

Five Darwinian Tenets Scrutinized

Under the Standards of David Hume's Analytical Criteria

Major Paper

CSSR 530: Darwin, Evolution, and Design

by

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Self-described “fervent evolutionist”¹ and leading Darwinian proponent Michael Ruse has stated with regard to the *design argument* in biology, that “[David] Hume’s ‘*Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*’ is the most sustained attack ever penned against theology and religious belief of any kind.”² It is for this reason that I endeavor to scrutinize five chief tenets of the Darwinian paradigm according to the standards of Hume’s two most prominent treatises: *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*,³ and *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*.⁴ I encourage readers to access the actual documents at their internet addresses just noted in order to appreciate the points in their larger context. Further references will be accompanied only by their location within the respective texts. I am employing these treatises as my standard for analyzing the logic of Darwinism, however, not because I *personally* regard Hume as the final authority on these matters (I do not!), but because of the fact that Dr. Ruse is by no means alone in holding Hume in high regard.⁵ According to the judgment of Darwinists in general, Hume is *the* standard of rational thinking, at the very least, as a tool for dispiriting adherents of biblical faith.

I am personally skeptical of David Hume’s treatises because the philosophical criteria that he there specified for analyzing general truth claims have been demonstrated to be profoundly flawed. Three noted relevant 20th Century thinkers stand out as especially effective challengers to Hume’s assertions.⁶ To cite just a few examples of the cracks in Hume’s broadly-lauded critique of religion, philosopher of science Karl Popper has devastatingly exposed the error

¹ Michael Ruse. *Darwin and Design: Does Evolution Have a Purpose?* (Harvard, 2003), p.73.

² Ruse. *Ibid*, p.27.

³ World Public Library and Project Gutenberg Consortia Center. Text in the public domain. http://ebooks.gutenberg.us/Renaissance_Editions/hume/hume.html. Henceforth referenced as “*Enquiry*.”

⁴ *Ibid*. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4583/4583-h/4583-h.htm>. Henceforth referenced as “*Dialogues*.” In this paper every reference in *Dialogues* will be the voice of “Philo,” who represents Hume’s personal position.

⁵ During Hume’s lifetime, his own “books [excluding *Dialogues*, which was published three years after his death] were becoming well known on the [European] Continent, especially in France. There came to be, indeed, almost, a Humeian cult ... After three years in France he returned home to find that his fame had at last spread to Britain.”

(W.T. Jones. *Hobbs to Hume: A History of Western Philosophy*, v. III. (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1952), p.298).

** Britannica’s lead philosophy editor, and author of *The 100 Most Influential Philosophers of All Time*, Brian Duignan writes, “David Hume is undoubtedly the most important philosopher to have written in English. He is also **one of the best writers of philosophy and science in any language**” (boldface mine). (<http://www.britannica.com/blogs/2011/05/influence-david-hume-editor/>). ** Mark Pallin has written an interesting, though less-than-decisive case, for this connection in his blog at <http://roughguidetoevolution.blogspot.com/2009/06/david-humes-influence-on-charles-darwin.html>.

⁶ Former atheist Antony Flew. *There is a God*. (Harper One, 2007), p.56f, 139f. Flew, while still an atheist, even then conceded his disenchantment with Hume a few decades ago in a debate with Gary Habermas on Jesus’ resurrection (*Did Jesus Rise From the Dead?: The Great Debate*. (Harper and Row, 1987)), ** C.S. Lewis. *Miracles*. (Macmillan, 1947), ch. XIII, ** and Philosopher of Science, John C. Lennox. *God’s Undertaker*. (Lion, 2009), p.193f.

of Hume's belittlement of metaphysical reasoning at the close of his *Enquiry* for the reason that that exact ploy undermined the authority of everything he himself had just written in his own *philosophical* treatise.⁷ In addition, it has been noted that Hume contradicted his own denial of causal relationships between natural events in *Enquiry*⁸ when he later in the same essay actually *employed* that very principal of universal *natural* causation as though it were valid, in order to argue *against* the likelihood of miracles.⁹ I intend to make plain below that in neither case is the Darwinian paradigm vindicated. Indeed, the obvious neglect of Darwinists to face such fundamental flaws as these, in itself, is sufficient to demonstrate that the steady rise of their movement to academic prominence depended less on a resolution to apply disciplined critical-thinking to their theory than it did, ironically, to their *determination* to overthrow the alternative prevailing *teleological* paradigm at any cost. Therefore, even though it would have given me great pleasure to recite and argue the list of positive evidences that support Intelligent Design, this paper is devoted to the equally urgent task of exposing Darwinian shortcomings for their failure to meet the intellectual strictures of their own greatest, albeit flawed, champion.

Since, however, the philosophy of David Hume is not the *main* object at center stage in this paper, but instead the spotlight whose aim is to shed light *onto* the key features of Darwinism, it is fitting to now identify five fundamental tenets of that evolutionary program. Amateur scientist Ryan Somma has composed an *artistically* beautiful website titled "*101 Reasons Why Evolution is True.*"¹⁰ Yet he fails there to make good on his title for the reason that the vast majority of his slides urge peripheral points which are only indirectly related to the fundamental question of what are the mechanisms that adequately account for the evolution of life from amoeba to modern human beings. Likewise, University of Texas professor emeritus of biology, Verne Grant, lists "*eight areas of evidence*" which, in the words of Dr. Hunter, "*he [Grant] believes together form a powerful argument for the truth of evolution.*"¹¹ Yet Dr. Grant's list, likewise, fails to answer, let alone address, that central challenge of the Darwinian claim.

⁷ Sir Karl Popper. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. (Routledge, 2002), p.12. To Hume's summary statement, "*It seems to me, that the only objects of abstract science or of demonstration are quantity and number, and that all attempts to extend this more perfect species of knowledge beyond these bounds are mere sophistry and illusion*" (*Enquiry*. Op.cit. (3)), Popper rejoined, "*They [positivists] are constantly trying to prove that metaphysics by its very nature is nothing but nonsensical twaddle--'sophistry and illusion'-- as Hume says, which we should commit to the flames.*" In the related footnote (no.3 in his text) Popper concludes, "*Thus Hume, like Sextus, **condemned his own Enquiry [to the flames] on its last page***" (boldface mine).

⁸ *Enquiry*. Sec.9, pt.1.

⁹ *Enquiry*. Sec. 10, pt.1. ** Lennox. Op.cit. (6), p.195f.

¹⁰ <http://ideonex.com/2012/02/12/101-reasons-why-evolution-is-true/>

¹¹ Cornelius Hunter. *Darwin's God*. (Brazos, 2001), p.111.

For the purposes of this paper, I identify the following Darwinian tenets as central to its case: **1) The existence of life as axiomatic.**¹² Darwin never actually accounted for the *beginning* of life, but for the purposes of advancing his agenda, simply *assumed* its existence. **2) Only non-teleological causes considered.**¹³ Given sufficient time, the strictly mindless naturalistic forces that drive evolutionary change are deemed fully adequate to account for the entire evolutionary history of the biological world from primitive life forms all the way to the complexity of the vast array of life that we encounter in the present. **3) Driving evolutionary machine is random genetic mutation.**¹⁴ These same environmental forces that drive evolutionary change periodically¹⁵ yield genetic mutations of a kind that are *advantageous* to creatures who in turn mature into parenthood. These parents then pass their advantageous gene to their offspring, and so forth and so on. **4) Survival of the fittest.**¹⁶ Because said mutations confer advantage to their recipient, over/against their natural competition, the offspring who inherit these traits will more likely survive so as to sow seed for subsequent generations. In other words, on average, species that are relatively strong will prevail over their weaker competition, and in turn more efficiently pass their “superior” characteristics to

¹² Niels Bohr has stated that “*life is to be accepted as an axiom.*” Cited in Fuzale Rana and Hugh Ross. The Origins of Life. (RTB, 2014), p.92. ** Darwin implicitly advanced his central theme in *Origin* by ignoring the rational question of a *scientific* accounting of the *beginning* of life altogether. He did state, “*I must premise that I have nothing to do with the origin of the primary mental powers, any more than I have with that of life itself.*” (*Origin*, p.207). ** The closest he came to addressing the specifics of that concern instead delved into theological considerations, stating: “*Therefore I should infer from analogy that probably all the organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from someone primordial form, into which life was first breathed.*” (Charles Darwin. On the Origin of Species, 1859 ed. (Harvard, 1964), p.484. See also p.490). This text will henceforth be referenced as “*Origin.*”

¹³ In Hume’s *Dialogues*, Philo (whose character clearly represents Hume) anticipated Darwin by a century, stated, “*As for design, the adaptation of organs and purposes may have resulted not from divine guidance but from nature’s slow and bungling experiments through thousands of years*” (182). ** Philosopher Will Durant directly connected Darwin with Hume’s earlier insights in The Story of Civilization. v.IX. (Simon and Schuster, 1965), p.150f. ** Darwin himself writes, “*The simplicity of the view that each species was first produced within a single region captivates the mind. He who rejects it, rejects the vera causa of ordinary generation with subsequent migration, and calls in the agency of a miracle.*” (*Origin*. p.352). ** See also Darwin’s letter penned in 1838 while on the HMS Beagle, cited and discussed in Michael Denton. Evolution: A Theory in Crisis. (Adler and Adler, 1985), p.42. ** In the introduction to *Origin*, Ernst Mayr writes, “*Darwin started from a new basis by completely eliminating the last remnants of Platonism, by refusing to admit the eidos (Idea; type, essence) in any guise whatsoever* (p.XI). ** Peter Bowler stated, in Evolution: The History of an Idea. (University of California, 2003), “*The real logic of Darwin’s open-ended branching model of evolution was that no such single goal [teleology] could be identified*” (p.320).

¹⁴ *Origin*. p.61.

¹⁵ A gross overstatement. Percival Davis and Dean Kenyon stated, “*Only than one in 1,000 [mutations] is not harmful.*” (Of Pandas and People. (Foundation for Thought and Ethics, 1993), p. 66. ** Douglas Axe noted that “*‘Darwin’s engine’ could not [in billions of years] ‘alter a single gene in bacterial cells so that its instructions specify a modified version of the original protein that performs a new task’* (“*Darwin’s Little Engine that Couldn’t.*” Science & Human Origins. (Discovery Institute, 2012) pp.33f.). ** See also Stephen Meyer. Signature in the Cell. (Harper One, 2009), p.464, ** and Stephen Meyer. Darwin’s Doubt. (Harper One, 2013), p.239-241.

¹⁶ *Origin*. p.433.

their offspring. **5) The explanatory superiority of Darwinism.**¹⁷ Anatomical and structural characteristics of the present biological phenomena are argued to be *best* explained as having evolved over vast periods of time by the process of natural selection.

The analytical criteria from Hume's philosophical treatises that I will employ in scrutiny of the Darwinian program include the following:

- A. The illegitimacy of metaphysics:**¹⁸ *"If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."*¹⁹

- B. The illusion of necessary-connection:** *"When we look about us toward external objects, and consider the operation of causes, we are never able, in a single instance, to discover any power of necessary connexion; any quality, which binds the effect to the cause, and renders the one an infallible consequence of the other. We only find that the one does actually, in fact, follow the other."*²⁰

- C. The illicit relationship of knowledge to the external world:** *"It is a question of whether the perceptions of the senses be produced by external objects, resembling them: how shall this question be determined? By experience surely; as all other questions of a like nature. But here experience is, and must be entirely silent. The mind has never anything present to it but the perceptions, and cannot possibly reach any experience of their connexion with objects. The supposition of such a connexion is, therefore, without any foundation in reasoning."*²¹

- D. The potential illegitimacy of analogies:** *"The world plainly resembles more an animal or a vegetable, than it does a watch or a knitting-loom. Its cause, therefore, it is more probable, resembles the cause of the former. The cause of the former is generation or*

¹⁷ Origin. p.413.

¹⁸ Metaphysics is an inter-disciplinary branch of philosophy that includes both abstract objects such as mathematics, logic, and propositions, and their relationships to every aspect of life. E.J. Lowe writes, "*Metaphysics...is very arguably ineliminable (sic) and conceptually necessary as the intellectual backdrop for every other discipline*" (*A Survey of Metaphysics*. (Oxford University, 2002), p.3).

¹⁹ Enquiry. Sec. 12, pt. 3.

²⁰ Enquiry. Sec7, pt. 1.

²¹ Enquiry. Sec. 12, pt. 1.

vegetation. The cause therefore of the world, we may infer to be some thing similar or analogous to generation or vegetation.”²²

E. The inadequacy of analogies: “A great number of men join in building a house or a ship, in rearing a city, in framing a commonwealth: Why [then, for example] may not **several** deities combine in contriving and framing a world?”²³ (boldface mine).

Categories in review: I summarize my list of five themes in each category that I will employ in this paper in the lists below. It is important to clarify that there is **no necessary correlation** between any two themes appearing on the same horizontal row. Henceforth, in the body of my paper every theme will be referenced as, for example, “tenet D,” or “criterion C,” etc.

Tenets of Darwinism	Criteria of David Hume
1. The existence of life is granted as axiomatic.	A. The illegitimacy of Metaphysics.
2. Only naturalistic, non-teleological causes.	B. The illusion of necessary connections.
3. Descent through modification.	C. The problem of knowledge concerning the external world.
4. Survival of the fittest.	D. The potential <i>illegitimacy</i> of analogies.
5. The explanatory superiority of Darwinism over teleology.	E. The potential <i>inadequacy</i> of analogies.

Scrutinizing Darwinian Tenets under Humean Criteria

Tenet 1. The granting of the existence of life as axiomatic.

Criterion A: Charles Darwin never addressed with any detail (scientific or otherwise) how life was supposed to have begun in the first place. In his rare broaching of that subject in *Origin* (two instances)²⁴ he contradicted his *own* naturalistic commitments²⁵ by suggesting the alleged cause of that event was a nebulous life-force whose obscure creative actions he described with passive

²² Dialogues. Sec. 6.

²³ Dialogues. Sec. 5.

²⁴ Origin. p.484, 490.

²⁵ Origin. p.207.

verbs. Even Darwin's noted letter to Joseph Hooker²⁶ a decade later, employed descriptive (as opposed to analytical) *speculation* about an imagined "*warm little pond*." So, Darwin effectively ignored altogether the obligation to account for the beginning of life from out of non-living matter. Instead he merely granted that life just is. In fairness to Darwin and his associates, the limitation of the knowledge in his time that was relevant to the question, rendered it impossible for them to understand the staggering complexity of a simple cell.²⁷ On the other hand, even granting the excusable nature of their ignorance, that detail does not excuse their failure to so much as *attempt* an investigation. Darwin's belief that protoplasm was a simple homogeneous jelly-like substance²⁸ ought reasonably to have encouraged naturalists to have probed into what they assumed by implication to be a "simple" challenge. I freely acknowledge Darwin's intellect, even as I praise his driving curiosity. Yet the possession of an inquisitive spirit is inconsistent with his marked disinterest in resolving that simple question. More problematic still is the glaring disconnect between his purporting to naturalistically explain the "*origin of species*" on the one hand, while on the other, neglecting to consider the origination of life itself on the same terms. Such contradiction implicates Darwin in deep philosophical error. Hume's Criterion A,²⁹ at the very least created a philosophical vacuum which enabled Darwin to neglect consideration of the very first step (Tenet 1) in his evolutionary program. In this matter David Hume himself did the scientific enterprise a major disservice for the reason that it is simply rationally impossible to practice valid scientific investigation apart from engaging in thorough philosophical and metaphysical reflection. Ironically, as John Lennox has noted, when Stephen Hawking recently pronounced publicly that "*philosophy is dead*" he likewise entangled *himself* in similar philosophical confusion over the fundamental distinctions concerning the question of how we all got here in the first place.³⁰

Tenet 1: Criterion B: Since the first Darwinian tenet I describe excludes consideration of the origin of life itself, the context necessarily lacks the *successive* aspect of natural events that Hume addresses in this criterion.

Criterion C. Hume's dismissal of the possibility of direct experience with the external world carries with it ramifications that are fatal to virtually *every* area of empirical scientific investigation. It logically follows that if we cannot trust our perceptions to truly correspond to the actual state of the natural order,

²⁶ Fuzale Rana and Hugh Ross. What Darwin Didn't Know. (Reasons to Believe, 2009), p.3 ** The passage in full can be found at <http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/editors-blog/2012/02/15/darwins-warm-little-pond/>

²⁷ Ibid. p.6.

²⁸ Casey Luskin. "No, Scientists in Darwin's Day Did Not Grasp the Complexity of the Cell; Not Even Close." *Evolution News*. (June 6, 2013). http://www.evolutionnews.org/2013/06/did_scientists_072871.html.

²⁹ Op.cit. (7).

³⁰ John Lennox. God and Stephen Hawking. (Lion, 2011), p.31.

then the very existence of life itself that is implied by Tenet 1 cannot be substantiated on scientific grounds.

Criteria D and E. Neither of these Humean criteria have any bearing on the legitimacy of **Tenet 1**.

Tenet 2. Only naturalistic causes are considered.

Criterion A. Even granting the validity, both of our perceptions of the external world (empirical knowledge), and the actuality of causal relationships between physical events in nature, considerations pertaining to the *nature* of such causes and the possible ways in which they may be manifest is not a scientific concern, but a metaphysical concern. Since Hume is utterly dismissive of philosophy and metaphysics (Tenet A), Darwin cannot appeal to Hume's *Enquiry* in support of his refusal of natural causes.

Criterion B. As already noted in Tenet 1-C, Hume's dismissal of the reality of the necessary connections between events is problematic to scientific considerations as a whole. For example, philosopher William Jones states that a belief in the uniformity of nature "*underlies all empirical sciences,*"³¹ so that, "*If Hume is correct, the sciences are only historical statements.*"³² The downside of that limitation for science is that, in order for naturalists (and scientists) to make calculations that are suitable for *advancing* their investigations, they must believe nature operates by natural laws that can be documented.³³

Specifically pertaining to Darwin, Hume's skepticism is counter-productive to the verification of the Darwinian version of the history of life. Darwin's "*Diagram of the Divergence of Taxa,*" found at the close of *Origin*,³⁴ purports in a simple and general fashion, to chart the evolution of the entire history of life from its initial primitive forms, all the way to the present state of the natural order, which is marked by an enormously-broad variety that is laden with exceedingly complex features. This, indeed, is the entire message of the Darwinian paradigm: that all of life is *demonstrably* connected together in an inner-related continuum, as opposed to the teleological account of successive non-interrelated special creation events.³⁵ Following from that vision, he argued that the fossil record, in spite of its imperfections, would vindicate by *documentation* the unfolding of the progression of life in the manner of a time

³¹ Jones. Op.cit. (5), p, 315.

³² Ibid, p.321.

³³ Langdon Gilkey. Maker of Heaven and Earth. (Doubleday, 1959), p.112c.

³⁴ Origin. p.514.

³⁵ Every *narrative* interpretation of the days of Genesis 1 (24 hour or aeon) embraces this pattern. ** Also, Fuzale Rana and Hugh Ross. Origins of Life: Biblical and Evolutionary Models Face Off. (Reasons to Believe, 2014), p. 43f.

line. In addition, Darwin judged with certitude, *on the basis of* comparative taxonomical features and faculties, that humans are descended from lower life forms.³⁶ Apart from some sort of narrative of a kind that can be drawn into a comprehensible conceptual paradigm, Darwinism becomes utterly incoherent and meaningless. Therefore, under the standards of criterion B, the Darwinian claim to causal connections across the history of life is undermined.

Tenet 2. Criterion C. The damaging ramification of *this* criterion to the scientific enterprise as a whole is nearly identical to my concerns expressed in the previous section. Specifically with respect to the Darwinian discipline of conducting field investigations, including the exhaustive gathering of a broad array of living specimens, intense detailed empirical analysis of their individual structures and habits, and broad-scaled reflection on both the consequent interrelatedness and alleged evolutionary development, David Hume’s insights utterly undercuts its legitimacy. Under the standards of Criterion C, Darwinists have no grounds for certainty that their *naturalistic* strictures have foundation in the “evidence” they appeal to in its favor.

Criterion D. David Hume rejected as illegitimate William Paley’s appeal to natural theology by means of his analogy of “the watchmaker,”³⁷ on the grounds that “causes” within nature are more analogous to living organisms than they are to *mechanical* instruments. It is interesting that Michael Denton decades ago invalidated Hume’s dismissal of Paley on the basis of recent discoveries regarding the mechanical inner-workings of the living cell.³⁸ He noted that these “innards” bear closer analogy to mechanically-designed precision instruments than they do, say, maturing sweet corn. What is clear, however, is that--given the enormous increase of scientific knowledge in the life sciences ever since Darwin’s time,³⁹ beginning with both the discovery of the extravagant measure of information in the DNA,⁴⁰ and the complex inter-working relationships between the array of “machinery” within the cell--blind material forces cannot possibly have produced life as we know it.⁴¹ While it was Darwin’s privilege to criticize the traditional *teleological* position on

³⁶ In Charles Darwin’s Descent of Man (1874). (Emero Publishing, non-dated), he stated, “*There can be hardly a doubt that we are descended from barbarians [lower life forms]... Man still bears in his bodily form the indelible stamp of his lowly origin.*” (Section XXI, p.251).

³⁷ William Paley. The Intelligence of the Watchmaker. Dennis Danielson, ed. The Book of the Cosmos. (Persius, 2000), ch. 46.

³⁸ Denton. Op.cit. (13), ch. 14. In a lecture I attended on November 6 in Seattle, Denton stated that science absolutely does not contradict intelligent design (ID). ID affirms scientific facts as the foundation for drawing inferences as to whether the influence of an intelligent designer stands behind the object that is being scientifically examined.

³⁹ Rana and Ross. Op.cit. (26).

⁴⁰ Meyer. Signature. Op.cit. (15).

⁴¹ Rana and Ross. Op.cit. (12), *Epilogue*.

creation according to standards based on his own private expectations,⁴² the extent of the failure of his own program to account for the design we *do* experience in nature continues to mount.⁴³ I.D. theorists have correctly distanced themselves from arguments from analogy in order to instead employ abductive reasoning, that is, inference to the best explanation. Such a strategy properly strives for a solution, not on the basis of perfective analogies, but rather according to which hypothesis, among an array of alternatives, most fully and legitimately addresses the relevant evidence.

Tenet 2. Criterion E. Hume's discussion on the potential *inadequacy* of analogies is irrelevant to Darwinian Tenet 2.

Tenet 3. The machine driving evolution is random genetic mutation.

Criterion A. To the question of whether *beneficial* genetic mutations, in contrast to *harmful* ones, have occurred throughout living *history* at levels sufficient to account for the present level of variety and complexity in nature, entails specifically *historical* analysis, which is dependent on data that is both ambiguous and incomplete. Historical investigation cannot avoid philosophical assumptions and considerations. In particular, the Darwinian insistence on exclusively natural causes (Tenet 2) so prejudices its investigation from the outset as to challenge the soundness of its conclusions. Regarding this criterion, Hume fails to shed light, but instead becomes complicit to the general state of confusion regarding the parameters of legitimate scientific inquiry.

The question of whether *beneficial* genetic mutations, in contrast to *harmful* ones, can be *observed* and documented to happen in the *laboratory*, at levels that are sufficient to predict further evolutionary development, is a *scientific* challenge that does not directly involve metaphysical considerations.

Criterion B. For reasons already considered under Tenet 2:B the weight of the scientific evidence that is argued in support of Darwinian Tenet 3 is utterly undermined by Hume's skepticism toward the reality of causal connections between natural events. If, as Hume argues, the *causal* aspect of the relevant relationships between events cannot be established, then the data considered loses its evidentiary authority.

Criterion C. For reasons already considered under Tenets 3:B and C, and in light of considerations noted just above, Hume's skepticism concerning our capacity to perceive the natural world directly, and consequently, removes all

⁴² Cornelius Hunter. Op.cit. (11).

⁴³ Rana and Ross. Op.cit. (12), ch.17.

rational foundation for trusting that empirical investigation can scientifically demonstrate the Darwinian dogma of natural selection by means of positive inherited genetic mutations. John Lennox has offered helpful insight on this theme by pointing out that materialism whenever it is carried to its extreme, as by Hume, fails to provide ground for belief in causal relationships.⁴⁴

Tenet 3. Criteria D and E. David Hume’s discussion on the pitfalls of analogies is not relevant to the third Darwinian tenet on my list for the reason that the relevant potential criteria are met through historical investigation and empirical study in the laboratory. See Criterion A, above, in this section.

Tenet 4. Survival of the fittest.

Criterion A. It is obvious as we look across the biological world that life forms are in constant competition for food, shelter, and safety. An obvious component of that reality is the fact of suffering and ultimate death of all individual living things. It is also clear that in the natural order there are both winners and losers. Darwin’s fundamental tenet that the fittest survive, however, is simpler in principle than it is in actuality. On average, those creatures possessing the most efficient way to find food, greatest capacity to protect themselves and their families, and to make and to thrive in their circumstances, will win out over the competition that shares their environment. On the other hand, the circumstances that impact who wins or loses are often also complex. The task of weighing these considerations involves reflection on the kinds of questions that are not scientific in the strict sense. The metaphysical aspect of judging how, when, and why questions by definition concerns matters that are not merely physical in nature, but also their relationship with each object and events.⁴⁵ Hume’s dismissal of these questions has already been demonstrated to be counterproductive to reflection on these kinds of concerns. Clearly it was *in spite* of Hume that Darwin gave so much attention to the question of relationship across the biological world in *The Origin of Species*.

Criteria B and C. The previous paragraph is also relevant to this section. In addition, little more needs to be stated regarding the counterproductive aspect of Hume’s skepticism of our capacity to confidently perceive the natural order. Clearly, Darwin did not follow Hume’s dictum on this matter. On the other hand, with respect to the healthy attention he gave toward the natural world,

⁴⁴ Lennox. Op.cit. (6). He writes, “It is surely arguable that it is only belief in a Creator that gives us a satisfactory ground for believing in the uniformity of nature in the first place...If Naturalism is true we have no reason to trust our conviction that nature is uniform” (p.205).

⁴⁵ Op. cit. (18).

Darwin was actually borrowing from a theistic worldview inherited by him as a gift because of his participation in a culture bathed in a Christian worldview.⁴⁶

Criteria D and E. Hume's considerations about analogy are irrelevant to the Darwinian tenet of survival of the fittest.

Tenet 5. The Explanatory Superiority of Darwinism over the Teleological Viewpoint on Creation

Criterion A. In Michael Denton's *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*,⁴⁷ he highlighted Darwin's overriding priority by means of his title to chapter 15, namely "The Priority of the Paradigm." I would add further that his goal was to advance a specifically *naturalistic* paradigm as demonstrably superior to the old teleological one. The burden behind arguing the evidence that Darwin amassed was not in order that two parties might reason together toward a common goal. It was instead to decisively end the discussion civilly, in order to replace, indeed overthrow, the traditional teleological view of biblical creation with an entirely naturalistic view. In sum, the Darwinian agenda amounted to no less than a massive metaphysical conversion of thought. In this respect, the Darwinian agenda represented what Hume, by contrast, resisted.

Criterion B. Darwin's agenda involved shifting the very *cause* of the natural order from the providential will of the Creator God of the Bible to blind and unguided naturalistic processes. In that very process, Darwinism directly contradicted Hume's denial of causal connections within nature.

Criterion C. Darwinism is nothing if it does not explain the results of the natural biological order by means of blind and undirected causes within the natural order. For this reason, Darwin argued in contradiction to Hume's skepticism about our knowledge of the natural world.

Criteria D and E. In substantial agreement with David Hume's naturalistic world-view, Darwin's *Origin of Species* repeatedly belittled all appeals to teleology instead of blind, naturalistic forces, as the causal agent of evolutionary change in nature on the grounds that the biblical accounts of creation⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Lennox. Op.cit. (note 44).

⁴⁷ Op.cit. (13).

⁴⁸ Significantly, regarding Charles Darwin's attempted disproof of the Genesis account and his consequent assertion that he thereby logically disproved the God of Genesis, Rabbi Hillel Goldberg writes, "*The Genesis that Darwin [attempted to disprove] does not exist, the English renderings he refuted do not, in critical details, reflect the Hebrew.*" ("*Genesis, Cosmology, and Evolution*," found at <http://www.ou.org/publications/ja/5760summer/genesis.pdf>).

created more problems than they solved. I judge that Darwin's resistance to the biblical creation texts may have been grounded, at least in part, on a misunderstanding of the specifics of those texts. It is my assessment, consistent with Rabbi Hillel Goldberg's view (footnote 48), that Darwin was biblically uninformed concerning the range of legitimate options available for interpreting the creation days of Genesis.⁴⁹ For example, theologian/evangelist, and a founding father of Christian "fundamentalism," R.A. Torrey, whose life intersected with Charles Darwin's for twenty-five years, interpreted the creation days of Genesis as geological ages. The intellectual climate had for several centuries prior to his time, effectively replaced the concept of a personal Creator (God) with the abstract concept of natural law alone instead. Had it happened that the Gospel of John (chapter 1 in particular) entered in some way into Darwin's thinking, the apostle's chosen designation of Jesus as "the Word" (John 1:1-3,14), Darwin might have availed himself of the biblical notion that intelligence (implying personality), and not matter, was the prime and primal cause of the biological order, indeed, of the entire creation!⁵⁰

Conclusion

When I began this paper, I anticipated incorporating the words of the Apostle Paul from his letter to the Romans (2:1) into my subtitle. He wrote, "*Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge another; for in passing judgment on him you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same thing*" (RSV). My inclusion of that passage here is not an appeal to theology specifically, but instead to simple logic and reason as Paul himself included such in his line of argument. The logical fallacy that I have highlighted is the employment of the *double standard*. The evolutionary proponent Michael Ruse was referenced at my beginning for arguing that David Hume's philosophy dealt a devastating blow to revealed religion. It has been my purpose to apply the very same set of standards to the claims of Darwinian evolution. My paper has demonstrated that the criteria I employed from Hume's most authoritative treatises fail to support the Darwinian claim. Indeed, they actually serve to undermine it. In spite of the fact that, as I highlighted, Hume was not philosophically consistent even within his own writings, in no case considered from the set of criteria I worked with, can it be maintained that David Hume, as a leading champion of rationalistic thinking, substantially supports Darwinian evolution.

⁴⁹ See my paper, "The Biblical Demand to Take Another Look: Ten 'Compelling' Exegetical Reasons the Days of Creation are Non-24 hour." At <http://www.christianityontheoffense.com>.

⁵⁰ John C. Lennox. Op.cit. (6), p.177,8.

