

Dear Editor,

I am a strict Darwinist in so far as the theory provides a well established scientific explanation for the evolution of life, and a devout anti-Darwinist when it comes to proscriptions for how we should behave towards one another. In other words, how we got here is not the same as how we choose the society we would like to create for ourselves. The law of the jungle may be all some species are capable of, but in the non-zero sum game of social interaction, humans (and a few other animals) have discovered that if we treat each other brutally, we will lose (on average). But if we cooperate and "do unto others as we would have them do unto us", we can prosper (on average).

This is the natural basis of morality. It is not absolute or encoded into the universe, but neither is it "anything goes". As we can all observe, there are strict rules as to what behavior is tolerated and what behavior is punished by society as a whole.

Religion is a natural social mechanism refined to enforce these rules, and belief in the supernatural only provides a psychological carrot and stick for those that are incapable of seeing the benefit of such fellowship themselves. As individuals we can attempt any and all sorts of actions- but in the long run how successful will those efforts be without the cooperation, approval and support of our families, friends, co-workers and just plain acquaintances?

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