



Creation Matters

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Understanding Transitional Forms

by David P. Woetzel

Few terms in the origins debate are as confusing or as often misconstrued as the term "transitional form." Yet this concept is fundamental to characterizing the distribution of organisms in the record of life. Creationists and some evolutionists claim that transitional or intermediate forms are rare. For example, Gould states:

"The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology. The evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches; the rest is inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils."¹

Many evolutionary specialists, on the other hand, declare that intermediate forms are abundant. Cracraft claims:

"Each species, then, is intermediate in some sense of the word; all species possess primitive and derived characters."²

The public, on the other hand, inter-

prets the word "transitional" or "intermediate" in an uncomplicated, straightforward way, to indicate an organism along a clearly identified lineage between two different organisms. The dictionary defines transition as "passage from one state, stage, or place to another; a movement, development, or evolution from one form, stage, or style to another."³ Yet Darwinists misconstrue the term to create illusions of ancestry. Let us review some of these various usages to better understand what actually constitutes a "transitional form" such that it is evidence for common descent.

Intermediates

In recent years many evolutionary biologists have shifted attention to cladograms (a branching diagram that is used to depict the hierarchical distribution of shared characters). Walter ReMine comments on this usage:

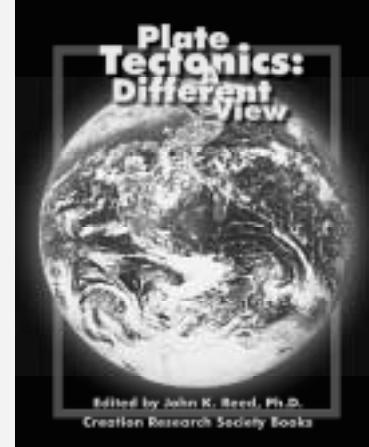
"...a species is intermediate to other species if they all have a pattern of nested similarities, as displayed on a cladogram."⁴

This meaning is often used, even if there is no plausible ancestral evidence, and phylogeny (a lineage) is never clarified.

On other occasions, evolutionists commonly define a transitional form as one containing character traits from two separate groups. Strahler notes:

"A transitional form, then, is judged to be an intermediate when its morphological features, or characters, are a combination of those of two distinct taxa."⁵

That is *not* a lineage, despite the fact that the public perceives it as such. This is the primary reason that this term causes so



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For many years, creationists have debated the role of plate tectonics in Earth history. Some creationists accept plate tectonics in a catastrophic form, and believe that those events were a part of the Genesis Flood.

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The initial chapters provide an introduction to the issue and a compendium of published criticisms of plate tectonics. Other chapters discuss ongoing problems with subduction, the Wilson Cycle, continental fit, the African Plate, and the inability of plate tectonics to contribute to field interpretation at the Midcontinent Rift.

This book offers a compelling argument that neither uniformitarian nor catastrophic plate tectonics has the evidence needed to support the broad explanatory power that makes them so popular. As the book says, "A theory that purports to explain everything, must." For anyone with questions about this issue, this book provides many answers and a coherent opposition to plate tectonics.

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much confusion.

Some scenarios focus upon the supposed evolution of certain body parts. Anti-creationist authors like Arthur Strahler and Philip Kitcher are notorious for zeroing in on just a single trait of supposed intermediates, such as dentition or locomotion, while ignoring many other characteristics that are not “transitional.” Their reason for this is predictable:

“Given the vicissitudes of fossilization, there is no reason to expect a sequence of fossils showing continuous modification of any characteristic we choose, even if that characteristic was continuously modified. Paleontologists think themselves lucky to be able to trace the continuous emergence of some characteristics.”⁶

Here Kitcher offers up excuses for the pattern of gradual change being absent. Yet it is important to note that a lineage does *not* require a “continuous modification of any characteristic.” Rather, it requires a clear-cut trajectory through morphological space, with a *void* or *absence* of organisms orthogonal to that trajectory. But both the pattern of gradual change and the evidence of a lineage are systematically missing in the fossil record.

Supraspecific groups

The classical Darwinians expected evolution to create lineages with clear-cut ancestors and descendants. When they couldn't find them, they began misusing words to create the illusion they *had* found them. If the various species in question could be plotted along a clear morphological trajectory, this would have been evidence for a lineage. The problem for Darwinists, however, is that there is a scattering of data points.

Evolutionists can hide this paucity of supporting data by citing only the supraspecific (higher than the species level) groups or taxa. Kitcher declares:

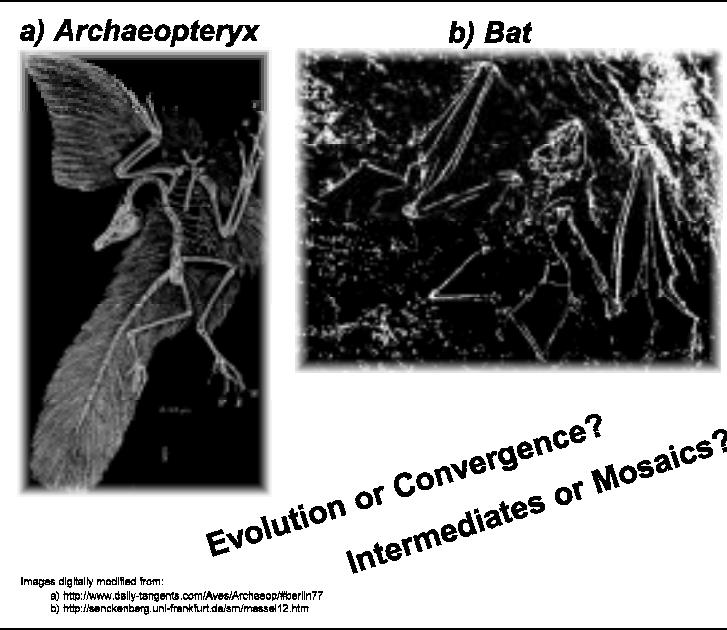
“About 180 million years ago, different groups of reptiles gave

rise to the mammals and the birds.”⁷

Such a statement makes it appear as if there are only a few data points (reptiles, mammals, and birds), when in fact there are wide morphological gaps that remain to be filled in, and a vast diversity within each of these groups. These higher taxa do not exist as data points and do not reproduce. This linearization of the evolutionary “process” makes transitions seem more plausible by obscuring the diversity contained within the respective groups.

Nested hierarchy

Nested hierarchy can become a source of confusion. For example, one might say that “amniotes gave rise to the mammals, from which arose humans.” The statement



is trivially true in the sense that your grandparents were amniotes, your parents are mammals, and you are human. As humans, we are simultaneously classified as amniotes and mammals. The statement says nothing about evolutionary ancestry.

Paraphyletic groups

Some taxonomic groups can be readily identified by certain common, narrowly-defined characteristics. For example, birds can be described as animals having feathers, and mammals are distinguished as animals having hair, mammary glands, etc.

On the other hand, there are groups of organisms, with a broad degree of diversity, that are united only by the *absence* of

certain characteristics. For instance, invertebrates share no common feature other than their *lack* of a spinal column. And reptiles comprise a group which is joined by nothing but the fact that they are amniotes that *lack* hair and feathers.

Such groups, called paraphyletic groups, are really classification leftovers (*para-*, aside from; *phyletic*, of a line of descent). However, evolutionists use this term in a way which implies evolutionary ancestry. They commonly define a paraphyletic group as a group that does not contain all of its descendants. For example, they may speak of reptiles being ancestral to a group such as mammals, or of invertebrates giving rise to the vertebrates. Colin Patterson concedes:

“The mysterious additional element, the extra information that transforms systematics into phylogeny, is extinct paraphyletic groups.”⁸

Mosaics

Mosaic or chimeric forms are sometimes mistakenly called transitional. Here I quote Gould and Eldridge (p. 147):

“At the higher level of evolutionary transition between basic morphological designs, gradualism has always been in trouble, though it remains the ‘official’ position of most Western evolutionists. Smooth intermediates

between Bauplane [body plans] are almost impossible to construct, even in thought experiments; there is certainly no evidence for them in the fossil record (curious mosaics like *Archaeopteryx* do not count).”⁹

Variation

Occasionally one finds evolutionists presenting “fine grained transitions” as if these were evidence for large-scale evolution. Perhaps a contemporary illustration will help explain the rare example of gradualism found in the fossil record. In mere centuries most of today’s common dog breeds have been selectively bred from original canine stocks. One can only

marvel at the breadth of diversity that has been produced! The Greyhound and the English Mastiff are thought to constitute the ancestors of the Great Dane. The English Mastiff might then be termed “intermediate” between an earlier breed (like the Tibetan Mastiff) and the Great Dane.

The problem for the evolutionists is that such variation is merely the expression of preexisting genetic information, sometimes called “microevolution.” It does not link disparate life forms into a lineage. It does not constitute a transitional form that is evidence for common descent.

Terminology

Evolutionists frequently employ misleading terms like:

- “simple”
- “primitive”
- “early”
- “convergent characteristics”
- “lost features”
- “found lower/higher in the geologic record”
- “advanced”
- “derived”
- “developed”
- “complex”

These terms are used as if ancestors had actually been identified when, in fact, they have not.

For example, under a commonplace evolutionary misuse of terms, a “convergent form,” like a “transitional form,” contains character traits from two separate groups. The only difference is in how the Darwinists explain them. *Archaeopteryx*, having teeth and a tail, is said to be a *transitional form* because it fits the common descent story of birds evolving from reptiles.

On the other hand, bats, having wings and utilizing echolocation to navigate, just like multiple species of birds, are said to be *convergent*. One must not say that bats are transitional between birds and mammals because it does not fit the accepted common descent story. Thus, Dawkins asserts:

“It follows that the echolocation technology has been independently developed in bats and birds, just as it was independently developed by British, American, and German scientists.”¹⁰

Unfortunately for evolutionary theory, convergent forms are abundant, while transitional candidates are rare.

Tying it all together

Evolutionists create the illusion of ancestry by merging together, in rapid fire, these various techniques.¹¹ The point is that any collection of objects can arbitrarily be placed into a continuum, with some identified as transitional. This, however, is not sufficient to establish actual evidence for common descent. There must, instead, be a discernible pattern of lineages giving the supposed transionals credibility. The data must occur along a long, narrow trail. The size of the gaps is not as important as the pattern. Once a lineage is determined, the transitional forms are self-evident.

The phylogeny question

While both creationists and evolutionists agree that there is a general pattern of nested hierarchy (which was recognized by Linnaeus long before Darwin’s work), the question for evolutionists remains one of lineage and ancestors. As more fossils have been found, the gaps and the lack of identifiable phylogeny have become more distinct. New discoveries have tended to obscure lineages previously believed by evolutionists to be reliable.

That is the whole point of punctuated equilibrium. Leading evolutionists do not claim that the fossils demonstrate phylogeny or gradual intergradations sufficient to prove large-scale evolution. To the contrary, they admit to the abundance of systematic, large gaps between major groups in the fossil record. Walter ReMine notes:

“These absences are huge as measured by the only scientific measuring stick we have — experimental demonstrations. The gaps are so huge they have not remotely been bridged by experimental demonstrations in labs or in the field.”¹²

This point should not be debatable, since there are plentiful statements from punctuationists admitting to the lack of clear ancestors and lineages in the fossil record.¹³

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6 Kitcher, Philip. 1998. *Abusing Science*. MIT Press, p. 110.

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11 See, for example Cuffey, Roger J. 1984. Paleontologic evidence and organic evolution, in Montagu, Ashley (ed.), *Science and Creationism*, Oxford University Press, pp. 255-281.

12 ReMine, Walter. 1999. Private correspondence.

13 See, for example, the archive at www.genesispark.com/genpark/link/link.htm

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As a Man Thinks...

by Wayne Frair, Ph.D. and Patrick H. Clancey, Ed.D.

Creationist Unveils New Fossil Discoveries

Thanks to Skilton House Ministries, two prominent students of evolution met in a two-hour debate Friday evening, 20 April 2001 at the Westminster Theological Seminary in a suburb of Philadelphia. Alan E. Mann, Ph.D., head of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Pennsylvania, argued the affirmative, while Jack Cuozzo, DDS, a retired orthodontist, argued the negative on the question, "Did humans evolve from ape-like ancestors?" The room was packed with nearly 400 attendees.

Mann's preemptory strike

In an apparent effort to associate himself with the views of most members of the audience, Dr. Mann, the first speaker, identified himself as an individual who formerly was "suspicious about what he would find" in anthropological studies, and also as a "very reverent person" with his own private views.

Then Dr. Mann presented what has become the standard, mainstream case for human evolution — most scientists believe it, footprint fossils lack opposable thumbs, ancient fossil dentition supports evolution, and "Lucy," an australopithecine, is a human ancestor. Most of his presentation was based upon his display of models of fossilized skulls, a molded ape hand, and a slide of "Lucy." Dr. Mann, an obvious Darwinist, offered the gratuitous, preemptory criticism that his opponent would not use data, but would present a religious, rather than a scientific, point of view.

Cuozzo's response

Dr. Jack Cuozzo, an orthodontist who has done original research, presented the negative point of view on the debate question. Contrary to Mann's earlier accusation, he proceeded to regale the audience with enormous amounts of data in a rigorous case against evolution. Cuozzo emphasized that evolution represents a threat, especially to our young people. The schools teach that humans are animals, and so it is no wonder that young people are more undisciplined and troubled than ever,

and their families disrupted.

The significantly earlier puberty among 50% of African-American girls by the time they are 8 years old demonstrates that humans are involved in "devolution," and not evolution. We are in decline from a better form, rather than advancing to some large-brained, Darwinian pinnacle, as evolutionists tend to believe religiously.

Major new fossil finds

Perhaps the most important part of Dr. Cuozzo's presentation was his display of a replica of a portion of a fossil temporal bone with its mastoid process. This relic, found by Cuozzo in a south London public park, fits precisely puzzle-like into the Swanscombe partial braincase, England's oldest human fossil. The actual fossil was turned over to English authorities, but first yielded an interesting hypothesis about the Swanscombe woman's death (see below).

Dr. Cuozzo intoned that this fossil piece was, "for the first time ever, (being) seen in any audience in the world." As if to demonstrate the serendipity of fossil finds, after Dr. Mann jocundly admitted that he never had found one himself, Cuozzo explained that the interesting "rock" he spied turned out to be a major fossil find.

He also subtly attacked evolution by noting that the red ochre burial powder stains on the Swanscombe fossil represents a process known to be used only within the last thirty thousand years, in contrast with the reputed 250,000- to 350,000-year age of the Swanscombe remains.

During his later rebuttal, Dr. Cuozzo further implied that, for spurious reasons, the Swanscombe fossil wrongly is regarded as a relatively young individual, since its pubic bone reveals considerable age. Dr. Cuozzo also discovered this female left pubic bone in soil near the temporal bone mentioned earlier. He pointed out that this Swanscombe woman had a powerful adductor longus muscle for moving the leg inward. This muscle had a very strong attachment on the pubic bone.

Effects of presuppositions

Throughout his presentation, Dr. Cuozzo emphasized that the presuppositions of the evolutionists color their interpretation of all "fossils." He claimed that evolutionists tend to argue for intermediate forms in order to justify a preconceived idea that humans are animals that have evolved from ape-like creatures. Some evolutionists may also adjust measurements in accordance with their presuppositions about evolution. However, he complimented Dr. Mann on the high quality of his doctoral dissertation dealing with the South African australopithecines.

Dr. Cuozzo's presentation was probably most energetic when he applied his expertise to an analysis of the probable cause of death of the Swanscombe woman. Crystallized "pus" on the mastoid process suggests that the cause of death was mastoiditis.

In the interest of others researching the Swanscombe park area, he has warned English authorities that the site is being overrun by dogs, bikes, and children at play. While not openly supporting Dr. Cuozzo's quest for the protection of possible fossils, Dr. Mann did vociferously object, during his rebuttal, to Dr. Cuozzo's argument regarding the similarity of Neanderthals and humans. This included his objection to Dr. Cuozzo's hypothesis that Neanderthal features characterize those of older humans.

Evidence from micro-carvings

Dr. Cuozzo also has discovered many micro-carvings on rocks, including a form very closely resembling *Cynognathus*, a carnivorous reptile which is supposed to have been extinct for some two hundred million years. He believes that Neanderthals had skill and eyesight greatly exceeding ours today, because they crafted tiny millimeter or sub-millimeter micro-carvings (which they could see apparently with the unaided eye, but we can't). He showed a photo of a one-half millimeter drawing of a bird with a bifid tail and pupil

in the eye. Another drawing was of a tiny millimeter fish above two horses.

With professorial self-confidence, Dr. Mann stressed evolutionary progression. He and his colleagues would not agree, of course, with Dr. Cuozzo, and would argue that the differences between Neanderthals and modern humans suggest different taxonomic categories.

While admitting limitations in K-Ar testing, Dr. Mann stated his confidence in the ethics of the scientific establishment as it seeks to improve its measurements over time. To Dr. Mann, who defended the cited

errors as inadvertent, he clearly took Dr. Cuozzo's repeated charges of unethical behavior as an insult to science.

The discussion also included recent findings of new fossils and how the Leakey report in *Nature* (22 March 01) refers to a new find (*Kenyanthropus*) which has small molars, contrary to what would be expected for a fossil of its reported age. This and other findings have complicated the current evolutionary picture so that popular evolutionary trees are now looking more like bushes with many side branches. Thus it has become increasingly difficult to trace

phylogenetic pathways, a conclusion with which Dr. Mann agreed.

During their presentations, both speakers covered considerable ground. Dr. Cuozzo tended to present rapid-fire details so that those in the audience without some initiation into anthropology likely felt somewhat overwhelmed. All in all, the debate was thoroughly joined by both opponents, and attentive members of the audience, regardless of their backgrounds, were able to comprehend major points in this thorough review of important issues involving human origins.

Debate report 2

Scientific or Unscientific?

by Wayne Frair, Ph.D. and Patrick H. Clancey, Ed.D.

A second debate, sponsored by Skilton House Ministries, was held Saturday morning, 21 April 2001, at Westminster Theological Seminary. Richard Weisenberg, Ph.D. (University of Chicago), Professor of Evolutionary Biology at Temple University, supported the affirmative, while Joseph Mastropaolo, Ph.D. (University of Iowa), currently Professor in the graduate school of the Institute for Creation Research in California, argued the negative on the questions, "Evolution is scientific? Creation is unscientific?" About 150 persons attended the debate.

Evolution is simply "change"

Dr. Weisenberg spoke first, and contended that evolution simply is "change," and that Darwinian natural selection explains it. Darwinism, he claimed, is the premise or clarifying principle for the various articles in a recent issue of *Nature* (3/29/01). Even though evolution is embedded in modern thinking, it now is under attack.

Weisenberg reminisced about a college roommate he had who was a Christian, a person with a weakness, which was the tendency to read his Bible frequently. But Weisenberg thought that his own interpretation of Revelation was just as valid as his roommate's. With the apparent purpose of stirring the audience, Weisenberg stated that "God is a she, I believe," who says, "I created fossils, species on islands, DNA sequences all arranged to reflect

evolution." In response to some student pressure after the formal meeting, Weisenberg did admit that he really is an atheist.

Evolution can withstand the challenge, Weisenberg said, and he offered that he'll "become a creationist" if rock dated radiometrically to be 65 million years old, and containing dinosaur bones, also can be found to contain a human or "even a higher mammal like a dog or cat." "Show me a bony fish in the Cambrian," he proclaimed.

According to Weisenberg, creationism invokes miracles that defy natural law, and is therefore unscientific. Creationism doesn't provide testable principles. Creationists must demonstrate that God uses natural law to bring about life.

Dr. Weisenberg's conclusion appeared to be that, even if a female God created the universe and the earth and all that lives in it, this would have no effect upon what science does. Science would continue to assume an evolutionary basis for all scientific investigation. Dr. Weisenberg's rebuttal seemed to say that the theory of evolution has been around for 150 years, and that evolution holds sway in mainstream science — since many believe it, therefore it must be true.

While Dr. Weisenberg had a much more relaxed exposition, even at times sitting down when he spoke, Dr. Mastropaolo radiated enthusiasm and bedazzled the audience with his articulation of well-organized points, attractively illustrated with a battery of photographs and drawings

on overhead transparencies.

No evolution, only devolution

Dr. Mastropaolo argued that there is not evolution, but rather widespread "devolution," as exemplified by a tendency toward disorder; for example, we see degeneration, death and decomposition. Plots on charts prepared by Mastropaolo show that, because of the increasing number of genetic defects, humans could become extinct by the year 2080.

Evolution, he said, has been the "phantom of the universe" since Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) taught that spontaneous generation made eels. It does appear that other Greeks, one to two hundred years before Aristotle, also believed in spontaneous generation.

As an example of what he considers fiction, Mastropaolo used the story of Prometheus' animating a lump of clay. This idea that life arises from non-living material firmly was disproved before the end of the nineteenth century. But according to evolutionists, the origin of life *did* require "spontaneous generation" — "the ancient idea in modern robes" — which usually is included in textbooks presenting evolution.

Dr. Weisenberg's reply was that he was not responsible for textbooks, even though he apparently is writing one at the present time. Later in the discussion he mused: "the first cell, an act of creation? OK! We don't know about the origin of life."

Mastropaolo maintained his tempo, saying that evolution is “nonexistent,” a superstition; whereas devolution is science. Haeckel’s embryos and peppered moths, for example, still incorrectly are being taught as plausible. Evolution, because of its low probability, requires an infinite number of miracles in going from “primitive to the present,” and is the biggest fairy tale ever told.

Evolution, Mastropaolo claimed, represents “occult religion.” Evolution is taught in public schools. Therefore, evolution violates the United States Constitution and should be expunged, if necessary by court injunction.

Taking a positive approach, Mastropaolo presented data showing that all the different forms of life were created from

nothing. He acknowledged that there had been some variation within the created types, what other scientists have termed microevolution. He said that as engineering requires intelligence, the various living organisms also were created by intelligence. He challenged evolutionists to make any bacterium, or even a cilium, of which there are 2,500 on a tiny paramecium.

An issue related to the politics of evolution arose after the debate in a discussion with Dr. Mastropaolo. Agreeing that evolutionists tend to appear smug about their views during debates, Dr. Mastropaolo explained that, because money lies at the root of this situation, evolution will tend to enjoy mainstream preeminence in Academe. Therefore, presentation of the

evolutionary point of view tends to be favored in tenure awards, federal research grants, and in the preparation of textbooks.

In conclusion, if Dr. Mastropaolo could be considered overzealous for his charges of evolutionary criminality and Constitutional violation, Dr. Weisenberg could be held to account for not showing more concern to work for necessary changes, for example, in textbooks. Overall, the attendees generally seemed stimulated by the presentations, and after the formal debate time both speakers were surrounded by members of the audience who were asking questions and challenging them.

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Why Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally?

by Robert E. Gentet

A high school student wrote to us asking why we think the Bible is to be interpreted literally. Here is the answer I gave her.

Your question is very basic and very good. And, to be truthful, to fully answer it would take a long paper or even a book! There are many facets to the question, and my answer will probably only hit upon some of them.

The theory of evolution, while in one sense old (some of the ancient Greeks, for example, believed in a form of evolution), is, in its current form, a relatively new idea. It's really only a couple of hundred or so years old, and was especially made popular with the publication of Charles Darwin's book *The Origin of Species* (1859).

It's important to understand that the term "evolution" can be understood in a variety of ways. For example, when Darwin studied and wrote his book, it was popular to believe that species don't change. However, the Bible nowhere says that species can't change. It only tells us that "kinds" (Hebrew, min) can't change. What the Bible actually says, many times in Genesis 1, is that God decreed that life is to reproduce "after its/their kind/s" (Gen. 1:12, 21, 24-25).

By actual living examples, we can see that species of some plants/animals can change. The question of how much they have changed since Creation is an open one. But if one takes the Biblical statements of Genesis 1 for what they plainly (literally) say, then the theory of evolution, that connects all existing life forms to a single origin in geologic time, would be impossible.

The Bible does not rule out all change. You are not exactly like your parents. All people on earth differ in some way. But, we are all humans and, according to the Bible, we always have been and always will be. People produce people. Cattle produce cattle. Frogs produce frogs. Birds produce birds. Fish produce fish. Snakes produce snakes. Bats produce bats. And you can go on and on.

That is the reality of what we have

observed for thousands of years. There is no evidence of anything evolving a wing, an arm, an eye, a toe, a hand, a fin, a fingernail, etc. Examples of disuse may be found, however. For example, fish lost in caves may have, over generations, lost their eyesight; but this is degeneration, not evolution! Losing what you have is hardly bringing something new into existence!

The Bible is a book that contains many expressions that are not to be taken literally. The New Testament calls Jesus "a door," but we would never take that literally. It is very clear that there are different literary types in the Bible. While there is a literal meaning for every statement of the Bible, the literal meaning is not necessarily the literalistic meaning of the words themselves.

It is clear that poetry may contain images that are not to be understood literally. Prophecy also is composed to some extent of images or pictures (for example, the Book of Revelation). In parables we must be very careful that we understand the point of the comparison, and that we do not seek literal meanings in details which have been added simply to complete the picture.

Even within an account that is basically historical, there may well be poetry with its imagery and figures of speech. There also may be accounts of prophetic utterances. For example, Genesis 2:23 stating the reaction of Adam to the creation of Eve is Hebrew poetry. The literal meaning is not necessarily to be understood in the sense of the literalistic meaning. That is, not every *detail* of a particular account is necessarily literally true.

But to say that the Bible is a philosophy book that you don't take literally is an extreme view of the Bible. It forgets that God is telling us things that we would otherwise be unable to know. Only God was there at creation. No man or woman was. And God does not lie. The account of the creation of Adam and Eve, for example, was affirmed by the early Church and by Jesus himself (I Corinthians 15:44-49; Luke 3:38; I Timothy 2:13-14; Rom. 5:14;

Matt. 19:4-6).

In short, there was a literal first man (made from the dust of the earth) and a first woman made from the first man. If we cannot accept this on the basis of Moses' account in Genesis, and the affirmation of Christ and the original apostles in the New Testament, then we have no basis to accept the rest of the Bible as well. The Bible then becomes merely a book of stories of the ancient Jewish people!

Most churches used to teach the Bible much more carefully. They believed in the literal, seven-day creation week of Genesis 1 and 2. It is only recently that some churches have changed their belief because of the growth of the belief in the theory of evolution. The church has changed to accommodate a theory that directly contradicts the Bible and what we can see around us in the world today!

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Speaking of Science

Is Radioactive Decay Constant?

This is one of the biggest questions in the young-earth / old-earth debate. Carbon-14 is useless to old-earthers as evidence to help make their point. However, there are many other radioactive isotopes that have been useful to old-earthers. Please remember that all of the ages that these isotopes give are based upon a list of unproven assumptions. Still, young-earthers have only been able to disprove a few of the assumptions in some isolated cases.

The biggest assumption has been the rate of isotope decay. Can it ever be faster? Is it possible that these "radioactive clocks" were going much faster in the past ... making it now look like these rocks and the earth are billions of years old instead of only thousands? This has been the greatest problem for young-earthers (not that old-earthers don't also have some big problems, too, as you know).

Recent research is beginning to open the door for new theories, discussions, and further research on the subject of decay rates. There are several kinds of radiation that can come from radioactive atoms. One is called beta decay (in addition to alpha rays and gamma rays). In 1987, Takahashi published in the *Physical Review Letters* (pp. 1522-7) the theory that beta decay can be faster. Jung confirmed this with an experiment (also in *Letters*, pp. 2164-7) in 1992. Follow-up research was reported by Bosh in 1996 (*Letters*, pp. 5190-3). What did this community of scientists discover?

They discovered that radioactive Dysprosium and Rhenium do decay up to one billion times faster, when they are in what is called the hot plasma state of matter. The temperatures of the plasma state are extremely high, however, like the inside of the sun or inside a hydrogen bomb blast.

But, even the evolutionary Big-Bang folks believe that the universe started out in the plasma state. This bit of news is extremely important to the ongoing debate! Takahashi suggests that this could be true for 24 other elements, too. Radioactive Lutetium can even decay up to 10

trillion times faster in this way. This changes things just a little bit.

What if the Creator began the universe in the plasma state? That seems reasonable. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. A literal reading of Genesis requires that after the first day, the earth would become cooled to a temperature way below a plasma. That's no real problem all by itself. But, what it does mean is that there was only one day of this super-fast decay that we can even theoretically talk about. And that is not enough to fully support the young-earth position.

Maybe the other assumptions in radiometric dating can be wrong enough to make up for the difference between 4.5 billion years and 6000 years. Like I said, this opens the door for further theory and research. Before this, old-earthers could say that this door was closed. Now they can't.

— contributed by Glenn Jackson

Our Humanity: Gene Sequence, Gene Activity, or Something More?

Both *Nature*¹ and *Scientific American*² have recently summarized the flavor of discussions from the Human Genome Meeting that just concluded in Edinburgh. Apparently, it is not the sequence of our genes, but the amount of activity in the way they are expressed, that makes us human. Gene sequences between humans and chimpanzees differ by as little as 1.3%.

Something else is clearly involved in making us what we are. A German scientist found that, although the sequences of genes in apes and people are similar, their expression in the brain is "poles apart." The genomes of all mammals are so similar that "it's hard to understand how they can produce such different animals," says Sue Povey, who works on human gene mapping at University College London in England.

What drives similar genes to have such divergent degrees of expression, if it is not DNA? No one knows. On April 27, ABC News posted a story³ about the relation of the genome to the "proteome," the protein library, with some illustrations of

how proteins work.

We are seeing a major paradigm shift in the works. For years we have assumed that differences in the genetic code (genotype) account for the differences in body plan (phenotype) and behavior. Apparently, things are not so simple.

There is no correlation between size of the genome and complexity of the organism: a single-celled Paramecium, for instance, has twice the DNA of a human. We are likely to see a whirlwind of new theories to explain the connection between our DNA and ourselves. Don't expect to find a soul encoded in A, C, G, or T.

1 Pearson, H. Humanity: it's all in the mind. *Nature* — Science Update, 24 April 2001.
<http://www.nature.com/nsu/010426/010426-8.html>

2 Wong, K. Gene activity, not sequence, makes us human. *Scientific American* — News in Brief, 24 April 2001.
<http://www.sciam.com/news/042401/2.html>

3 Krulwich, R. The next big thing. *ABCNews.Com* — Sci/Tech, 27 April 2001.
http://abcnews.go.com/sections/scitech/DailyNews/proteomics_010427.html

— contributed by David Coppedge
www.creationsafaris.com

The Code that Was

Tom Bethell, writing for the *American Spectator* (April, 2001), in an article entitled "The Road to Nowhere," claims "The genome isn't a code, and we can't read it." He reports how the human genome is far more complex than earlier claimed, because the old one-gene one-protein hypothesis appears to be incorrect — a gene can code for several tens of genes.

This means the difference between man and apes cannot be simply correlated to the difference in gene count, for instance. The article contains statements by Dr. David Baltimore, James Watson, and other prominent DNA scientists, to the effect that it may be many decades before we understand how the human genome works and what it says. Predictions that our computers could crack the code now appear to have been overly optimistic.

— contributed by David Coppedge
www.creationsafaris.com



Creation Research Society
presents



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Phoenix, Arizona

(to be held at the Church of the Redeemer in Mesa, AZ)
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday June 1, 2001

Attendance at each is limited to the first 40 registrants. Attendees must be either members of the CRS, or affiliated with some other creationist organization.

The registration fee is \$40.

For more information, contact Dr. David Kaufmann by mail at the address below or:
phone (352)378-9112
email kaufmann_d@hotmail.com

Complete this form, sending it with the proper payment to:
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I wish to attend the workshop at [] Newark, NJ [] Phoenix, AZ

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Creation Calendar

Note: Items in "Creation Calendar" are for information only; the listing of an event does not necessarily imply endorsement by the Creation Research Society.

May 18

Workshop: How To Debate Evolutionists with Dr. Duane Gish
Attendance limited to members & friends of the Creation Research Society
To be held at New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, NJ
Registration fee: \$40 (see registration form this issue) Mail fee to:
Dr. David Kaufmann, 3745 NW 7th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32607
Contact: Dr. Kaufmann (352)378-9112, kaufmann_d@hotmail.com

May 19

Creation / Evolution Seminar by Drs. W. Frair and D. Kaufmann
To be held at New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, NJ
Contact: Allan Valvano at (973)377-7839

May 25-28

Kansas Chalk Formations, Museums, and Fossil Beds
Family Creation Safari
CSA for Mid-America (Kansas City Area)
Contact: Tom Willis (816)618-3610, csahq@juno.com

May 26

Science vs. Textbook Evolution by Dr. Mace Baker
South Bay Creation Science Association
7:00 pm, Cornerstone Community Church, Torrance, CA
Contact: Garth Guessman (310)952-0424

June 1

Workshop: How To Debate Evolutionists with Dr. Duane Gish
Attendance limited to members & friends of the Creation Research Society
To be held at Church of the Redeemer, Mesa, AZ
Registration fee: \$40 (see registration form this issue). Mail fee to:
Dr. David Kaufmann, 3745 NW 7th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32607
Contact: Dr. Kaufmann (352)378-9112, kaufmann_d@hotmail.com

June 1 (* DATE CHANGE *)

Debate: Creation vs. Evolution with Dr. Duane Gish vs. Dr. Michael Shermer
To be held at Calvary Community Church, Phoenix, AZ
Contact: phone (602)973-4768 for information

June 16

Charles Darwin Exhibit at Huntington Library — Field trip sponsored
by Creation Safaris and BSA of San Fernando Valley, CA
Contact: David Coppedge (661)298-3685, bwana@creationsafaris.com

June 19-22

Niagara Falls and Spectacular Canyons — Creation Tours led by
Dr. John Meyer, Dir. CRS Van Andel Creation Research Center
Origin and finish at Morgantown, PA. Paid registration required.
Contact: Dave Endy, Pilgrim Tours (800)322-0788

June 22-24

Ozark Stream Float Trip: Learn the truth about river & canyon formation.
Family Creation Safari
CSA for Mid-America (Kansas City Area)
Contact: Tom Willis (816)618-3610, csahq@juno.com

June 23

Darwin's Influence on Man: His Science and His Theory
by Dr. Robert E. Kofahl
South Bay Creation Science Association
7:00 pm, Cornerstone Community Church, Torrance, CA
Contact: Garth Guessman (310)952-0424

June 24-29

Redcloud Family Adventure #1 — Fun-filled vacation for families with
teens and upper elementary aged children
Alpha Omega Institute, Grand Junction, CO
Contact: Andrea Korow (970)523-9943, www.discovercreation.org

July 1-6

Twin Peaks Family Science Adventure
Fun-filled vacation for families
Alpha Omega Institute, Grand Junction, CO
Contact: Andrea Korow (970)523-9943, www.discovercreation.org

July 21

Hear God's Side: Visit to Kansas Univ. Natural History Museum
Family Creation Safari, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
CSA for Mid-America (Kansas City Area)
Contact: Tom Willis (816)618-3610, csahq@juno.com

July 28

The Creation Model in Chinese Writing
by Mr. & Mrs. Mason Williams, former missionaries to Japan
South Bay Creation Science Association
7:00 pm, Cornerstone Community Church, Torrance, CA
Contact: Garth Guessman (310)952-0424

July 28 - August 11

Rocky Mountain Safari - SW Colorado — Field trip sponsored
by Creation Safaris and BSA of San Fernando Valley, CA
Contact: David Coppedge (661)298-3685, bwana@creationsafaris.com

August 12-17

Redcloud Family Adventure #2 — Fun-filled vacation for families with
children of any age
Alpha Omega Institute, Grand Junction, CO
Contact: Andrea Korow (970)523-9943, www.discovercreation.org

August 15-17

Discontinuity — Understanding Biology in the Light of Creation
Conference sponsored by Baraminology Study Group, Center for Origins
Research and Education (Bryan College), and Cedarville University
To be held at Cedarville University
Contact: Dr. Todd Wood, Box 7731, Bryan College, Dayton, TN 37321
(423)775-7277, info@bryancore.org

August 18

Fossils and Geology of Kansas City
Family Creation Safari, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
CSA for Mid-America (Kansas City Area)
Contact: Tom Willis (816)618-3610, csahq@juno.com

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