

## Evolution: "Pathological Science"\*

On September 24, 1989, there appeared an extremely interesting article in the magazine section of the *New York Times* entitled "Cold Fusion Confusion," written by two physicists from the Brookhaven National Laboratory, Robert P. Crease and N.P. Samios. It examined the sensational claim of Dr. B. Stanley Pons of Utah and Dr. Martin Fleischmann of the University of Southampton in England to have produced nuclear fusion at room temperature:

"Fusion, the process that powers the sun, ordinarily takes place at hundreds of millions of degrees. The announcement that so-called cold fusion had been achieved stunned the scientific community. We, like most of our colleagues, followed the story as it unfolded in the academic and popular press. With a mixture of excitement and skepticism, we learned that Pons and Fleischmann claimed to be generating four times as much energy as they were putting in, using a small device built with \$100,000 out of their own pockets. Scaled up, this process could conceivably power cities. Small wonder that businessmen and politicians took notice, for such a device would revolutionize the creation and distribution of energy - and with it, the shape of international politics."<sup>1</sup>

"But when other laboratories were unable to duplicate Pons and Fleischmann's work, their claim was soon completely discredited. Pons and Fleischmann had apparently fallen victim to the experimental scientist's worst nightmare - self-deception.

"Self-deception in science is very different from fraud. Few working scientists lose sleep over fraud. The reason is simple: The motive for fraud is almost always résumé-padding - adding lines to a bibliography by publishing fabricated or plagiarized work. But this succeeds only when the work is trivial, insignificant or peripheral; if at all noteworthy, it will be exposed when other researchers try to duplicate and explore it...Self-deception, however - involuntary or unconsciously being led astray - is a daily threat to every experimental scientist."<sup>2</sup>

Crease and Samios gave several famous examples of self-deception in the history of science. Each example showed a remarkable similarity to the Pons Fleischmann case:

"In the 1930's, a prominent scientist named Irving Langmuir coined the term "pathological science," or what he called "the science of things that aren't so." Pathological science he said, has a characteristic set of symptoms, and he drew up an informal list based on his own experiences. We have drawn up our own, based on ours. It is, we realize, neither exhaustive nor infallible. Genuine science might display any of these symptoms; pathological science is usually accompanied by several."<sup>3</sup>

\*Here are Crease and Samios' four symptoms of "pathological science":

Symptom number 1: too many miracles.

Symptom number 2: the "discoverers" are outsiders.

Symptom number 3: the discoverer has not tried to kill the discovery.

Symptom number 4: inability to repeat the experiment is met by *ad hoc* excuses.

As I read Crease and Samios applying these four symptoms to cold fusion, it occurred to me that these same symptoms could be applied, *mutatis mutandi*, to what I think is the most glaring example of self-deception in the history of science, the so-called "theory of evolution." But since both Crease and Samios are physicists examining a case of "pathological science" in experimental physics, their categories were not broad enough for my purposes, so I have taken the liberty of inventing my own four symptoms to apply to evolution:

Symptom number 1: it is neither observable nor verifiable.

Symptom number 2: it contradicts a known fact of science.

Symptom number 3: it is unreasonable.

Symptom number 4: it contradicts an article of the faith.

Let us examine then, like Crease and Samios, the theory of evolution in the light of these four symptoms, to see if it does indeed qualify as the longest running example of "pathological science" on record.

### **Symptom number 1: it is neither observable nor verifiable.**

When Charles Darwin first proposed his theory of evolution of the origin of the species by natural selection, he expected to be able to demonstrate it himself experimentally in a few years by breeding pigeons. His great champion, Thomas Henry Huxley, expected to be able to do the same by the breeding of sheep. But this proved to be wishful thinking, because, according to contemporary evolutionists, they had greatly underestimated the tremendous stretches of time it takes to produce a new species. Even over fifty years of experimentally breeding fruit flies which reproduce every twelve days, has failed to produce a new species. So evolution is not observable;

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but is it verifiable? It should be verifiable by an examination of the fossil record. If evolution has indeed occurred, we should be able to discover clear examples of transitional forms between the great classes of animals. For example fish are supposed to have evolved into amphibians, amphibians into reptiles, and reptiles into birds and mammals. However we do not find these transitional forms between the great classes in the fossil record. Here is the favorite popularizer of evolutionary theory today, at least with the media, Stephen Jay Gould of Harvard, offering what he claims are, clear examples of evolution in action:

“We have abundant, direct, observational evidence of evolution in action, from both field and laboratory. This evidence ranges from countless experiments on change in nearly everything about fruit flies subjected to artificial selection in the laboratory, to the famous populations of British moths that have become black when industrial soot darkened the trees upon which the moths rest. (Moths gain protection from sharp-sighted bird predators by blending into the background.)”<sup>4</sup>

But neither of these illustrations are examples of evolution, but of simple variation within the species. Where is the fruit fly or British moth mutating into a new species of insect? Darwin could do similar things as this with his pigeons, and Huxley with his sheep, but both were scientists enough not to have claimed to have produced a new species. But aware of the unconvincing nature of these non-examples, Gould and a colleague have invented a new theory they call "punctuated equilibrium," which they claim explains the lack of transitional fossils between the great classes in the fossil record:

“I count myself among the evolutionists who argue for a jerky, or episodic, rather than a smoothly gradual, pace of change. In 1972 my colleague Niles Eldridge and I, developed the theory of punctuated equilibrium. We argued that the outstanding facts of the fossil record - geologically ‘sudden’ origin of new species and failure to change thereafter (stasis) - reflect the predictions of evolutionary theory, not the imperfections of the fossil record. In most theories, small isolated populations are the source of new species, and the process of speciation takes thousands or tens of thousands of years. This amount of time, so long when measured against our lives, is a geological microsecond. It represents much less than 1 percent of the average life-span for a fossil invertebrate species - more than ten million years. Large, widespread, and well established species, on the other hand, are not expected to change very much. We believe that the inertia of large populations explains the stasis of most fossil species over millions of years.”<sup>5</sup>

So the reason we do not find the transitional forms between the great classes in the fossil record, is because periodically evolution speeds up and the transition is accomplished in a mere ten thousand years or so. Gould offers no explanation of why the mutation rate should suddenly speed up, and then just as suddenly settle back to the normal rate of apparently no change for millions of years. This sounds suspiciously like Crease and Samios's Symptom number 4: regarding *ad hoc* excuses. If we can't find the fossils that the original theory calls for, we invent another supplementary theory to explain the apparent failure. So evolution is neither observable, nor as we have just shown, is it verifiable.

## **Symptom number 2: it contradicts a known fact of science.**

But the reason that there are no transitional forms between the great classes, is not because of "punctuated equilibrium," but because such a transition is physiologically impossible. Louis Vialleton, a professor of physiology at the University of Montpellier in France, was one of the most articulate opponents of the theory of evolution as proposed by Darwin and others. He maintained that the science of physiology made the theory completely untenable.

The evolutionists seem to hold that evolution proceeds organ by organ. For example, Darwin said that the thought of the evolution of the eye made him sick, it seemed so impossible, yet contemporary evolutionists do not hesitate to claim that the eye has evolved forty separate times. Vialleton maintained that you can't speak of the eye, or any organ for that matter, as having evolved by itself, because the eye is part of a whole interdependent physiological system. If you want to speak of evolution, you have to speak of the evolution of the whole system or not at all. The evolutionists do not attempt to respond to Vialleton's criticisms, but have simply ignored them. Here is a summary of Vialleton's argument by the French mathematician, George Salet, a Catholic layman:

“Mutations happen by chance, and therefore we must see if chance, even if aided by natural selection, has been able to achieve any results...the desired result is that the new production not be an incoherent ensemble, but an ‘organ,’ i.e., something possessing different parts which complement one another so that the whole may be able to exercise a definite function. If we consider, for example, the eye, it is necessary among the requirements that the crystalline be transparent and that its curvature, and therefore its focal distance, have a definite relation with the distance to the retina...Another result to be obtained is that the new organ form with its organism a coherent whole. For example, an eye would have no use at all should it develop inside the stomach.

“Besides, an organ is not something you attach to an organism the same way you attach a rear view mirror to an automobile door. Its coordination with other already existing organs supposes a more or less profound revision of the whole living being; for example, the eye, even assuming that it appears on a suitable location and is properly connected by nerves to the sensorial and motor centers of the brain and the cerebellum, would serve no purpose at all if these nervous centers had not at the same time become fit to use the stimuli received by the optic nerve in a manner useful to the individual...Vialleton showed how impossible it was for new organs to form a coherent whole with what existed before, and therefore the need for a recasting of the whole individual. The reasons brought forward by...him have never been the object of serious discussion. I recall them briefly...in the hope that they will not fall into oblivion.”<sup>6</sup>

The "theory of evolution" then, is against a known fact of science. Vialleton and Salet's arguments expose Gould's "punctuated equilibrium" as a futile attempt to keep the theory going, thus incidentally, not only disposing of atheistic evolution, but also so-called "theistic evolution" as well, since theistic evolution presupposes a valid scientific base for the theory.

### **Symptom number 3: it is unreasonable.**

Here is the Nobel Laureate, Jacques Monod, in his *Chance and Necessity*, considered a "classic" by the atheistic humanist establishment:

“When one ponders on the tremendous journey of evolution over the past three billion years or so, the prodigious wealth of structures it has engendered, and the extraordinarily effective teleonomic performance of living beings, from bacteria to man, one may well find oneself beginning to doubt again whether all this could conceivably be the product of an enormous lottery presided over by natural selection, blindly picking the rare winners from among numbers drawn at utter random.

“While one's conviction may be restored by a detailed review of the accumulated modern evidence that this conception alone is compatible with the facts (notably with the molecular mechanisms of replication, mutation, and translation), it affords no synthetic, intuitive, and immediate grasp of the vast sweep of evolution. The miracle stands ‘explained’; it does not strike us as any less miraculous. As François Mauriac wrote, ‘What this professor says is far more incredible than what we poor Christians believe.’”<sup>7</sup>

But Monod's initial hesitations quickly dissipate as he warms to his subject:

“We call these events accidental; we say they are random occurrences. And since they constitute the only possible source of modification in the genetic text, itself the sole repository of the organism's hereditary structures, it follows that chance alone is at the source of every innovation, of all creation in the biosphere. Pure chance, absolutely free but blind, at the very root of the stupendous edifice of evolution; this central concept of modern biology is no longer one among other possible or even conceivable hypotheses. It is today the sole conceivable hypothesis, the only one that squares with observed and tested fact. And nothing warrants the supposition - or the hope - that on this score our position is likely ever to be revised.”<sup>8</sup>

Monod concludes:

“The universe is not pregnant with life nor the biosphere with man. Our number came up in the Monte Carlo game. Is it any wonder if, like the person who has just made a million at the casino, we feel strange and a little unreal?”<sup>9</sup>

I think everyone will admit that this presentation is unreasonable. There is no such thing as chance from God's point of view. Chance exists only from the point of view of man, and stems from his ignorance. The Holy Ghost Father, Henry Korin, discusses the possibility of life arising from non-life by chance:

“If the material causes operating in a living body, which the soul combines into a single unit, are able to cause the necessary conditions for life and thus produce a new living body, why should it

be impossible for those forces to be united 'by chance' into an operational unit and thus give rise to a living body? If such a thing did happen, a living body would have been produced from inanimate matter. Thus it would not be impossible for a combination of inanimate forces to give rise to a living body.

"...We must answer that an appeal to chance is not an explanation, but a confession of ignorance of the adequate explanation. Chance refers to the unpredictability of an effect produced by causes whose combined action is not known. To deny that their combination has a cause is tantamount to a denial of the principle of causality. Therefore, an appeal to chance is an admission that the known physical forces of inanimate matter cannot explain the origin of life."<sup>10</sup>

But if the chance origin of life is unreasonable, it is also unscientific, since true science is an exercise in reason. It should be possible then to rebut Monod's explanation of the origin of life not only from philosophy, but from science itself. This can indeed be convincingly done by probability math which studies the laws of chance. Dr. Henry Morris, a Protestant creationist scientist, does this about as well as I have ever seen it done in his excellent *Scientific Creationism*, but since his treatment is a little long, let me try to condense it.

What is the mathematical probability of the most simple self-replicating chemical structure that can be conceived, arising in what the evolutionists call the "primordial soup," by chance alone. The basic chemicals of life are proteins and DNA, but Dr. Morris lets the DNA go and concentrates just on the protein. Proteins are composed of long chains of twenty different kinds of amino acids, and can function only if the chain is in one particular sequence. Now, as long as there are only a few components, the odds of the probability of the correct sequence arising by chance alone in the "primordial soup" are not too great.

For example, suppose we have two components A and B that function only in the sequence A-B. The only other possible combination B-A does not work. So we have a one-in-two chance of success, just like tossing a coin heads or tails.

Let us add a third component C, and assume that only the sequence A-B-C works. There are six possible ways that these three components can combine: A-B-C, A-C-B, B-A-C, B-C-A, C-B-A, and C-A-B. So now the odds of getting the correct system have risen to one in six. As we continue to add components, the odds rise sharply. For five components A-B-C-D-E, the probability is one in one-hundred-and-twenty.

Let us jump to a protein chain composed of one hundred units. Remember this system will work, only if it appears in one particular sequence. Believe it or not, there are  $10^{158}$  possible sequences in a system composed of a hundred units.  $10^{158}$  is a one followed by 158 zeros. So the odds are now one in  $10^{158}$ .

Now suppose in the "primordial soup" these 100 components keep trying to hit the proper sequence, getting together, breaking up, trying again. The evolutionists tell us that the universe is less

than thirty billion years old. Suppose we let these one hundred components combine a billion times a second for thirty billion years. We will have reached  $10^{105}$  of the possible sequences. Remember we need at least  $10^{158}$  chances to have at least a hope of success. So the evolutionists are hoist on their own dating petard. Thirty billion years is just not enough time. And this is just for the protein. We haven't even considered the other necessary chemical for life, DNA. Dr. Morris concludes:

“And yet an organism composed of only 100 parts is impossibly simple. Research sponsored by NASA (for the purpose of enabling astronauts to recognize even the most rudimentary forms of life on other planets) has shown that the simplest type of protein molecule that could be said to be ‘living’ is composed of a chain of at least 400 linked amino acids...It is thus inconceivable (to anyone but a doctrinaire evolutionist) that a living system could ever be formed by chance. Yet if a Creator is excluded from the problem, there is no other way that at least the first living system could ever have been formed.”<sup>11</sup>

#### **Symptom number 4: it is against an article of the faith.**

Here is the atheistic humanist Sir Julien Huxley of UNESCO fame:

“In the evolutionary pattern of thought there is no longer either need or room for the supernatural. The earth was not created; it evolved. So did all animals and plants that inhabit it, including our human selves, mind and soul as well as brain and body. So did religion.

“Evolutionary man can no longer take refuge from his loneliness in the arms of a divinized father-figure whom he has himself created, nor escape from the responsibility of making decisions by sheltering under the umbrella of Divine Authority, nor absolve himself from the hard task of meeting his present problems and planning his future by relying on the will of an omniscient, but unfortunately inscrutable, Providence.”<sup>12</sup>

I have edited Huxley's unbelievable outpouring against the faith (it was hard to know where to start) down to just one sentence: "The earth was not created; it evolved." This statement is against the very first article of the faith: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth." Both Scripture and Tradition bear witness to this beautiful truth. In the very first sentence of the Bible we read: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," and from Tradition, the First Vatican Council declared: "If anyone does not admit that the world and everything in it, both spiritual and material, have been produced in their entire substance by God out of nothing: let him be anathema" (*Denz.* 362).

Let me conclude by returning to Stephen Jay Gould:

‘Why should a rat run, a bat fly, a porpoise swim, and I type this essay with structures built of the same bones unless we all inherited them from a common ancestor? An engineer, starting from scratch, could design better limbs in each case. Why should all native animals of Australia be marsupials, unless they descended from a common ancestor located on this island continent...Did he

[God] create to mimic evolution and test our faith thereby?"<sup>13</sup>

God the Father is an artist, and like all artists He repeats Himself in ever varying but similar patterns. He also has a sense of humor, and He made Australia, the land of the marsupial, for our delight. Gould's, "did he create to mimic evolution and test our faith thereby?", strikes me as a much more serious case of self-deception than Pons and Fleischmann's "cold fusion."

St. Paul says in his Epistle to the Romans, "For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, His eternal power also, and divinity so that they are inexcusable" (1:20). In 1938 Pope Pius XI, speaking to the Pontifical Academy of Science, used this passage to warn scientists:

"May not that terrible vision recur to any of them, that terrible vision which, though for a moment the Apostle of the Gentiles had: namely, that every high intelligence of this kind ought to become deeply interested in the pursuit of the whole truth, so that it might not happen that an intelligence created by God, illuminated by God, would not rise to the Creator, To such an intelligence ought to be applied that great, grave and logical condemnation mentioned by the Apostle himself in these terrible words: '*ita ut sint inexcusabiles*' (so that they are inexcusable); as if to say that they could not have an excuse not to have known the Maker, the Creator, after having known His works, His creature.@"<sup>14</sup>

Why then is evolution the longest running example on record of "pathological science"? The British evolutionist, D.M.S. Watson, unwittingly gives us the answer:

"The theory of evolution...[is] a theory universally accepted not because it can be proved by logically coherent evidence to be true, but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible."<sup>15</sup>

So these self-deluded men cling desperately to this "theory" not because it is observable or verifiable, not because it is scientific, not because it is reasonable, but because the alternative, creation by God, they refuse to accept.

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### *References*

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- 3 Crease and Samios, p.36.
- 4 Stephen Jay Gould, *Hen's Teeth and Horses Toes*, W.W. Norton and Co., New York, 1983, p.257.
- 5 Gould, *Op. cit.*, pp.259,260.

- 6 George Salet, *Hasard et Certitude*, translated from the French by Bro.Stanislaus Ribera Faig, O.S.B., Editions Scientific, Paris, 1972, pp.389-391
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- 8 Monod, *Op. cit.*, pp.112,113.
- 9 Monod, pp.145,146.
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- 11 Henry Morris, *Scientific Creationism*, Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego, CA, 1974, pp.61,62.
- 12 Julien Huxley, "The Evolutionary Vision," in *Evolution after Darwin*, Vol. III, *Issues in Evolution*, Edited by Sol Tax, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1960, pp.249-253.
- 13 Gould, *Op. cit.*, pp.258,259.
- 14 *L'Osservatore*, January 31, 1938.
- 15 D.M.S. Watson, "Adaption," *Nature*, Volume 123, 1929, p.233; quoted in Morris, *Op. cit.*, p.8.

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