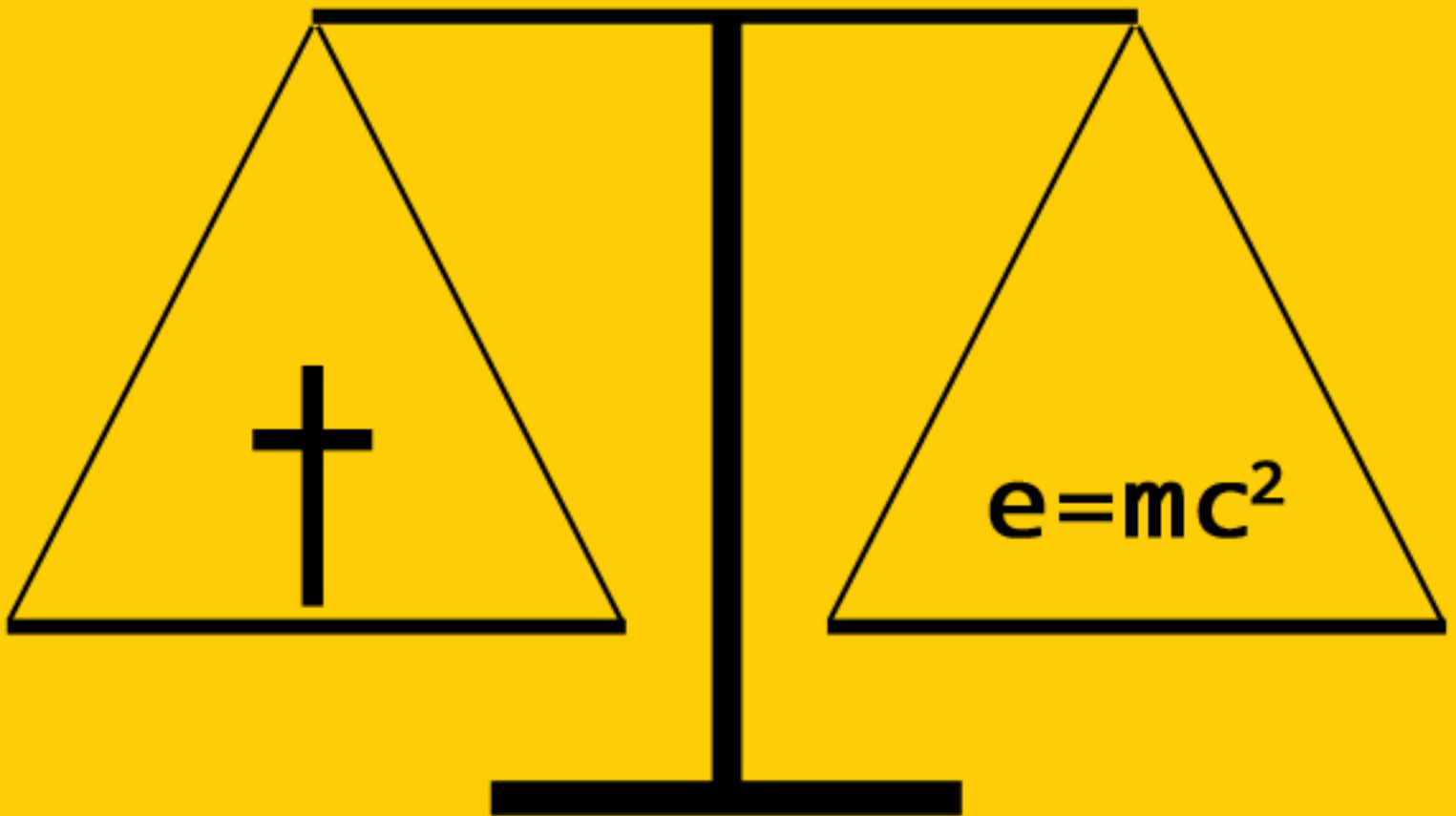


Christians, Scientific Methodology and Evolution



Mike Manea

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by Mike Manea

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The theory of Evolution has sparked much controversy among Christians. Some might even argue that this idea has done more to undermine the authority of Scripture than any other modern concept. Other Christians have apparently found ways to reconcile their faith with the theory and have insisted that, to be taken seriously by the secular public, the rest of Christendom must follow suit. One thing for certain, the scientific community and the educated secular public alike have fully accepted evolution and, if the church hopes to have any further access to this important segment of the population with the gospel, an adequate response is indispensable.

However, up to this point, the Christian response has been anything but adequate. At first, Christians tried to argue with science by showing that evolution contradicted the plain reading of Scripture. When that didn't work, Scientific Creationism was developed which attempted to destroy evolution by pointing out flaws in the theory. But, since scientists will always choose an imperfect theory over not having a theory at all, that did not work either.

Next came an attempt to make a break from Creationism by choosing a less religious sounding label like Intelligent Design and appealing to civil courts for equal access to the science classroom in order to influence the next generation. Needless to say, these efforts failed miserably as well. Today, evolution is stronger than ever and the only things we hear from the opposition anymore are pathetic attempts from people that are so underqualified that they are piling on embarrassment on top of embarrassment.

At the other end of the spectrum we have theistic evolutionists who, in their attempt to reconcile the Bible with science have failed in convincing both the Christian and the scientific communities, although scientists are much more willing to tolerate this second group, at least for the time being. Finally, there is an ever growing third group of people who, in order to protect their own faith, have become anti-science, anti-education and anti-intellectualism altogether, not realizing that this only serves to give Christianity a bad name.

Overall, the Christian world seems to be out of ideas on how to deal with this difficult question even though most are aware that it is eating away at the very foundations of the faith and is especially damaging to the youth. Creation Scientists from all over the world continue to meet regularly to exchange ideas and strategies and to share their findings but, nonetheless, there is no viable solution in sight. Meanwhile churches are frustrated that evolution is making inroads into their own private schools and is being promoted even by denominational employees. Church leaders as well as lay members are feeling pressed to take a firm stance either for or against the theory splitting the church before our very eyes. And yet, I am going to argue in this paper, that such a stance is still premature for Christians; there is something that must be done first before Christians can make an informed decision on the issue.

There are several things to keep in mind as you read this essay:

1. The article is written for theists and therefore works under the assumption that the reader does believe a god exists. Atheists are encouraged to take a look at other content I've written on the subject.
2. In the article I am addressing theists who accept evolution since this is the group that is most likely to disagree with what I have to say but the material is relevant to all theists.
3. Since this particular group I am addressing differs in their view of Biblical inspiration I will be writing this without taking into consideration the Bible, theology or Christian tradition at all but simply following logically the relationship between the existence of God and scientific methodology.
4. The essay is also written so as to hopefully make sense to people without a science background.

My argument can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Science works under an assumption of Naturalism
- 2) The lack of alternative 'scientific models' affects the level of certainty regarding Evolution
- 3) It IS possible to study supernatural phenomenon using methodological naturalism

Therefore, given 1 - 3, it is premature for Christians/theists to accept evolution.

I. Naturalism in Science

Naturalism is the philosophical viewpoint that everything arises from natural properties and causes and that the Supernatural (gods, angels, demons, miracles, magic etc.) does not exist.

Methodological Naturalism (MN) in contrast is not a claim regarding the nature of reality but simply a tool or a protocol to be followed when doing science. In essence it is like saying, 'We don't know if the Supernatural exists or not but we're going to work under the ASSUMPTION that it does not. We're going to PRETEND for the time being to know for a fact that there is no God etc. and we're going to look for NATURAL explanations for everything that happens or that exists.'

Misconceptions

In general, I run into two misconceptions when it comes to the role of naturalism in science. First, some people underestimate the extent of that role. They have a hard time believing that science really does have a bias towards naturalism and against God.

To this group I recommend a thorough study of the scientific method and of how methodological naturalism applies. Here are two articles ([1](#), [2](#)) written by prominent scientists on the topic. One of the authors, Barbara Forrest, is at the forefront of the fight against Creationism and Intelligent design.

Another group recognizes the naturalistic bias of science but considers this a 'flaw' in the scientific process when in fact, this is actually its strength. While there isn't enough time to explain just why in this essay, consider that humanity has, for millennia, used many different methods in trying to understand

the natural world with little success. Science, on the other hand, has taken us from the stone age to the space age in just 300 years. The success of the scientific process is so evident that the only recourse for people who disagree with it is to come up with a better methodology and then take several years or decades to demonstrate to the scientific community and the world that this new methodology produces better results than the current scientific method.

Implications

However, as effective as the scientific method is, we need to consider the implications of working under a Naturalistic paradigm. Scientists apply this methodology not only to the development of living organisms but to every aspect of our universe. Christians/theists who accept evolution because they feel the need to harmonize their theology with science are not going far enough. The only kind of god that is compatible with the scientific process is a god that has had no involvement whatsoever in the development of our universe nor has ever performed any kind of miracles or interacted with humanity in any way. And, if that's the god that exists, why would we even care that he exists? Yes, more is known about the development of living things than some aspects of physics or cosmology but the same process that has led to the present conclusions regarding life on earth will inevitably lead to similar conclusions regarding the universe as a whole.

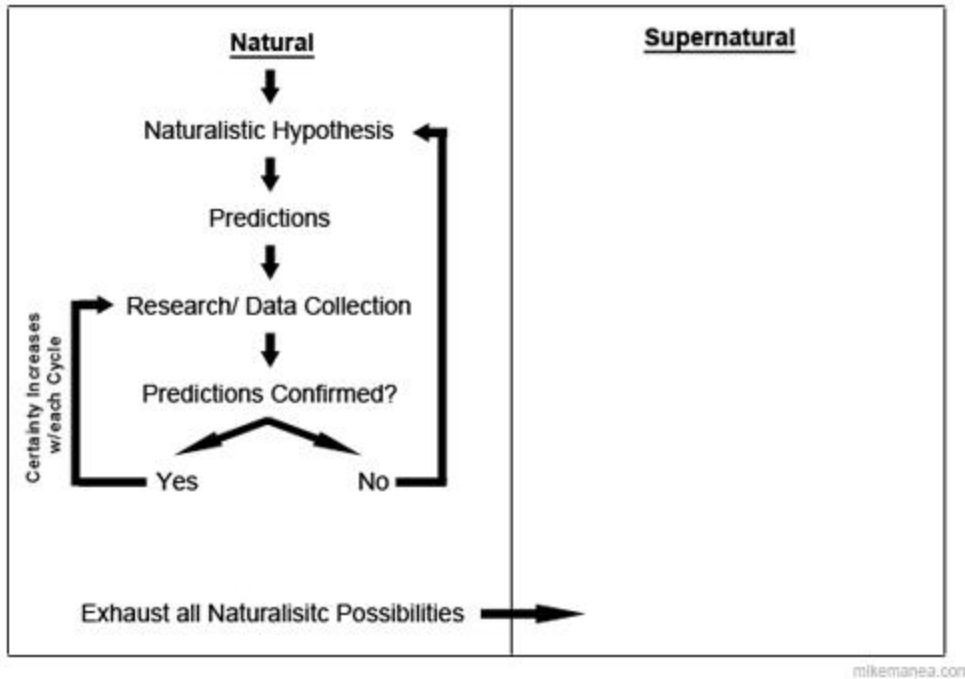
The Process

But, if the scientific process is so biased against God, how can it be that effective a process? Since, after all, if God did play a crucial role in the formation of our universe and science assumes He did not, science is simply WRONG.

Well, not exactly; at least not in theory. Let's imagine, hypothetically speaking, that object 'A' has a 50/50 chance of being of Supernatural origin. Scientists would undertake its study by assuming that its origins are Natural. They would develop a Naturalistic hypothesis, form predictions based on that hypothesis, and conduct research to determine if those predictions are correct.

In essence they would say something like this: 'IF object 'A' resulted from natural causes, how would that have happened?' Once they come up with a naturalistic mechanism for the development of that object they would ask again, 'IF this mechanism is correct and the object did develop in this particular way, what should we expect to find when further studying the object?'

If as the data comes in their predictions are confirmed, then, chances are that the causes of object 'A' WERE in fact natural. The more the predictions that are confirmed, the more likely that this is true.



If however the data does not line up with expectations then the hypothesis must have been incorrect and a new Naturalistic hypothesis has to be formulated. But, if every naturalistic hypothesis we can think of fails, THEN it starts becoming more and more likely that object 'A' did NOT have a Natural origin (although science never actually comes right out and admits this).

A Process of Elimination

But why go about things in this roundabout way? Why not just have a hypothesis that assumes Supernatural origin from the start? And the answer is that we don't really have a choice. If we assume supernatural involvement then we wouldn't know what predictions to make since we have no idea how the supernatural works.

So in a sense, the naturalistic methodology of science is not fully anti-God. The initial Naturalistic bias should correct itself over time and potentially lead someone to Supernaturalistic conclusions through a process of elimination. But, as I've said, this is true more in theory than in practice for the following reasons:

- a) Just because we can't think of a good naturalistic hypothesis now does not mean we won't be able to think of one in the future when science advances. So scientists are perfectly comfortable putting questions on hold and revisiting them later, all the while still assuming natural causes.
- b) If we try several Hypotheses that don't work we can always come up with more.
- c) It often happens that eventually scientists do come up with a hypothesis that, at least for the time being, seems to line up with the data. And, in such a case, it could take years, decades or even centuries for sufficient data to come in before that hypothesis is finally demonstrated false.

d) In a situation where you have one working hypothesis dominating the field for an extended period of time with no alternative hypotheses even coming close that monopoly in itself becomes additional confirmation for that hypothesis (will come back to this in part 2).

e) The chance that science will ever advance far enough to know with confidence that it has in fact ruled out all possible Naturalistic hypotheses, is slim to none.

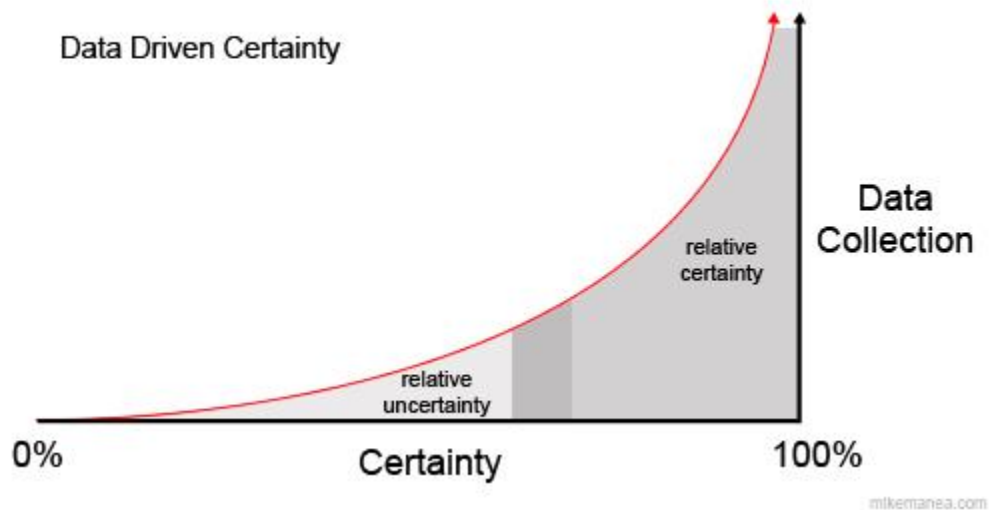
Those with a science background might bring up the self-correcting nature of science. After all, Newtonian physics was eventually superseded by relativistic physics as additional data came in. But Newtonian physics and relativistic physics were both naturalistic ideas. It would take much more than that to rule out all possible naturalistic options before reaching a supernaturalistic conclusion.

Consequently, theists have to be aware of these limitations of science and cannot unquestioningly accept every conclusion that scientists put forth.

The Uncertainty Period

But does this mean we can't be certain of any scientific conclusion?

I mentioned previously that as predictions are repeatedly confirmed, the likelihood increases that scientists are on the right track. A hypothesis starts out as mere intuition and, as data lines up with expectations, we become more and more certain that the hypothesis is correct; although in science we can never be 100% certain. So given any specific question, as science progresses, there is a period of relative uncertainty and a period of relative certainty. And the question we need to ask regarding any specific issue is, at what stage in the process are scientists at?



Some will say here that at least as far as evolution is concerned, the theory has definitely passed into the certainty phase. Except that evolution is not one concept that either passes or fails but many different elements that must be evaluated on an individual basis.

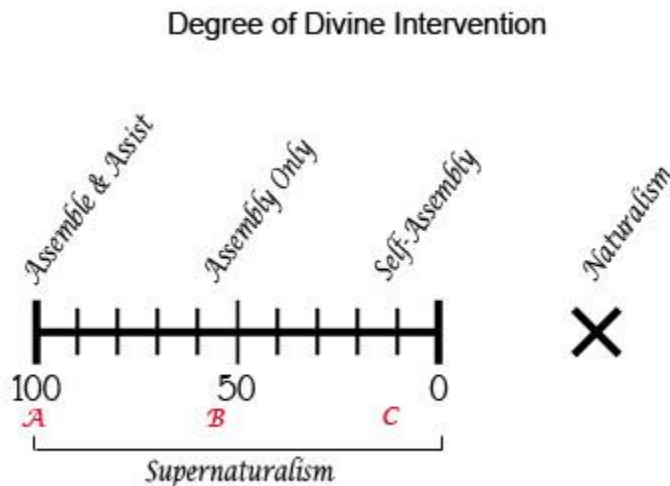
Degrees of Intervention

But would science advance this far all the while attributing God-acts to natural causes? Would it be this successful if it was so often wrong? Maybe science's naturalistic assumptions are correct after all.

The best way to think about this question is to look at how we as human beings create things. People have, over the centuries, come up with all kinds of inventions and developed all kinds of devices. So we can draw some lessons about how a god might create the universe based on our own experience with the creative process.

There are several ways in which devices are built:

- a. Assemble & Assist. Some devices are built to require continual effort on our part to work. A bicycle for example, to take us from point A to point B, requires that we peddle constantly.
- b. Assembly Only. Other devices, once built, can continue to function on their own. A car does not require constant physical effort from us to keep moving.
- c. Self-Assembly. Still other devices don't even need us to build them since they were designed to assemble as well as run themselves. You can double-click a setup file on a computer and the program automatically installs itself.



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Similarly, there are different ways in which God could have created the universe. He could have, for example, made it such that He would need to constantly tinker with it for it to run properly: perform a miracle to cause rain, a miracle for the sun to rise and set each day, etc. (A). And, if all these things functioned on a supernatural basis, the scientific method would not have worked very well at all.

But there is no reason to assume that God would create the universe this way. If we can create devices that assemble and run themselves why would we expect God to micromanage every minor aspect of creation and continuously intervene supernaturally to keep the universe running?

Therefore, because as theists we expect that a creator would put together a well-engineered universe that doesn't need constant attention to work, we also expect that the naturalistic methodology of science will be effective in the majority of cases. We expect that any phenomenon occurring today is occurring naturally and that even when it comes to creation, God put in place various natural mechanisms to at least partly help with that creation process. Unlike the atheist however, we are not philosophically obligated to assume naturalism in all cases.

Worldview Shifts

But aren't scientists just scientists regardless of philosophy?

They should be; but in reality that isn't exactly the case. Historically, the majority of scientists were theists. They believed God created the universe but expected creation to be a well-engineered one. They fully accepted methodological naturalism understanding the usefulness of such an approach, all the while expecting that the methodology would eventually break down if they went far enough.

Over time however, the makeup of the scientific community has changed. The majority of those who use methodological naturalism today happen to be themselves naturalists. There are several possible reasons for this:

1. A higher percentage of atheists/naturalists have gone into the sciences
2. Society is more secular so people go in uncommitted and easily adopt naturalism
3. Others have been converted to naturalism as students under naturalist professors
4. Still others became convinced during their scientific career because they went in expecting to find an 'assemble & assist' type universe that just isn't there.
5. Some theists are able to exist within a state of cognitive dissonance where they fully embrace both naturalism and theism at the same time.
6. Other theists that might otherwise be interested in the sciences recognize the naturalistic bias and either choose other fields or go into healthcare instead.
7. Theists that do pursue science tend to keep their worldview to themselves to avoid friction.
8. Those who are vocal are often marginalized

Now I am not saying this as an accusation or to claim that there is some sort of conspiracy but simply to point out that not only is there an intrinsic anti-god/anti-supernatural bias in the scientific method itself, but the scientists using this methodology resonate with this bias as well. And, what this should tell us as theists is that we should evaluate all scientific conclusions carefully and look for ways to balance out this bias. And, having an alternative point of view will only be a benefit to science in the long run.

Conclusion

While as theists we expect science to be very effective in determining how our universe and everything in it works, we also expect that there will be some discrepancies when it comes to the process by which everything came into existence.

And, because modern scientists sympathize with science's naturalistic bias, we have a responsibility as theists both to carefully evaluate scientific conclusions and to look for ways to study alternative options scientifically.

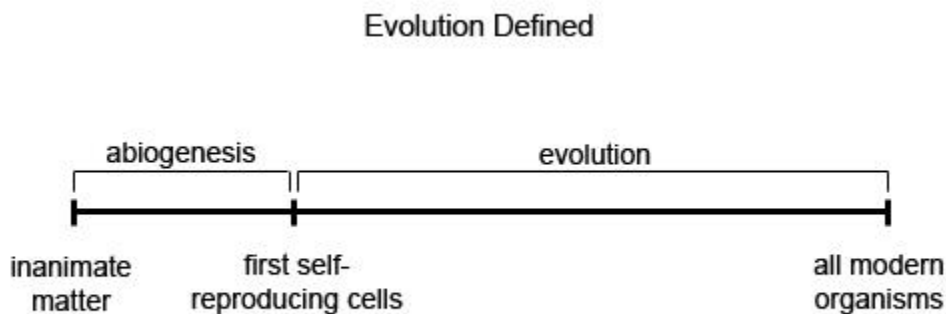
Questions you must answer if you disagree with this section.

1. Do you believe a god exists? If not, this paper was not intended for you and makes certain assumptions it would not make if it was written for atheists.
2. If you do believe a god exists, do you believe this god has ever interacted in any way with our universe? If not, why bother believe at all?
3. Do you agree that science uses a naturalistic methodology and that this results in a bias against god and the supernatural? If not, please research methodological naturalism in detail.
4. If you agree that there is an anti-god bias in Science, have you developed a process that corrects for this bias?
5. If God was involved in the creation process, and, given that scientists will assume He wasn't, how do you resolve that discrepancy between science and reality?
6. Is there some branch of mainstream science that is studying your version of what actually happened and if not why do you still believe it all the while rejecting the views of other theists as unscientific?

II. A Lack of Alternative Models

Besides the naturalistic bias of science, the lack of alternative models is an additional factor that we need to consider when it comes to evolution. But first let's clarify exactly what we mean by evolution.

Biological evolution is often defined as 'a change in the genetic characteristics of a population over time.' The term however can also refer to Universal Common Descent and it is in this sense that we're using it here.



Basically, assuming abiogenesis happens and the first self-reproducing cells develop, evolution takes over from there and is responsible for producing all living organisms that have ever existed, with no intelligent guidance or interference. This is the assumption we are evaluating here. Theists who believe evolution did happen but that it was directed by God are making a claim that is distinct from evolution and would require its own scientific backing.

It is important to also note that while we tend to think of evolution in terms of the development of complete organisms, the real challenge is in the development of the Biological Machines that these organisms are made of (although some biologists dislike this term I am not aware of a better one). I am referring here to biological structures with multiple components that form complex mechanisms performing specific functions; structures like the human eye. Whenever organisms develop new ways to move about, to sense the environment, to digest new substances etc. new mechanisms must be developed to accomplish these tasks.

Now let me explain what I mean by a lack of alternative models. Let's say scientists are trying to solve a very difficult problem. After several failures they come up with a hypothesis that seems to work so they continue their research using that hypothesis. As time passes, other hypotheses are introduced as well but they are all eventually dismissed while this hypothesis continues to remain viable. Even though scientists are still a long way from knowing for certain that the hypothesis is correct, the persistent lack of viable competing models becomes itself additional support for the hypothesis. (Keep in mind that creation is never considered as an alternative model because creation is not a naturalistic hypothesis)

In essence the reasoning goes like this:

1. We have a hypothesis that seems to work,
2. We have tried numerous other hypotheses and they have all failed,
3. The other possibility, Creation, is not a naturalistic hypothesis (not testable) so it is disqualified as a possibility,

And therefore, since there are no options left, the likelihood that the evolutionary hypothesis is correct is very high.

The best way I can illustrate this point is using Michael Behe's Irreducible Complexity. I am not a supporter of the intelligent design (ID) movement and consider Irreducible Complexity a poorly framed argument. However, during the commotion started by Behe's book, something very interesting came to the surface in the way scientists argued in favor of the evolution of complex biological machines. Their argument was never in the form of, 'here is concrete evidence that these structures could evolve.' Rather, they placed the burden of proof back on the ID proponents and argued that they had failed in providing sufficient reason to assume such structures couldn't evolve (see this [video](#) (3) and the video comments for more details.)

The question we need to ask then is whether scientists would be as certain of the evolution of complex structures if they had other mechanisms besides evolution to explain them. In other words, let's say there was evolution but there was also a second theory as well. If scientists knew for sure this second theory could explain these structures, would they still be as confident that the structures could have developed entirely through evolutionary means as well? It is important to ask this question since it tells us whether scientists really know these structures could evolve or they just assume they can. And,

judging by the response given to Behe's challenge, they don't actually have concrete, definitive evidence.

In conclusion, there are still important aspects of the theory of evolution that have not yet been scientifically verified but are still assumed true for lack of a better explanation. As theists however, we believe that creation IS a plausible alternative. The only recourse for us then is to find a way to study out this possibility scientifically. We need a scientifically valid alternative model.

If you disagree with this section:

1. Make sure you read the second and third paragraphs carefully to understand what aspects of evolution are being discussed.
2. Take some time and watch the video I mentioned above. Please watch the original video (see my video description), my response to that video, and read the detailed explanation in the video comments.
3. If you have concerns with the idea of an alternative theory please read the next section first.

III. Methodological Naturalism and the Supernatural

Before we get into this section I want to spend some time discussing some of the steps and missteps taken by creation scientists in the past.

First off, to be fair, creationists have tried to introduce an alternative model, not for evolution directly but for the supporting geology, i.e. the flood geology model. I am not going to get into the scientific value of this model here. I do know of several legitimate scientists who believe they have at least some evidence that lines up better with a flood geology model than the standard model. Nonetheless, I do believe the likelihood that this approach will work is minimal for several reasons:

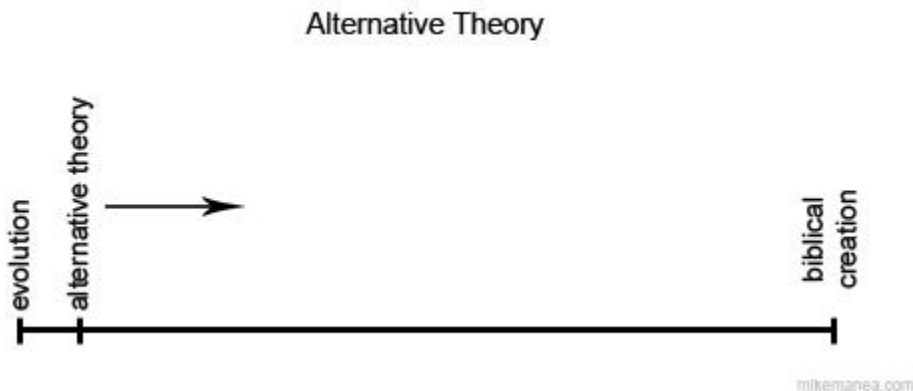
- a. Whatever evidence a handful of creation scientists can gather, it will have a hard time competing with over a century of work by tens of thousands of evolutionary scientists.
- b. The flood geology model contradicts not just the standard geology model but numerous other branches of science. It is very unlikely that the scientific community will be open to a model that will require a complete revamping of paleontology, biology, genetics, dating techniques, etc.
- c. Accepting the flood geology model, although itself possibly a naturalistic model, would require an acknowledgment of the supernatural since there would no longer be enough time for evolution to take place. And, this is another thing the scientific community will never do.
- d. Evolution is a theory that has its roots in biology although supported by the other disciplines. For scientists to take an alternative model seriously, it will need to start with the biology as well. It will need to provide an alternative mechanism for Darwin's concept of natural selection working upon genetic variation.
- e. Creation scientists have been unsuccessfully trying to introduce the flood geology model for over a century. Are present day creation scientists doing anything significantly different than what has been done before?

- f. Most importantly, if creation scientists really believe that, given enough time, they will be able to produce sufficient evidence to make a convincing case, can they at least provide us with a time-frame? Or, will we still be waiting for them to produce that evidence fifty years from now?

Thus, while I am not one to discourage scientists in their work, I personally will not be holding my breath waiting for a viable solution to come through this channel.

Another mistake, in my opinion, has been that creation scientists have focused on looking for ways to either defeat or displace evolution altogether. And, this is both unnecessary and next to impossible. What we should be trying to do instead is to come up with a model that, as far as possible, could work side by side with evolution. This will allow us to develop this model without being constantly challenged by evolution supporters.

Along the same lines, we shouldn't be trying to produce an alternative for the entire theory at once since this would be too great an undertaking. We should start with something small and get our foot in the door sort of speak. It is ok if, for the time being, we go along with everything else evolution claims except for this one small area we are working on. Instead of trying to come as close as possible to the biblical creation story, we should go as close as possible to evolution and then take one step back. Once this step is established we can take another. We should move no faster than we can provide more than sufficient support for our current position.



We shouldn't expect that an alternative scientific model will line up exactly with scripture since the nature of science is such that it could take centuries for that to happen. What we should be looking for instead is a scientific theory that is closer to the creation story than evolution is. At this point our beliefs are being judged by a theory that is at the exact opposite end of the spectrum.

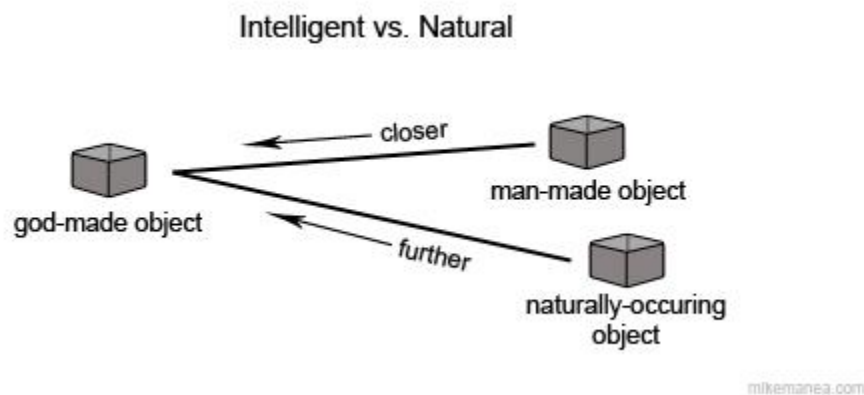
Lastly, I want to mention as well that creation scientists must realize the scientific community makes the rules and, if we are going to accomplish anything, we have to play by those rules. They have over many decades proven the effectiveness of their methods and earned the trust of the public as well as the support of governments and courts. Taking our toys and leaving whenever there is some indication of unfair treatment just means that we will lose yet again.

The Alternative Model

And now let's return to the question of how to study a supernatural phenomenon like Creation using methodological naturalism.

I am going to use a very simplistic illustration to get the point across. Suppose a little girl is walking on a beach after a storm and finds a mound of sand. She decides to build another mound just like it. And, let's just suppose that after the girl leaves, some supernatural entity comes along and supernaturally creates a third mound next to the other two. If a scientist finds all three mounds and decides to research their origin, what would he discover?

And, chances are, that unless this supernatural entity used another storm to build that third mound, it will have more in common with the one built by the little girl than with the one that resulted from natural causes. In essence, something created by an Intelligent Supernatural agent should in most cases be more similar to something made by an Intelligent Natural agent than to something resulting from Unintelligent Natural processes.



Now this does not mean we are making a definitive claim here; there is no way to know this for sure. We are just saying that overall, this would be a safe guess to make. And, this could provide a rationale for us to look into the possibility of natural intelligent involvement in the development of life on earth.

Human bioengineers are already able to tamper with the genetics of various organisms and will eventually probably be able to produce organisms with entirely new features. Thus, beside the Darwinian mechanism for new genetic information resulting from mutations and natural selection, some of that genetic information could have been intelligently introduced by a natural agent.

So in essence, the way to study a supernatural hypothesis like creation using methodological naturalism is to assume the creation process was entirely natural. In the case of organisms on earth, this would imply that an intelligent, technologically advanced, extraterrestrial entity used bioengineering to interfere with and direct the evolutionary process to some degree. By postulating an alien creator instead of a supernatural one, supernatural concepts like creation can be looked at using methodological naturalism.

When I discuss this with atheist biologists I explain it with a series of questions:

1. Do you believe that one day science will advance far enough for us to be able to tamper with the genetic code of organisms and significantly alter the way those organisms and their offspring look?
2. Do you think we will be able to bioengineer entirely new organs or features?
3. What about entirely new organisms?
4. If by that time space travel significantly improves and we discover a planet that is populated with very simple life forms, will we be able to use those life forms to bioengineer new, more complex ones, appropriate for the conditions on that planet?

If so, let's just suppose that we do this and then leave the planet and, millions of years down the line, these life forms evolve to the point of intelligence, something that would not have happened had we not interfered. How would their scientists study the development of life on that planet?

If we can devise a way to study the possibility of intelligent interference in this hypothetical scenario then we can apply that same methodology to life on earth. Again, we're not saying here that we believe life on earth was created by aliens but simply that this is a way to formulate a naturalistic hypothesis addressing the possibility of intelligent interference.

I have on occasion run into evolution supporters who claimed that it would not be possible to come up with testable predictions if intelligent interference was postulated, even if this was done by a natural entity. But if that were true, that would be a much bigger problem for them than for us. After all, they are saying that it is necessary to assume evolution even in a situation where intelligent interference definitely happened (like in this hypothetical scenario). So what does that tell us about scientific assumptions regarding life on earth?

However, there is no reason to think that such a model would be unable to make testable predictions; after all, scientists study situations where they postulate intelligent interference (by humans) all the time.

In conclusion, while the scientific process is very effective at studying nature, it lacks the ability to look into the possibility of supernatural involvement. And therefore, in order to study this question, we have to find round about ways to do it, like the process described above. Now this is just one approach although I personally have been unable to think of a better one though I am very interested to hear if someone else has another idea. But this idea will need to also be naturalistic in nature and provide an alternative mechanism for the Darwinian process. Without this any strategy is bound to fail as history could well attest.

What this will accomplish

Let's briefly discuss what will happen if we manage to introduce this alternative model into science.

First, this will not prove that god exists or that the Bible is correct. But there will be a theory for the development of life on earth that is closer to the Bible than evolution.

Second, this model will make it possible for scientists from multiple Christian denominations, from other theistic religions as well as atheists who are interested in the possibility of extraterrestrial involvement to work together. This will greatly reduce the manpower and funding deficits that creationists usually face.

Third, this alternative model will reduce the bias faced by scientists working under the standard model. The evolutionary model has strict requirements regarding geologic time, the fossil record etc. and anomalies tend to be ignored or reinterpreted in light of these requirements. The new model will be much more flexible in many respects.

And finally, evolution supporters will no longer be able to take for granted things like the evolution of biological machines. Since an alternative mechanism exists, they will need to provide concrete evidence that evolution can produce these structures as well.

IV. My Recommendation

I believe that by following this approach an alternative model can be introduced in five years or less for an initial investment of about five million dollars.

What will be accomplished in five years?

I am not claiming here that in five years we will be able to defeat/displace evolution or introduce a second theory that will have equal standing.

However, in five years we should be able to come up with a scientifically valid alternative hypothesis which the scientific community can accept. This will allow us to publish papers in reputable scientific journals and to accumulate evidence towards this model. It will also provide enough of a structure for other scientists to come on board as well. And, if so, it will be more than has ever been accomplished before by any anti-evolution group.

How the money should be spent

I recommend that a team of ten scientists is hired with a guaranteed base pay of \$50,000 a year for five years. These scientists should have research experience, should have published papers in reputable journals, should have a background in biology, genetics and related fields and should be very familiar with evolutionary theory.

Besides this I would recommend also hiring one or two marketers/fund raisers/PR persons. A lot will depend on how this new model is presented to both the scientific community and the public. And, once there is something tangible to show the public, fund raising can be done as well. The rest of the five million can be used for expenses and research.

What this team of scientists would be doing

The majority of the time initially will be spent,

- A. Looking over the current theory to determine where exactly an alternative theory will best fit,
- B. Formulating an alternative hypothesis that makes testable predictions, and,
- C. Doing some initial research to see if the data lines up with expectations in support of this model.

While much of the work will be theoretical there will also need to be interaction with the scientific community and possibly the media in order to establish the validity of this model.

Church involvement

I recommend that a project like this be conducted under the auspices of the church. If successful, it will give the church instant credibility within the Christian community. Also, many people will become open to the gospel as a result.

But, the project can be run independent of the church as well.

My involvement

I am personally available to consult or to lead out with this project if necessary. Also, if there is sufficient interest, I can start a non-profit foundation where donations can be sent for the project.

1) Methodological Naturalism and Philosophical Naturalism: Clarifying the Connection (2000) - Barbara Forrest - http://infidels.org/library/modern/barbara_forrest/naturalism.html

2) How not to attack Intelligent Design Creationism: Philosophical misconceptions about Methodological Naturalism - Maarten Boudry, Stefaan Blancke, Johan Braeckman
<https://sites.google.com/site/maartenboudry/teksten-1/methodological-naturalism>

3) Response to QualiaSoup on Irreducible Complexity
<http://youtu.be/1xeQMIWUu1Q>