.

Even worse, the couple of quotes he does give, that aren't outdated (by Denton for example), merely attest "evolution couldn't happen." But as has been pointed it, the burden is on creationists to explain why, given the observed and demonstrated mechanisms of evolution, how evolution COULDN'T happen. Maybe God intervenes every time a plant or animal reproduces.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

The universe as perceived is an impossibility based on the exigencies of ultimate location and the infinite regress paradox.

I thought we were talking about biological evolution?

He's squirming now.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **MerGirl**

People did exist with dinosaurs. Though personally I do believe that was in the distant past but not as distant as 65 million years ago.

<http://www.weirdvideos.com/ancient2.html>

<http://www.labyrinthina.com/ica.htm>

<http://www.crystalinks.com/icastones.html>

Also I am no creationist nor am I an atheist. The "Bigger Picture" is much more than those two theories. Neither am I an evolutionist which is a theory so full of holes and is on it's way out.

It seems that man existed alongside these so called evolutionary ancestors that we supposedly evolved from. They actually are looking much more like our contemporaries now. They existed alongside us.

You need to expand your Internet searches and avoid the pseudo-archeology web sites if you are trying to educate yourself. Ask yourself: why don't scientists find evidence for say, Atlantis, convincing? You can be sure they'd want to discover it, just for the fame and glory alone (not counting the scientific interest). The fact that they are not actively searching for Atlantis or million year old archeological sites might mean something. Of course scientists have been wrong- it is the nature of science to be wrong. But science also is amazingly successful, and as someone that appears to have an inquiring mind, you should avail yourself of the best data that is available. Scientific information on the web is not always as easily digestible as the pseudo-science web sites- but it is a lot more scholarly and evidence based and therefore more satisfying in the long run.

The "Bigger Picture" is that creationism is NOT a theory- it is religious belief. Neither is evolution a theory "so full of holes and on it's way out." Evolution is the ongoing and active research basis of all biology and medicine today (you've heard of antibiotic resistance I'm sure?) and is overwhelmingly supported by geology, chemistry, paleontology, physics and astronomy.

Start here for more information on evolution:

<http://www.talkorigins.org/>

A very human, beautifully written, emotionally touching and extremely readable book that I highly recommend is **Sagan's "The Demon Haunted World"**, which deals with the exact issues that you are struggling with.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **weloki**

As i said before, i think that a proper theory of evolution and the existence of a benevolent, intelligent, and creative God are not necessarily mutually exclusive propositions.

Weloki, You are exactly correct.

Evolution (and science in general) says nothing about the existence of God. Science (methodological materialism) merely cannot use supernatural explanations in it's investigations. To say that something happened supernaturally is only to say we don't know how something happened and never will.

Science instead says, we don't know what happened but here's an idea, let's see if this agrees with the data. If not, we throw out the idea and try a new one. Science is the opposite of religion because religion always assumes it's knowledge is absolute and science always assumes it's knowledge is tentative.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **weloki**

"It is impossible to give an evolutionary sequence to the human fossils because there is a coverage gap involving the dating methods which evolutionists believe are the most reliable radiocarbon and potassium-argon (K-Ar). This gap is from about 40,000 ya (years ago) to about 200,000 ya on the evolutionist's time scale. It covers roughly the period known as the Middle Stone Age (MSA)." - The Dating Gap, Marvin L. Lubenow PhD

Even though i got this from an article on a creationist site, he is speaking of something that is fact as of now.
It sounds like your prof is a little behind the times. K-Ar dating is almost never used any more today. The preferred technique currently is Ar-Ar dating which relies on converting potassium into an isotope of Ar through neutron flux in a reactor. It is much more accurate and sensitive to compare the ratios of two isotopes of the same element as you might imagine.

Using Ar-Ar dating one can date from hundreds of millions years old to less than 100,000 years old, even on "difficult" materials. Easier K-rich materials like K-feldspars can be dated to less than 50,000 years old without difficulty. The record for Ar-Ar dating is 2,000 year old tuffs from Vesuvius, Italy for which of course we have historical evidence for.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **fotia**

I have not read this thread from page 1, because it's going to take way too long and I have stuff to do, so I don't know if you guys already covered this, but please restate it if it has been defined: the definition of creationism and the definition of evolutionism.

Read the whole thread (or even better- a few scholarly books on the subject) and then discuss your ideas. I suggest "Why People Believe Weird Things" by Michael Shermer. It very readably covers creationism, paranormal, holocaust denial, astrology and other pseudo-sciences.

The term "evolutionism" was coined by creationists to try and create the impression that evolution is somehow distinct from the results of science that don't as directly contradict the Bible. As such it has no meaning among biologists, chemists, geologists, physicists, astronomers and paleontologists, all of whom find evolution a powerfully fruitful and explanatory scientific theory or principle in many scientific fields.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Wildy**

I think I do have an open mind. Truth can not be found if questions are not asked. I can't accept every theory that comes my way by word alone.

Quite frankly we're talking about history here, odds are we'll never find out the truth, all we have is speculation. I raised some questions, so do you have anything to say about them or would you prefer to just say i'm close minded and demand unwavering faith in your theory?

The theory of evolution is a bit more than "way by word alone" and "speculation." It is an empirical (though partially historical) science just like geology, archeology, astronomy and paleontology. Do you think those fields are "speculation." Religion/faith based creationism is exactly by "word alone" however.

Be "open-minded" but not so "open-minded" that your brains fall out.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **weloki**

It is ironic that the creationists who so doubt and attack science and its validity would try to use science to support a basically religious view.

I think creationists are seriously "conflicted." On one hand they want the esteem and status that science deservedly holds among scholarly and educated people. On the other hand they resent that science seems to proceed just fine without invoking the supernatural. It is especially ironic that they sometimes claim that evolution is not falsifiable- therefore it can't be science, and then at other times, they proceed to try and falsify it!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **weloki**

My initial point bringing up the Dating Gap was to say that technically, there is not absolutely certain proof that the theory of evolution is true. But it does not need to be proven for it to make sense, have scientific value and plausibility, and to be developed even further. The creationist standpoint cannot be developed further with any new evidence, because there is none; the scientists with creationist slant only repeat over and over the unfalsifiability of creationism, which is a weakness to creationism; so the only way it can go is further into oblivion.

You know, i see it as sad that certain people with such intelligence and argumentative skills are so attached to a belief that drives their arguments. Really, God will still love them even if they happen to be wrong.

You are basically right- though remember, nothing in science can ever be "proven." Scientific knowledge is always tentative and uncertain. It has to be uncertain to be science- otherwise it's merely dogma (like creationism).

Just ask any creationist if there is any possibility, any possibility whatsoever, that the Bible could be wrong. They will of course say "no, the Bible is the inerrant word of God." Such absolute certainty, of course, means that creationism is dogma- as opposed to the scientific theory of evolution which, **like every theory in science**, could in principle, be wrong or at least be modified.

I once had a creationist tell me that since science is what we know to be absolutely true, and the bible is absolutely true, then the bible is science! Wait- it gets better! Then they said that since modern science admits that scientific theories could be wrong, modern science is therefore just belief. Therefore modern science must be religion!

Oy Vay.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **weloki**

Really, God will still love them even if they happen to be wrong.

Not if God is a scientist. ;)

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

I have tried to be as explicit as possible in sharing my views.

Will I paint myself into a corner via unnecessary speculation? o

Of course not!

If something is still unclear, why should I defend it as if it were not?

That would be inviting effective refutation against something that should have never been put forth as indisputable fact in the first place..

A waste of both our time.

Exactly.

No scholarly intellectual position is indisputable. However, clearly explaining one's position so that it can be critiqued is one of the hallmarks of science. Vague positions cannot be criticized and science proceeds always by criticism and refutation of bad theories. But you, and all other creationists, will not expose creationism to refutation by presenting a clear and defined creationist theory, for the simple reason that creationism is a completely religious belief without any scientific evidence in its favor.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

In any case, although some creationist sites might resort to that type of dubious and unchristian strategy, all creationists do not. If I were aware that any of the quotes I posted were, I would immediately reject it.

I'd like to see a creationist site that does NOT resort to "unchristian" lies and distortions. Can you give us an example?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Radrook**

The purpose is to show what scientists say to one another during certain scientific discussions about evolution. What they say, shows that evolutionary certainty is not always founded on indisputable evidence. Otherwise there would not be any such quotes concerning uncertainty.

No one in science claims "indisputable" evidence for anything. That would not be scientific- haven't you understood that by now?

The common and dishonest tactic used by creationists (taking out-of-context quotes of scientists that are arguing about the details of evolutionary mechanisms), is not only unchristian, it's dishonest. No scientist doubts that all life on earth shares a common evolutionary ancestry.

And we are still waiting for your creationist evidence.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **weloki**

if you are in the mood to try to debunk the methods of science, go to this site:

<http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?ar...umber=1&catID=2>

if you can convincingly show any of these 15 points debunking creationist arguments against evolution to be untrue, i will then refer to you as God.

If Radrook could do this, he still wouldn't be God, but he might get the Nobel prize in biology. Not much chance of that however, since his position is entirely consistent with dogmatic religious beliefs that are unique to fundamentalist Christians living in the united states.

Ask him for the creationist explanation of antibiotic (or HIV) resistance. You'll notice that he won't respond to my posts directly.

I got this from the Sci Am web site you posted- it's quite good:

"Conversely, serious scientific publications disputing evolution are all but nonexistent. In the mid-1990s George W. Gilchrist of the University of Washington surveyed thousands of journals in the primary literature, seeking articles on intelligent design or creation science. Among those hundreds of thousands of scientific reports, he found none. In the past two years, surveys done

independently by Barbara Forrest of Southeastern Louisiana University and Lawrence M. Krauss of Case Western Reserve University have been similarly fruitless.

Creationists retort that a closed-minded scientific community rejects their evidence. Yet according to the editors of Nature, Science and other leading journals, few antievolution manuscripts are even submitted. Some antievolution authors have published papers in serious journals. Those papers, however, rarely attack evolution directly or advance creationist arguments; at best, they identify certain evolutionary problems as unsolved and difficult (which no one disputes). In short, creationists are not giving the scientific world good reason to take them seriously. "