

# Origins Insights

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## My Rebutal to "15 Answers to Creationist Nonsense"

by John Rennie

### Part 1

by Robert Harsh

I have had the wonderful opportunity being a part of molding the minds of my students in AP Biology this past school year. These are some of the brightest students and many are eager to learn the truth about "Nature". In the American school system the ruling philosophy is Naturalism or Materialism. Many students enter their senior year completely convinced that "Nature" created "Nature". Non-life became life and began living at some point in the distant past. Other students entered their senior year as skeptics of "Materialism". These students have rejected the philosophical foundation that supports "Materialism".

It is my observation that many of the former believers in "Materialism" because of their faith in the educational system that has provided no reasonable reason to doubt the validity of "Materialism". The latter are skeptics primarily because of the perceived philosophical conflict between their religious training and their school experiences.

Many have experienced for the first time a public school teacher who is interested in the pursuit of truth enough that he has attempted to challenge the rational validity of "Materialism". Science is the process humans use to try to find out the truth about "Nature".

My students have been exposed to three fatal errors in the Materialists' explanation of the origin of "Life".

One of the most accepted Laws in all of science is

the "Law of Biogenesis" [Life only comes from already existing Life.]. The invalidity of abiogenesis was settled over 140 years ago with Pasteur's famous experiment. The first and most important error on the part of Materialists is that "Life" did indeed spring spontaneously from non-life at least once in the distant past. The second violation, of all known science, that materialist have indoctrinated into the American educational system, is the teaching that the first cells arose from non-cellular matter. Every Biology book in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century contains a unit on the "Cell Theory". The third part of the cell theory is credited to the 19<sup>th</sup>

**CSF Meeting  
Tuesday, Sept. 16**

**By all accounts from those in attendance  
ICC 2003 was a rousing success.**

**Attend the September CSF meeting and  
hear the "Highlights and An Overview of  
the 2003 ICC", as presented by Lionel  
Dahmer and Reid Moon**

Century biologist, Virchow. The universal belief by competent biologists is that “all cells originated from already existing cells.

The third fatal error that materialist have not successfully dealt with is **the problem of the simultaneous evolution of nucleic acids and proteins.** Living organisms are made out of proteins. **To construct even the most simple protein, nucleic acids [DNA and RNA] are absolutely necessary.** On the other hand, in order to construct any nucleic acid, many different kinds of proteins had to be present. **The first life that “magically” sprang from non-life had to be able to reproduce. No life is able to reproduce without the replication of its DNA. DNA cannot, and never could, reproduce itself without many different specific proteins and parent DNA. No protein has ever been produced in any living organism, in the absence of DNA and several other proteins.** This is an impossible situation for the materialist.

It is my belief that none of these three fatal errors were previously taught to either group of students. The believers had never been exposed to these fundamental problems and so they were naturally, believers in the materialistic explanation of the origin of life. The skeptics were skeptics because of their philosophical persuasion and not because they were aware of the scientific problems.

My students fell into four categories. Some were not interested and they did not give the problem of the validity or invalidity of materialism much thought. Needless to say, they remain uneducated. A second group listened to the problems with materialism and they have rejected the fatal errors as trivial and remain believers. They have received an education. A third group has received the teaching and their skepticism of materialism has been reinforced. A fourth group has become more skeptical of materialism but those students remain believers. Groups three and four have received an education because they have considered the problem and have formulated their conclusions.

My belief is that education in our **public schools should not be the indoctrination of our young people into scientific orthodoxy but providing opportunities for our youth to discover the truth about Nature.**

It is clear to me that John Rennie is more interested in the former than the later. His method in this article as well as past articles in *Scientific American* features misinformation and intimidation. Let us now examine a few of Rennie’s remarks in the July 2002 issue of *Scientific American*.

Rennie introduced his article in this way: **“When Charles Darwin introduced his theory of evolution through natural selection 143 years ago, the scientists of the day argued over it fiercely, but the massing of evidence from paleontology, geology, Zoology, molecular biology and other fields gradually established evolution’s doubt reasonable doubt.”** [Rennie, 2002] My paraphrase is: **“The scientific evidence in favor of evolution is so overwhelming that to oppose its Darwinian evolution’s validity is to reject science itself.”** That is what I mean when I object to the indoctrination our children receive in the care of public education in 21<sup>st</sup> Century America. No science educator wants the stigma that they are ignorant of the truth about science. Rennie makes it clear that skeptics of Darwin’s hypothesis are ignorant. **INTIMIDATION BY ORTHODOXY!**

Rennie next wrote, “Today the battle has been won everywhere-except in the public imagination.” This is the reason for his article. Rennie wants the believers to become good missionaries of Darwinism and be able to win the “public” over to the truth of “Darwinism”. That purpose is made clear in his introduction on page 78 of his article.

The intimidation is continued in a graph on page 81 where a Gallup compared the level of education of people with their agreement with the statement, “God created humans in their present form within the past 10,000 years or so.” The results demonstrated that the more education people had attained, the less chance they would agree with the statement. More than 50% of high school graduates agreed with the statement, while less than 30% of post-graduates believe humans were created by God within the past 10,000 years. My paraphrase, “If you want to remain ignorant, go ahead; but the rest of us genuinely educated folk know that humans evolved from ape-like creatures more than 10,000 years ago.

One of my students raised a question about Rennie’s “Answer #8 so I will focus our attention on that point. Rennie wrote:

Mathematically, it is inconceivable that anything as complex as a protein, let alone a living cell or a human could spring up by chance. Chance plays a part in evolution (for example, in the random mutations that can give rise to new traits), but evolution does not depend on chance to create organisms, proteins or other entities. Quite the opposite: natural selection, the principal known mechanism of evolution, harnesses nonrandom change by preserving ‘desirable’ (adaptive) features and eliminating ‘undesirable’ (nonadaptive) ones.

The part of the above statement that is underlined is number 8 of his 15 objections to what Creationists teach. The first problem is that orthodox evolutionists have been saying exactly the same thing for several decades. Rennie is untruthful in leaving the impression that statement number 8 is held to exclusively by Creationists and not believed by fellow biologists who are evolutionists.

**Is Rennie suggesting that “Natural Selection” is a conscious mechanism? Does this “conscious mechanism” plan the direction organisms need to evolve in order to be successful? What is the force behind the entity that has the ability to “harness nonrandom change”? How does this entity know which proteins will be an advantage to the future success of the organism?** We now know that living things are full of many irreducibly complex “series of chemical reactions” whose sum results in a selective advantage. The chance appearance of a single protein does not provide any selective advantage; it in fact will most likely provide a selective disadvantage and will be eliminated.

Quite the opposite! **“Natural Selection” is not a “mechanism” at all. It is merely an observation of differential survival in nature.**

Rennie next exposed either his ignorance of how Darwinian evolution is supposed to function or he is attempting to deceive his less educated readers:

**As an analogy, consider the 13-letter sequence ‘TOBEORNOTTOBE.’ Those hypothetical million monkeys, each pecking out one phrase a second, could take as long as 78,800 years to find it among the 2613 sequences of that length. But in the 1980s Richard Hardison of Glendale College wrote a computer program that generated phrases randomly while preserving the positions of individual letters that happened to be correctly placed (in effect, selecting for phrases more like Hamlet’s). On average, the program re-created the phrase in just 336 iterations, less than 90 seconds. Even more amazing, it could reconstruct Shakespeare’s entire play in just four and a half days.**

This is **not** the way evolution could possibly work! Let me explain by referring to a familiar illustration. If you were walking along in a wilderness area and came upon a watch lying on the ground would you logically theorize that some intelligent agent constructed the watch and left it lying there? It would not be logical to theorize that the parts formed themselves and then assembled themselves without the help of an intelligent agent. Richard Dawkins wrote a book, *The Blind Watchmaker* in which he explained his belief that the intricate design we observe in Nature came about by the blind watchmaker of Nature without direction or forethought.

Rennie’s analogy allows that there is selective advantage for each part of the watch the “blind watchmaker” of nature produces as it is invented. The seeing intelligent watchmaker could, with an accurate forethought, save each new part he invented and when he had all the necessary parts in place, assemble the watch that could keep accurate time. The blind watchmaker cannot possibly know the future. If a newly invented part has no selective advantage, the blind watchmaker will discard that part and it will be as if it was never invented in the first place.

Rennie wants us to believe that the blind watchmaker of Nature has sight and is directed towards a goal. The problem with Hardison’s analogy is **“preserving the positions of individual letters that happened to be correctly placed”.** **How did he know they were “correctly placed”?** He proposed a predetermined plan and a conscious selection mechanism. Darwinian evolution depends on the addition of new nucleotides that have arrived within the DNA of already successful organisms. Each of these additions must come about by pure chance and these changes in the genetic code are known as mutations.

Another problem is that the organisms used in the analogy have very high reproductive rates and the rate of mutations is

extreme. The probability of a beneficial mutation happening in real life is minute but in this analogy 100% of the mutations are beneficial. In the real world most, if not all, mutations are either neutral or harmful. If the mutation rate was as high as in the analogy, mutations would be occurring at other genes as well and the deleterious consequences of mutations at other sites in the genome would eliminate the individual who had developed the good traits. If the mutated gene was recessive it would not be expressed and there would be no selective advantage for that good gene in the analogy the size of the sequence is extremely small. In real life, the sequence would be on the average of 300+ nucleotides, rather than 13-letter sequence in the analogy.

Many genes are valuable only as a member of an irreducibly complex concert of other genes. Rennie ignored that problem.

What would be the odds of the 13-letter sequence, 'TOBEORNOTTOBE,' being typed by those hypothetical million monkeys, each pecking out one phrase a second? The answer is simple: one chance in  $13^{26}$  [ $9.1 \times 10^{28}$ ]. If this were a 13 amino acid polypeptide it would be one chance in  $13^{20}$  [ $1.9 \times 10^{22}$ ] because living organisms utilize 20 different types of amino acids.

It is clear that the Editor of Scientific American was either trying to deceive his readers or he is ignorant of the real world of living organisms!

### 2003 CSF Meeting Topics

Tuesday, Sept. 16 "Highlights and An Overview of the 2003 ICC", Lionel Dahmer and Reid Moon

Tuesday, Oct. 21 "What is Relevance of the Biblical Creation Account to YOUR Christian Faith", Reid Moon

Nov 18 "Neo-Creationist Geology from 2003 ICC", Chuck Danley

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