



*"The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1)*

# REASONS TO BELIEVE - SEATTLE AREA CHAPTER

NEWS AND VIEWS

OCTOBER 2006

## What's Happening?

### Dr. Ross Recovering

Dr. Ross had coronary bypass surgery on October 4. The surgery went very well and he is now home recovering. Please keep him in your prayers. If you would like to send your best wishes, send them to [hugh@reasons.org](mailto:hugh@reasons.org).

### Chapter Meeting

The Seattle Chapter will meet October 28th, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Calvin Presbyterian Church, 18826 3rd Avenue NW, Shoreline. This is a great opportunity to meet the local folks and get involved in the RTB ministry. Join us!

### We Do Presentations

If your group is looking for a speaker, the Seattle chapter does presentations on wide range of topics ranging from the scientific evidences pointing to God, to the age of the earth debate. Contact us at [seattle@reasons.org](mailto:seattle@reasons.org).

## Inside This Issue

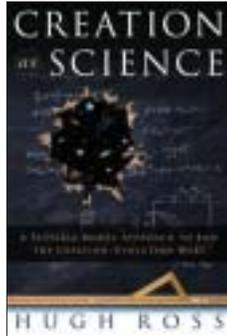
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## Breaking the Log Jam

Rev. Gary Jensen

In the quest for the truth about the question of origins, one of the biggest challenges is finding agreement on a common set of rules from which the differing viewpoints can pursue a common goal. Lacking such a foundation for discussion, the competing parties typically descend into name-calling and pot-shot-lobbing. In order to move the discussion forward in a positive way, Reasons to Believe has introduced a constructive model into the debate with Dr. Ross's new book, "Creation as Science."

Briefly stated, Dr. Ross begins the book by appealing to the broad yet latent consensus that the goal of science is to follow where the evidence actually leads, regardless of ideological or theological commitments. Next, he defines what constitutes a scientific research model and lays out the criteria for the RTB creation model. He then presents the RTB model and fleshes out how the model stands up to the latest scientific discoveries. Finally, Dr. Ross proposes a preliminary chart that contrasts the predictions arising from the four competing positions on origins (RTB/Old-Earth, Young Earth, Theistic Evolution, and Naturalistic Evolution). It is here that Dr. Ross issues the challenge over which position is most fully confirmed with the advancement of scientific discovery.



I found Dr. Ross' arguments both eye-opening and compelling. As Joyce Handzo of Christian Book Previews.com puts it, "Creation as Science dovetails the facts of science with the authority of the Bible in a realistic step toward a peaceful coexistence."

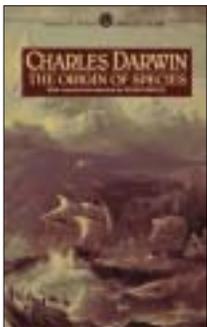
A power point presentation of Dr. Ross's book will be the major focus of the Seattle Chapter's meeting on Saturday, October 28. You will not want to miss this presentation and the lively discussion that is sure to follow. Join us for coffee and fellowship. We'll also have copies of *Creation as Science*, as well as *Origins of Life* and *Who Was Adam* available for purchase.

# The Genesis of Evolution

Ron DeMiglio

I want to approach the subject of evolution from a completely different perspective as tends to be my intellectual bent. I have often wondered how fine the line is between a mind that has a particular bent to it and one that is decidedly warped. Oh well, no use lamenting the way God made me!

Christian scientists and biblical scholars have always sought to tackle the ideas and ideals of evolution based on the empirical data or lack thereof. Although I don't believe any idea should be discarded solely based on the influences surrounding its acceptance, I do feel a critical evaluation of its acceptance needs to take place if an idea is unreasonably perpetuated by it. I think a fresh look at the genesis of evolution is in order. I will try and not make this mind-numbingly dull.



A question that came up during the The Truth Project (a Focus on the Family curriculum) got me thinking. The question was, "How did this happen?" The question was asked in reference to the systematic rise of evolutionary dogma. As I considered this question, a recent thought I had began to take on greater dimension and clarity. (It might have just been bad fish for dinner though).

I have always found the timing and the universal acclaim of Darwin's theory of evolution more than a bit curious.

Prior to the publishing of his theory in 1859, it was understood by most reputable scientists that the universe and life were far too complex to have arisen and advanced by a random succession of chance. The process of adaptation and selective mutations had long been observed and, although not fully defined, recognized as a fundamental reality. For thousands of years societies have brought about fundamental changes in species of animals for the purposes of domestication or useful abilities. However, the idea of slowly evolving species to species transitions to account for the present state of humanity was considered and ruled out many times over prior to Darwin. It was ruled out in spite of the fact that it was the only possible alternative to the Genesis account of life or, at the very least, a purposeful design by an intelligent being. Most scientists today discount anything other than a systematic and gradual progression of life that is dictated by chance, self preservation, survival of the fittest, selective mutation and environment. This was not always the norm.

I am proposing that Darwin did not come up with this "new" earth shattering epiphany of evolution but was the first one to give the theory "legs" as it were. Darwin himself merely attached detailed observation, speculation and presupposition under the title of "evolution." Darwin's most notable addition to an otherwise discredited theory was to propose what many considered to be a plausible mechanism to spur changes in organisms. In some instances Darwin utilized the scientific principles of observation, testability and repeatability. In other instances abandoned them completely for the sake of the grander speculation. I am going to put forth the notion that evolution, although postulated under

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## In the NEWS...

### [What's a Worldview Anyway?](#)

According to a recent survey, only 4 percent of Americans have a "biblical" worldview. What does that mean? This Focus on the Family article defines "worldview" and discusses why having a biblical worldview matters. Go to: <http://www.family.org/fofmag/cl/a0033123.cfm>.

### [Can We Trust the Gospels?](#)

This article by N. T. Wright examines the reliability of the canonical gospels and whether the so-called "gospels" outside the New Testament (e.g., the Gnostic texts) trump them. Go to: [http://www.beliefnet.com/story/197/story\\_19743.html](http://www.beliefnet.com/story/197/story_19743.html).

### [The Science of Design](#)

This 3-part Breakpoint series by Regis Nicoll discusses how design in the cosmos points to a Designer. Go to: <http://breakpoint.org/listing/article.asp?ID=5593> (for part 2 and 3 use ID=5644 and ID=5706).

### [Gender Difference, not Gay Marriage, at Center of Family Fight](#)

This article by Michael Medved posits that gay marriage can be more effectively debated on basis that it downplays gender differences and the importance of gender specific roles in relationships - something most people oppose. Go to: [http://www.townhall.com/columnists/MichaelMedved/2006/08/02/gender\\_difference\\_not\\_gay\\_marriage\\_at\\_center\\_of\\_family\\_fight](http://www.townhall.com/columnists/MichaelMedved/2006/08/02/gender_difference_not_gay_marriage_at_center_of_family_fight).

### [The Great Deception](#)

This Focus on the Family article by Susan Mathis discusses the pitfalls of new age spirituality so prevalent in our society. Go to: <http://family.org/fofmag/cl/a0038078.cfm>.

### [So Easy a Caveman Can Do It](#)

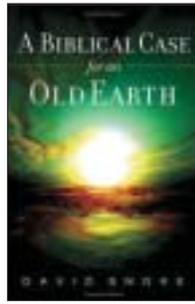
This Breakpoint commentary by Chuck Colson challenges the view that music evolved as a way to attract mates. His answer? Music is evidence of the *imago Dei* implanted in humans. Go to: <http://www.breakpoint.org/>

# Book Reviews

## A Biblical Case for an Old Earth

David Snoke  
Baker, 2006

Reviewer: Mike Brown



David Snoke has a Ph.D. in physics and is an associate professor in the department of physics and astronomy at the University of Pittsburgh. While his background is science, the majority of the book deals with the biblical evidence for an old earth. Of all the books I have read on this subject, I enjoyed this one the most. It is easy reading and provides many arguments I haven't heard or thought of.

The book is divided into nine chapters. The first is an introductory overview and the second deals with the scientific case. Chapters three through eight deal with the biblical evidence. The final chapter deals with the theological implications. Dr. Snoke not only provides convincing evidence for an old earth, but ably addresses the young-earth challenges.

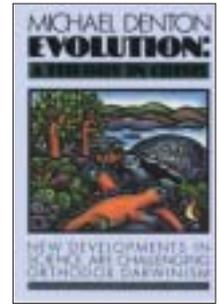
I respect his repeated theme of balance in Scripture and nature. In the beginning of chapter six he states: "In chapter 1, I argued that science may sometimes affect our interpretation of the Bible. There, I mainly argued against the 'fundamentalist' who would seal off the Bible from the rest of our experience. In this chapter, I argue that our understanding of the Bible can also affect what we look for in the world of science. Here I argue against the 'liberal' who would seal off the world of our experience from the Bible. I am arguing the same way I did in the first chapter: the Bible and science do not exist in two, non-overlapping worlds. If we allow them to speak to each other, the flow can go both ways; therefore, it is natural to use information from the Bible to direct our inquiries in the scientific arena."

I appreciated his handling of the issue of death before the fall. His insights were the best I have read. It would be difficult if not impossible to do justice to his arguments in such a short review. He does an excellent job of pointing out the balance of the love and wrath of God. In the chapter on Noah's flood, he gives no less than fifteen powerful arguments against a global flood. Another area I especially liked is in chapter six titled: "But what if we are wrong?" At the end of the book he reminds us that: "If we seal ourselves off from this risky aspect of our faith, that it can be falsified, then we make any theory anyone wants to believe just as good as our beliefs."

## Evolution: A Theory in Crisis

Dr. Michael Denton  
Adler & Alder, 1985

Reviewer: Dan Williams



In the ongoing and escalating controversy over the fundamental questions concerning the origin of life, Michael Denton's book is of singular note. First, it is written by a man who is well qualified to speak to this subject, with degrees in both molecular biology and medicine. Second, Dr. Denton takes, as he puts it, the 'radical approach,' by "presenting a systematic critique of the current Darwinian model." And third, Dr Denton is quite firm in asserting that he is neither a theist, nor a creationist in any sense of that term.

The book is quite accessible to none scientists with sections on the history of Darwinism, a good summary of the theory of evolution with a careful differentiation between micro and macro evolution, and the shift from theory to scientific dogma which came about in the scientific community. Dr. Denton's exposition in the section, "From Darwin to Dogma," about how the methodological naturalistic presuppositions are philosophic rather than scientific is worth the price of the book. Later sections deal with various mistakes which Dr. Denton asserts are commonly made and are quite interesting though of course controversial, providing hours of argument between opposing factions.

Dr. Phillip Johnson stated in a lecture I attended that it was Dr. Denton's book which set him to rethinking evolution as not so much a scientific theory, but rather a philosophical theory. The basis of the intelligent design movement is that naturalistic presuppositions do not form the basis of good science, and that the evidence of unbiased science indicates clearly the greater likelihood of a creator than that the origin of life, and particularly mankind, is due to purely natural processes over great periods of time.

different titles over the centuries prior to Darwin, gained specific traction and credibility because of movements of the day and not based on the integrity of the data. Evolution was merely the vehicle that justified other ideologies. I propose the meteoric rise of evolution was as much about the politically expedient justification that it offered as it was the science. The systematic rise of Darwin's theory was purposeful and orchestrated because his theory turned out to be the ideal conduit for a number of ideologies and movements. It remains so to this day.

Present in the socialist and communist revolutions of the time were some base beliefs that would be greatly enhanced by a viable alternative to biblical creation. Along with this ideological bent was a growing movement of moral relativism throughout many parts of the world. Social mores and issues of conscience were being vigorously debated at the time of Darwin. I suppose that could be said of many times in the recorded history of the world but this time was unique in several respects. Academia was involved in the process of divorcing itself from the precepts of faith. Simultaneously, the scientific community was refining its dogma that to be a true intellectual required one to discount any notion of divine origin.

I believe the environment of the time was particularly receptive to Darwin's ideas for reasons other than knowledge and a quest for truth. Those influences, in concert with Darwin's admittedly remarkable mind, produced a lethal combination of need, desire and unqualified acceptance. It was the scientific equivalent of a "perfect storm," if you will. Was neo-Darwinian thought a sudden paradigm shift in understanding or was it a movement and ideology born of and perpetuated by necessity? Here are just a few things to consider.

Prior to Darwin's book, "Origin of Species," there were numerous philosophical speculations and theories that made many of the same assertions:

- The ancient Greeks referred to this idea as "descent with modification." Boiled down to its essence, it was the idea that all things descended from one central, guiding principle.
- The German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) developed a theory of descent that is remarkably close to current day thinking and he did so some 60 years or so prior to Darwin.
- Charles Darwin's grandfather Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802) was a naturalist of significant reputation. He also had many intriguing ideas about evolution and argued all life could have come from a common ancestor.
- Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's (1744-1829) assertions were similar to Darwin's but were discredited because they lacked a viable mechanism of modification.
- Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) proposed the theory of population growth and was ultimately the idea that inspired Darwin's theory of natural selection.

It is also interesting to note that Alfred Russel Wallace developed the idea of the mechanism of natural selection at the same time as did Darwin. Wallace,

## Apologetic TOOLS

### [Creation Update Webcast](#)

Join Hugh Ross and Fuz Rana each Tuesday, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM (PT), for an exciting discussion about how science agrees with the Bible. Go to the RTB website and click on the "Creation Update" icon.



### [Daily Discoveries](#)

RTB posts a new scientific discovery on their website each day that supports the RTB creation model. For an archive of discoveries since 2003, go to the website and click on the "Today's New Reason" icon.



### [Ministry Newsletters](#)

RTB's free newsletters feature great articles on science and the Bible. They also keep you informed about what's happening at the ministry. Go to the website and click on "Mini Mag/Newsletter."



### [Message of the Month](#)

Receive a monthly CD featuring special discussions by the RTB scholars while supporting RTB financially. This year's series is titled, "Answers to Life's Big Question." Go to the website, and click on "Donate."



### [Outreach Brochures](#)

Get RTB's brochures for initiating science and the Bible discussions. Topics include the big bang, the origin of life, the anthropic principle and the "days" of Genesis. Go to the RTB webstore and click on "ministry items."



### [Apologetics Training Course](#)

Take RTB's training course and become an official RTB apologist. Available through the chapter for \$200. Course materials include audiotapes or CDs, two videos (VHS or DVD) and seven books. Financial scholarships are available.



however, openly embraced spiritualism and held adamant social convictions, all of which resulted in the watering down of his role in the discovery of the natural selection theory.

Now I would like to cite what I believe to be key factors in Darwin's theory being enthusiastically embraced at that time in history and the social necessity for it to remain as such today. The end result of this need was that instead of evolution languishing in obscurity as all unproven scientific theories did, it was fast-tracked into the mainstream of several propaganda-driven ideologies. It is important to note that although science has made incredible strides in almost every discipline; the same facts against evolution were then as they are now. Science has not been able to even scratch the surface of a reasonable reconciliation of them. They are today as they were then and have been long before the time of Darwin:

- There is no scientific law that allows for something to evolve from absolutely nothing.
- There is no way to account for non-living matter to come to life.
- There is no scientific law that would allow for one kind of creature to turn naturally into a completely different kind.

Darwin's theory of evolution and the "survival of the fittest" aspect of it irreversibly shaped the belief system and ultimately the justifications for the mass murders of Hitler, Trotsky and Stalin.

Hitler masterminded and endorsed a program that was based on the insidious evolutionary theory called "eugenics." The program was intended to bring about the improvement of the human race by employing the principles of evolution. This improvement resulted in the doctrine of ethnic purification or a "Master Race" and resulted in the classification of races as "fit" and "unfit." The end result was vehement racism, compulsory sterilization, death camps and ultimately the holocaust.

Trotsky said of Darwin: "Darwin stood for me like a mighty doorkeeper at the entrance to the temple of the universe." He further said that Darwin's ideas "intoxicated" him. Trotsky was a tyrant of almost mythical proportion and is seen today as one of the most blatant dismissals of God's moral laws. By all historical accounts there is little doubt that Trotsky was emboldened in his political and social views by the theory of evolution and that those views were under girded by evolutionary principles.

Stalin stands to this day as the worst mass murderer in the history of the world. Once again, Darwin's "survival of the fittest" ideas powerfully shaped Stalin's approach to society as well as the moral and political justification for his atrocities. Stalin's history of murder, oppression, atheism is well chronicled and the

blood of millions flowed freely from his unwavering rejection of a Creator after reading Darwin's evolutionary theories. To further illustrate the lack of morality brought on by this one theory, it was Stalin who had Trotsky murdered. It seems there is no loyalty, even between contemporaries of like mind and conviction. In order to foster support and justify their atrocities these men required credibility based on science and supposed reason. They could not have found a more ideal vehicle than evolution.

Society today struggles with question of sexual orientation, moral equivalence, moral absolutes vs. moral relativism. From a standpoint of societal and sexual justification, evolution is as important today as it was then. The importance of the theory then and now would appear to be different but all involve the desire to come out from under any standard of morality or restraint. I cannot call Darwin's theory one of exclusively unintended consequences but it seems clear to me that it has certainly been used by others as a theory of convenience as opposed to a single minded and noble pursuit of truth.

In conclusion, the question is not whether the theory of evolution is responsible for the vile acts of a few. No well-intentioned pursuit of the truth, which I believe was the goal of Darwin, should be held to such an unreasonable standard. I will liken my feelings about this with more recent occurrences. Both Mark David Chapman in his murder of John Lennon and John Hinckley Jr. in his attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan cite the influence of J.D. Salinger's book *The Catcher in the Rye* as a contributing factor in their actions. It is not the fault of Salinger that his book in some way triggered the abhorrent actions of the delusional few. The ill intent of some should neither confirm nor deny the work of others. I have no doubt, however, that Salinger's book has received far more acclaim and interest because of those aforementioned violent actions. I believe that literary critics would concede that *The Catcher in the Rye* has become a cult classic in part because of the insidious acts perpetrated in the books name.

My question to the readers is has evolution, like J.D. Salinger's book, received favor beyond reason based on the use of its content and conclusions? Was Darwin's scientific ground any less shaky than that of his predecessors and does the theory receive a scientific "free pass" because of moral relativism and the need for justification?

I contend that, at the time of Darwin, the same fundamental issues surrounding the evidence against evolution existed and, except for a well-conceived but unprovable mechanism, the theory remained as impossible as it ever had. I also contend that although the idea evolution had been around for a great many years prior to Darwin it had gained unprecedented traction due to the political and moral opportunity it provided for Socialist, Communist and Fascist regimes. I further contend that the

acceptance of Darwin's theory by default gave rise to a prolonged period of moral relativism that has increased in proportion to the theory's establishment and adherence.

The theory of evolution acts as much today as it did then, as a justification for any behavior that was previously seen as immoral. Although not directly credited or quoted, it has become the ethical arbiter among the current generation to embrace all that was once understood to be at odds with God. Couched in terminology like acceptance, inclusion and tolerance, Darwin's ideas have permeated all segments of our collective consciousness. We have come to equate justification on any level to be that of a compassionate mind.

Sadly, it is widely thought today that "love is God," regardless of the form it takes or rationale it employs, when indeed the opposite is true, "God is love." The origins of this mindset can only be traced to the self-loathing precepts found in evolution or philosophies of like kind. The scientific merits of Darwin's theory can be debated forever but the historical and moral consequences of it are beyond what any civilization should ever knowingly accept without substantive debate. That said, once the shackles of conscience have been loosed and the idea of a divine creator is banished from a society, the inevitable outcome will become increasingly tragic and ultimately fatal for the people of that society.

*Ron is a member of the Seattle RTB chapter and an avid apologist. He lives in Everett, operates an international coffee business and attends Clearview Foursquare Church in Snohomish.*



## Seattle Chapter Reasons To Believe

### Who Are We?

The Seattle Chapter of Reasons To Believe is a local extension of the worldwide, interdenominational Reasons To Believe ministry. We exist to support our parent organization and foster local involvement in the ministry. We serve the Puget Sound area and are composed of Christians of different ages and backgrounds.

It is our conviction that the same God who created the universe inspired the Bible. Therefore, what God says through His word must agree with the facts of nature. We reject the notion that science and the Bible are at odds and provide a scientifically-sound and Biblically-faithful alternative to Darwinism and young-Earth creationism.

### What Do We Do?

Our mission is to remove the doubts of skeptics and strengthen the faith of believers. We provide scientific, historical and philosophical evidence that supports the Christian worldview and helps remove barriers to a belief in God, the Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We carry out this mission by:

- Helping people access RTB and other scientifically and biblically sound resources.
- Bringing nationally-known speakers into the area to promote the scientific reliability of the Bible.
- Assembling a team of local apologists to address questions about science, the Bible and related topics.
- Working with teachers and homeschoolers to achieve a balanced approach to the teaching of origins.
- Building alliances with local churches, ministries and groups to maximize the exposure of the RTB ministry.
- Reaching out to unbelievers with gentleness and respect, encouraging them to evaluate their worldviews.

We welcome your involvement and support. For more information, contact us at [seattle@reasons.org](mailto:seattle@reasons.org). Tax-deductible donations can be sent to: Seattle RTB, PO Box 99683, Seattle, WA 98139-0683.

## Questions? Get Answers.

Whether you are looking for scientific support for your faith or answers to questions about God, the Bible, and science, contact us at [seattle@reasons.org](mailto:seattle@reasons.org). You can also call the RTB hotline seven days a week, 5:00 to 7:00 PM at 626-335-5282.