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“Nevertheless, it was to Darwin’s friends that the first wave of positive responses must be attributed. For it was obvious that Darwin’s theories were as useful to them as they were to his theories. Over the following decades, Darwin’s defenders came to occupy influential niches in British and American intellectual life. Together, these men would also control the scientific media of the day, especially the important journals...Darwin’s opponents failed to achieve anything like the same command of the media or penetration of significant institutions.”

—Janet Browne, *Charles Darwin: The Power of Place* (Princeton, 2002), p. 129.



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This month marks the 7th Anniversary of *Creation-Evolution Headlines*. This would be a great time to send us a line if you discovered the site in the last year or so. It can be pro or con, but should include your name, city and occupation. Your name will not be shown, and you will not be put on a mailing list. [Write here](#) with your brief comment.



Watch for the Recycle logo to find gems from the back issues!

Evolutionists Say Parasites Made Humans Successful 09/30/2007

“If **cooperation** has been the **secret to our evolutionary success**, we may have our **parasites to thank** for that.” That’s a pretty big *If*, but that’s what two evolutionary biologists claimed this month *Current Biology*.¹ The cooperative behaviors naturally selected in evolutionary host-parasite wars, by implication, are what gave human beings the ability to build cities, governments and scientific laboratories – like the Institute of Evolutionary Biology at the University of Edinburgh, where Andy Gardner and Stuart A. West work.

Surprisingly, their claim came at the end of an article that discussed primarily the downfall of one of the leading theories for social cooperation: the kin selection theory of W. D. Hamilton. Their first paragraph explained why this theory fails:

Cooperation abounds in the natural world, and biologists are faced with the difficulty of reconciling this fact with the principle of the ‘survival of the fittest’. A fundamental step in **our understanding** of cooperation was provided by W. D. Hamilton’s theory of inclusive fitness. This reveals that **altruistic behaviour**, where an individual pays a direct fitness cost in order to enhance the fitness of others, can be **favoured by selection** if **individuals tend to promote the reproductive success of their genetic relatives**. This **raises the question** of how **altruists** ensure that their **selfless behaviour** is directed primarily towards their **kin**. One possibility is genetic **kin recognition**, where individuals identify close kin on the basis of physical similarity because relatives look more similar than unrelated individuals. **Despite** the apparent incentive for such kin recognition, however, **there is relatively poor empirical support for this mechanism in nature**. A new **theoretical study** of genetic kin recognition by Francois Rousset and Denis Roze reveals that, **left to its own evolutionary devices, this mechanism will drive itself to ruin**.

They proceeded to demonstrate that theoretical and observational evidence for Hamilton’s celebrated theory for the origin of cooperation is rare in nature, if it works at all. There was only one example they could provide: parasitism.



Scientist of the Month



Evolution: Possible or Impossible?

Dutch Headlines



Guide to Evolution

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“It is refreshing to know that there are valuable resources such as Creation-Evolution Headlines that can keep us updated on the latest scientific news that affect our view of the world, and more importantly to help us decipher through the rhetoric so carelessly disseminated by evolutionary scientists. I find it ‘Intellectually Satisfying’ to know that I don’t have to park my brain at the door to be a ‘believer’ or at the very least, to not believe in Macroevolution.”

But **all is not lost for genetic kin recognition**. As Crozier suggested, the **mechanism** could be **stabilised** by extrinsic processes that maintain marker diversity. Rousset and Roze have confirmed this by **incorporating an *ad hoc* advantage** to rare markers into their model and found that, **provided** this was **sufficiently strong** relative to the **fitness consequences of altruism**, genetic kin recognition is **maintained** and **selflessness prevails**. This could explain why, when genetic kin recognition does occur, it **often involves genes that are implicated in host-parasite interactions**, a potent source of strong **balancing selection**. The **paragon** of genetic kin recognition is the detection of major histocompatibility (MHC) genes, involved in **immune function**, upon which **rodents** and **humans** appear to **decide their social and sexual relationships**.

And that was the context for their ending sentence quoted earlier: “If cooperation has been the secret to our evolutionary success, we may have our parasites to thank for that.”

This statement clearly implies far more than a desire to uncover a mechanism for evolutionary behavior. It is implying that our deepest relationships and longings, even to the point of self-sacrifice for one we love, is rooted in blind, uncaring processes of evolution at the genetic level. Ultimately, it is a claim that selflessness is an illusion, arising from Darwinian selfishness.

With the downfall of Hamilton’s popular theory, there may be no current working model for the origin of human love, cooperation and reasoning. Of one thing Gardner and West are sure, however: they came about by Darwinian survival of the fittest.

¹Andy Gardner and Stuart A. West, “Social Evolution: The Decline and Fall of Genetic Kin Recognition,” [Current Biology](#), Volume 17, Issue 18, 18 September 2007, pages R810-R812, doi:10.1016/j.cub.2007.07.030.

Scene: a university science lab. Excuse me, sir. May I help you, officers? We’re looking for a Dr. Darwinlover. That’s me; what is this about? I’m afraid we’ll have to take you into custody. You’re under arrest. Wha...? On what grounds? What’s going on here? According to our warrant, you are being charged with impersonating a scientist, violating established laws, and using academic resources to promote a narrow religious agenda. What are you talking about? Who are you? The CEH Police. I’ve never heard of you. We are a non-governmental agency of trained volunteers authorized by the court to conduct citizen’s arrests. What court? The court of public opinion.

You can’t do this to me. I’m a scientist. So you say. We hear that one all the time. Please don’t cause a disturbance, sir. We’re just doing our job. And violating the laws... what laws? The laws of logic, sir. What are you talking about? I told you I’m a scientist. According to the warrant, you claimed, in writing, that human behavior evolved by a material process of evolution, but then reasoned as if this represented a true account of human origins. So? Truth cannot evolve, sir. According to the prosecutor, this represents a contradiction. According to the law of non-contradiction, this is punishable by demotion to the realm of the irrational – in other words, losing your license to practice science.

And I’m not promoting any religious agenda! I’m an atheist! According to the federal courts, atheistic humanism is a religion. The prosecutor said you went far beyond the empirical evidence and taught your own personal beliefs using academic resources. But lots of scientists are atheists! What you believe in your private life is protected free speech, sir, but scientists are not supposed to use their academic positions to promote a narrow religious agenda, according to your own writings. This is another one of the counts of violating the laws of logic being charged against you. In fact, the count alleges that you yourself used this very argument to convince the dean to deprive a colleague of tenure because of his private religious beliefs.

This is outrageous. Nobody has ever accused me of such things. Ignorance of the law is no excuse, sir. Scientists have a position of high trust in our culture. Presumably, when you took this position, you committed to abide by the laws of logic and should have received the proper instruction in the law. But I’ve written things like that paper all my professional life. And so have all my colleagues! Are you confessing to collusion, sir?

For crying out loud, I haven’t done anything that isn’t common practice among all my peers. I realize that, sir. The chief recognizes this is a widespread problem. He has decided it’s time to start cracking down. The only way to make progress is by tackling one case at a time. Why me? He decided to make you an example, so that others would hear, and fear, and commit no more such abomination in the land.

What will they do to me? Most likely, you will be given an opportunity to confess your crimes, then cease and desist. For a probationary period, your speaking and writing will be under surveillance. However, if you persist in irrational behavior, repeat offenses

(a loan specialist in California)

“I have greatly benefited from your efforts. I very much look forward to your latest posts.”
(an attorney in California)

“I must say your website provides an invaluable arsenal in this war for souls that is being fought. Your commentaries move me to laughter or sadness. I have been viewing your information for about 6 months and find it one of the best on the web. It is certainly effective against the nonsense published on Talkorigins.org. It great to see work that glorifies God and His creation.”
(a commercial manager in Australia)

“Visiting daily your site and really do love it.”
(a retiree from Finland who studied math and computer science)

“I am agnostic but I can never deny that organic life (except human) is doing a wonderful job at functioning at optimum capacity. Thank you for this ... site!”
(an evolutionary theorist from Australia)

“During the year I have looked at your site, I have gone through your archives and found them to be very helpful and informative. I am so impressed that I forward link to members of my congregation who I believe are interested in a higher level discussion of creationist issues than they will find at [a leading origins website].”
(a minister in Virginia)

“I attended a public school in KS where evolution was taught. I have rejected evolution but have not always known the answers to some of the questions.... A friend told me about your site and I like it, I have it on my favorites, and I check it every day.”
(an auto technician in Missouri)

“Thanks for a great site! It has brilliant insights into the world of science and of the evolutionary dogma. One of the best sites I know of on the internet!”
(a programmer in Iceland)

“The site you run – creation–evolution headlines is extremely useful to me. I get so tired of what passes for science – Darwinism in particular – and I find your site a refreshing antidote to the usual junk.... it is clear that your thinking and logic and willingness to look at the evidence for what the evidence says is much greater than what I read in what are now called science journals. Please keep up the good work. I appreciate what you are doing more than I can communicate in this e-mail.”
(a teacher in California)

“Although we are often in disagreement, I have the greatest respect and admiration for your writing.”
(an octogenarian agnostic in Palm Springs)


“your website is absolutely superb and unique. No other site out there provides an informed & insightful ‘running critique’ of the current goings-on in the scientific

will lead to your being stripped of your credibility. Hardened criminals might even be pilloried in public.

And if I fail to cooperate? You have the right to remain silent. But remember, anything you speak or write can and will be used against you in the court of public opinion. *What's with the dog?* That's our K9 unit; Apollos here is trained to sniff out [contraband](#). [*Barking and a brief scuffle ensues.*]

Tune in tomorrow for the next exciting episode of: *Creation-Evolution Headlines*, the top-rated science investigative reporting show, featuring Apollos, the wonder dog. Brought to you by Master Plan, the universal leader in information management design technology, and by Moral Support, a global network of encouragement.

Next headline on: [Darwin and Evolutionary Theory](#) • [Dumb Ideas](#)

 Material girl in a material world: not a formula for happiness, from [09/17/2003](#).

Astronomy Columnist Tackles Naturalism vs. Intelligence 09/29/2007

Bob Berman is an unusual columnist for a science magazine. He's independent-thinking, unafraid to tackle big questions and criticize powerful institutions, but all the while able to keep a sense of humor. In his monthly column "Bob Berman's Strange Universe" in the November issue of [Astronomy](#) (p. 10), he took a moment from munching on his hot dog under the moon to think big. "Astronomy leads us to **deep issues**," he began. "Many are **so profound**, we can't even handle them." In "Hall of Mirrors," he nevertheless handled, in his own whimsical way, some of the biggest: quantum theory, consciousness, perception, time, space, and intelligence.

Take **the question of intelligence** lurking throughout the cosmos. This topic arises when we look for **life beneath the martian surface** or perform SETI searches. We **assume** life is out there, but we don't know its limits....

Or consider **nature itself**, which most of us feel is **smart**. Yet, **it supposedly arose randomly from inert matter**. So we have **this universe, which is basically as dumb as gravel**. A few billion years ago, some **witless bits of carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen slammed together for awhile until out popped Kobayashi** – the Japanese competitive eater who devours hot dogs. **How carbon and oxygen atoms should have ever developed a taste for frankfurters is mysterious**. But there you have it, and it probably happened on other worlds, too. **We're left with a combo plate: Some of the universe is smart, some of it is dumb. We're never quite sure where to draw the line.**

So given that the source of intelligence in the universe is a profound mystery, who does a better job explaining it: scientists, or theologians? Berman switches the conventional whipping boys:

If all this **sounds far-out**, well, you bet it is – although **no more so than the standard model where the universe popped out of nothingness like a jack-in-the-box**. Any way you slice it, the biggest aspects of the cosmos are strange and mysterious.

Religions push back these mysteries by **one step**, and **science**, understandably, finds this unhelpful, **even if it cannot come to the rescue itself**. We're left with **the stuff no one talks about**, the uncle with the facial tic that **everyone tries to ignore**.

I think mysteries are among the best parts of astronomy, the perfect accompaniments to a starry night. Scientists love 'em too, as they brilliantly chip away. **It would be nice, however, if cosmologists would put a lid on their arrogant ghetto-talk about their latest theory of everything and admit – just once in a while – that their knowledge is a single snowflake in the blizzard of the unknown.**

So even though he called it a draw, he reserved his biggest put-down for the standard cosmologists. No worries, mate: "Me, I'm gonna observe the Moon," he ended amicably. "Want a hot dog?"

Bob Berman is a rare columnist unafraid to stand up to the big guys in Big Science when he thinks they are a bunch of clueless loudmouths who don't know what they are talking about (see [10/06/2004](#)). Bravo.

Is it really adding another step, though, to posit God as the Author of intelligence? Is it really unhelpful? This common misconception needs to be put in its place. Carl Sagan used this in *Cosmos* as one of his many digs at religion, saying "Why not save a step, and say that the origin of the universe is an unanswerable question?" Don't just swallow this line and feel intimidated by it. It's time to go on offense:

- It [begs the question](#) that saving a step is a good thing. Sometimes it is, but not

establishment. Thanks for keeping us informed." (a mechanical designer in Indiana)

"I have been a fan of your site for some time now. I enjoy reading the 'No Spin' of what is being discussed.... keep up the good work, the world needs to be shown just how little the 'scientist' [sic] do know in regards to origins." (a network engineer in South Carolina)

"I am a young man and it is encouraging to find a scientific 'journal' on the side of creationism and intelligent design.... Thank you for your very encouraging website." (a web designer and author in Maryland)

"GREAT site. Your ability to expose the clothesless emperor in clear language is indispensable to us non-science types who have a hard time seeing through the jargon and the hype. Your tireless efforts result in encouragement and are a great service to the faith community. Please keep it up!" (a medical writer in Connecticut)

"I really love your site and check it everyday. I also recommend it to everyone I can, because there is no better website for current information about ID." (a product designer in Utah)

"Your site is a fantastic resource. By far, it is the most current, relevant and most frequently updated site keeping track of science news from a creationist perspective. One by one, articles challenging currently-held aspects of evolution do not amount to much. But when browsing the archives, it's apparent you've caught bucketfuls of science articles and news items that devastate evolution. The links and references are wonderful tools for storming the gates of evolutionary paradise and ripping down their strongholds. The commentary is the icing on the cake. Thanks for all your hard work, and by all means, keep it up!" (a business student in Kentucky)

"Thanks for your awesome work; it stimulates my mind and encourages my faith." (a family physician in Texas)

"I wanted to personally thank you for your outstanding website. I am intensely interested in any science news having to do with creation, especially regarding astronomy. Thanks again for your GREAT website!" (an amateur astronomer in San Diego)

"What an absolutely brilliant website you have. It's hard to express how uplifting it is for me to stumble across something of such high quality." (a pharmacologist in Michigan)

"I want to make a brief commendation in passing of the outstanding job you did in rebutting the 'thinking' on the article: [Evolution of Electrical Engineering](#)" ... What a rebuttal to end all rebuttals, unanswerable, inspiring, and so noteworthy that was. Thanks for the effort and research you