

05/2007

Re: Metaphysics vs. Physics

Dear Editor,

Robert Williamson (letters, 05/22/07) has seemingly confused metaphysics with physics by claiming the scientific theory of evolution depends on the philosophies of materialism and vitalism. Evolution by natural selection is not philosophy. Its validity depends solely on evidence and there is over 150 years of accumulated data which provides overwhelming support for this masterpiece of scientific understanding. The citation of a single obscure paper from 1967 claiming to have "rejected" Darwinian theory completely ignores decades of subsequent work which put evolutionary theory on a sound mathematical basis starting in the 1970's by Robert Trivers. This was followed by subsequent research in the 1980's, by Axelrod and Hamilton who used the mathematics of Game Theory to predict expression of "reciprocal altruism" in animal and human populations. Since then numerous empirical studies have followed up and repeatedly confirmed these insights.

But perhaps Intelligent Design (ID) should have its day in court? In fact the "evidence" for ID was presented last year in the Dover Federal Court presided by Judge John E. Jones (a Republican church goer appointed by President Bush it should be noted), who stated in his 139 page decision: "The overwhelming evidence at trial established that ID is a religious view, a mere re-labeling of creationism, and not a scientific theory." But don't take my word for it, see for yourself:

http://www.pamd.uscourts.gov/kitzmilller/kitzmilller_342.pdf

As zoologist Richard Dawkins has said regarding ID: "...it no more belongs in a biology class than alchemy belongs in a chemistry class, phlogiston in a physics class or stork theory in a sex education class.

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