



UNCOMMON DESCENT

The Intelligent Design Weblog of William Dembski,
Denyse O'Leary and Friends.

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Uncommon Descent holds that...

Materialistic ideology has subverted the study of biological and cosmological origins so that the actual content of these sciences has become corrupted. The problem, therefore, is not merely that science is being used illegitimately to promote a materialistic worldview, but that this worldview is actively undermining scientific inquiry, leading to incorrect and unsupported conclusions about biological and cosmological origins. At the same time, intelligent design (ID) offers a promising scientific alternative to materialistic theories of biological and cosmological evolution -- an alternative that is finding increasing theoretical and empirical support. Hence, ID needs to be vigorously developed as a scientific, intellectual, and cultural project. [read more...](#)

Additional Descent

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[programmed by evolution to see design where there really isn't any](#) ... and thus do evolutionary psychologists explain the resurgence of design

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[Leading scientists still reject God](#) Survey of NAS scientists' religious beliefs. Nature, Vol. 394, No. 6691, p. 313

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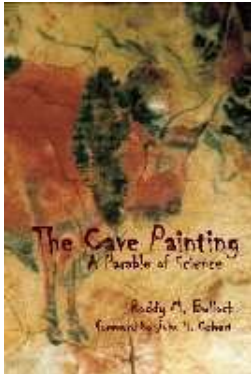


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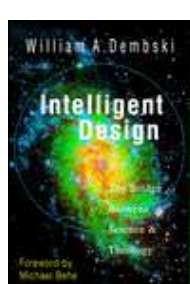
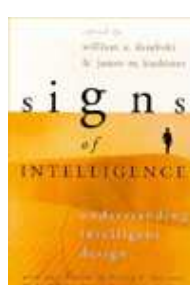
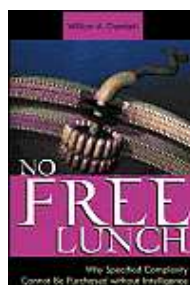
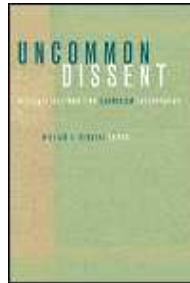
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16 July 2007

Is It Possible to Intelligently Design and then Deny the Intelligent Designer?

PaV

The tagline for the article from PhysOrg.com that I link to here, was "[Nano propellers pump with proper chemistry.](#)" Despite no mention being made of it, my immediate thought was: "Their design is based on what biological systems already do."

Then, perusing the article, after all the talk about what Petr Král is doing in his Univ. of Illinois lab, about how this pump works, etc, etc., we find the following:

Král's laboratory studies how biological systems, like tiny flagella that move bacteria, offer clues for building motors, motile systems and other nanoscale devices in a hybrid environment that combines biological and inorganic chemistry.

I find it almost infuriating that there are labs like Petr Kral's all over the world that are doing this kind of work every day, and, yet, our Darwinist brothers tell us that, unlike any potential contact with ET's, in this case we cannot possible know anything about any Intelligent Designer.

One has to ask the question: If the Intelligent Designer designed the universe, and the Designer's intelligence is beyond anything we could possibly comprehend, then how is it that Einstein gave us a description of gravity, AND, in so doing say that his discovery was "like knowing the Mind of God"?

In the particular case of Kral's work, one has to ask: How is it possible to examine biological life, **AND on the BASIS of what one SEES**, then construct a molecular machine of heretofore unknown sophistication, and then, simultaneously maintain that no inference about any so-called Intelligent Designer can be made...."since we don't know anything about Him—He's beyond science"? Further, if biological systems contain no intelligence, how, then, can you study them? Why doesn't some Darwinian-Believer answer that one? How can someone "learn" how to build a nanoscale molecular pump from such a study of extant biological systems and then have that very possibility denied by saying: "There's no intelligence in what I'm studying. What are you talking about"? Is this like Baron Munchhausen being able to pull himself out of the mud by pulling on his hair?

Philosophically speaking, how can you "study" that which is, per your own definition, "incomprehensible"? Would Darwinists like to 'fess up about all of this?

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21 Responses

[1](#)

magnan

07/16/2007

3:36 pm

“In the particular case of Kral’s work, one has to ask: How is it possible to examine biological life, AND on the BASIS of what one SEES, then construct a molecular machine of heretofore unknown sophistication, and then, simultaneously maintain that no inference about any so-called Intelligent Designer can be made...since we don’t know anything about Him—He’s beyond science”?

Darwinists would presumably have no problem with these arguments. If a flagellum, for example, is an example of a complicated machine that merely appears to be designed, they agree that it does in fact incorporate an apparently engineered design. This is regardless of its true origin intelligent or not, and if intelligent regardless of ignorance of the nature of the Designer. There is then nothing contradictory about a human scientist taking this “blueprint” and its underlying principles and using them for human nanotechnology.

“Further, if biological systems contain no intelligence, how, then, can you study them?”

For the same reasons I don’t see the logic here.

[2](#)

PaV

07/16/2007

4:35 pm

There is then nothing contradictory about a human scientist taking this “blueprint” and its underlying principles and using them for human nanotechnology.

If a scientist is involved in designing a complicated machine, no one would dispute that this work involves the use of his reason, his intelligence. Now, if this same scientist encounters a difficulty in designing the machine, so much so that he can’t find a way to design that which he intends to design, then, again, it would be fair to say that he has reached the limit of what his intelligence is capable of. Now, if he finally succeeds to develop the machine, but with no more output from his own intelligence, then wouldn’t it be fair to say that something else has filled the gap? Now, if there is a “lack of intelligence”, then how else can that gap be filled except with intelligence? Only a like substance can make up for an absence of the substance.

Likewise, I think it preposterous to have scientists being guided in their designs by the study of biological systems, while at the same time pleading agnosticism when it is proposed that those biological systems contain intelligence. Isn’t this fairly

obvious?

3

[EJ Klone](#)

07/16/2007

5:23 pm

...and, yet, our Darwinist brothers tell us that, unlike any potential contact with ET's, in this case we cannot possible know anything about any Intelligent Designer.

So you're saying that you can infer characteristics of the designer from the design, PaV? (If so I agree)

And how do you know that the designer(s) intelligence is beyond anything we could possibly comprehend? If we can eventually understand how the flagellum functions, how could you conclude this from the scientific evidence? Do you allow for the possibility that those doing the designing could have intelligence similar to our own (but knowledge probably exceeding ours)?

Further, if biological systems contain no intelligence, how, then, can you study them?

I'm no darwinist, but I think I can answer this question. You are saying that biological systems make sense - that is - they work. They are understandable, as snowflakes and hexagonal columns of basalt are understandable, yet these two examples don't have intelligence **behind** them. We can study natural regularities just as much as we can study intelligent causes. You're equivocating two different meanings of the word "intelligence."

4

JT75

07/17/2007

4:59 am

Wat if a person were a Stoic who believed in a logical principle in nature (a LOGOS) that pervades the natural order and yet itself is not mindful, couldn't this account for the functionality of natural systems without appealing to an ultimate Mind? By contrast then it seems to me that the ID position is, like magnan indicates, a question of the origin of this rationality/functionality/design in nature. But this seems properly a philosophical, not scientific, question. That is, questions of the ultimate origins of abstract principles (like Functionality) belong to the realm of philosophy. Darwinists may be committed to an anti-telic view of nature while the ID proponents are committed to teleology. What we need in biology is less philosophy not more and contrary.

5

PaV

07/17/2007

9:40 am

EJ Klone: *"So you're saying that you can infer characteristics of the designer from the design, PaV? (If so I agree)"*

No, I'm saying that intelligence can be discovered independent of any discovery of the who the Designer is.

EJ Klone:

“They are understandable, as snowflakes and hexagonal columns of basalt are understandable, yet these two examples don’t have intelligence behind them.”

In the case of basalts and snowflakes, we’re not dealing with anything that is functional. I should have been more precise and said asked how we can study biological systems in order to more intelligently design and engineer nanostructures if the biological systems themselves don’t contain intelligence.

If Petr Kral had said, “I conferred with some colleagues, and as we discussed the pump system we came to a new insight”, that would make perfectly good sense. If he had said, “I looked at snowflakes and hexagonal basalts and then figured out how to build a nanostructure pump system”, I think we would be left with a big question as to how those systems could provide him the needed insight.

My basic complaint with the Darwinists is that they argue that UNLESS you know who the Designer is, then you cannot possibly “understand” him. It’s merely a poorly camouflages effort to get ID people to say that the Designer is God, thus permitting the Darwinists to say: “Aha. I caught you. You see, ID is all about religion; not science.” It’s no more than a strawman argument that is so transparent, and so off the mark, that it becomes terribly irritating. My point here is that if biological systems solve otherwise unsolvable logical problems, then those systems contain intelligence—independent of by whom, where, when, that intelligence came about.

[6](#)

PaV

07/17/2007

9:47 am

JT75:

“What if a person were a Stoic who believed in a logical principle in nature (a LOGOS) that pervades the natural order and yet itself is not mindful, couldn’t this account for the functionality of natural systems without appealing to an ultimate Mind?”

The question strikes me as odd since “logos” is almost synonymous with the “mind”. How can you have “logic” without a “mind”. If you didn’t have a “mind”, then you wouldn’t be able to detect “logic”. Not to be facetious, but have you ever asked a chimpanzee what he thinks of “logic”? No. “Logic” is synonymous with “mind”. Where there is one, the other is supposed.

JT75:

“By contrast then it seems to me that the ID position is, like magnan indicates, a question of the origin of this rationality/functionality/design in nature. But this seems properly a philosophical, not scientific, question.”

As to the “origin” of this rationality, I would agree, it is, properly, a philosophical question. However, that is not my point here. I’m simply suggesting that it is quite clear that if biological systems can facilitate the intellectual workings of us humans, then the presence of intelligence—independent of its source!!—in those same systems is axiomatic.

[7](#)

JT75

07/17/2007

10:44 am

PaV: “No. ‘Logic’ is synonymous with ‘mind’. Where there is one, the other is supposed.”

But of course if they were truly synonymous one could not say “where there is ‘one’ the ‘other’ is supposed.” What I think you mean to affirm is that they are inseparable, for certainly they are distinct and therefore not synonymous. ‘Logic’ is the science of correct inferences, a ‘mind’ is the cogitive powers of a rational agent that uses logic, and ‘rationality’ is that

feature of an object that makes it accessible to mind. The question remains, “Is it possible for a system to display rationality even though it has had no contact with a rational agent?” Darwinists believe that this rationality can come from randomness, which seems a very poor explanation. ID proponents locate the origin ultimately in Mind. A Stoic might say that Nature is essentially rational (even absent the influences of a rational Agent) and therefore natural systems display rationality in like manner. ID proponents, in combating the Darwinian position, seem to present ID as the exclusive alternative to Darwinism and therefore secure ground of an alternative research program; my point, however, is that someone like a Stoic could take account of the rationality of biological systems without being either Darwinian or ID.

[8](#)

JT75

07/17/2007

11:13 am

PaV:”I’m simply suggesting that it is quite clear that if biological systems can facilitate the intellectual workings of us humans, then the presence of intelligence—independent of its source!!—in those same systems is axiomatic.”

Again, there is a difference between “intelligence” and “rationality.” The latter is “that which the mind picks out,” the former is a feature of mind itself. The question is not whether the system displays rationality but what is its source. Darwinists basically say it has no source and further, that it needs no explanation, and ID proponents say that the source is ultimately Mind. The purpose in bring up the Stoic is to show that the source of the rationality is a philosophical question. What ID offers is a mathematical basis for saying that the degree of rationality/functionality is only consummate with Mind, but I would say this argument falls in the realm of mathematical information theory and not biology proper.

[9](#)

[DaveScot](#)

07/17/2007

11:29 am

certainly *some*

characteristics of the designer(s) can be inferred from the designed object such as minimum capabilities required - possibly more but not necessarily so

in the case of life on earth we can infer some level of expertise in biochemistry and systems engineering as well as time and location in the past such that it doesn’t violate temporal or spatial causality

[10](#)

PaV

07/17/2007

11:43 am

JT75:

“What ID offers is a mathematical basis for saying that the degree of rationality/functionality is only consummate with Mind, but I would say this argument falls in the realm of mathematical information theory and not biology proper.”

There is Plato with his world of ideas. There is Aristotle with the world of ideas “incarnated” in the physical world. There is God, in whom all thought resides, and in whom all power resides, and who is completely capable of forming a world that conforms to the “logos”.

You say that ID properly belongs to mathematical information theory, implying that it is not raw science. But is not mathematical information theory not a part of science? And, to get at your point a little bit more, would you say that a Macintosh computer belongs to the field of mathematical information theory and no more?

Remember, ID posits a “design inference”. It doesn’t has as a purpose the delineation of the Designer. Rather, it has as its purpose the substitution of the “design inference” for that of the Darwinian notion of RM+NS (random mutation plus natural selection). Thus, it’s about the explanatory power of competing ideas regarding biological complexity. Are there theological overtones? Yes. Are there philosophical overtones? Yes. Is ID philosophy? Is it theology? No, to both questions. It’s about explanatory power. Let the overtones ring where they may.

11

magnan

07/17/2007

1:52 pm

PaV: “Now, if there is a “lack of intelligence”, then how else can that gap be filled except with intelligence? Only a like substance can make up for an absence of the substance.”

This is obvious to ID advocates, but biologists generally do not recognize the necessity for an intelligent source implied by Dembski’s specified complexity and Behe’s irreducible complexity in living nature. Since they believe to the core that apparent “intelligence” inherent in living organisms arose by chance and necessity, to them there is no contradiction. It is a psychological issue.

PaV: “Likewise, I think it preposterous to have scientists being guided in their designs by the study of biological systems, while at the same time pleading agnosticism when it is proposed that those biological systems contain intelligence. Isn’t this fairly obvious?”

This was the basic point of your entry, and I agree - it is preposterous. But the biologists are conditioned by their faith in metaphysical naturalism and Darwinism to ignore such absurdity. As I said, this is more a psychological and sociological issue.

12

[EJ Klone](#)

07/17/2007

2:13 pm

PaV:*If he had said, “I looked at snowflakes and hexagonal basalts and then figured out how to build a nanostructure pump system”, I think we would be left with a big question as to how those systems could provide him the needed insight.*

Are you saying that we cannot learn how to solve problems from observations of natural regularities? I think that is the claim you are making, and it is false. Take stone arches, for instance, from which people can become inspired to build artificial arches based on the same concept. The world is replete with examples of designs inspired by nature. (Even with no organisms involved) So it seems you are left with that big question.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_arch

I’m simply suggesting that it is quite clear that if biological systems can facilitate the intellectual workings of us humans, then the presence of intelligence—independent of its source!!—in those same systems is axiomatic. The same logic should work when it comes to natural regularities, but it doesn’t. I just don’t think you’re making a good argument.

On the characteristics of the designer:

No, I’m saying that intelligence can be discovered independent of any discovery of the who the Designer is.

and

If the Intelligent Designer designed the universe, and the Designer's intelligence is beyond anything we could possibly comprehend (sic)(emphasis mine)

How do you know that the same designer(s) made biological systems and the universe? What is your evidence that any of these designers possess intelligence "beyond anything we could possibly comprehend"?

certainly some characteristics of the designer(s) can be inferred from the designed object such as minimum capabilities required - possibly more but not necessarily so

Nice to see *someone* agrees with me. 😊

It may not be necessary to conclude that the designer(s) had complete expertise concerning all designs - some achievements could be accidental, others could have been mistakes. But in essence, I think that's correct.

[13](#)

[EJ Klone](#)

07/17/2007

2:14 pm

oops, I meant to emphasize "beyond anything we could possibly comprehend" with a 'strong' tag.

[14](#)

JT75

07/18/2007

7:36 am

DaveScot: "certainly some characteristics of the designer(s) can be inferred from the designed object such as minimum capabilities required - possibly more but not necessarily so

in the case of life on earth we can infer some level of expertise in biochemistry and systems engineering as well as time and location in the past such that it doesn't violate temporal or spatial causality"

It seems that what you are pointing out is that 'if we think that biochemical systems were designed, then the Designer must at least have knowledge of biochemistry and systems engineering, as well as other characteristics that don't violate our ideas of causality, etc.' While this is true it does not seem like an inference but rather that which is entailed already in the notion of Intelligent Designer (that He/it is intelligent and has all the traits/characteristics/attributes that would enable Him/it to be the cause of such things without these traits/characteristics/attributes involving contradictions).

[15](#)

JT75

07/18/2007

7:49 am

PaV: "You say that ID properly belongs to mathematical information theory, implying that it is not raw science. But is not mathematical information theory not a part of science? And, to get at your point a little bit more, would you say that a Macintosh computer belongs to the field of mathematical information theory and no more?"

I do believe that mathematical information theory is science (although I don't know what function "raw" does in the above quote). What Dembski has shown is that when you deal with biological information as quantified information you can reveal that it has all the traits that we normally associate with rational intention. But what he has done is draw the biological into

the realm of the informational, deduced his conclusions, then reintroduced these conclusions into their original biological context. In doing so he makes metaphysical naturalism/materialism an implausible interpretation of the system. But his work, the analysis itself, does not deal directly with biological objects (like the work of Behe), but rather mathematical abstractions from these objects. There is nothing illegitimate in this process but it does emphasize the fact that this part of the ID paradigm belongs to the realm of mathematics and not biology proper. No worries, it still invalidates the underlying assumptions of materialism, which is what it is intended to do, but I don't think it is an alternative 'biological' paradigm since it is not a science of the same type. That would be like saying General Relativity is an alternative to Plate Tectonics.

[16](#)

PaV

07/18/2007

9:15 am

EJ Klone: "Are you saying that we cannot learn how to solve problems from observations of natural regularities?"

No, I'm saying that snowflakes and basalts won't help you build a nanopump.

PaV: I'm simply suggesting that it is quite clear that if biological systems can facilitate the intellectual workings of us humans, then the presence of intelligence—independent of its source!!—in those same systems is axiomatic.

EJ Klone: "The same logic should work when it comes to natural regularities, but it doesn't. I just don't think you're making a good argument."

But what makes you think that snowflakes and basalts are absent of intelligence? The kind of intelligence they manifest is a kind of "crystallized" intelligence; i.e., the "Laws of Nature." If we can figure out quantum mechanics, then, per force, logic must reside in the forces examined. Logic—devoid of an intelligent agent—is a contradiction.

PaV: If the Intelligent Designer designed the universe, and the Designer's intelligence is beyond anything we could possibly comprehend (sic)(emphasis mine)

EJ Klone: "How do you know that the same designer(s) made biological systems and the universe? What is your evidence that any of these designers possess intelligence "beyond anything we could possibly comprehend"?"

Are you asking me to defend an hypothetical with evidence?

[17](#)

PaV

07/18/2007

9:28 am

JT75: "But his work, the analysis itself, does not deal directly with biological objects (like the work of Behe), but rather mathematical abstractions from these objects. There is nothing illegitimate in this process but it does emphasize the fact that this part of the ID paradigm belongs to the realm of mathematics and not biology proper."

I've already lost a response due to the server having problems. I'll try again.

Darwinists use the canard that since we're unable to know anything about the Designer—unless we point Him out to them—then we can't possibly infer intelligence. But, of course, if an alien craft were found, without knowing anything about them, we could possibly figure out, let's suppose, the anti-gravity propulsion system the craft used.

The article that I posted here is but one of many examples of scientists using the intelligence present in microbiological structures to solve real-world problems. Since intelligence is required to solve problems, then it is apparent that in using

biological systems to solve nanostructure problems must, per force, involve a sort of concretized intelligence contained in those biological systems. It seems the height of inanity to say, “I studied this biological system in order to solve a problem I was having in the lab”, and then say, “But the biological system has nothing to do with intelligence.”

While Dembski’s work is, indeed, primarily mathematical, it is used to infer design, and, hence, the presence of intelligence. This isn’t biology. No. But that doesn’t lessen its biological significance. The Design Inference permits us to approach the biological complexity we find in plant and animal life with a paradigm that is very different from the prevailing one. And, if true—and it certainly appears to be true—is an aid to scientific exploration of biotic forms.

[18](#)

[EJ Klone](#)

07/18/2007

5:01 pm

PaV:

But what makes you think that snowflakes and basalts are absent of intelligence? The kind of intelligence they manifest is a kind of “crystallized” intelligence; i.e., the “Laws of Nature.” If we can figure out quantum mechanics, then, per force, logic must reside in the forces examined. Logic—devoid of an intelligent agent—is a contradiction.

You are quite right that logic does not exist outside of an intelligent agent, but your logic is still wrong.

I think you are still equivocating. (I’ll use two different emphases to demonstrate) **Logic** is an abstraction, not a physical thing. You are saying that nature behaving in a *logical* fashion means that **logic** resides in the natural forces involved.

Similarly, as I pointed out before, you were equivocating between two definitions of intelligence/intelligent. The first, that living things are understandable, i.e. *intelligent*, is indisputable. But you are leaping from that to say that because something is understandable, that it contains **intelligence**, thus it was the result of ID.

The “intelligence” you are ascribing to snowflakes are the result of natural regularity. Anyone who’s read Dembski’s work knows that natural regularities are distinct from intelligent causes, and are weeded out by the explanatory filter. So, you are saying that any and all natural regularities can be inferred to be due to intelligent causation? So there is no way to distinguish between nonintelligent and intelligent causes... because everything’s intelligently caused, even the nonintelligent?

Let me feed your words back again and reiterate:

I’m simply suggesting that it is quite clear that if biological systems can facilitate the intellectual workings of us humans, then the presence of intelligence—independent of its source!!—in those same systems is axiomatic.

What you are saying, with this logic, is that if anything is understandable or provides insight into the way the universe operates, then it must have been intelligently caused. All I’m saying is that this logic does not pan out.

I think the given (insight/technological application) is true, the conclusion (intelligent design) is true, but the chain of reasoning connecting the two in this way doesn’t hold up.

Heh, before we get too carried away with nitpicky details, I seem to remember Bill Dembski saying something to the effect of, ID doesn’t require positing a designer. I can’t seem to find the quote, does anyone remember it?

[19](#)

JT75

07/19/2007

12:10 pm

PaV: The Design Inference permits us to approach the biological complexity we find in plant and animal life with a paradigm that is very different from the prevailing one. And, if true—and it certainly appears to be true—is an aid to scientific exploration of biotic forms.”

I agree, but the “different paradigm” is a philosophical one of naturalism vs. non-naturalism (of different varieties). It is the belief that there is an underlying rationality and purpose to nature that helps guide further biological inquiry, but this assumption is a philosophical one that may help the scientist but need not be assumed by him. In its scientific role as an aspect of mathematical information theory, ID makes a purposeful interpretation of nature more plausible than its denial. But in and of itself the diffusing of naturalism, although incredibly beneficial for the theist, is not a biologically based alternative to Darwinism. ID makes most of its headway as a valid critique of Neo-Darwinism, but it lacks positive answers to similar questions (like ‘where do cats and dogs come from’?). Darwinism has a biological answer for this question, I believe it is mistaken; but ID has no answer at all that is not another criticism of ND or a repetitive appeal to a common Design.

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PaV

07/20/2007

11:45 am

EJ Klone: “I think you are still equivocating. (I’ll use two different emphases to demonstrate) Logic is an abstraction, not a physical thing. You are saying that nature behaving in a logical fashion means that logic resides in the natural forces involved.”

“Chair” is an abstraction. Does that mean that chairs don’t exist?

EJ Klone: “But you are leaping from that to say that because something is understandable, that it contains intelligence, thus it was the result of ID.”

Does software code contain “intelligence”? Is it the result of ID?

EJ Klone: “So there is no way to distinguish between nonintelligent and intelligent causes... because everything’s intelligently caused, even the nonintelligent?”

No, I’m saying that the “laws of nature” are the product of intelligence. Since they follow regularities, snowflakes and basalts show “complexity”; but they don’t show “specificity”. Hence, using CSI, one wouldn’t draw a “design inference” regarding them.

EJ Klone: “I think the given (insight/technological application) is true, the conclusion (intelligent design) is true, but the chain of reasoning connecting the two in this way doesn’t hold up.”

You might want to explain this a little bit more.

As to the designer, I think Dembski would say that we don’t need to know who the Designer is before we make a “design inference.”

JT75: “I agree, but the “different paradigm” is a philosophical one of naturalism vs. non-naturalism (of different varieties). It is the belief that there is an underlying rationality and purpose to nature that helps guide further biological inquiry, but this assumption is a philosophical one that may help the scientist but need not be assumed by him.”

If we were to find a spaceship, and we presumed that it was intelligently designed, is that a “philosophical” paradigm? If SETI receive electro-magnetic signals—as in “Contact”—representing a pattern, would we be guilty of imposing the paradigm of naturalism vs. non-naturalism on that perceived pattern if we were to infer the pattern represented intelligence? I think the answer to both questions is “no”.

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PaV

07/20/2007

11:59 am

JT75: "ID makes most of its headway as a valid critique of Neo-Darwinism, but it lacks positive answers to similar questions (like 'where do cats and dogs come from?'). Darwinism has a biological answer for this question, I believe it is mistaken; but ID has no answer at all that is not another criticism of ND or a repetitive appeal to a common Design."

Does Darwinism really have an answer as to where "cats and dogs" come from?

Isn't Darwinism no more than a guess, and a terribly bad one at that?

Darwin, in the 'Origin of Species' first suggested that it was the Creator who made a "form, or several forms" from which all other life derives. Doesn't that sound like the Designer? Nowadays, Darwinists will say, "Once you have replication, then NS can take over. Origin of life questions are a separate matter." Well, let's look at 'origin of life' questions: without replication the wrong-headed notions of a Richard Dawkin don't apply, and we run right into.....Intelligent Design arguments that in no way can be surmounted. Let's face it, Fred Hoyle, a life-long atheist, a committed naturalist, thought NDE pointless.

On the other hand, ID is not an assertion of "naturalism/purpose" over and against "non-naturalism/purposelessness", it suggests that we're dealing with "machinery". The difference between Darwinists and IDers is that IDers know that complexity can't be arrived at randomly. And anyone who has ever tried to write a program (and, of course, even Bill Gates says that DNA is a software program of a sophistication that we can't comprehend) knows that randomness can be programmed in, but that randomness in no way could EVER bring about a more advanced program.

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