

SESSION 7—THEORY PART 1

There are limits to both faith and science. We should approach each with a critical and open minded eye.

Today we'll take a close look at the limits of scientific theory specifically evolution. The purpose of this is not to convince you that evolution is wrong but there are some things we need to take into consideration in the faith and science debate/discussion.

As we discuss ask yourself: What does evolution explain? What does evolution not explain?

SESSION 7—THEORY LARGE GROUP HANDOUT

“Natural selection is the blind watchmaker, blind because it does not see ahead, does not plan consequences,, has no purpose in view. Yet the living results of natural selection overwhelmingly impress us with the appearance of design as if by a master watchmaker, impress us with the illusion of design and planning.” (Richard Dawkins)

Dawkins view: appearance of design is a lie.

- The irony: what appears to be design is only an appearance, but what appears to be evolution must be evolution.

The fact: Evolution is theory.

- Change is a fact → what causes change is a theory.

What is evolution? Def: “any process of formation or change.”

The controversy: Macroevolution.

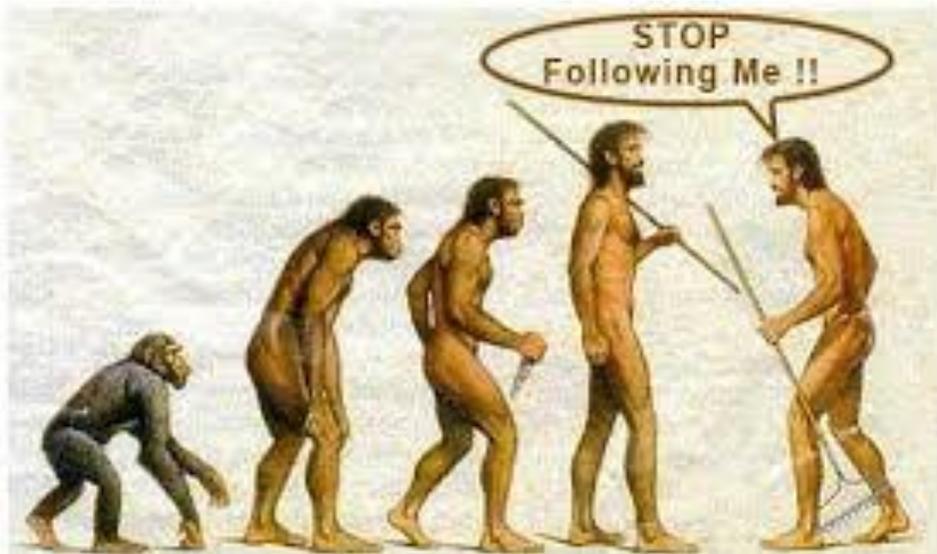
Ex. Humans evolving from apes/drastic change over time—never been observed or shown in an experiment)

Natural selection: changes increase an organism’s ability to survive and reproduce.

Q: Does natural selection have the ability to create whole new species?

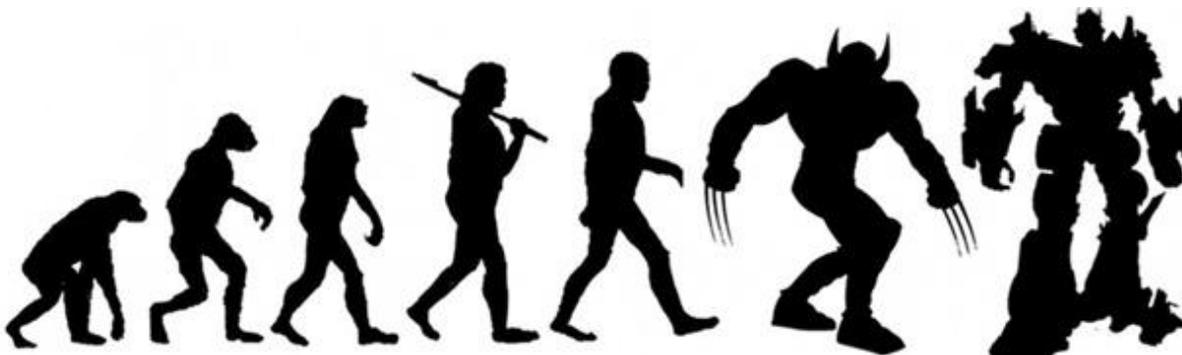
Commonly Accepted: Microevolution.

Ex. Limited/observed changing due to food/minor change—observable.)

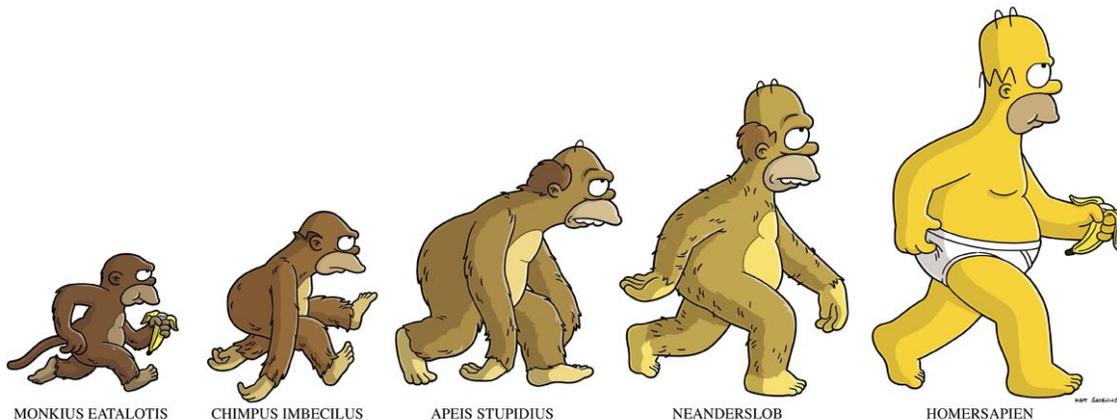


Problems/limits/questions about evolution

1. **ORIGIN OF LIFE PROBLEM**—natural selection doesn't explain life. It explains adaptations but not origins. If there is no life or cell to begin with, then there's nothing to select.
 - a. "The problem is not the survival of the fittest, but the arrival of the fittest."
2. **BUILDING BLOCKS OF LIFE/PROBABILITY**—Even if the earth were filled with all the building blocks of life, those pieces would never assemble into a cell much less a body...someone or something had to bring the pieces together...it's like having a car...just because you have all the parts doesn't mean you have the car.
 - a. The chances of life arising on its own are 10^{40000}
 - b. There are 4×10^{17} seconds since the big bang.
3. **IRREDUCIBLE COMPLEXITY**—many —many organisms must have numerous parts all at once or they don't function. Most organs, biological processes, and cellular machines contain multiple pieces that are all needed simultaneously to operate properly. Therefore, they cannot develop through a step by step process of adding or modifying one piece at a time.
4. **TREE OF LIFE**—Contrary to the current popular evolutionary belief that are deep within modern science communities, no conclusive evidence has been presented that all life arose from a common ancestor by an unguided natural process.
5. **CAMBRIAN EXPLOSION**—Complex life just appears. It even stumped Darwin. Darwin's explanation was that changes happened so gradually we should see series of fossils that vary only slightly from each other.
6. **DNA**—there are noteworthy connections between humans and chimpanzees, who share a significant percent of the same DNA (as well as a fly.) But that's not concrete evidence→that's simply observation.
 - a. The real issue: how these observations are interpreted.



7. **ORPHAN GENES**—There are genes, DNA, that certain creatures have that are in no other creatures→didn't evolve they came out of nowhere.
- Ex. the toxin in jelly fish.
 - Scientists are finding orphan genes in every creature from mosquito to man→about 10-20%
 - 54 orphan genes in humans that apes don't have
 - 144 orphan genes in apes that humans don't have.
 - TRADITIONAL CLAIM: there's only 1% difference between the DNA of humans and apes.
8. **NOT THE WHOLE TRUTH**
- The 1% # → isolated of DNA (not the whole)
 - Chimpanzee genome is only 70% similar to the human genome.
 - 900 million DNA letter difference in the genome separate humans & chimps.
 - Why is it that we don't have the full info? \$\$\$
9. **TRANSITIONS**—lack of transitional forms, that is, one species changing into another, is so glaring that it prompted Stephen Jay Gould, to propose the theory of...
- Punctuated Equilibrium=species remain basically the same through time and transform so quickly that no evidence is left in the fossil record.
 - This can't be a science→only explaining gaps—not based experiment.
 - What scientist claim to be “transitional” species are simply fossils that share features.
 - Identifying similarities between fossils doesn't prove those similarities are the result of common ancestry.
 - Evolutionists argue for evolution where the fossil record is most ambiguous.



HOMERSAPIEN

10. **HUMANS VS ANIMALS**—things we can do no other creature can do:
- a. Think about thinking
 - b. Aesthetic Recognition—beauty, art, nobility, honor, emotions
 - c. Language—not voice command but understandable speech
 - d. Creativity and Scientific Exploration—hands with thumbs, stand/walk
 - e. Morality—act beyond instinct
 - f. Higher intelligence—life vs intelligent life (self aware, technology)
 - g. Personhood—unique, free decisions
 - h. Culture—distinguishing ways of doing life
 - i. Beyond the physical—soul comes from several different sources
 - j. Spiritual hunger
11. **NO CONCENSUS**—www.dissentfromdarwin.org—scientists who do not believe that accidental mutations and natural selection could have resulted in life today.

Statements on evolution are not all based on evidence alone but on an interpretation of evidence

→like the way we interpret the bible

→there are a lot of wrong ways to read the bible/ approach science.

“...we still have no firm evidence for any progressive change within the hominid species.”

Stephen Gould

