

Apologetics 2: Response to New Atheism (CM5)

Science and Origins 2

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Apologetics 2 (CM5)

Oct. 2 – Introduction

Oct. 9 – Faith and Reason

Oct. 16 – ***Mid-Term Break***

Oct. 23 – Science and Origins


Oct. 30 – Science and Origins 2

Nov. 6 – Morality, Suffering and Violence

Nov. 13 – The Influence of Religion

Nov. 20 – Conclusion; Final Exam

Science versus Religion?

- 1) Belief in Darwinism as a comprehensive explanation for the biosphere has become a deterrent to Christian faith. The entrenched Darwinian ideology is an obstacle to the discussion and teaching of God's intervention in creating life and setting humans apart in nature. The de facto establishment of naturalism in science (and culture at large) has a vise-grip on most of the public discourse on science.
 - 2) Darwinism suffers from fatal flaws both logically and evidentially. It is far less well-supported than commonly thought. It thus opens a door for Christian apologetics that would otherwise be closed.
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Science versus Religion?

- Darwinists reject all criticisms of Darwinism as religiously based, unscientific and unworthy of serious attention. But it is false that all significant critiques of Darwinism come from religious sources.
- In recent years a variety of thinkers have argued against Darwinism without appealing to any religious sources.
- Since 2001, over 900 scientists of various worldviews have signed a published statement questioning the legitimacy of Darwinism:
“We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged.”

Icons of Evolution?

- The color of moths?
- The finch beak variations?
- Evolutionary extrapolation?
- Ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny?
- Darwin's tree of life?
- Transitional forms?
- Do we have a common ancestor?
- Homology: Darwinian or designed?
- Vestigial organs and systems?
- We therefore are left with a strong opening
for Intelligent Design.

Design as Alternative to Darwinism

➤ **Paley's Teleological Argument**

- The “argument from design,” or “watchmaker argument” says that the complexity of the world demands belief in a Creator, in the same way that the complexity of a watch demands belief in a watchmaker.
- The argument goes like this:
 - 1. A watch has many complex parts, works a specific and intentional function, and is intelligently designed to achieve that function.
 - 2. Similarly, the world has many complex parts, works a specific and intentional function (esp. the sustaining of life), and is intelligently designed to achieve that function.
 - 3. Therefore, there is a very high probability that the world – like the watch – was intelligently designed by a Creator.

Design as Alternative to Darwinism

"It makes no difference whether a scientific theory comes from a dream, the Bible or bathroom graffiti. The issue is whether independent scientific reasons are given for it." J.P. Moreland

➤ **Principle of “Irreducible Complexity”**

1. Molecular machines evidence specified complexity (i.e., contingent, complex and specified).
2. Specified complexity cannot be explained on the basis of chance or necessity, or the combination of chance and necessity.
3. Intelligent agency is a known cause which produces specified complexity.
4. Therefore, best explanation for specified complexity in molecular machines is intelligent design.

Design as Alternative to Darwinism

➤ **The Fine-Tuning Teleological Argument**

- A version of the teleological argument, this is based on scientific discoveries of “cosmic constants” which have existed since the Big Bang. If the values of the cosmic constants were even *very* slightly different, life on earth would not be possible.
- **1. Rate of Expansion of the Universe.** If this were different by as little as $1/10^{60}$ the universe would either have collapsed or would have expanded too rapidly for stars to form.
- **2. Strong Nuclear Force.** If the force that binds protons and neutrons together had been even 5% stronger or weaker, life would not have been possible.
- **3. Force of Gravity.** If gravity had been stronger or weaker by even $1/10^{40}$ then stars which can support life (like our sun) would not have been formed.

Design as Alternative to Darwinism

➤ **Kalam Cosmological Argument**

- a modern re-formulation of the cosmological argument, which has served as a key component of the revival of Christian apologetics in response to the New Atheism.
- The argument goes like this:
 1. Everything that begins to exist has a cause;
 2. The universe began to exist;
 3. *Therefore*, the universe has a cause.
 4. If the universe has a cause, then an uncaused, personal Creator of the universe exists, who is beginningless, changeless, immaterial, timeless, spaceless and enormously powerful;
 5. *Therefore*: an uncaused, personal Creator of the universe exists, who is beginningless, changeless, immaterial, timeless, spaceless and enormously powerful.