

**Review: *Getting the Facts Straight: A Viewer's Guide to PBS' Evolution*, Discovery Institute Press, Seattle, WA, 2001**

Pages: 143

**Achieves the Goal**

This summary dismantles the PBS's *Evolution* propaganda piece, detailing each of its errors. Evolutionist leaders quoted include Kenneth Miller, Daniel Dennett, and Neil Shubin.

The show's claimed goals of providing empirical evidence for Evolution are unmet, and commitment to religious neutrality is laughable. At every opportunity it pits the 'rational' evolutionist against 'irrational' Christian fundamentalism.

While the presentation is somewhat dated, the content is nonetheless evergreen since evolution relies on the same old tropes, e.g., Darwin's finches, whale evolution, and fruit fly wing duplication.

There are also activities at the end which give greater opportunity for in-depth learning, suitable in a home schooling situation.

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**Executive Summary (pp. 9-16)**

**Introduction (pp. 17-19)**

*Evolution's* claimed goals were to:

1. Show evolution is important to, "almost every aspect of human life".
2. Present the underlying evidence.
3. Report on, "areas where the science is sound".
4. Examine, "empirically-testable explanations".

## I) Darwin's Dangerous Idea (pp. 20-38)

Only years after the *Beagle's* voyage did Captain Fitzroy take to defending a literal interpretation of Genesis.

The series' stereotype is rational scientists accept evidence contrary to irrational Christian fundamentalists.

Darwin didn't even mention the famous Galapagos finches in *The Origin of the Species*. Only a century later did evolutionists correlate beak sizes with different food sources, naming them "Darwin's finches".

Historian James Moore: "The key to Darwin's thought in every realm is that given enough time, and innumerable small events, anything can take place by the laws of nature." [p24]

DNA words correspond to a start and stop signal, or one of the twenty protein (amino acids) sub units.

HIV supposedly only reproduces daily, so changes do not occur every minute as the series says.

Daniel Dennett: "Natural selection ... feeds on accident and contingency ... there's no predictability." [p27]

Imperfections are claimed as proof of the eye's evolution.

So-called 'primitive' vertebrates all have retinas that face forward.

Evolutionist Kenneth Miller: "I'm an orthodox Catholic, and I'm an orthodox Darwinist." [p30]

Darwin went to church regularly during his voyage.

Dennett believes religion should be, "preserved in cultural zoos".

Re: the importance of Darwin's finches to him, Frank Sulloway wrote, "nothing could be further from the truth."

Darwin didn't travel north of Lima.

“The issue is not whether humans have an animal nature, but whether humans are *just* animals.”

## **II) Great Transformations (pp. 39-50)**

Tiny ‘leg’ bones in *Basilosaurus* are claimed evidence of whale evolution.

Fish are claimed to have evolved limbs *before* they left the water!

Neil Shubin: “There’s really no goal to evolution. Evolution wasn’t trying to make limbs; it wasn’t trying to push our distant ancestors out of the water. What was happening was a series of experiments.” [p42]

Most biology texts simply ignore the Cambrian Explosion.

Extra *Drosophila melanogaster* wings created via intentional mutation of the *Antennapedia* gene are useless.

Evolutionists claim all contemporary animals are just variations on a body plan which existed 500mya.

Scientists have discovered that mouse eye genes inserted into the fruit fly produce fruit fly eyes, not a mouse ones. This suggests the gene is merely like a switch to create the specific creature’s eye, rather than creating the eye itself.

Evolutionists study lemurs because, “we have to know what it was we started from”. [p47]

Paleoanthropologists imagine four main events: moving from trees to the ground; upright posture; intelligence and language acquisition; and technology and social development.

“Paleoanthropology has the form of science but not the substance”.

## **III) Extinction! (pp. 51-59)**

The practice of biological control (using one creature to kill another) has no grounding in evolution.

In China and Yemen, farmers have been using ants to control crop pests for centuries. The Chinese also forbade eating frogs since they killed pest insects.

In India, intercropping is practised.

#### **IV) The Evolutionary Arms Race (pp. 60-69)**

The newt's tetrodotoxin is a potent nerve poison.

Streptomycin is sourced from *Streptomyces* bacteria, which keeps mold growth in check. Ants use this as an antibiotic.

#### **V) Why Sex? (pp. 70-83)**

One evolutionary theory is sexually-reproducing fish are more resistant to parasite infestation.

A bland statement: "sex generates variation which improves a species' chance of survival".

Kenneth Miller: "the human brain is wildly in excess of what it seems like we would need to survive on the plains of Africa." [p78]

Altruism is a mystery within evolutionism.

#### **VI) The Mind's Big Bang (pp. 84-96)**

"Two-thirds of all conversation is dedicated to gossip."

#### **VII) What About God? (pp. 97-109)**

*Evolution* erroneously claims American science was neglected because of the Scopes trial.

Miller: "I personally do not believe that the image of God is connected to our physical appearance, or our origin, as far as how we were brought into being." [p100]

In 1987, SCOTUS overturned a 1981 Louisiana law require creation science be taught alongside evolutionism because it, “violated the First Amendment separation of church and state”.

**Conclusion (pp. 110-118)**