



Bethany Sollereeder

## Essay Book Review

# God and Evolution: A Review of Four Contemporary Books

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*Of the four books here reviewed, [I think that] Lamoureux's and Miller's are very helpful, Giberson's is adequately so but repetitive within the field, and Dowd's is entirely off the mark.*

**SAVING DARWIN: How to Be a Christian and Believe in Evolution** by Karl W. Giberson. New York: HarperOne, 2008. 248 pages, notes, index. Hardcover; \$24.95. ISBN: 0061228788.

**ONLY A THEORY: Evolution and the Battle for America's Soul** by Kenneth R. Miller. New York: Viking Adult, 2008. 244 pages, notes, index. Hardcover; \$25.95. ISBN: 067001883X.

**THANK GOD FOR EVOLUTION: How the Marriage of Science and Religion Will Transform Your Life and Our World** by Michael Dowd. New York: Viking Adult, 2008. 413 pages, appendices, index. Hardcover; \$24.95. ISBN: 0670020451.

**EVOLUTIONARY CREATION: A Christian Approach to Evolution** by Denis O. Lamoureux. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008. 493 pages, appendices, notes, glossary, index. Paperback; \$55.00. ISBN: 1556355815.

Over the last ten years, there has been an inundation of books published on the interface between science and religion. With the approach of the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of Darwin's publication of *Origin of Species* in November and his two hundredth birthday in February, the topic of evolution is again being pushed to the forefront of public thought. It deserves to be asked why this topic should be of concern to evangelical readers. After all, people have been finding salva-

tion in Christ for two millennia without needing to have a perfect understanding of the process of origins. Why should readers put time and effort into trying to disentangle this issue?

As a Bible college student in Canada, the evolution debate was completely outside my range of interests. I was not a scientist, and I had no grounds on which to disagree with the science of the evolutionists or of the young-earth creationists. It was not until I was shown that the debate is often fundamentally a hermeneutical issue that I was drawn in. Questions like "What is the nature of the first chapters of Genesis?" and "How does God communicate with his people?" were questions that were applicable to my daily reading of the Bible.

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This paper will compare four new books which have been published in the last year: Karl Giberson's *Saving Darwin*, Kenneth Miller's *Only a Theory*, Michael Dowd's *Thank God for Evolution*, and Denis Lamoureux's *Evolutionary Creation*. I will compare and contrast their approaches to the science and religion debate primarily by evaluating their helpfulness to the average Christian who wants to know how the Bible interacts with science, and how to integrate these two disciplines hermeneutically.

## Saving Darwin

Karl Giberson is a professor at Eastern Nazarene College where he teaches the history of science and religion. He holds a doctorate in physics from Rice University. He is the director of the forum on faith and science at Gordon College, and is the co-director of the Venice Summer School on Science and Religion. *Saving Darwin* is his fourth book on the evolution vs. creation controversy.

Giberson's book explodes off the blocks. With a subtitle of "How to Be a Christian and Believe in Evolution" expectations are set very high. In the introduction, Giberson tells the story of how he, as a "teenage fundamentalist" Christian, came to peace with evolution.<sup>1</sup> He also sets forth three provocative theological points. First, he rejects the literal interpretation of the six days of creation.<sup>2</sup> Second, he dismisses the historicity of the Fall of humanity, generalizing it into a basic principle of human nature.<sup>3</sup> Third, he states that we should begin to widen our understanding of what it means to be made in the image of God, extending this label even to other species, such as some of the great apes or, indeed, any species that shows cognitive awareness and altruistic behavior.<sup>4</sup> The way these three points are introduced gives the reader the impression that the book will further explore these issues in relation to the biblical witness and expand on why these three changes should be made. It is a teaser that is never fulfilled. The book is actually a history of evolutionary theory and its acceptance (or lack thereof) in America. These three important conclusions are simply stated in the introduction and then never re-explored, explained, or challenged.

The book begins in earnest with Darwin himself. Giberson weaves his way through the myths and legends surrounding the great scientist, and emerges

with a thoughtful and helpful picture of the man. Neither a hardened atheist vehemently trying to disprove God nor a deathbed convert who recants his life's work at the last moment, Darwin is shown to be a reluctant convert to agnosticism after years of agonizing over the evidence for evolution and the cruelties of nature.

From this starting point, Giberson traces the history of this contentious theory in America. Ellen White and the Seventh-Day Adventists, the monkey-Scopes trial, the writing of Whitcomb and Morris' *The Genesis Flood*, and Phillip Johnson's transformation of creationism into the so-called Intelligent Design (ID) theory all make an appearance.<sup>5</sup> The last two chapters of the book cover some of the arguments against the ID movement and some of the excesses of atheist fundamentalists, like Richard Dawkins, and give an explanation of evolutionary theory. Giberson presents only a brief introduction to each subject, and the overall result is a string of necessarily weak arguments lined up without adequate explanation or proof. The reader is reminded of the theological claims abandoned in the introduction.

It is unclear who the primary audience is meant to be. If the book was written for a popular audience to teach them how to hold evolution and Christianity in balance, it should have dealt with the primary concern of a popular audience: how to read the Bible in a way that can accept the conclusions of science. In Mark Noll's words, "the appeal to Scripture remains the heart of creationism,"<sup>6</sup> and so the antidote to creationism must make a similar appeal. A call to embrace evolution without an accompanying introduction to a new hermeneutic will not help a popular audience. Giberson himself acknowledges that "reflection on the evolution controversy convinces me that the conflict is only tangentially scientific. Those who would adjudicate this dispute by appealing to science are wasting their time."<sup>7</sup> Despite this recognition, he does not once deal with issues of the inerrancy of Scripture or the nature of Genesis. As a result, Giberson loses what could have been a very helpful book for the average layperson.

The book is a fine example of a history of Darwinism<sup>8</sup> in America (of which there are already many<sup>9</sup>), but that hardly accounts for the subtitle. It fails to stand out in the already crowded discussion surrounding science and religion.

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### Only a Theory

Kenneth Miller is a biology professor at Brown University. He has written several high school and college level textbooks that are used nationwide, as well as the popular book *Finding Darwin's God* (2000). He testified in the 2004 Atlanta trial concerning his book *Biology*, co-authored with Joseph Levine, and was the opening witness at the September 2005 Dover trial on the teaching of ID theory in public schools.

*Only a Theory* is an incisive exposé of the ID movement.<sup>10</sup> In the first five chapters, Miller presents the case for ID, knocks it down, and then builds a case for evolution. The last three chapters deal with the politics and organization of the ID movement, how scientific theories end up on trial in courtrooms, and musings on the future of science in America.

First, Miller goes through each of the “so-called proofs” of ID theory and discredits them one by one.<sup>11</sup> The disassembly of ID theory is compelling. The mouse trap, the bacterial flagellum, the blood-clotting system, and the immune system are all shown to be reducible and explainable through biological evolution.<sup>12</sup> In addition, new computer programs are demonstrating how simulated natural selection can create information within a replicating and randomly mutating “population.”<sup>13</sup> If one needed more proof, Miller presents a new study where bacteria evolved the capability to metabolize nylon under the direct observation of scientists at Osaka University. Interventionistic Design has never been observed, but evolution and the generation of new information—how to synthesize nylonase—can be recorded in the lab. Miller concludes that “design is an appealing idea only when we *don't* take it seriously”<sup>14</sup> and therefore do not submit it to proper scientific inquiry. Having safely knocked down the ID arguments, Miller builds a case for evolution. The usual suspects are presented: pseudogenes,<sup>15</sup> human chromosome two, and the hominid fossil record.

The second half of the book becomes remarkably more philosophical in tone. Miller reflects on the desire to find purpose in the universe, and links this with the strategy of the ID movement. He muses over the wild success ID theory has met in popular circles and outlines why this seemingly innocent

challenge is, in reality, dangerously undermining the basis of science itself. The crisis caused by the ID movement is shown to be closely related to the relativism that wreaked havoc in the humanities as outlined in Alan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987). The quest for truth is abandoned in favor of a scheme where tolerance is the highest value. As a result, everything becomes relativized. For this to happen in the sciences, Miller argues, it would mean a total redefinition of science. In short, the ID movement theorists and their Wedge document will have achieved their purpose.<sup>16</sup> What is needed instead is for evolutionary science to be divorced from the politics of the day so that it can continue correcting itself through established scientific methods.

The book ends with a rumination on the power of story. The ID movement tells us that life has meaning and purpose—that we were meant to be here and are specially designed for life. How do biological evolutionists respond? Miller powerfully states, “Evolution is not just a better story, a drama with more plot twists and cliffhangers than design could ever imagine, but it has the added advantage of actually being true.”<sup>17</sup>

Overall, *Only a Theory* is a very good book. It makes an important contribution to the current debate by showing how and why the arguments of the ID movement do not stand up to scientific scrutiny. It is written in clear language, interspersed with helpful and amusing anecdotes. The book should appeal to a wide audience.

The science in the book is understandable; the arguments are powerfully written. Simple, memorable examples are given. From the deconstruction of a mouse trap to the genetic reason why we need citrus fruits in our diet,<sup>18</sup> the illustrations are well defined. Miller treats ID theories fairly and debunks them with humor but without scorn. Such a clear-headed, rational approach is increasingly difficult to find in a field dominated by polarizers, such as Ken Ham or Richard Dawkins.

On the other side of the debate, Miller gives a six-page reflection on theological considerations. While this is by no means adequate, his argument starts the reader on the necessary path of trying to determine what kind of literature is contained in the first book of the Bible. Miller's answer is that

“Genesis was written in a prescientific age, in the language of the day and in an attempt to communicate great truths to the people of that age.”<sup>19</sup> He goes on to quote both Pope John Paul II and St. Augustine<sup>20</sup> and shows that historical Christianity did not shy away from engaging with new natural knowledge. This brief but helpful section only highlights the desperate need for more work to be done in this area. Miller’s introduction to hermeneutical approaches might prod a reader in the right direction, but it does not give the reader a sufficient foundation to address the biblical issues. Nonetheless, this is a fascinating book and is well worth reading.

## Thank God for Evolution

The third author will be less familiar to many evangelical readers. Michael Dowd is a self-acclaimed “evolution evangelist.” He has a B.A. in biblical studies from Evangel University (a Pentecostal school), and a Masters of Divinity from Palmer Seminary. He has pastored three different United Church of Christ congregations, and is now a full-time itinerant speaker on what he terms “evolutionary Christianity.”

*Thank God for Evolution* is the most disturbing and dangerous of the books reviewed here. The young-earth creationist’s fear that acceptance of science causes the loss of true faith is frighteningly realized in this book. Dowd has completely lost touch with even fringe orthodoxy. Yet despite the bizarre and discombobulated hermeneutics and the replacement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the “gospel of evolution,”<sup>21</sup> this book has garnered the endorsement of five Nobel Prize laureates. This is a result, no doubt, of the increasing fragmentation of knowledge.<sup>22</sup> A great physicist or physiologist does not necessarily know anything about philosophy or theology, and the support of an economist seems especially irrelevant. Nevertheless, these endorsements hold popular appeal and authority, and orthodox Christians should be ready to answer some of the issues raised by Dowd.

This book is a strange “new-age” brew of personal stories, quasi-hermeneutics, scientific explanations, and self-help practices. Dowd confidently asserts that if you understand the “good news” of our common origins, suddenly you will be able to deal with addictions, unhealthy lifestyle choices,

and personal hurts. He also includes exercises and mantras that can help a person deal with stress and temptations. One almost feels that one has stumbled by accident into an Oprah’s Book Club meeting. “The way forward,” says Dowd, “begins with this simple truth: *Your greatest difficulties ... while your responsibility, are ultimately not your fault.*”<sup>23</sup>

Dowd divides faith into several different categories. He makes a distinction between “night” and “day” language, that is, between figurative, emotive language and literal, scientific facts. He also makes a distinction between private and public revelation. Private revelation includes all the Scriptures of the world—the Bible, the Koran, the Bhagavad Gita, the Book of Mormon—anything that is not readily available to people worldwide. On the other hand, public revelation includes any scientific discoveries that unequivocally speak of God. Any religious recording from a time when people believed the world was flat, he considers a *flat-earth faith*, written in “night” language. These need to be ushered into the twenty-first century, where they become *evolutionary faiths*, incorporating all the newest “day” language. In doing this, he completely throws out the Scriptures. “Evolutionary religion’s alternative to reliance on ancient scriptures is *empirical data*. In a way, the data are our scriptures and to these we submit.”<sup>24</sup>

God is also radically redefined. In Dowd’s world, God is the greatest of all “holons” or the composite of all parts of creation. God is equated with the sum whole of ultimate reality, and sits somewhere in between pantheism and panentheism. Dowd’s new term (he has many) is that he is a crea-THEIST, while his wife, Connie Barlow, who is an atheist, is a cre-ATHEIST. These types of cute and lighthearted approaches quickly become unbearably saccharine.

Possibly the most inappropriate of these changes is the REALizing of biblical narratives. Anything written in a flat-earth faith is to be completely overhauled. So, the idea of original sin and the Fall is simply the cerebellum and neo-cortex asserting themselves against our frontal lobes. We do not sin, we simply are affected by our biological desires to eat, be safe, and reproduce. Yet Dowd maintains that the story of the original Fall is true in that it is an actual “description of the day language process through which our ancestors evolved the frontal lobes.”<sup>25</sup> This attempt at concordism,<sup>26</sup> while ignor-

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ing the theological implications of the passage, falls flat. It strips the Genesis account of any truth worth keeping, while still trying to satisfy conservative Christians by relativizing it and declaring it “true.” In the appendices, he does the same with the stories of Christ’s birth, death, and resurrection. The value of their historicity is brushed aside in favor of life lessons that can be learned, such as “pain and suffering can be redemptive.”<sup>27</sup>

The tragedy of this book is that the author came to terms with evolution, but could not find adequate hermeneutics to deal with the Scriptures in a way that did not paint them out of the picture altogether. Instead, he has expended a great amount of energy and effort on an approach which is very attractive to a postmodern audience but has no substance. While we must always allow scientific data as the Book of God’s Works to inform our reading of Scripture, to abandon completely the biblical witness is obviously unacceptable.

### Born Again?

There are a surprising number of similarities between the personal story of Michael Dowd and that of the last author, Denis Lamoureux. Both grew up in Roman Catholic homes and abandoned faith in their early college years. Both joined the army and went on tour to Europe during the same year. Both rediscovered Christ during their army service, and became dedicated young-earth creationists as a result of being entrenched in the science vs. religion dichotomy. Both started to be open to evolution as a result of seminary training. Both wrote their first major book in the area within a year. Dowd espouses evolutionary Christianity, and Lamoureux defends evolutionary creation.

Even more astounding than these similarities are the differences between the two. Dowd has made a decisive break with orthodox theology; Lamoureux is a committed evangelical. Dowd speaks of the gospel of evolution, while Lamoureux continually speaks of the great Savior he has found in Jesus. Dowd has seminary training in theology, and no formal education in science. Lamoureux has earned a Ph.D. in evangelical theology and another Ph.D. in evolutionary biology, adding these to an earlier earned DDS.

### Evolutionary Creation

Denis Lamoureux is currently the associate professor of science and religion at St. Joseph’s College at the University of Alberta. *Evolutionary Creation* is the culmination of nearly twenty-five years of work dedicated exclusively to the evolution vs. creation debate. As a result, his arguments are cogent and powerful.

The book is divided into ten chapters. The first three deal primarily with categorical issues. The next four chapters explore the biblical account of creation, explaining the “science of the day” and showing why concordism with modern science (or as Lamoureux prefers to term it, scientific concordism<sup>28</sup>) is inappropriate. The last three chapters explore issues surrounding human evolution and include Lamoureux’s personal story of coming to terms with evolution.

One of the overall themes in Lamoureux’s work is the issue of concordism. Problems for Christians arise when they attempt to find an accord between the “science” found in Genesis and modern scientific theory. Even a cursory glance will show that the two do not line up well. Instead of throwing out the biblical account, as Dowd does, Lamoureux engages in careful exegesis and uses what he calls the message-incident principle to differentiate between the infallible message of faith and the incidental science of the day. As a result, he avoids the problems that trouble other writers. Fuzzy thinking on these categories often allows subtle forms of concordism to slip in. For example, trying to find some sort of “federal head,” Adam, who can historically represent the human race, or trying to deny the paradisaical state of the Garden of Eden in order to find death before the Fall are attempts to maintain some kind of concordism in the literature while still maintaining the truth of evolutionary biology.<sup>29</sup> Lamoureux rejects this entirely. He writes,

First, Adam never actually existed. Genesis 1 and 2 present the *de novo* creation of the heavens, earth, plants, and animals. This is an ancient origins science with no correspondence to physical reality.<sup>30</sup>

Having said this, he also maintains that Genesis was written with the understanding that it was a real and true account of the origins of humanity. The bridge between these two is the incarnational nature of the Bible.

The question of whether Genesis 1–11 is true is a return to the question asked earlier, “Does God lie in the Bible?” The answer given was an absolute NO! God does not lie, he accommodates. Lying requires *the intention* to deceive. In contrast, accommodation recognizes *the need* to communicate truth in a way that is understandable to an intended audience.<sup>31</sup>

With a hermeneutic that is remarkably similar to that of Peter Enns’s *Inspiration and Incarnation*,<sup>32</sup> Lamoureux compares the biblical account of creation and the flood to other narratives common in the ancient Near East. Understanding the context into which the Holy Spirit was speaking is essential to distinguish the message of faith from the incidental science. Lamoureux also spends a significant amount of time showing the concordist attempts of young-earth creationists and progressive creationists to recreate cosmology in a way that would reflect the biblical narrative. By comparing both sides of the issue, the reader is able to see clearly how the exegeses differ and is left to determine which is the more reasonable.

When it comes to the origin of sin in the world, Lamoureux does not back down. Human sin certainly entered the world as a historical occurrence. At the same time, he rejects the idea of a special, instantaneous creation of the image of God in humans. To clarify his position, Lamoureux compares three different models of origins. Punctiliar monogenism would imagine an historical individual Adam, who in one moment was endowed with spiritual life, and who alone sinned. Punctiliar polygenism is a similar approach, but says that God directly created his image in all existing humans simultaneously, and that all people subsequently fell into sin. Both of these, according to Lamoureux, ultimately belie a *de novo* or ancient understanding of origins. Instead, he advocates a gradual polygenism, a method which says the image of God—that which makes us unique amongst the creation—manifested itself gradually in all humans. Sin also entered the world, but its entrance cannot be pinned down to any one time. The historical emergence of sin and the image of God are veiled within “the category of mystery.”<sup>33</sup> Yet, Lamoureux remains uncompromising about the reality of the sinful state of humanity. The last academic statement in the book is, “Indeed, sin enters the world, but not with Adam.”<sup>34</sup>

Lamoureux uses the analogy of the womb to explain how spiritual realities were manifested gradually and mysteriously during human evolution. “While in our mother’s womb, when do we begin to bear the Image of God? Do we get one-half an Image from her egg cell and the other half from our father’s sperm cell?”<sup>35</sup> So too with sinfulness, the author insists that the emergence of sin, in both the womb and human history, are equally impossible to pinpoint. Instead, the metaphysical realities that are being spoken of cannot be made to fit scientific demands, including the need for a first human pair. This is a radical notion for most evangelicals. Lamoureux really and truly gets rid of a historical Adam and Eve while defending the truth that humans bear God’s image and have fallen into sin. However, most evangelical scholars who accept evolution still feel they must get some sort of historical Adam and Eve into the mix.<sup>36</sup>

Another appealing feature of Lamoureux’s work is that he makes a real attempt at developing an evolutionary theodicy to accompany the new worldview brought to his readers. Using the message-incident principle, he rejects the causal connection of physical death to human sin, and the historicity of the cosmic Fall. At the same time, he absolutely holds to the sinfulness and need for redemption of humanity. Lamoureux also shows the progress of theodicy throughout the Bible. At the beginning of the biblical account, suffering and death are connected to sin; in the New Testament, the suffering and death of Jesus are connected to the divine purpose held for him. This leads to a change of perspective in regards to suffering and death, but it maintains that death was viewed by the original audience of Genesis as a result of sin, even though historically death did not enter the world at the first instance of human sin.

The interweaving of science, Scripture, ancient Near Eastern context, theodicy, and personal story make this book the most comprehensive in dealing with questions raised by the current debate. It is unapologetically scientific and thoroughly evangelical.<sup>37</sup> Most importantly, this book equips the reader to exegete the first chapters of Genesis with confidence, and thus it is highly relevant to all readers who love the Bible and want to read it more carefully. *Evolutionary Creation* is rather imposing at just under four hundred pages, with an additional hundred pages of appendices and indices, but it is well

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worth the time investment and is likely to be one of the most influential books on this topic to emerge this decade.


### Conclusions

The evolution vs. creation debate continues to attract every kind of thinker and speaker. From the absolutely absurd to the incredibly cogent, from amateurs to the embarrassingly well educated, young and old, everyone is represented. Every walk of life contributes as well—scientists, theologians, historians, lawyers, and so forth. Increasingly, the challenge is to sift through all the repetitive or unhelpful materials being produced to find those contributions that really move the discussion forward. Of the four books here reviewed, Lamoureux's and Miller's are very helpful, Giberson's is adequately so but repetitive within the field, and Dowd's is entirely off the mark. Only Dowd and Lamoureux deal with the hermeneutical issues at length, and of these two, only Lamoureux maintains an orthodox position.

Personally, the evolution vs. creation debate was never the watershed issue of biblical inerrancy for me that it was for an older generation. I attended a small, Bible belt, Pentecostal Bible College, much like Dowd did. I also attend Regent College, where Lamoureux did some of his graduate work. But times have changed since they attended. While Vanguard (Pentecostal) College did not necessarily endorse evolution, it was not against it either. At Regent, the conversation is still alive and well, but it consists mostly of evolutionary creationists trying to convince the last remnant of young-earth creationists, rather than the other way around.

Generation Y generally has no problem with evolution. After all, the evidence has become so overwhelming in recent years that it is becoming impossible to contradict. The real danger now is that the youth and young adults are more likely to accept science and reject Christianity if the two come head to head. How many of my generation have to abandon belief before we, as Christian scholars, finally relinquish our deep-seated need for concordism? The irony is that it is often the same people who know the text the best who are also the most entrenched in concordist beliefs. The time has come, however, for us to come to terms with evolution and the nature of biblical revelation. If we do

not, Christianity as a whole will be seriously compromised in the minds of the next generation, especially for those outside the faith community. The pastoral implications of this misguided debate are immense.

The recent brouhaha over the resignation of Michael Reiss from the Royal Society after the misinterpretation of his comments has shown just how sensitive even the global, secular world has become to the topic of creationism.<sup>38</sup> It has become a time when we as Christians must choose our words and approaches with care. To have our "conversation be always full of grace" (Col. 4:6) while "speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15) is becoming ever more necessary. 

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Karl Giberson, *Saving Darwin: How to Be a Christian and Believe in Evolution* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 3.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 13–4.

<sup>5</sup>There is a great difference between the Intelligent Design theory and the historical Christian understanding of intelligent design. The ID movement is really an *interventionistic design theory* which holds that God must intervene in order to assemble biological systems, in one fell swoop, that seem too complex to develop through an evolutionary process, such as the blood clotting system. The traditional Christian understanding of intelligent design holds that God reveals himself and his eternal qualities through the created world, and has nothing to do with the support or denial of natural processes (See Rom. 1:19–20).

<sup>6</sup>Mark Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 200.

<sup>7</sup>Giberson, *Saving Darwin*, 166.

<sup>8</sup>By this I mean Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection and gradual phylogenetic change. *Darwinism* is a problematic term since it is often skewed to carry metaphysical implications of atheism or of a dysteleological universe— notions to which Darwin never ascribed. Nor is the term *Darwinism* used in scientific literature. It is replaced by either "biological evolution" or left simply as "evolution."

<sup>9</sup>For example, the work of Edward J. Larson in this area is very comprehensive. See *Evolution: The Remarkable History of a Scientific Theory* (New York: Random House Publishing Group, 2006); *Trial and Error* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); or *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate over Science and Religion* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); see also Ronald L. Numbers, *Darwinism Comes to America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) and his *The Creationists: The Evolution of Scientific Creationism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>10</sup>Kenneth R. Miller, *Only a Theory: Evolution and the Battle for America's Soul* (New York: Viking Adult, 2008).

<sup>11</sup>Miller, it should be said, believes in intelligent design while rejecting the ID theory:

The notion that the universe has a rationality, an architecture that reflects the work of a creator is an old and traditional one in western thought ... Investigating the workings of nature, as well as its history, was viewed as a way of exploring the plan, purpose, and "design" of nature's creator. Seen in this way, the process of biological evolution is nothing more than an attempt to understand how the natural world produces the range and diversity of life all around us. In short, evolution is another way to appreciate the intelligence reflected in the ultimate design of nature.

In regards to the ID movement, Miller states,

Ironically, their creationist views actually lead them to regard nature as insufficient to account for the origin of species. This means, in a theological sense, that they see nature not as the logical work of a wise and provident creator, but as insufficient, incomplete, and deeply flawed.

Kenneth R. Miller, personal communication, October 23, 2008. See note 5 above.

<sup>12</sup>Each of these arguments are ultimately different versions of the God of the gaps theory. They attempt to show where interventionistic rather than providential divine action should be seen. Unfortunately, like the retrograde motion of the planets in Copernicus' day, a greater understanding of the world around us begins to close those gaps, making God seem a rather idle or redundant figure.

<sup>13</sup>Of course, it could be argued that there is still an ultimate intelligent designer behind these programs, namely the programmer who gives parameters to the random generations.

<sup>14</sup>Miller, *Only a Theory*, 86.

<sup>15</sup>A pseudogene is a gene that is unable to be translated into a protein due to a mutation to its structure. This can happen in several ways. A nonsynonymous mutation, premature stop codon, or a transposition could all be causes of a pseudogene. The classic example in humans is the Vitamin C pseudogene, where the vestiges of code to synthesize vitamin C remain in our DNA, yet are non-functioning and so force us to add citrus fruits or other sources of ascorbic acid to our diet.

<sup>16</sup>For the Discovery Institute's response to the uproar surrounding the Wedge document, as well as the document's full text, visit [www.discovery.org/a/2101](http://www.discovery.org/a/2101)

<sup>17</sup>Miller, *Only a Theory*, 220.

<sup>18</sup>See endnote 15 above.

<sup>19</sup>Miller, *Only a Theory*, 159.

<sup>20</sup>While this oft-used quotation beginning with "Usually, even a non-Christian knows something about the earth ..." is thought to show that Augustine did not look for harmonization between the Bible and science, this is not always the case. Later, in the same book, he speaks of Ps. 104:2 and Isa. 40:22, and states,

But if it is necessary, as it surely is, to interpret these two passages so that they are shown not to be contradictory but to be reconcilable, it is also necessary that both of these passages should not contradict the theories that may be supported by true evidence (p. 59).

In reference to the firmament he also says,

They must certainly bear in mind that the term "firmament" does not compel us to imagine a stationary heaven: we may understand this name as given to indicate not that it is motionless but that it is solid and that it constitutes an impassable boundary between the waters above and the waters below (p. 61).

Augustine did not accept science as valid in its own right, in that he would not accept a "scientific" fact if he could not also reconcile it with the biblical account. St. Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis 1*, in *Ancient Christian Writers* 41, trans. John Hammond Taylor (Mahwah, NJ: Newman Press, 1982).

<sup>21</sup>Michael Dowd, *Thank God for Evolution: How the Marriage of Science and Religion Will Transform Your Life and Our World* (New York: Viking Adult, 2008), 49.

<sup>22</sup>This is exactly the problem Ian Barbour points out in *Religion in an Age of Science* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1990). "The whole controversy reflects the shortcomings of fragmented and specialized higher education" (p. 10) and "Scientists are no wiser than anyone else when they step out of their laboratories and speculate beyond strictly scientific work" (p. 14).

<sup>23</sup>Dowd, *Thank God*, 15. Italics original.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 167.

<sup>26</sup>"Concordism" is the attempt to find an agreement between two different groups or disciplines. See endnote 28.

<sup>27</sup>Dowd, *Thank God*, 366.

<sup>28</sup>Scientific concordism attempts to find agreement between the biblical record and scientific data discovered today. Historical concordism is the attempt to line up archeological and historical studies with the biblical histories.

<sup>29</sup>This is the case in Denis Alexander's new book *Creation or Evolution: Do We Have to Choose?* (Oxford: Monarch Books, 2008). Alexander presents five models for how Adam and Eve could have existed, but favors a model of federal headship in which either two people or a community of Neolithic farmers in the Middle East became "*homo divinus* who were truly spiritually alive in fellowship with God, providing the spiritual roots of the Jewish faith" (p. 237). His concordism is evident when comparing this model to a view similar to Lamoureux's where Alexander says, "Such a retelling of earlier events in theological terms is by no means impossible, but does empty that retelling of any Near Eastern context and detaches the account from its Jewish roots" (p. 240). By placing "Adam and Eve" in the Middle East, instead of Africa or Australia, Alexander can achieve an accord between the biblical text and the actual history of the dispersion of *homo sapiens* around the globe.

<sup>30</sup>Denis O. Lamoureux, *Evolutionary Creation: A Christian Approach to Evolution* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2008), 319.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 269-70. Italics original.

<sup>32</sup>Lamoureux found Enns's work outstanding, and was sad to hear of his being fired at Westminster Theological Seminary. The major turning points in Lamoureux's hermeneutical journey, however, came over several years. The first was at Regent College, reading George Ladd's *The New Testament and Criticism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1966) where Ladd says, "It is the central thesis of this book that *the Bible is the Word of God given in the*



# Essay Book Review

## God and Evolution: A Review of Four Contemporary Books

words of men in history" (p. 12). A second turning point occurred in 1988 when Clark Pinnock lectured at Wycliffe College on his book *The Scriptural Principle* (1984). It was here that he first discovered an incarnational approach to Scripture. Denis Lamoureux, personal communication, October 1, 2008.

<sup>33</sup>Lamoureux, *Evolutionary Creation*, 288.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 329.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 287.

<sup>36</sup>Keith Miller's *Perspectives on an Evolving Creation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003) gives several different views on Adam and Eve. James Hurd's article in the compendium, "Hominids in the Garden," presents the difficulty of an *ex nihilo* view scripturally, yet he still attempts to "harmonize the paleontological record with the biblical account" (p. 224), once again showing the deep-seated concordism that is causing the problems. This ends up tacking an Adam and Eve on the tail end of evolutionary processes simply to try "to have one's cake and eat it too." For more examples, see Darrell Falk, *Coming to Peace with Science* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004) where in the last pages of the book he says it "certainly is still possible that Adam and Eve were real individuals who lived in real

time" (p. 226), but also "an alternative view is that God inspired the picture of Adam, Eve and the garden in story form" (p. 227). Bruce Waltke's new book *An Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007) supports the idea of "theistic evolution," but demands that God "by direct creation made 'ādām a spiritual being" (p. 203). This seems to be as far as scholarship goes in an evangelical context, which makes Lamoureux's insistence on relinquishing historical concordism refreshing.

<sup>37</sup>Lamoureux's concern for including the Bible in his work is evident from the scripture index which covers twelve pages.

<sup>38</sup>Michael Reiss, a former director of education for the Royal Society, stepped down from his position as a result of misinterpretations regarding comments on creationism. Reiss felt that science teachers should take the time to explain why creationism is not a valid scientific theory. Many took this to mean he was advocating the teaching of creationism in Britain's science classrooms. Ian Sample, "Professor Steps Down over Creationism Row," *The Guardian*, 17 September 2008 [newspaper on-line]; available from [www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2008/sep/17/mainsection/uknews](http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2008/sep/17/mainsection/uknews); Internet; accessed 4 October 2008.

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