

Review: J.P.Moreland et al., *Theistic Evolution: A Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Critique*, Crossway Publishing, HarperOne, New York, NY, 2014

Pages: 1,007

Devolved Theism

If you can get through this thousand-page tome and still believe Theistic Evolution is scientifically, philosophically or theologically supportable then you are blinded by the god of this world (II Corinthians 4.4).

Whilst scripture is above so-called 'science', the scientific arguments alone from inference demand that our origin has an intelligent designer, not the fantastic gods of 'natural selection', 'random mutation' and 'deep time'.

No sane Christian cognisant of the premises behind evolution, i.e., that its engine is random and results undirected by blind 'nature', could reconcile it with a non-random Creator who actively guides His creation.

The only downsides of the book are references to the corrupted English Standard Version, and that even the main theology 'expert' Wayne Grudem sees no conflict between a universe billions of years old and Genesis 1-11. He claims (p. 63) that each creation day might have 'gaps' of millions of years. Despite the fact scripture doesn't mention them, it doesn't change the Biblical order of creation which is antithetical to evolution. He would also have thorns and thistles, and dying sea and air animals millions of years before the curse and death entered the universe through sin (Genesis 3.18, Romans 5.12).

Mysteriously, there are appendices dedicated to evolution sympathisers C.S. Lewis and B. B. Warfield. The latter is relevant in that he was the driving force behind today's unscriptural Originals Onlyism dogma (which holds that due to manuscript 'mutations' no collection of writings today on earth agree 100% with the content of the [unobservable] LUCA manuscripts for each of the 66 books).

Contributors (pp. 19-26)

Foreword (pp. 27-31)

Scientific and Philosophical Introduction: Defining Theistic Evolution [Stephen C. Meyer] (pp. 1-60)

Not even God can direct an undirected process!

Biblical and Theological Introduction: The Incompatibility of Theistic Evolution With the Biblical Account of Creation and With Important Christian Doctrines [Wayne Grudem] (pp. 32-77)

Grudem believes one can add millions of years between each creation day.

Even Theistic Evolution (TE) proposes no "intrusions for outside" by God.

Some 8,000 years ago, it is claimed, *Homo divinus*, or the first human couple was chosen from Neolithic peoples.

I) Three Good Reasons for People of Faith to Reject Darwin's Explanation of Life [Douglas D. Axe] (pp. 78-104)

Physical causes are categorically incapable of explaining conscious life.

Thomas Nagel refers to the "cosmic authority problem."

II) Neo-Darwinism and the Origin of Biological Form and Information [Stephen C. Meyer] (pp. 77-137)

The angiosperm "big bloom" is said to have been during the Cretaceous 130Ma, and the mammalian radiation in the Eocene (55Ma).

Natural selection (NS) can only "select" what random mutations first stumble upon.

Significant morphological change can only occur under TE id:

1. some trait q varies.
2. creature with q leaves offspring which either do or don't have q .
3. subsequent generations faithfully transmit q .

"Embryonic lethal" mutations are a huge problem for TE.

Two AA changes in nylonase to a 392-AA existing protein enabled it to metabolise nylon.

III) Evolution: A Story Without a Mechanism [Matti Leisola]? (pp. 138-163)

Adding "theistic" does nothing to evolution's explanatory power.

Every attempt in the laboratory to mimic evolution is an example of design.

The average DNA base mutation is 10^{-10} .

Xylitol is a C sugar alcohol and is derivable from xylose using *Candida*.

Isoprene is the genesis material for synthetic rubber.

Earth has an estimated 10^{30} bacterial cells.

Similarity only shows similarity, it does nothing to explain its origin.

Evolution used to be called transmutation.

VI) Are Present Proposals on Chemical Evolutionary Mechanisms Accurately Pointing Toward First Life? [James M. Tour] (pp. 164-191)

Nanotrucks and cars can be built to move across Au surfaces. Velocity of slow vehicles is 1.8 rph and 3M rph for fast ones.

90% of organic chemical reactions are failures.

Pentose sugars have three stereogenic centers making eight possible isomers. These fully decay after a few years at most.

Lypholisation is water removal by ice sublimation under reduced pressure (<0.001 atmospheres).

Enantiomers are mirror images, diastereomers unique.

V) Digital Evolution: Predictions of Design [Winston Ewert] (pp. 193-216)

Hamming distance is the difference of characters between two aligned strings.

"Avida's" low mutation rate meant it failed to evolve many tasks.

"Tierra" cannot start a Cambrian Explosion event.

"Stylus" cannot evolve a character starting from junk.

Evolution is unfalsifiable by computer simulation.

VI) The Difference It Doesn't Make: Why the "Front-End Loaded" Concept of Design Fails to Explain the Origin of Biological Information [Stephen C. Meyer] (pp. 217-236)

"Front-end-loaded" fails to recognise that laws of nature do not describe information-generating processes.

There must be some physical law to transmit whatever information was present at creation across billions of years without degradation.

VII) Why DNA Mutations Cannot Accomplish What Neo-Darwinism Requires [Jonathan Wells] (pp. 237-256)

Multiple exons can be duplicated or deleted after initial DNA reading by mRNA so that the final mRNA is different. This is an alternative splicing code or RNA editing which is extensive in humans.

Glycans is from Greek (sweet). Long molecules are glycosaminoglycans.

The preexisting cell architecture is a unique code.

VIII) Theistic Evolution and the Extended Evolutionary Synthesis: Does It Work? [Stephen C. Meyer, Ann K. Gauger, Paul A. Nelson] (pp. 257-287)

Mutations may be major but not viable, viable but not major, but not both.

Most homeotic [*Hox*] gene mutations cause fatal birth defects.

IX) Evidence From Embryology Challenges Evolutionary Theory [Sheena Tyler] (pp. 288-327)

Extrapolation is a major tenet of the Modern Synthesis.

A *Ubx* gene mutation in *Drosophila* causes it to grow another pair of wings.

Limb struts are already oriented during embryonic development before any loading takes place.

NPC are neural progenitor cells.

Chromosomes are DNA strands wrapped around histone proteins.

20% of hybrids are fertile.

Spatial cell arrangement within an embryo during mitosis is the "cleavage pattern".

X) The Fossil Record and Universal Common Ancestry [Gunter Bechly, Stephen C. Meyer Tyler] (pp. 289-361)

Morphological gaps are evident in phyla, classes and orders.

The Late Heavy Bombardment is said to have been 4.1-3.8Ga which boiled off the oceans and creating a water-vapour atmosphere.

Avalon Explosion [575-565mya]

Great Ordovician Biodiversification Event (GOBE) [485-460mya]

Devonian Nekton Revolution [410-400mya]: marine nektonic animals swim.

Odontode Explosion [425-415mya]: odontodes are jawed fish.

Silurian-Devonian Radiation [Late Silurian]: sudden appearance of vascular plants.

Carboniferous Insect Explosion [318-300mya]

Triassic Explosion [252mya]

Early Triassic Terrestrial Tetrapod Radiation [252-240mya]

Early Triassic Marine Reptile Radiation [242-240mya]

Mid-Triassic Gliding Reptile Radiation [230-228mya]

Mosasaur Radiation [Upper Cretaceous]

Angiosperm Radiation [130-115mya]

Modern Placental Mammal Radiation [69-49mya]

Modern Bird Radiation [Paleocene]

Hominid lineage is said to be: opossums, shrews, tree shrews, lemurs, monkeys, man.

XI) Universal Common Descent: A Comprehensive Critique [Casey Luskin] (pp. 362-401)

New World platyrrhine monkeys are said to be descended from Old World catarrhine monkeys. However, the Old World ones had to migrate across the Atlantic ocean to South America (at least a fertile couple or a pregnant female!).

Nolo contendere is "no contest".

Xenarthra are sloths and anteaters.

Radial symmetry occurs about a central body axis.

Cephalopods have camera eyes almost identical to humans.

Richard Dawkins: "it is vanishingly improbable that exactly the same evolutionary pathway should ever be travelled twice."

Phylogenetic trees have a "consistency index" (CI) which is the minimum number of "evolutionary events" divided by the number of the tree.

Cleavage and gastrulation are the two earliest stages of vertebrate development.

The evolutionary hourglass embryonic model has been refuted.

XII) Five Questions Everyone Should Ask About Common Descent [Paul A. Nelson] (pp. 402-430)

The principle of continuity holds every step in any evolutionary pathway must be biologically possible.

Bacteria, Archaea, and Eukarya are the major domains.

Michael Behe accepts UCD.

The genetic code is a 64-trinucleotide translation specification.

Difference must decrease as similarity increases, meaning the main goal of evolution is to explain differences, not similarities.

Omne vivum ex vivo.

XIII) The Battle Over Human Origins [Ann K. Gauger] (pp. 431-435)

XIV) Missing Transitions: Human Origins and the Fossil Record [Casey Luskin] (pp. 436-473)

Evolutionists humanise apes and apeify humans.

Sahelanthropus tchadensis ("Toumai skull") is one skull and some jaw fragments of a female gorilla.

Orrorin ("Kenyan: "original man") was pieces of arm, thigh, lower jaw, and some teeth.

Ardipithecus ramidus is said to be 4.4myo and was badly crushed and distorted.

Robustus and *boisei* are bigger-boned (thus "robust") but are said to be later offshoots to the UCA of man and chimp.

"Lucy" wasn't found *in situ*.

Homo habilis should be reclassified as an australopithecine.

Homo naledi was unveiled in 2015. It had long curved fingers and curved toes, primitive pelvis and teeth.

XV) Evidence for Human Uniqueness [Anne Gauger, Colin Reeves] (pp. 474-502)

The Y-chromosome of chimpanzees and human males are very different.

Humans and chimps have at least a 5% DNA difference.

SINEs make up 12% of human DNA and LINEs 17%.

lncRNAs are "long non-coding RNAs" since they don't code for proteins.

Overexpression can cause cancer.

Human accelerated regions are HARs.

Simian foamy virus is SFV.

Simian infectious retrovirus is SIV.

How the DNA is expressed is crucial not mere similarity.

One mutation can take 1.5-6Ma to fix.

The human genome has more than 80,000 pseudogenes, 60% of which are similar to mice.

Synteny is how chromosomal sequences align.

Synonymous codon use is a design redundancy feature, not evolutionary evidence.

XVI) An Alternative Population Genetics Model [Ola Hossjer, Ann Gauger, Colin Reeves] (pp. 503-521)

Heritable mutation case: a single nucleotide of a non-sex chromosome is changed from A to G in a sperm cell which fertilises an egg.

Population alleles stabilise over time.

Directional selection is more fit alleles developing and purifying are unfit being eliminated.

A first founding couple created with diversity could explain today's human genome.

Out of Africa has Homo erectus going through a population bottleneck of 10,000 100-200kya. The survivors migrated to the Middle East, Europe and East Asia.

The human genome is up to 40% neanderthal.

MRCA is Most Recent Common Ancestor.

Created diversity can't be invoked for the Y-chromosome.

DNA blocks can be up to 10k nucleotides long,

Many alleles are lost due to genetic drift during a bottleneck event.

XVII) Pressure to Conform Leads to Bias in Science [Christopher Shaw] (pp. 522-543)

Often only 10% of research submissions receive grants ("even God wouldn't get a grant today").

Sydney Brenner ("How Academia and Publishing Are Distorting Scientific Innovation"): "peer review is simply a regression to the mean. I think peer review is hindering science."

Peer review only has to have three reviewers per submission.

Career research scientists must abide by certain "rules of engagement".

XVIII) Why Science Needs Philosophy [J. P. Moreland] (pp. 544-559)

For Stephen Hawking, "nothing" means a quantum vacuum, which contains energy and is located in space.

[God] "If you don't mind, get your own quantum vacuum!"

Strict physicalism says empathy is identical to neuron firings in the brain.

Dualism holds empathy to be an irreducible state of consciousness.

Substance dualism holds empathy to be an irreducible conscious state which depends on firing neurons.

XIX) Should Theistic Evolution Depend on Methodological Naturalism? [Stephen C. Meyer, Paul A. Nelson] (pp. 560-592)

So-called "demarcation criteria" die by a thousand counterexamples..

If design can be false it can also be true.

Newton's Law of Gravitation would have been "unscientific" since there is no *causal* explanation other than "nature".

Laws can play no or a minimal role in historical enquiry.

XX) How to Lose a Battleship: Why Methodological Naturalism Sinks Theistic Evolution [Stephen Dilley] (pp. 593-631)

Darwin sought to assail creation using scientific arguments while at the same time declaring it unscientific!

MN prohibits conditionals involving supernatural entities.

Evolution was "born in theology".

Francis Collins at the NIH manages a \$26B budget.

XXI) How Theistic Evolution Kicks Christianity Out of the Plausibility Structure and Robs Christians of Confidence That the Bible Is a Source of Knowledge [J. P. Moreland] (pp. 632-658)

Sensate is only experience with the five senses. Such a culture eventually disintegrates.

Alethic states are truth states.

XXII) How to Think About God's Action in the World [C. John Collins] (pp. 559-681)

XXIII) Theistic Evolution and the Problem of Natural Evil [Garrett J. Deweese] (pp. 682-703)

God only created the possibility for moral evil, not its actuality nor necessity.

XXIV) Bringing Home the Bacon: The Interaction of Science and Scripture Today [Colin R. Reeves] (pp. 704-729)

XXVI) The Origin of Moral Conscience: Theistic Evolution Versus Intelligent Design [Tapio Puolimatka] (pp. 730-753)

If evolutionary ethics is true, moral truths are unknowable.

XXVI) Darwin in the Dock: C.S. Lewis on Evolution [John G. West] (pp. 754-779)

XXVII) Theistic Evolution Undermines Twelve Creation Events and Several Crucial Christian Doctrines [Wayne Grudem] (pp. 780-837)

XXVIII) Theistic Evolution Is Incompatible With the Teachings of the Old Testament [John D. Currid] (pp. 838-878)

Etiology attempts to explain why something came to be as it is.

XXIX) Theistic Evolution Is Incompatible With the Teachings of the New Testament [Guy Prentiss Waters] (pp. 879-926)

XXX) Theistic Evolution Is Incompatible With Historical Christian Doctrine [Gregg R. Allison] (pp. 927-952)

Belgic Confession: "We believe that God created man out of the dust of the earth."

TE is incompatible with historical doctrinal standards.

XXXI) Additional Note: B. B. Warfield Did Not Endorse Theistic Evolution as it Is Understood Today [Fred G. Zaspel] (pp. 953-972)