

THE UNIVERSITY CONCOURSE

An Independent Journal of Opinion

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Editor's note: At the end of last year (Vol III, issue 6), I passed onto readers requests I'd received from other readers that we feature a discussion on evolution. The two articles below came in response. As always, follow-up pieces are more than welcome.

What should Catholics think of evolution?

by **Michael Healy**

Last year, the editor suggested that we discuss the theory of evolution in these pages. I think this is a good idea. In my view, Catholics have a particular duty to examine all sides of the theory of evolution, as well as the views of creation scientists. Why?

1. Unlike Biblical fundamentalists, we are not bound to accept the first few chapters of the book of Genesis as literally true, with each word in it carrying the same sense everywhere. Thus we are free to interpret "day" in Genesis 1 and 2 loosely as "a block of time."

2. Unlike atheists, we are not

compelled to unequivocally reject the possibility of special creation.

3. We can nevertheless accept a literal interpretation of Genesis if we want to.

This means that Catholics are in a unique position for testing every imaginable view on the origins of mankind with the utmost rigor—which is the only way that any of those theories could be scientifically proven, right? In the best interests of science, then, let us get involved in the Evolution debate.

But let us be clear about what it is that is being debated. First, I use the word "Evolution" to refer to what

others would call "Macroevolution" or "Transformism." What is often termed "Microevolution" I refer to as "Variation." Microevolution or Variation, whatever you may call it, is the idea that species can be divided into many sub-species through minute changes. This phenomenon has been observed and established as fact. It is macroevolution, transformism, evolution proper—the idea that one species, genus, etc. on up to kingdom, can be transformed into another by the accumulation of many minute changes—that is under discussion.

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A closer look at evolution

by **Benjamin J. Brown**

Darwin's theory of biological evolution took hold almost immediately upon publication of his *The Origin of Species*, not because it was sound but because his age was ready for it. Immersed in the "idea of progress," the 19th century readily adopted Darwinism as its child. Today, evolution is taught in virtually every high school and college in the country without anyone so much as batting an eye. Virtually everyone takes it for granted, but in recent years much serious scientific research has been done in the field which greatly undercuts evolutionary "theory."* I am by no means qualified or knowledgeable enough to go into the

scientific work, but I would like to offer a few arguments which show how problematic Darwinism is and how weak its scientific basis.

Darwin's theory rests mainly on three things: sheer mass of accumulated evidence, his idea of natural selection, and the principle of analogy. The majority of the 500 page *Origin of Species* is devoted to account after account of changes that have occurred

in various species over time, mostly in the realm of domestic breeding. Darwin then argues that, after many years of being bred for their desirable characteristics, domestic animals become different enough from the original species to be rightly classified as a sub-species, or variety. Combining this evidence with his theory of natural selection, or "survival of the fittest," Darwin

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QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND CONTINUING CONVERSATIONS



Dr. Martin does it again

I would like to commend Dr. Martin for his brilliant article on the true aim(s) of education and the importance of literature in the formation of the intellectual person. I can add nothing to what he has said as he, in his inimitable fashion, has thoroughly uncovered the length, breadth and depth of the problem, yea, even at Franciscan University. If only more people in higher education, educators and students alike, would hold to what he's written...

Anyway, I'm glad the editors continue to plug away and just hope that the students back on the other side of the Atlantic grab up an opportunity to

become involved in the academic and intellectual wealth of discussion that the *Concourse* can offer.

Joanna Bratten
Class of '97

Joanna Bratten is currently working toward a doctorate in literature at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

FUS needs to get more practical about education

Dr. Regis Martin's article "What liberal educators may not omit" calls for a response. The role of the liberal arts education which is to ground the person in fundamental truths cannot and must not be underrated. Today in corporate America there is a recognition that people must have a background that makes them well-rounded people. This background can only come from some form of liberal arts education.

Precisely what form it should take at this university, however, is often in dispute. While many of our students are in the field of theology and philosophy, the students in other disciplines such as nursing, education, business and the like are involved in programs that do not and cannot give them the time to study at length such things

as Dante, Shakespeare, Homer and Dickens. While Homer may be important to make the student well versed in humanities and thus learn how to deal with the person as a whole, the student of Hotel Management has to give priority to those areas such as accounting, business organization, management and finance. This does not mean that the student does not study Homer, but the major part of the two and a half to three hours of study time a student has each day needs to be spent on his area of concentration.

Newman talks of utilitarianism in education, and indeed education should not only be to secure a better job in the work place but also to ground one in fundamental truths. I find it interesting that Dr. Martin's article makes no mention of computer education and training in such activities as job placement. At the end of the twentieth century no student should receive a BA, BS, MA or MS degree without having enough computer literacy and enough basic training in vocational skills to help them compete with those who do not esteem God or the human person as we do.

Our University provides the liberal arts education quite well. We fall short, however, in preparing our alumni for the reality of life. We should introduce into our English classrooms informa-

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THE UNIVERSITY CONCOURSE

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We welcome submissions from faculty, students, administrators, staff, alumni, parents, trustees, benefactors and friends, on any topic of interest to a general university readership, provided they are courteously expressed and framed with a view to advancing the welfare of FUS and/or Catholic culture at large.

We recommend opinions be kept to fewer than 1,500 words.

Contributions should be sent to e-mail address "katieandjules@ibm.net" or through our website: www.TheUniversityConcourse.com.

Please include your full name, phone-number and e-mail address, if you have one.

We will consider printing submissions anonymously or under a pen-name; however, in general we wish to encourage open, "face to face" discussion. In either case, the editors require the full name and phone-number of the author of each opinion.

A different perspective on the modesty question

by Kathleen vanShaijik

REGINA DOMAN SCHMIEDICKE HAS MADE SOME VERY WORTHWHILE POINTS ABOUT THE RELATION BETWEEN PROPER DRESS AND PERSONAL

DIGNITY, ABOUT THE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF AUTHENTIC modesty, and about the uncharitableness-toward-men of immodesty. But I am afraid some misplaced emphases and an undue rigorism in her view might get in the way of the good she'd like to help bring about in this area.

For instance, I think it a mistake to put so much emphasis on the danger of tempting men to sin. It is certainly a part of the problem, but it is at most only a secondary part. Treating it as if it were the "main point" of modest dress can make matters worse, in two ways. For some it will only aggravate the puritanical tendency Regina rightly lamented for causing many women to dress in ugly, bag-like clothing that hides their shape. If the main idea of modesty is seeing to it that we don't tempt our brothers to sin, then obviously the more invisible we make our figures the better. Modesty is reduced to its negative aspect, i.e. sexual-sin-avoidance. Its deeper essence as reverence for the sexual sphere is down-played or lost entirely.¹

An over-emphasis on the "temptation factor" might lead others to conclude that immodesty is not really a serious problem at all. Too many women will think: "Please, I am not so deluded as to imagine that the sight of my bare knees is titillating enough to send the men around me running for the confessional." And too many men will think: "I don't know what kind of guys you're hanging out with, but speaking for myself, it's just not such a big deal." Maybe they're in denial; maybe they've been inured by decades of sensory overload; maybe they're just naturally less highly-charged than other men, or

maybe their taste has been so well-formed that they are more repelled than attracted by immodesty—whatever the reason, it seems to me a fact that there are plenty of men out there for whom short skirts and sleeveless shirts do not automatically give rise to a struggle with impurity. I don't say this is necessarily a good thing; I only say it shows that the temptation factor is not the heart of the issue. If it were, then where there was no temptation there would be no problem, whereas in reality, indifference to the human body is a serious disorder, particularly widespread today. It has come about by the licentiousness and irreverence for human sexuality that characterize our age,² and it, at least as much as anything else, shows how urgently we need to recover a sense of modesty.³

Further, though there may well be something to Regina's idea of there being a historical relation between robes and social standing, I think she goes way too far when she links the loss of that symbolism so directly with "the advent of more effective birth control"—as if the sexual revolution were the only event of the century. It makes the change in women's fashions into an absolute evil—as if every woman who doesn't wear "robes" is declaring her sexual availability, consciously or not. Is it not much more plausible to say that as women began to move more freely in society, they began to dispense with "robes" simply because they found it easier to do the sort of things they wanted to do without them? (Who could deny that things like housework and gardening and sports and traveling, for instance, are much easier in pants?) We might very well want to argue that

what women lost in respect when they began wearing pants was worth much more than what they have gained in comfort and social mobility, but we can do that more effectively, I think, if we don't overshoot our mark.

It is similarly overdoing things to say that no Catholic woman should wear anything the Blessed Mother wouldn't wear. As a mutual friend of Regina's and mine pointed out, Our Lady is both a mother and a consecrated virgin. To say that no one should wear what the Blessed Mother wouldn't wear would be the same as to say all women should dress as if they were consecrated virgins. A nun wears a habit as an outward sign of her virginity. That sign would have no meaning unless there were a natural distinction between the way married women and virgins dress.

If we want to persuade women to dress more modestly, we would do well to avoid both exaggerated analyses of the problem and too-extreme solutions to it. We should show more sympathy with legitimate concerns for comfort, practicality and stylishness, and be more modest, so to say, in our calls for reform.

A few years ago, when we lived in Steubenville, a women's household asked me to come to campus and give them a talk on self-respect and its modern counterfeits. I spoke a lot about the importance of modesty. I told them how if we dress in a way that draws attention to our sexuality to the neglect of our personality, we will get the wrong kind of attention from the wrong kind of men. The good ones will turn the other way, and the bad ones will turn dangerous. If we want to be recognized and respected for who we are in our

deepest essence, we should have nothing to do with the my-bod-in-your-face fashions of today. In clothes like that everything about a woman except her sexual value is pushed into the background, while her body is thrust into the public glare for comparison with all the bodies in Hollywood. If she happens to have an especially good figure, she will certainly attract a lot of attention, but it will be the degrading attention of impure men. If her figure is not so attractive, she will feel mortified by rejection, and tempted to self-hatred.

The girls listened intently and eagerly. One of them said, "You are so right. Last week we were going dancing in Pittsburgh, so I put on my sluttiest shirt, and it was *nothing*, I mean *nothing*, to what the other girls there were wearing!" That was the word she chose. She wore her sluttiest shirt. She said it jokingly, and her friends laughed. But I wanted to burst into tears.

Things have gone farther than we realize. We are a million miles away from the "Pope's rules" for the Catholic high schools of the 1940 and 50s. Girls whose sense of modesty has been formed in a culture where "looking great" is understood to be synonymous with "looking *hot*" are not about to take seriously a decades-old dress code stipulating the number of inches below the knee, elbow and collarbone. It is sim-

ply too remote from their experience. It will only serve to confirm their impression that those who talk that way are completely out of touch with reality.

Then, there are other reasons why people who are all in favor of more modesty might reject the idea of establishing a set of rules to dress by. One is that by their nature rules breed legalism, judgementalism and hypocrisy. (Fallen creatures that we are, we can't live well without any rules at all, but we seem to thrive best when they are kept to a minimum.) This is especially the case where a real grasp on the deep moral values involved is weak or missing, as is the case with regard to modesty in today's society. Consider, for instance, how easily we backfire by confusing our external conformity to a set of rules with possession of virtue itself. Because I adhere to an especially strict standard of body-coverage, I imagine myself to be particularly modest; I imagine that that person next to me, whose skirt is two inches shorter, is less modest than I am.

It goes without saying that there is an essential connection between inward modesty and its outward expression, but the two are not the same thing. Virtue cannot be measured in inches, and there is much more to modesty than conservative clothing. (For instance, I

personally think "stretching out on the floor to watch television"—except perhaps in the intimate confines of the family—is at least as much at odds with the ideal essence of feminine modesty as short skirts are.)

Let's forget about rules and dress codes for now. Let's instead try harder to instill in one another a deeper appreciation of the nature and dignity of the human person; a better understanding of the meaning of the human body, and a profound sense of reverence for the sexual sphere. (If I had more space I'd start right here! Maybe next issue.) If we manage this authentic modesty will come of itself. ■

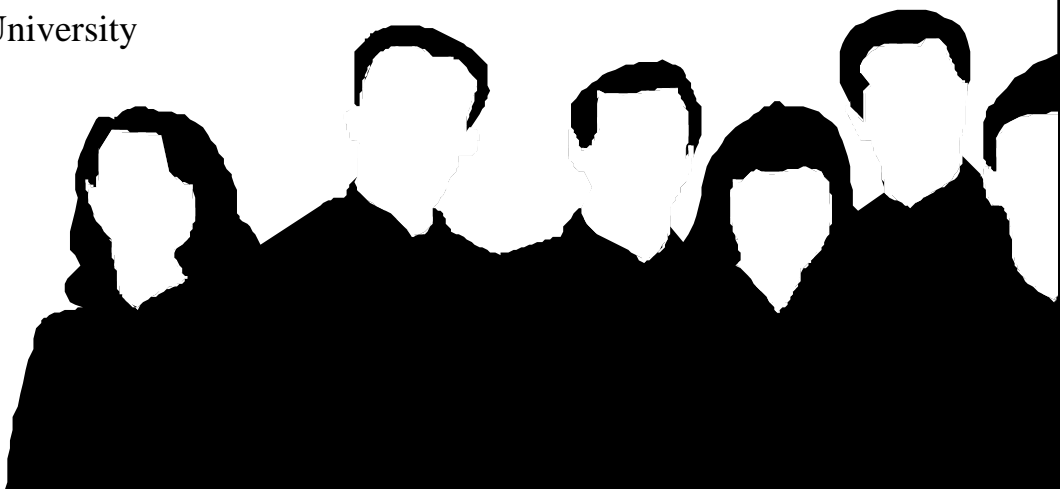
Kathleen (Healy, '88) van Schaijik is Editor of the Concourse.

1. If we revere something, we do not hide it. Neither do we flaunt it in public. We cherish it; we pay it homage; we approach it with dignity; we adorn it with beauty; we take care that it is not misused.
2. In classical vicious circle fashion it also adds to the problem of licentiousness, of course. People who are ho-hum about human sexuality are more like to engage in it casually, or else to seek thrills through various forms *inhuman* sexuality.
3. One part of Regina's article shows that she is very well aware of this aspect of the issue. But I still think the combination of her too-heavy emphasis on temptation and her lack of discussion of right-reverence for the sexual sphere might have an effect opposite to the one she intends.

Enjoy discussions like these?

Join the Franciscan University
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Conversations

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tion on resumes and cover-letters. Our computer labs should be expanded and every student should have at least 3 credits of such a class before graduating. The exit conferences at graduation should be more thorough and cover such areas as job interviews. I wonder how many of our students know of the Career Placement and Planning Office. Do many of our students take part in their services? Personally, I doubt it.

Peter Cole
MS Education program

Peter Cole received a BA in theology from FUS in 1997.

Why non-liberal majors need a liberal core

Regis Martin's article on the value of great works of literature in the formation of the person stirred within me many long-standing questions and considerations regarding undergraduate education.

First of all I shall admit something it seems nearly a crime to admit: my bachelors degree is in science—specifically nursing. I say that with humor, as at times it seems majors outside of the liberal arts are viewed as flat, technical and lacking in depth. Majors such as accounting, economics, chemistry, business, computer science, education and my own dear little nursing are flung off as “less than” a full college education—relegated to the realm of utility and excluded from the world of beauty. They are also seen as incapable of attaining what Newman so aptly described as the end of education, Knowledge of the Whole. This view of the non-liberal arts programs has not come about without reason.

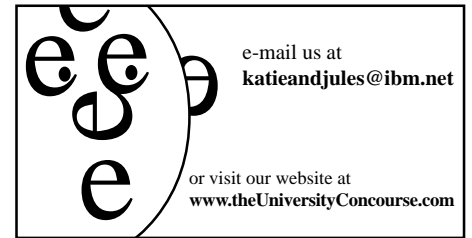
A student of the sciences or business deprived of courses in language, history, philosophy, music, art, literature and theology—in other words, a core curriculum—is left open to a formation of the intellect that perhaps leans towards mere utility and function.

As a five-time-expectant mother I have come across this sort of mal-formation in the hospital where I was sometimes “cared for” by nurses with a two-year technical degree. Such nurses tend to lack refinement; they often fail to recognize the person behind the technical duties they’re performing. They function as directed, without an understanding or a rationale behind their actions. The lack of education in human psychology, the lack of exposure to deep philosophical questions about personal existence and the dignity of man can cause them to act without sympathy. They just fling a hospital gown toward the helpless patient with a heartless: “Strip down and put this on, honey.”

It is not their fault. They were never taught otherwise. But they should have been.

Thankfully, FUS asks more of its nursing students. I can remember many times as an undergrad my classmates lamenting the effort of having to read Dante, and asking, how is this related to caring for sick people? But we see now that it is, for it is this reading, this opening of the mind to time-tested literature, this encounter with the great questions of ethics and theology, all within the milieu of a lively Catholic academic community, that produces the kind of nurses we wanted to be.

The FUS-educated nurse greets a patient by name, and uses direct eye contact. She speaks gently, exhibiting confidence and knowledge, and profound respect for the patient as person. Her reading of literature has given her insight beyond her own experience, so that despite her youth she might understand and empathize with patients of all ages from all economic backgrounds. She is not tired of learning, as her mind, now inflamed with Truth, longs for more. She is not deprived of the vision of the Whole even though much of her training was technical in nature. We do not send her out flatly educated with a view for the merely utilitarian. She may pursue excellence in her field, without missing out on the fullness that comes from “liberal”



learning.

The same is true for students in the other professional programs. Exposure to a liberal arts core does nothing to diminish their technical training or capabilities, rather it enhances them and brings them into a circle of fullness and depth.

Education is the formation of the whole man, not merely the passing on of technological data and skills. Man can not be confined to such an arena. As John Paul II stated in his encyclical Faith and Reason, “all men and women...are in some sense philosophers and have their own philosophical conceptions with which they direct their lives. In one way or other, they shape a comprehensive vision and an answer to the question of life’s meaning; and in the light of this they interpret their own life’s course and regulate their behavior.”

If we deny this in man and attempt to confine him to the technical only, we do violence to his deepest nature.

I want to add my voice to those calling for a solid core curriculum for all of our majors. And I repeat Dr. Martin’s question:

“Is it too much to hope, I wonder, that here at Franciscan University we too might fashion a setting ...A place where intellect and soul, Athens and Jerusalem, exist amid a myriad of splendid tensions marking the life of a great University? If such is not a goal worth striving for, then what possible excuse have we for offering an education to those who come to us seeking wisdom and wholeness?”

Susan (Creel) Fischer
Class of '84

Susan C. Fischer is Assistant Editor of the Concourse and is currently on sabbatical from the MA Philosophy program.

Healy on Evolution

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We must also avoid the perilous trap of assuming that there are only two views in this discussion. There are at least four possible views on the origin of life and the age of the earth, each with many subdivisions. The main categories are as follows.

1. Atheistic Evolutionism: the idea that purely naturalistic processes account for everything from the origin of life to the coming into existence of the human race.

2. Theistic Evolutionism: the idea that macroevolution occurs, and accounts for almost everything, but that God does a few key things, like infuse human beings with souls.

3. "Old Earth" Creationism: the idea that macroevolution does not occur, but at the same time the earth really is 4.5 billion years old.

4. "Young Earth" Creationism: the idea that macroevolution does not occur and that the earth is actually only 6,000-10,000 years old.

It is important to note that belief in the Great Flood could conceivably be combined with any of these views, except for Atheistic Evolution.

I know that evolutionists often argue that creationism is unscientific since it invokes supernatural causes while science seeks naturalistic causes. But is this true? Science is the study of the natural world. Naturally, it must ask whether something could have been naturally caused or not. However, if it can be conclusively proven that a particular thing could not conceivably have any natural cause whatsoever, would it not be ridiculous to insist that scientists should hold, on faith, that there must be some natural cause for it? Would this not be strange? Yet supporters of the theory of evolution sometimes seem to argue along these dubious lines.

I know someone will object, "We cannot conclusively prove that there is no natural explanation for something like the origin of life." But could something like life come into existence

purely naturally in any way other than by chance? I don't see how. And if something could only begin purely naturally by chance, why could a scientist not prove that it could not possibly have come into existence by chance? And if it could be proven that life could not possibly have come into existence by chance, would that not constitute evidence that life could not possibly have purely natural origins? And if it could be proven that life could not possibly have purely natural origins, why would it be "unscientific" to suggest that science has no explanation for the origin of life? And if science had no natural explanation for the origin of life, would it not be putting a straight jacket on itself if it stubbornly insisted that it could not even consider any non-natural origin for it?

I am also aware of some other ways in which evolutionist criticism of creationism can be phrased. I would like to take special note of one. A pamphlet published by the National Academy of Sciences in 1984 entitled "Science and Creationism" includes the following statement:

"Creationism reverses the scientific process. It accepts as authoritative a conclusion seen as unalterable and then seeks to support that conclusion by whatever means possible."

This may be true of some creationists; atheistic evolutionists have often fallen into that same trap. They start with the assumption that God does not exist, or at least does not "interfere" with the world, and work to amass evidence to support this conclusion. In fact, the history of paleontology, for one, provides numerous examples of times when evolution's supporters have committed just the errors that they here accuse their opponents of.

When the first Neanderthal skeleton was found in 1856, evolutionists, in their excitement at having found a potential "missing link" underestimated the cranial capacity of the skull and overemphasized the supposedly apelike characteristics. Everyone on both sides of the evolution debate now realizes that "Neanderthal Man" was a race of Homo

sapiens.

Dr. Dubois, who found the first Homo erectus fossil in Java admitted thirty years later that he had concealed the fact that he had found Homo sapiens fossils at about the same strata as his "Java Man" so that it would be accepted as a hominid predecessor of man instead of just a giant gibbon, which was what he thought it actually was.

Everyone now knows "Piltdown Man" was a blatant forgery, but it was advertised as a hominid ancestor of man for forty years. Evidence to prove it fraudulent was ignored until it became so watertight and overwhelming that it could no longer be dismissed.

In 1922, a fossilized tooth found in Nebraska was declared to be from the mouth of a hominid ancestor of man but was later found to be the tooth of an extinct breed of pig.

Descriptions of the batch of Homo erectus fossils known as "Peking Man" written by the supervisors of the dig significantly conflict with one another and with those of other scientists who examined those fossils. Furthermore, the fossils mysteriously disappeared after World War II, and all we now have are what are said to be plaster casts of the originals, which supposedly were stolen by the Japanese.

Anyone on campus could verify these statements by reading *Science of Today and the Problems of Genesis* by Fr. Patrick O'Connell, which is in our library and (I think) our bookstore. Fr. O'Connell spends much time on "Peking Man" and frequently quotes letters and articles by its discoverers.

And let us not fall for the assumption that the theory of Evolution has been conclusively proven. Variation has been, but not Evolution/Transformism. On this point, the following quotations, all taken from the fourth chapter of *Cosmos and Transcendence* by Wolfgang Smith, (which can be found in the JPII Library in the Mulloy collection) are of interest:

In the heart of this fourth chapter, Smith quotes W.C. Dampier, who accepts Evolution, on the initial

acceptance of Evolution: “Haekel and other materialists. . . joined to create that Darwinism which made many of his followers more Darwinian than Darwin himself. . . Darwinism ceased to be a tentative scientific theory and became a philosophy, almost a religion.”

Right after it he quotes Jean Rostand, who also accepts Evolution: “I firmly believe—because I see no means of doing otherwise—that mammals come from lizards, and lizards from fish; but when I declare and when I think such a thing, I try not to avoid seeing its indigestible enormity and I prefer to leave vague the origin of these scandalous metamorphoses rather than add to their improbability that of a ludicrous interpretation.”

In the sixty-seventh footnote of the above mentioned book Smith quotes the historian of science Hossein Nasr on dissenters to the theory of evolution: “Only too often the works of such authors have been deliberately neglected or suppressed. A case in point is the book by D. Dewar called *The Transformist Illusion*, Murfreesboro, 1957, which has assembled a vast amount of paleontological and biological evidence against evolution. The author, who was an evolutionist in his youth, wrote many monographs which exist in the libraries of comparative biology everywhere. But his last book had to be published in Murfreesboro, Tennessee (!) and is not easy to find even in libraries that have all the earlier works. There is hardly any other field of science where such obscurantist practices are prevalent.”

At the end of the chapter he quotes Carl Jung saying of the theory: “From the standpoint of epistemology it is just as admissible to derive animals from the human species, as man from animal species. But we know how ill Professor Dacqu fared in his academic

career because of his sin against the spirit of the age, which will not let itself be trifled with. It is a religion, or— even more—a creed which has absolutely no connection with reason, but whose significance lies in the unpleasant fact that it is taken as the absolute measure of all truth and is supposed always to have common sense upon its side.”

Wolfgang Smith concludes this chapter thus: “In short, there are ‘means of doing otherwise’; but they have been ruled out of court. Moreover, there is a traditional Christian doctrine concerning the origin of living forms which accords both with reason and with the facts; the hitch is that it accords not with the modern bent of mind, ‘the spirit of the age which will not let itself be trifled with.’ “ In other words, Smith maintains that Evolution appears to scientists to be the only scientifically valid explanation for the origin of life because all non-naturalistic explanations have been arbitrarily assumed to be impossible simply because they do not fit “the spirit of the age.” Would it be right to leave such a charge against the scientific community unexamined? Should we not determine if there is substance to the charge and, if there is, work to correct the problem?

And lastly, let us remain humble. None of us is omniscient. We can make mistakes. We can misinterpret data. All too often, those involved in the evolution debate seem to forget this. They would do well to ponder the words Sherlock Holmes gives Dr. Watson in the episode of *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*:

“ ‘I could hardly imagine a more damning case,’ [Watson] remarked.

“ ‘Circumstantial evidence is a very tricky thing,’ answered Holmes thoughtfully. ‘It may seem to point very straight to one thing, but if you shift your own point of view a little, you may find it pointing in an equally uncompromising manner to something entirely different.’ ” ■

Michael Healy is a senior, majoring in philosophy.

Brown on Evolution

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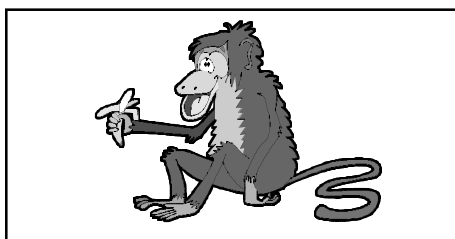
has a strong case for the natural evolution of varieties within species, what is known as micro-evolution. By itself this is uncontroversial, supported by the evidence, and a significant contribution to natural science.

The problems enter when Darwin makes the leap to macro-evolution, or evolution of one species from another. This great shift from qualitative changes within species to macro-evolution is an unjustified conclusion, supported only by a common trick of logic (N.B., I’m not impugning Darwin’s motives here), namely, an abuse of analogy. Darwin “reasons” like this: if it’s the case that species evolve into varieties after a sufficiently long time, then, given enough time, species could very well have been varieties to begin with, which finally differentiated themselves enough to be a separate species, and genera could have previously been only species, etc.

The logical conclusion of this analogy is that there was some one original animal from which sprung all modern species. One might also suppose that in the distant future, we will have to invent other categories to contain what are currently species as they evolve further.

This hypothesis is quite plausible at first glance. It makes sense that this is the way things could have happened. However, it certainly does not deserve the name of theory, as that word is currently used by natural science. A hypothesis becomes a theory by being tested and verified by the objective evidence. And Darwin’s theory has by no means been so verified—either by Darwin or anyone else. There simply is no hard evidence for macro-evolution. The only thing supporting it is the abused principle of analogy, which has been twisted from an explanatory device into a method of proof.

The people of Darwin’s time accepted his theory despite the dearth of evidence, because it fit well with so many other popular ideas of the age



(e.g., materialism and the idea of progress.) By now it has become a part of our intellectual culture which is just taken for granted. It is high time, however, that we give it a more critical analysis.

Upon examination of Darwinism, several flaws become apparent. The first is the fact that there is a difference in kind, not just degree, between micro and macro-evolution. It is an entirely different thing to say that fish developed lungs than to say that pigeons developed longer beaks. The second is a simple change in quality, while the first is a radical change in structure. No amount of breeding is going to yield a dog with a fifth leg, no matter how much time you allow. And there is no such thing as a gradually evolving fifth leg; what in the world would that look like anyway! To say that certain parts evolved gradually is often even more absurd than to posit an instantaneous appearance of an organ; we have at least seen mutated animals that had an extra limb, but we've never, that I've ever heard of, seen something that might properly be called a gradually evolving leg.

At this point many people would object by pointing out things like flippers and wings which as commonly thought to be forerunners of arms. All this shows, though, is a further abuse of analogy. Just because there are structural similarities between two parts or organs does not mean that one developed from the other or that they both developed from a common ancestor. But this is precisely what evolution claims as true. Yet there is not one shred of evidence that any such thing actually happened. We're only convinced because we can see certain structural similarities. And that is as far as evolutionists go; there is no real explanation of how such a process of development from flipper to arm might have taken place. As "evidence" for this theory, evolutionists point out a series of limbs (e.g. fish fin, shark fin, dolphin flipper, walrus 'arm', otter arm, etc.) that look like they could be intermediate stages, which is far from proving the point.

I personally can't even imagine how a flipper might be made to change ever so slightly so as to gradually develop into an arm. I highly doubt that it's even genetically possible, unless one posits genetic mutations, which brings another whole set of problems into the picture. In any case, there is no doubt that the explanation offered by Darwinism (i.e., natural selection) is insufficient. For example, I can see how a longer or stronger flipper might help a dolphin to survive better and pass on its genes to its offspring. But I cannot see how anything resembling a finger, or a little bump that might be the beginning of a finger, or a narrower flipper, or any number of other things that might be intermediate stages, is going to help a dolphin survive better and pass on these characteristics. Gradual qualitative improvements can help an animal survive better, but I cannot see how structural changes, when looked at on the gradual level, are going to offer an animal any better chances of survival.

Another point which I would like to address is that of intermediates. Evolution assumes a very, very gradual process (millions of years) of accumulated changes, which means that there have been many thousands of intermediate species between each modern species and its ancient predecessors. The problem is, where are their fossils? The geological record in no way gives evidence that millions of other species existed. Darwin addresses this problem, but quite unsuccessfully. He conceded that the geological record was imperfect, and dedicated the whole of chapter 10 to trying to resolve this problem. Ultimately, he is unable to solve the problem convincingly, and a century and a half later, after major developments in technical capabilities and massive amounts of geological research, we are little closer to verifying evolution. Rather than concluding that the geological record is imperfect, it seems more sensible to conclude that the "theory" of evolution is imperfect.

Lastly, I would like to address the

issue of specialization. An obvious question should occur to anyone who gives evolution any serious thought: If a given attribute helps an animal survive better, then why wouldn't several such attributes help even more? For example, if gills allow a fish to breathe under water, and mammals developed from fish, then why would mammals lose their gills? Certainly they would be better able to survive if they had both lungs and gills. Darwin's answer is that no one doubts the value of the physiological division of labor. That is, each animal fills a particular niche, just as each person on an assembly line does one particular task. Darwin considers this to be the end of the matter, because he's relying on the common notion of his time and ours that specialization is more efficient than generalization. He entirely misapplies the principle, though. Division of labor only works in the context of a group effort, when each person is doing his own part. With animals, however, it is individual survival that is important, so the more beneficial qualities one has the better. If evolution were a valid theory, it would seem that animals should be getting more generalized, not more specialized.

In conclusion, Darwinism reminds me of the movie *Angels in the Outfield*, throughout which is repeated the line "It could happen." There is no direct evidence that evolution takes place, only a number of facts that seem to be explained by positing it. The problem is that more difficulties arise than are explained. A less all-encompassing, but more coherent and sound theory would be to posit independent creation along with a certain degree of micro-evolution.■

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* See such authors as Michael Johnson, Phillip Johnson, and Michael Behe.