These are just some thoughts I've been putting down in regard to problems I have with a natural-selection-only theory of biological evolution. I thought I might look into the competing theories a bit before drawing premature conclusions. After all, I can't imagine there would be competition for jobs in the scientific study of evolution, or any field for that matter, if there weren't any controversies and criticisms among the theorists and researchers. Unless of course, unlike any other field of scientific inquiry, evolutionary biology stands alone as having complete and sweeping agreement on every aspect of a single overarching master plan.

Here are my notes so far:

"biology is more like history than it us like physics" -Carl Sagan
"scientific laws are an unconscious derivative of medieval theology" -Whitehead

In other words history is not only "going", it is "going somewhere."

Neo-Darwinism: natural selection, speciation, random mutation, genetic drift, phyletic gradualism, accounts for everything.

But because of gaps in fossil record (Swiss cheese you could drive a hummer through) this has led to various explanations which ARE controversial in evolutionary biology.

1. Punctuated equilibrium (rapid [70k years in geological time for a .005 cm limb growth. "stasis" for most of the time, then cladogenesis, punctuated splitting of one species into two instead of one gradually transforming into another. Religious preacher Richard Dawkins calls this but a "wrinkle in neo-Darwinism" and sticks to his dogma of neo-Darwinism.

2. quantum evolution (multi-tempoed, species adapt at 3 different speeds AND drastic changes (quantum leaps) occur to account for gaps in fossil record. Quantum refers to an "all-or-none reaction," where transitional forms are particularly unstable. Gaps are the result of these "inadaptive phases" that saves up for a big change, like a QB calling for the long bomb.

3. Emergent evolution (life emerges from matter, consciousness emerges from life) movie 2010, Hal: "what's happening Dave?" Dave: "something wonderful"

If I have feet (boots) that are "made for walkin'" natural selection would not start growing my species a wing so I could get to my food faster. I suppose if I had no predators... and all the food was in trees I couldn't climb...., or if I was born in a tree to

begin with, then maybe. But what adaptive advantage does my little .005cm wing "stump" have? And how did my parents get up in that damn tree in the first place!

My only choice as a little snakey lizardy thing is to try and have a little coitus with foghorn leghorn to speed up the process, but inter-species procreation is apparently not an option. Plus, he'll end up doing the chickenhawk before he makes note of my lordosis.

Like · Comment · Share · Delete

John Powers I would like to know why you have such a problem with evolution and natural selection, Steve.
January 11 at 10:54pm · Like

Steve Snodgrass That whole note is about gaps in the fossil record, so I thought that was the obvious problem here, that is at the heart of controversy among evolutionary biologists. Nat selection explains a great deal, so its not like i have a problem with the idea or dont understand how it works. but there's more to evolution that the random drift because of the gaps. Quantum and punctuated equilibrium are the best explanations and both seem to be covering their tracks, unable to dislodge themselves from an underlying philosophical bent. Do you see how I can see that as a problem?

I'm not pushing for creation or intelligent design, just open to the direction that evolution has and in need of an explanation that doesn't seem put together with bandaids.
January 12 at 7:17am · Like

Steve Snodgrass I'll put it a different way. The medieval astronomer with the super complicated cosmology needed to keep the earth at the center of the universe? That's what the explanations for fossil record gaps look like to me.
January 12 at 7:31am · Like

John Powers The fossil record is incomplete because the conditions for fossil preservation are rare. Evolution is not about fossils, it is about descent through genetic inheritance. We see evolution happening right now. While it would be nice to find the common ancestor that all life shares, or even all the ancestors that lead to modern day humans, it is unnecessary.
January 12 at 11:12am · Like

Steve Snodgrass we're like ships passing in the night, John, but we can keep trying until we reach mutual understanding. I think I understand your

position clearly, but you're not seeing mine, right?

try repeating this to yourself, "steve believes in evolution...steve likes evolution...steve has no problem with evolution. steve is red hot for evolution. steve is just saying natural selection and blind chance are not the ONLY mechanisms involved. steve thinks random mutation "shots in the dark" would be revealed in just as many errors and discards as there are stars in the milky way. steve is even okay with him having evolved from a single cell to serpent to a lizard to a mammal and a lower ape, to then a proto-humanoid by genetic inheritance of adaptive features. Steve ony has a problem with the natural selection arm of evolutionary biologists. Steve is cool."

There is a reason that punctuated equilibrium and quantum evolution has some popularity John. why is that?

January 12 at 6:36pm · Like

Steve Snodgrass Note to steve's Christian friends: try to understand what I'm saying to john here. (or see my previous notes on evolution and creation.)

January 12 at 7:14pm · Like

John Powers Say it Steve. Just say it.

January 12 at 9:53pm · Like

Steve Snodgrass I will take your dare, but only if you answer my question that is at the main point of everything I've posed here. Why are alternatives to natural selection (quantum evolution and punctuated equilibrium theory) so popular? Why is there disagreement on this central question among theorists in the field if everything has been supposedly settled?

The reason has everything to do with UFOs and the possible evolution of ETs which I hope we can get to on the radio show this week. (unless I'm just a trouble maker)

January 12 at 11:53pm · Like

John Powers You can get the ET's on the show?

January 12 at 11:57pm · Like

John Powers Quantum evolution and Punctuated equilibrium are not alternatives to natural selection, they ARE natural selection in particular situations. There is no PACE to evolution...No DIRECTION. And yes, it can happen at different paces in different places.

Maybe you need to read this: http://www.talkorigins.org

/faqs/faq-misconceptions.h

tml

Now SAY IT!
Thursday at 12:02am · Like

Steve Snodgrass you're the one who just said it...."particular situations."

there is no pace, no direction to natural selection, agreed. agreed for micro-evolution. but the "particular situations" punctuated equilibrium and quantum whatever are trying to explain are the spontaneous, self-organizing, new emergents, that are responsible for adding something entirely new to the gene pool, (macro-evolution). it's those darn particular situations.

the author of your article said it too. "Chance certainly plays a large part in evolution, but this completely ignores the fundamental role of natural selection, and selection is the opposite of chance"

so the role of selection is the OPPOSITE OF CHANCE? in other words, this "small part" of natural selection is now a non-accidental, designed, deliberate, goal-oriented process that plays the fundamental role!

your author seems to think the occasional order from disorder evident in nature (sand dunes, snowflakes and piles of rocks) are on the same order as reproducing organisms. I think not.

you might want to read http://www.trueorigin.org/

isakrbtl.asp that was linked on the same page as your article, unless you just plan to link back the reply to the reply to the reply.

natural selection assumes macro evolution based on the proof of micro evolution... because it MUST be that way. someone is blurring dogma and science here and i don't think it's me.
Thursday at 10:38pm · Like

John Powers Micro and Macro evolution are theist devices to describe something they don't understand.

Natural selection is not the opposite of chance. Natural selection has its fingers in many pies, with life forms adapted to many different situations. The selection comes when the environment becomes too hostile for one form, a different life form that can thrive in the new habitat does so. THAT is the 'Selection' process.
Thursday at 10:52pm · Like

Steve Snodgrass (Then don't tag any more links for me to study if you're just going to disagree with what they say.)

Micro/macro or not. What you're saying is the complexity of consciousness arose from less complex life and complex life arose from less complex

matter/energy by...by rearranging alleles...because the environment was too hostile?

Ok. Prebiotic soup was so hostile that the amino acids arranged themselves into a prokaryote to adapt to it. That helped, but the prokaryotes then adapted to become self reproducing eukaryotes. Then they got cells, molecules, organs and brain stems because the environment continued to be hostile. Later, a homo-erectus needed something better than hand gestures, so alleles recombined to give language, from which arose consciousness. And so on to symbols, concepts, rules, sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, formal operational thought.

Seriously John, you see no direction here???

Emergence pushes off a developmental stage preceding it, transcending and including it. With progress and purpose. Each new stage solves problems but creates new pathologies in a dialectic of progress (Hegel)

THAT is selection because selection involves choice and "life is matter/energy that chooses".

Best of all, the matter/energy (physics/chemistry) that spontaneously created life on earth by odds against chance has done so on innumerable other planets...making ET seek out new life and new civilizations, and making us sit in a radio studio every Friday trying to figure out if they've already been here.

Friday at 1:06am · Like

John Powers That link was a mistake, I apologize for that. Life will proceed from simple to more complex, but it does not depend on that. I can think of two mass extinction events that took the development of life back a number of steps. In fact, if that had not happened, we would not be here now.

Friday at 1:10am · Like

John Powers You have done me a tremendous favor, you have shown me that I need to work on explaining the concept of evolution to people better. This is essential if I am ever going to be a teacher. Thank you.

Friday at 1:29am · Like