

MENACE, from p. 5

movement as an organized consciousness, originated from opposition to the Theory of Evolution as taught in schools.

Where Christians might have to part company with Evolutionists is not in the idea of evolution, but in some of the suggested mechanisms suggested to explain evolution. Natural selection, "Nature red in tooth and claw", amoral competition projected onto the cosmos. At least from the early decades of this century, such writers as Pierre LeCompte DeNouy have pointed out the extraordinary statistics theoretically opposed to every step along the evolutionary path. DeNouy invented the term "Antichance" as a label for this (sneaking God in through the

back door under a pseudonym). It would seem that the prima facie evidence for Evolution as a fact, coupled with the miraculous odds against it on theoretical grounds, make it one of the more telling evidences for some providential factor in life. It is this kind of vision which inspired Teilhard de Chardin to portray the sweep of divinely-guided evolution drawing us into a future full of promise and potential.

Considering the practical odds against that kind of future, I must say I draw great comfort from combining theist and evolutionary perspectives.

To debate evolution is, of course, a rather fruitless task. How God (or whoever it is) goes about creating the world is ultimately his business. The issues which face us in the

present are those of discerning what is human and human now, not millions of years in the past or future. It is too bad that the crowd who turned out to hear the lecture "Gish to Fish" were not there to hear, for example, the Ven. Thich Man Da La speaking from her caring heart about the plight of the people of Viet Nam and the orphans who are her care.

Fletcher Stewart
Chaplain

Promise & Potential

Of course, except for the few Bible fundamentalists among us, the theory of evolution is the next best thing to proven fact to nearly everyone. Some arguments used to claim evolution is untrue can be swept up here without too much trouble:

1) Absence and/or nonsurvival of intermediate forms. The second half of this argument claims that a partially-evolved creature, possessing an incomplete set of adaptations to a new environment would be adapted to no environment, and therefore incapable of survival. The fallacy in this argument

is: a) Mutations are recessive, thus a large number of separate mutations can become relatively common in a gene pool without changing the creatures possessing them. While offspring with a single mutation represented in the genetic material received from both parents may not survive, those possessing one mutated gene would not be affected, thus in time offspring would be created with the right combination of mutated characteristics.

b) Partially adapted creatures could still survive to some extent in at least one of the environments, or by spending some time in each. Even if they are less efficient than competing creatures, the intermediate species could survive long enough to give rise to an improved form, which would survive: the improved form would differ much more from the original animal than the intermediate species did. They might be able to interbreed with the intermediate species (thus being still of the same species - but much different in characteristics) so, while the adaptations often came after the occurrence of a new species, the fossil record might show only one step, as the intermediate forms succumbed quickly to competition from the

finished product. This takes care of the first half of the argument.

2) Existence of living fossils.

The rock hyrax may well be one and the same as the ancient *Cohippus*. *Coecalanths* still do live. So, runs the argument, how could they have evolved if they're still around? Obviously, the horse couldn't have evolved from the hyrax, because if it did, these wouldn't be any hyraxes.

This argument isn't too bright. A species does not evolve into another species because of some magic force. Individual members of the species who carry mutations give rise to the first members of the new species: there is no reason at all that the old species should become extinct. It may if it creates a species that effectively competes with it. But, it also may not become completely extinct. Creatures do not evolve out of necessity: that only changes a species by removing unfit members. The creation of new characteristics occurs by chance, so a new species or genus may appear even when its parents are in no danger.

3) Harmful nature of all mutations. As time goes on, the more evolved a creature is, the less room for improvement remains in it. Thus, in earlier periods, more mutations were beneficial than now: evolution slows exponentially with time.

Furthermore, there really are some beneficial mutations. Sickle-cell anemia used to be beneficial, when malaria was common. Africa is, in fact, a hotbed of evolution; one tribe has eyesight good enough to see the moons of Jupiter with the naked eye, and the large range in height between different tribes is well known. Back home, some people have fully functional sixth fingers. If it weren't for buying gloves (and being laughed at) this certainly would be beneficial. We could have larger typewriters.

There are other fallacies too: for example, it is asked: How could the platypus be similar to the first mammals, as it is so highly specialized? Answer: the intermediate form was not too successful, only when full mammals evolved from it was there much success. But in one part of the world, it happened to be possible to bet away with specializing for the environment rather than by becoming a true mammal: that's what happened.

With that under my belt to prove that yes, I really do believe in evolution, I would like to reply to Dennis Wilson's Feb. 26 letter.

Doctor Gish contends that the biological evolution of beings by changes in their genetic material is impossible, or something like that. The "evolution" of societies is entirely different, involving no genetic changes. That some systems so evolve proves nothing about different systems that are claimed to evolve by different mechanisms. Societies do not evolve because of changes in the DNA molecule. Thus, observing societies cannot tell us about the consequences of DNA-molecule change. Furthermore, societal development is the result of the action, even uncoordinated, of intelligent minds. On the other hand, evolution of animals and man is claimed to take place without the need for intelligent intervention. (If we admitted the need for such intervention, as scientists en masse and not as individuals, Dr. Gish could disprove evolution merely by quoting the Bible!)

John Savard
Science 3

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Agriculture	Agriculture	250	Before March 21
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Education	Education	Lobby	March 13 and 14
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Students entering 2nd yr.	Mech. Eng.	5-1	March 10 to 14
Students entering 3rd & 4th year			
Chemical	Chem/Min. Eng.	536	March 10 to 14
Civil	Civ/Elec Eng.	220	March 10 to 14
Electrical	Civ/Elec Eng.	238	March 10 to 14
Mechanical	Mech. Eng.	4-9	March 10 to 14
Mineral	Chem/Min Eng.	604	March 10 to 14
Household Economics	House Ec.	115	March 11 to 13
Physical Education			
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B.A. (Rec. Admin.)			
Students entering 4th yr.	Phys. Ed.	W114	March 14
Students entering 3rd yr.	Phys. Ed.	W114	March 21
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Others	Phys. Ed.	E463	
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