

Evolution Impossible

12 Reasons Why Evolution Cannot
Explain the Origin of Life on Earth

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DNA

Introduction

Some time ago I was meeting with university professors from a highly regarded Australian university. They were involved in plant breeding research and we were discussing a possible collaborative research project, breeding disease-resistance traits into a newly developed functional cereal grain. The breeding techniques included treating seeds with chemicals that damaged their DNA. The resulting mutant seeds were then germinated and tested for any beneficial traits that might have resulted from the changes.

The new grain cultivar we were discussing possessed a favorable variation due to the destruction of part of a gene. This loss of genetic material meant that the “new” plant produced a grain with less easily digestible starch. This grain potentially could be made into foods with significant benefits in the prevention and management of type 2 diabetes.

Over lunch I was thinking of the role of mutations in relation to the theory of evolution. For a new species to evolve from a common ancestor, new genetic information must arise — presumably from some sort of favorable mutation. So while we were sitting around the lunch table, I asked the research scientist in charge of the plant-breeding project a question. “Do mutations ever give rise to new purposeful genetic information?”

His answer was immediate. “Of course — yes!”

“Can you give me an example?” I then asked.

He thought for a moment and replied along the lines of “Um, I can’t think of a specific example right now but ask our geneticist . . . he will be able to.”

Later that afternoon I caught up with the senior genetics researcher in the university plant-breeding department and asked him the same question.

His reply was just as quick, but the very opposite! “Never!”

Surprised, I pressed him further. He explained that mutations always lead to damaged DNA, which usually results in the *loss* of genetic information. He knew of *no* instances where new purposeful genetic information arose, either by a natural process or through a mutation induced chemically or with radiation.

I thought about these two responses. The older, more experienced scientist believed mutations *can* produce new purposeful genetic information. And I dare say the other scientists around the lunch table working in related biological fields believed likewise — they certainly did not correct the first answer. It seemed likely to me that most scientists who put up their hand for believing in evolution would also agree that mutations can produce new genetic codes, providing new traits for the forces of natural selection to choose from for new species to evolve.

But if the geneticist was correct and mutations never produced new purposeful genetic information, “evolution” as the cause of life on earth was impossible and could not have happened.

As I thought about this I decided to begin researching and writing this book.

Since the early 1970s, when I was a research fellow in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Tasmania, I have been studying the evidence for evolution. At that time a friend was completing his doctorate in geochemistry. One day he showed me the results from some carbon-14 dating of a specimen of wood from a partly fossilized shovel handle found in the old gold-mining site he was researching. The analysis results from the government laboratory in New Zealand gave an age of 6,600 years. However, the mining activity was from the late 1800s, and it was unlikely that the European shovel handle was made from timber more than a few hundred years old.

This apparently incorrect dating result stimulated my interest in radiometric dating methods, along with the associated implications for the dating of the geological column and evolution. As I continued my research, it seemed to me that evolution had some obvious major problems that were being noted by high-profile scientists such as Sir Fred Hoyle, a well-known

British astronomer,¹ and Professor E.H. Andrews, head of the Department of Materials at the University of London.²

In the late 1990s, after a seminar on the evidence for creation at Macquarie University in Sydney, I decided to write to scientists who held a creationist view of origins, asking them why they chose to believe in creation as opposed to evolution. I found their arguments revealing and compelling, so I edited some of the replies and those became the book *In Six Days: 50 Scientists Explain Why They Believe in Creation*,³ which was originally published in 1999. This book has since been reprinted many times, in German, Italian, Spanish, and Korean editions, too, and is widely cited on the Internet in the evolution versus creation debate.⁴

Creation *is* an act of God — He is the Supreme Intelligence — so I decided to write to academics at secular universities who were believers, asking them to explain why they believed in God, miracles, and answers to prayer. These academics provided me with abundant evidence of a personal God who interacts with His creation. So again I edited some of the replies I received, and the work was published in 2001 under the title *The God Factor: 50 Scientists and Academics Explain Why They Believe in God*.⁵ Again, this book has been reprinted a number of times.

This present book follows *In Six Days* and *The God Factor*, summarizing the scientific evidence that indicates that evolution cannot be the mechanism responsible for life on earth. It details the evidence I have found that supports the geneticist's assertion, together with much other scientific research that demonstrates that natural evolutionary processes could not have been responsible for the diversity of life this planet has seen.

Many readers may find this a challenging and new perspective, but hopefully one that will stimulate more informed debate on the subject of origins.

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1. Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe, *Evolution from Space* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1981), p. 23–33.
 2. E.H. Andrews, *God, Science and Evolution* (Homebush West, New South Wales: ANZEA Books, 1981).
 3. John F. Ashton, editor, *In Six Days* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2001).
 4. See citations of *In Six Days* in, for example: C. Groves, "The Science of Culture," in *Being Human: Science, Culture and Fear*, The Royal Society of New Zealand, Miscellaneous Series no 63, 2003; E.C. Scott and G. Branch, "Antievolutionism: Changes and Continuities," *BioScience*, vol. 53, no. 3 (2003): p. 282–285; "Level of Support for Evolution," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Level_of_support_for_evolution accessed 18/01/2012.
 5. John Ashton, editor, *The God Factor* (Australia: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001).





Chapter 1

But Isn't Evolution a Fact?

As you begin to read this book, you might start to respond like many others previously have: “I thought it was well established scientifically that all life on earth, including humans, evolved from primitive simple cells over hundreds of millions of years. This is what we have been taught in science and biology classes. How can a practicing scientist and university professor now write a book claiming that there is evidence that evolution is impossible?”

This is a very legitimate question and one that raises the very relevant issues that this book attempts to address. Most scientists and educators believe that evolution is true — simply because that is what they have been taught when they went through school, college, and university. Most science textbooks, science academies, science museums, and popular biology authors echo the view that evolution is a proven fact of science. For example, a widely used 2007 university textbook on evolution has a bold-type topic heading “The Fact of Evolution Is Explained by Evolutionary Theory.”¹ The authors go on to claim that scientists now understand how all the evolutionary processes work, and in many instances how these processes have generated species adaptation and divergence.

1. N.H. Barton, D.E.G. Briggs, J.A. Eisen, and N.H. Patel, *Evolution* (Cold Spring Harbour, NY: Cold Spring Harbour Laboratory Press, 2007), p. 81.

Evolution Impossible

In a recent position paper on evolution, the United States National Academy of Sciences stated that “evolution” is considered a fact. The Academy maintained that because the theory of evolution is supported by so many experiments and observations, scientists are confident that the fundamental components of the theory will not be overturned by new scientific evidence.² The Geological Society of London claims that it has been long established beyond doubt that our planet is about 4,560 million years old. It holds that life has evolved into its current form over a period of thousands of millions of years as a result of genetic variation combined with natural selection.³

The Australian Academy of Science published a similar view, saying that there is a vast body of “factual” knowledge supporting the theory that the natural processes of evolution have produced the biological complexity we have on earth today.⁴ In fact, science academies around the world echo the same belief in evolution as the Interacademy Panel (IAP), a global network of science academies, publishing a statement on the teaching of evolution signed by 67 academies of sciences. This statement asserts that the member academies agree that evidence-based “facts” about the evolution of life on earth have been established by a large number of observations and results of independent experiments, including that

- life appeared on earth at least 2.5 billion years ago;
- since life first appeared it has continued to evolve, and this is confirmed by paleontology and modern biology and biochemistry;
- the structure of the genetic code of all living organisms indicates their common primordial origin.⁵

Not surprisingly, most natural history museums have displays presenting evolution as if it is a “fact” of science. For example, the Smithsonian Institute, in their 2009 exhibit “Since Darwin: The Evolution of Evolution,” has this statement:

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2. National Academy of Sciences and Institute of Medicine, *Science, Evolution, and Creationism* (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2008), p. 11. Available at: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11876.
 3. Geological Society of London, “Young Earth Creationism, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design,” 2008, available online at: http://www.geolsoc.org.uk/gsl/views/policy_statements/page3635.html, accessed 8/6/2010.
 4. Australian Academy of Science, *Intelligent Design Is Not Science*, letter published in major Australian newspapers, October 21, 2005. See: <http://www.science.org.au/reports/intelligent-design.htm>.
 5. The Interacademy Panel on International Issues, IAP Statement on the Teaching of Evolution, 2006, see: <http://www.interacademies.net/File.aspx?id=6150>.

“The evolution of living things has been occurring for billions of years and is responsible for the dazzling diversity of life on Earth. *That is a fact*” (emphasis mine).⁶

When the world’s preeminent institution devoted to researching natural history says that evolution is a fact, it is very reasonable for a casual visitor and the media to believe this. Of course, it also is not surprising that well-known evolutionists also assert that evolution is a “fact” of science, such as the eminent Harvard University paleontologist Stephen J. Gould, who writes that he does not deny the “fact” of evolution,⁷ and Oxford University Professor Richard Dawkins, who writes that the purpose of his 2009 book on evolution is to show that evolution is an “inescapable fact.”⁸

However, when we examine these statements about evolution more closely, we find that they are simply assertions made without citing proven evidence, or where evidence is cited it does not actually prove the claim. For example, it is asserted that life arose so many million years ago. But I have found no reputable scientific paper explaining a proven mechanism for how a living cell could arise from nonliving molecules — a process called abiogenesis. On the other hand, I have found many published scientific findings that show that abiogenesis cannot happen, as I explain in chapter 3.

Another assertion is that all life “evolved” from primitive organisms over millions of years, which stems from Charles Darwin’s theory involving mutations and natural selection. When Darwin wrote his book over 150 years ago, scientists at that time knew very little about the extremely complex biochemistry machinery within living organisms. In fact, living cells had not yet been discovered. It took nearly a century of further scientific study before DNA — a chemical molecule that encodes the structure and mechanisms that constitute the myriad different types of cells that make up the millions of different organisms that inhabit our planet — was discovered. The development in recent years — and in particular during the last three decades — of sophisticated scientific equipment and methodologies has enabled scientists to explore the components of living organisms and their cells extensively. We now know a high level of detail about the enormous complexity of the genetic information encoding their structures and biochemistry.

6. See <http://www.mnh.si.edu/exhibits/darwin/evolution.html>, accessed 10/23/2009.

7. National Academy of Sciences, *Science and Creationism: A View from the National Academy of Sciences* (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999), p. 28.

8. Richard Dawkins, *The Greatest Show on Earth: The Evidence for Evolution* (London: Bantam Press, 2009), p. 18.

However, to date I have found no reputable published scientific paper that explains a proven mechanism for how this huge amount of highly complex genetic information could arise by chance. Nor could I find any scientific papers reporting the observation of new meaningful genetic information arising by chance. In other words, I could find not a single published scientific paper reporting the evidence that supports the fundamental requirement of evolution that new meaningful genetic information arises by chance. Instead, I have found much published data showing that it is impossible for new purposeful genetic information of any significance for evolution to arise by chance, and I discuss this evidence in detail in chapter 4.

This was an astounding finding — the widely claimed “fact” of evolution was not only *not* proved, but there were published articles disproving it. This observation will be a surprise to many readers, and some may doubt that my observations are correct. After all, have I not just pointed out that evolution is considered to have occurred by most scientists around the world? How can I now say it has been disproved by scientific studies? Why don't other scientists now reject Darwin's theory? The answer is that some scientists, as they read about the latest scientific evidence regarding the biochemistry of living organisms, are now also rejecting evolution. However, it is not easy for scientists to publicly reject evolution because of peer pressure to have those scientists discredited or removed from positions of influence. A recent example of this was the case of Israeli Education Ministry chief scientist Dr. Gavriel Avital, who was sacked for questioning the validity of evolution.⁹ A few years ago the documentary film *Expelled, No Intelligence Allowed* was produced, which exposed examples of the persecution and marginalization of scientists who have dared to question the evidence for evolution.¹⁰

Science-based doubts about the theory of evolution are not new.

In the mid-1960s, several mathematicians challenged the plausibility of evolution from a probability standpoint. The resulting mathematical studies culminated in a symposium on the analysis of the probabilities that evolution could occur, which was held at the Wistar Institute, a highly regarded biomedical science research center in Philadelphia. A full record of the presentations at the symposium was published that showed that the biologists were not happy about this new challenge to evolution.¹¹ They insisted that

9. O. Kashti, “Sa’ar Dismisses Chief Scientist for Questioning Evolution,” *Haaretz*, October 5, 2010; see <http://www.haaretz.com>.

10. See www.expelledthemovie.com.

11. P.S. Moorhead and M.M. Kaplan, editors, “Mathematical Challenges to the Neo-Darwinian Interpretation of Evolution,” The Wistar Institute Symposium Monograph No. 5 (Philadelphia, PA: Wistar Institute Press, 1967).

the mathematicians did not understand evolution, but they did not provide any quantitative answers to the challenges.

In the 1970s, Harvard-educated paleontologist Dr. Barbara J. Stahl drew attention to some of the serious shortcomings in the fossil evidence for evolution.¹² In the mid-1980s, King's College London-educated molecular biologist Dr. Michael Denton drew attention to the huge complexity of biological systems at the molecular level and the inability of the theory of evolution to explain the origin of these systems.¹³

In the 1990s, the science of *information theory* came into prominence, but it still has not uncovered a natural source for the huge mass of specific information found within the genome, the DNA blueprint of living things. The cell proteins and nucleotides in our chromosomes are intricately complex and specific in their structure. Minute alterations in the arrangements of the amino acid components of these protein molecules affects their shape, the way they are folded, and their function. Their unique and precise arrangement gives them their specific biological information or code. Like digits in a computer code, their arrangement must be perfect or it fails. But where did this information come from? “From an ancestor” is not a helpful answer — it explains nothing. This failure of evolution theory to be able to explain the source of biological information has been pointed out by several information theorists such as Professor Werner Gitt at the German Federal Institute of Physics¹⁴ and Massachusetts Institute of Technology-educated physicist Dr. Lee Spetner.¹⁵

In an attempt to fill this glaring gap in the evolutionary explanation of how animals and plants developed their astounding variety and complexity, Harvard Medical School biology professor Dr. Marc W. Kirschner and University of California, Berkeley, professor of cell and developmental biology John C. Gerhart developed a new theory. It is related to the new field of epigenomics and called “facilitated variation,” details of which they described in their book *The Plausibility of Life: Resolving Darwin's Dilemma*, which was published by Yale University Press in 2005.¹⁶ They suggest that the “core processes” encoded in the DNA of an organism that produce its structure are in a sense so stable they are impervious to change produced by small-scale

12. Barbara J. Stahl, *Vertebrate History, Problems in Evolution* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973).

13. Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler, 1986).

14. Werner Gitt, *In the Beginning Was Information* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2006).

15. Lee M. Spetner, *Not By Chance: Shattering the Modern Theory of Evolution* (New York: Judaica Press, 1997).

16. Marc W. Kirschner and John C. Gerhart, *The Plausibility of Life: Resolving Darwin's Dilemma* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005).

mutations, and they only allow for the possibility of a number of small mutational changes to accumulate over time. They then argue that changes in the organism's environment produce stressors that trigger the activation of the accumulated mutations, which in turn produce some totally new "core processes" resulting in a new configuration of part of the organism. However, even if the theory were proved to explain some changes in biological systems, it still does not explain where the genetic information in the original "core processes" came from. In fact, in their conclusion the authors admit that their theory actually opens up more questions about the origins of the conserved "core processes."

Further shortcomings of the theory of evolution were pointed out by the Rutgers University philosopher Dr. Jerry Fodor, who in an extraordinary article titled "Why Pigs Don't Have Wings" presented very strong arguments as to why Darwinian-type "natural selection" cannot be an effective basis for species evolution.¹⁷ Dr. Fodor's piece attracted a lot of comment from other scientists, and he went on to develop his arguments further in a recent book co-authored by Dr. Masimo Piattelli-Palmarini, professor of cognitive science at the University of Arizona, titled *What Darwin Got Wrong*.¹⁸

Since "natural selection" comprises the essential core of Darwin's theory, Fodor's paper presented a serious challenge to the scientific integrity of evolution. As a result, in July 2008, 16 of the world's leading evolutionary scientists met in a castle in Altenberg, Austria, to discuss these serious threats to evolutionary science. Details of the conference were written up by science journalist Suzan Mazur.¹⁹ She reports interviews and comments from attendees and other thought leaders in the area of evolution. They highlight the growing realization by these scientists that if natural selection is now rejected or marginalized as the underpinning evolutionary process, then Darwin's theory is dead. Dr. Jerry Fodor is quoted as saying, "Basically I don't think anybody knows how evolution works."²⁰

This statement is a far cry from the confident assertions found in biology textbooks and museum displays. Furthermore, nobody knows how evolution works because nobody has ever observed evolution — it has never

17. Jerry Fodor, "Why Pigs Don't Have Wings," *London Review of Books*, vol. 29, no. 20 (2007): p. 19–22, available at <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v29/n20/jerry-fodor/why-pigs-dont-have-wings>.

18. Jerry Fodor and Masimo Piattelli-Palmarini, *What Darwin Got Wrong* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010).

19. Suzan Mazur, *The Altenberg 16: An Exposé of the Evolution Industry* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2010), available online at <http://books.google.com/books>.

20. *Ibid.* p. 34.

been observed in the past and it has not been observed in the laboratory. No one has been able to set up an experiment and make one type of organism evolve into a new type of organism (unless we deliberately remove genetic information or insert genetic information from another organism, neither of which is true evolution). To have no mechanism for how evolution can occur, as well as no experimental evidence, leaves evolution far from being a fact of science.

This quandary over evolution among top scientists is very real. What theory can replace neo-Darwinism? No one knows. Evolutionists are groping for credible mechanisms that can give rise to the multitude of life forms in our biosphere. The interviews reported by Susan Mazur present a vivid picture of the uncertainties and vehement disagreements of these scientists who continue to cling to their faith that evolution is an unquestioned fact of history. But evolution's inner workings and mechanisms are made excruciatingly doubtful by the recent discoveries in molecular biology such as those highlighted by University of Cambridge-educated philosopher Dr. Stephen C. Meyer in his recent book *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design*.²¹

The current scientific debate over the mechanisms of evolution demonstrates that evolution is not a proven “fact” of science — it is a “wish” of science, a fanciful hope in the light of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that somehow a mechanical process to describe how life arose will be discovered. As several social commentators and a biographer have pointed out, Darwin established a mechanical conception of organic life in the “machine age,” that time following the first world fair in London in 1851, when the machine had become the single most absorbing preoccupation of the time.²² This obsession with the “machine worldview” continues to dominate science to this day and is played out in the evolution controversy.

But before considering more of the evidence against evolution, let us first revisit Darwin's theory in the next chapter.

21. Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design* (New York: HarperOne, 2009).

22. Geoffrey West, *Charles Darwin: A Portrait* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1938), p. 334. See also A. Sandow, “Social Factors in the Origin of Darwinism,” *The Quarterly Review of Biology*, vol. 13 (1938): p. 315–326; John C. Greene, *Science, Ideology and World View* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981).