

For some time now, many people have been debating the issue of evolution versus intelligent design – the two prevailing theories as to the origin of mankind. Granted, this is only being debated by those who are not experts in either field. Anyone educated in theology and/or biology pretty much agrees that evolution is real, and that the additional existence of a supreme being working behind the scenes is really a matter of personal opinion based on individual faith. But we don't care what the educated people think.

The consensus is that because there are two theories on the subject, they should be taught as alternatives allowing for students to make their own decisions. There is also the consensus that the word "theory" does not mean "scientific principle" but rather means the same thing as "hypothesis" or "belief." The only people who think that the definition of "theory" is a scientific principle are the educated ones. Again, no one cares. Educated people are a minority, and in a democratic society, the majority rules.

So maybe we should include all alternative theories on the origins of man in science classes, because students sure as hell aren't going to listen to a preacher, and parents know better than to waste their time raising their children with their personal beliefs when there is a perfectly functional state-run school system available to do the job for them. Don't work harder. Work smarter.

Personally, I think that enforced religious ambiguity in the classroom for the purpose of political correctness is not an example of religious freedom. It's an example of forced religion. The Puritans forced Christianity on people. The Soviets forced atheism. The Taliban forced Islam. Now our modern politically correct society is forcing agnosticism. We're actually asking the Government to intervene in public institutions and enforce uncertainty and prohibit the free expression of anything religiously definitive one way or the other. Oh, sure it's nice to give a nod individually to all parties present, but do we really want to be forced to be nice? I just think that we should choose not to be religiously fanatical of our own free will. But I digress.

Here's my problem. We as a society are only considering either of two theories, but if we really want to be fair and teach ALL available hypotheses on the origins of our species, then we should be considering more than two. And there are more than two. Let's take a look at some of the many possibilities.

First, let's look at evolution. The evidence in favor of evolution are circumstantial things like fossilized skeletal remains, the ages of which are estimated based on sedimentary rock layers and then confirmed by radio-carbon dating, and these fossils just happen to exactly corroborate the hypothetical models based on the theory of natural selection – a theory already proven by firsthand observation in the behavior of microorganisms under both natural and laboratory conditions, and on the macro-scale in the example of the nutria – a modern species of rodent which thrives on industrial pollution. But again, it's only a theory. Basically, evolution suggests that when a change in the environment kills off a large number of the population, the surviving members, due to lack of options, resort to inbreeding, producing genetic drift – a random number of duplicate recessive genes (which is basically another way of saying that their offspring are freaks), and that the

harsh conditions of the new ecosystem will ultimately kill of any members of the species unless the particular thing which makes them a freak is actually an improvement, which makes them fully adapted to survive under the new conditions. Those genes which neither help nor harm continue to exist, but do absolutely nothing and are known as “junk DNA” – a remnant of nature’s trial-and-error method. If this really happened, junk DNA would probably make up about 96% of the DNA of all species... which it does. But again, it’s only a theory, and in no way explains the existence of things like, say, inanimate objects. So we can more or less throw out any notion that this is some kind of a proven scientific fact or something.

The second theory is “Intelligent Design.” This is loosely inspired by the idea of “Creationism,” which is the belief that God created all life. The Intelligent Design theory is based on the idea of being more religiously inclusive and politically correct. The designer may not have been God. It may very well have been some OTHER supreme omnipotent benevolent infallible being responsible for the creation of all of existence, and who has some divine plan for the universe. Let’s look at the evidence supporting Intelligent Design. First of all, some person from a primitive era when man had no understanding of chemistry, medicine, physics, geography, geology, astronomy, or basically any knowledge whatsoever of the existence of anything more than ten miles away from his home, said so. This person, whose identity is not known, was apparently inspired by the Intelligent Designer, to tell his children the story of Creation, who in turn passed it along to their children, who passed it along to theirs, for thousands of years while culture and even language changed around them, until the invention of writing, at which time the stories were written down and merged with the stories of other tribes who had joined forces with them at some point in forming the first kingdoms. After that, the stories were passed around, translated, retranslated, re-retranslated, lost, found, lost again, found again, reinterpreted, rewritten, paraphrased, translated again, outlawed, liberated, burned, salvaged, copied, edited by clerical bureaucrats, reedited, translated a few more times, added to, subtracted from, broadly interpreted, and ultimately forgotten. It should be pointed out that the modern Intelligent Design theory, although reverse-engineered from Creationism, is designed to be vague for the sake of cultural tolerance. It does not say that any particular religion or belief system is the right one. Only that the atheists are wrong.

If we were created by an Intelligent Designer, why do we have all this junk DNA? Why are the bones of our ancestors so different from ours? Why do we share genetic patterns with other species, particularly chimpanzees? Why are there so many different kinds of bugs? What is the purpose of dust mites? There can’t be THAT many people employed in the manufacture of allergy medications.

On the other hand, if we evolved through natural selection, why do we love? Wouldn’t it be more efficient for procreation if men just raped women, thus insuring that each generation of males – being the primary hunters – would grow increasingly stronger? Why is it so important for the next generation that the female actually like the male? What is the purpose for keeping the man around after mating? Shouldn’t the woman just kill the man and eat him after she’s done with him? (It’s certainly a lot more pragmatic

than the woman asking to be eaten.) Why do women have orgasms? They may be helpful to reproduction, but they aren't really necessary. Why do people have a sense of humor? Granted, it lowers stress levels and reduces fanatical behaviors, but wouldn't it have been easier for man to evolve into a life form which didn't get stressed out in the first place, or at least, wouldn't suffer health risks as a result of it? Why are there homosexuals? There is no conceivable way that something like that could be a product of evolution. If you are a religious conservative looking for proof of Intelligent Design being more valid than evolution, then thank your Designer that the world has so many gay people to back you up!

Hmmm... It seems that both theories have some holes in them. Is there a third alternative? I've got several. For starters, how about a "Stupid Design" theory? Maybe we weren't created by an infallible supreme being who had a plan for mankind. Maybe we were created by a flawed supreme being who was trying to create a race of perfect god-like beings and fell short of the goal. A lot of the greatest inventions by man were accidents. Maybe humanity itself was somebody's accident. It would certainly explain things like nipples on men. Also, the scrotum is extremely poorly designed. It's the most important physical attribute for the purpose of reproducing, and yet, it's the least protected part of the male anatomy. The ovaries are placed logically. The testicles start out in the same place as ovaries, and yet at some point while still in the womb, the testicles drop down into a completely defenseless position, thus putting all the man's eggs in one basket hanging out in front of the rest of the body as if wearing a "kick me" sign. This is the only part of the body with no layer of bone, cartilage, muscle or even fat to cushion it. Then it sprouts sporadic mangled hairs. I think it's safe to say that evolution would never have produced something like this, and if there was an Intelligent Designer, he surely would have thought of something better than that.

Maybe we didn't come from anywhere. Maybe we were just always here. If we can believe that the Intelligent Designer has no origin, why is it so hard to consider the possibility that we don't have an origin. Time may extend infinitely both backwards and forwards, with no beginning and no end. Has anyone really considered that possibility?

Maybe time is a circular continuum. Maybe our descendants will one day build a time machine, go back to the beginning, and become our ancestors. Humanity could very well be a massive temporal predestination paradox. It's just as valid as any other possible explanation. It may even tie in with the story of Atlantis.

Maybe we're robots. Maybe some extraterrestrial race built us using organic nanotechnology. Then something went wrong, such as we became technologically obsolete, or we rebelled against our former masters, or maybe we just didn't sell as well as expected. So we were dumped off on the nearest convenient planet.

Maybe we're devolving. Uranus the Tyrant was nearly all powerful. His son Kronos was less powerful. His son Zeus was even less. His son Heracles was almost human, and his children were completely human. Maybe human beings are actually gods who have

lost our powers over the ages. It would explain all the stories of powerful wizards in the middle ages, while it's so unlikely that you'll see one today.

Maybe time isn't moving the way that we think it is. Maybe we have cause-and-effect backwards. If that's the case, then we are all precognitive clairvoyants who have virtually no ability to remember the past. It would certainly look to us as if time was moving the opposite way. It's possible that in reality, gravity is a repulsive force, the universe is shrinking, we are slowly becoming more ape-like, we're born out of the ground, we die in the womb, like magnets attract, opposite charges repel, and eventually someday, matter will lose its cohesiveness and dematerialize just as the universe finally collapses out of existence. In that case, the origin of man is a result of an inferior version of some past humanoid race we can't remember, and that that race first coalesced from the scattered matter and energy of a universe formerly too widespread to support cohesive substance or survivable temperature conditions. Of course, this whole hypothesis still makes the broad assumption that time is actually moving in either direction. It's probably not linear at all, so this is an unlikely explanation.

Maybe we're not here at all. Maybe we're holograms being projected from somewhere. Or maybe we're a computer simulation existing only in cyberspace. Maybe in the real world, our programmers look nothing like us or may not even exist in our same three spatial and one temporal dimension. Maybe reality is a two-dimensional plane, and we're a computer-generated model which is part of an experiment to see if life can exist in a "hyper-plane." Maybe the civilization that created us isn't even aware that the program is still running. They may have died out eons ago. Maybe the God of Creationism was just a software engineer, or just as easily, maybe he's an artificial intelligence built into the mainframe.

Maybe existence itself doesn't exist. We could be non-physical points of consciousness in a place without space, time or substance. We could be only imagining this entire universe, collectively assigning it hypothetical properties. We may even be hypothetical ourselves. It's possible that nothing exists, but that in the hypothetical world of mathematics, there is some vast hypothetical equation which is so inclusive and circular in its nature, that it can continue to hypothesize the existence of itself whether it exists in the first place or not. In other words, we don't exist. We don't even think we exist. We only think that we think that we exist. In this case, we don't need to explain our origins because we don't have any. (At least now we have a logical explanation for why subatomic particles, which make up everything in the universe, have mathematical properties even though they don't have physical presence.)

Maybe the world really does exist, but just not the way you see it. Maybe you're the only one who thinks we're living on this planet and that we look and act the way that we do. Maybe all of the real people are looking at you right now thinking that you're just insane. Maybe this is really the planet Zarqon, and you're a two-headed lizard who just took way too much LSD, and are now hallucinating the planet Earth and the human race. It's possible, isn't it? Next time you see ice melting, ask yourself this. Is it really melting?

Well, there are probably a million more possibilities which I haven't even thought of, and we'll probably never know for sure which one, if any, is the right one. And if somebody does know for certain, he'll never be able to satisfactorily convince everyone else, so for the collective of humanity as a whole, it will remain a mystery forever. But thank the Designer or the programmer or evolution or infinite time or whatever for the complexity of the human brain being what it is so that we could even consider these options. Because maybe where we came from isn't nearly as important as what we are now or where we're going, and it's this same open-minded critical thinking which is going to most greatly improve our chances of getting to a better place. (Unless we don't exist.)