

**Review: Richard Dawkins, *A Devil's Chaplain*, Phoenix, London, UK,
2003 (2004 edn.)**

Pages: 310

The High Priest High on Evolution

This covers the gambit of Dawkins' worldview, naturally centred on Darwinism. It is filled with self-contradiction, pseudoscience, and magical thinking; hallmarks of this religion. So many are the examples they can't all be quoted:

-On his self-contradictory world view: "I am a passionate anti-Darwinian when it comes to politics." [p13]; "Science has no method for deciding what is ethical." [p39]

-Espousing Intelligent Design without realising it: The "Darwinian algorithm" is embedded in the universe." [p15]

-Logical [genetic] fallacy: "People are loyal to other belief systems for one reason only, they were brought up that way." [p18]

-Junk DNA myth: "There are many nonfunctional pseudogenes." [p113]

-Duplication is new information [!]: "New genes arise through various kinds of duplication." [p114]

It also exposes the main faux arguments Evolutionists use that, "Christians just don't understand Evolution". E.g:

-There is no such thing as a "genetic code": "The genetic code is truly digital, in exactly the same sense as computer codes. This is not some vague analogy, it is the literal truth." [p32]; "Genetics is digital through and through, digital to its very backbone." [p127]

-Mutations do increase information: "Mutation is not an increase in true information content, rather the reverse." [p120]

In his arrogance, he tries his hand at pop psychology to medicalise Christianity. Dawkins ironically claims if you're the victim of a mind virus, "chances are that you won't know it, and may even vigorously deny it," [p162] yet has fallen ill himself with Darwinism!

I) Science and Sensibility (pp. 7-70)

"I am a passionate anti-Darwinian when it comes to politics." [p13]

The "Darwinian algorithm" is embedded in the universe. [p15]

"People are loyal to other belief systems for one reason only, they were brought up that way." [p18]

"We can't (quite) interbreed with modern chimpanzees, but we'd need only a handful of intermediate types to be able to sing: 'I've bred with a man, who's bred with a woman, who's bred with a chimpanzee.'" [p28, *Gaps in the Mind*]

"Science can be spiritual, even religious in a non-supernatural sense of the word." [p31]

"The genetic code is truly digital, in exactly the same sense as computer codes. This is not some vague analogy, it is the literal truth." [p32]

"Genetic engineers ... can save time ... by climbing on the back of the millions of years of R & D that Darwinian natural selection has put into ... whatever we are seeking." [p33]

"Science has no method for deciding what is ethical." [p39]

"The Young Earth view is not just that it is false but that it is petty, small-minded, parochial, unimaginative, unpoetic, and downright *boring* compared to the staggering, mind-expanding truth." [p68]

II) Light Will Be Thrown (pp. 71-136)

Neo-Darwinian evolution precisely means change in gene frequencies in

the gene pool.

By a whole gene count, the human-chimp DNA similarity is 0%. Comparison unit, DNA base pair or gene, makes a huge difference.

Molecular clocks give “relative timing”.

“It is always safer to assume fossils are cousins rather than ancestors”.
[p86]

“Bipedal gait set up new selection pressures that encouraged the brain to grow” [87]

Particular brain parts are “pre-wired” [!].

“Cumulative evolution by non-random survival of random hereditary changes is universal.” [p92]

Since the great majority of mutations are phenotypically silent, “there has to be some nonrandom guidance towards adaptive solutions.” [p103]

Information is ignorance reduction ‘quantity’.

“There are many nonfunctional pseudogenes.” [p113]

“New genes arise through various kinds of duplication.” [p114]

“Almost all of evolution happened way back in the past, which makes it hard to study details.” [p119]

“Mutation is not an increase in true information content, rather the reverse.” [p120]

“Natural selection is *by definition* a process whereby information is fed into the gene pool of the next generation.” [p121]

“Genetics is digital through and through, digital to its very backbone.”
[p127]

III) The Infected Mind (pp. 137-190)

Dawkins is, “suspicious of strongly held beliefs ... unsupported by evidence.”! [p137]

The Medawar/Williams theory of aging holds we are victims of lethal genes that mature only after plenty of time has elapsed to allow for reproduction.

“Designers derive this year’s car as a slight modification of last year’s car.” p[159]

Computer viruses can have their evolution “steered by human designers.” [p159]

Dawkins ironically claims if you’re the victim of a mind virus, “chances are that you won’t know it, and may even vigorously deny it.” [p162]

Dawkins tries to medicalise Christian ‘patients’ as those who: live by faith in spite of evidence (the ‘lack of evidence is a virtue idea’); see mystery as a good thing; are close-minded to other beliefs; St Paul and John Wesley were particularly ‘infective agents’.

Dawkins claims the “three-in-one” idea is nonsense.

“As allegory, the six-day creation story is empty. As history, it is false.” [p181]

IV) They Told Me, Heraclitus (pp. 191-218)

V) Even the Ranks of Tuscany (pp. 219-262)

“The evolution of complex organisms had to be gradual because all the correct changes would not occur in a single large mutation.” [p250]

“If genetic change has no causal influence on bodies .. on *something* that natural selection can ‘see’, natural selection cannot favour or disfavour it. No evolutionary change will result.” [p260]

VI) There Is All of Africa and Her Prodigies in Us (pp. 263-282)

“The ‘design’ of all living things and their organs is, of course, an illusion; an exceedingly powerful illusion, fabricated by ... Darwinian natural selection.” [p265]

VII) A Prayer for My Daughter (pp. 283-291)