numerical, sensory, or whatever) the expression "purely physical" is on a par with talk about square circles. Moreover, Alexanian shifted the idea of ontological reduction from the one I found religiously objectionable and rebutted, to the claim that some sets are either "equated" with one another or are empty. But kinds of properties-and-laws are not sets; kinds do not have "members" and what is qualified by each kind is a matter of contingency. By contrast, sets do have members and each is necessarily a member of the set. Besides, I gave a fairly detailed circumscription of the senses of "reduction" I found objectionable so it is hard to understand why a completely different idea is treated in response.

Finally, my non-reductionist argument would equally defeat the notion that a proper ontology can be a "set theoretic analysis of the whole of reality." The idea of a set is derived by abstracting from the quantitative aspect of creation and thus can neither encompass nor explain its nonquantitative properties and laws.

Notes

[1]Roy Clouser, "Prospects for Theistic Science," *PSCF* 58, no 1 (2006): 2–15.
[2]P. G. Nelson, "Reduction in Science," *PSCF* 58, no 3 (2006): 253–4.
[3]Moorad Alexanian, "Set Theoretic Analysis of the Whole of Reality," *PSCF* 58, no 3 (2006): 254–5.

Roy Clouser
204 Bradley Ave
Haddonfield, NJ 08033
royclouser@comcast.net

Free Will and Incarnation

David Siemens[1] questions my attempt to understand free will and incarnation scientifically.[2] Concerning my explanation of free will, he asks: "What mechanism or process sets up the balanced state [in the brain], produces awareness of it in the decider, and then consciously switches it?" The best answer I can give to this is as follows.

As a child grows, its brain develops by cells multiplying and differentiating according to the child's genes, and by the whole structure interacting, through the nerves and sensory organs, with the rest of the body and the outside world. This leads eventually to activity among the neurons that the young person experiences as an awareness of having to think about and make a decision. So far this is a bottom-up process, determined by physics and chemistry.

My hypothesis is that, once this point has been reached, a top-down process becomes possible. This is when the young person's consideration of the options facing him or her gives rise to a physically balanced state (bifurcation point) in the brain. In this circumstance, I suggest, the young person's thoughts themselves can, by proceeding along one line rather than another, determine the direction the brain takes. This then constitutes a free choice.

David Siemens also asks, in relation to my treatment of the Incarnation: "if personality is a function of brain how does a nonphysical spiritual being have a personality?" My answer to this is that personality resides in *patterns* among neurons, not in the neurons themselves.[3] A spiritual being can therefore have a personality if it has an organ with components that can take up similar patterns to those in the brain. In my treatment of the Incarnation, I assumed that the preincarnate Son had such an organ with patterns in it (I speak humanly[4]). I further assumed that, when the Son "emptied himself" and became an embryo, the Father retained these patterns in his memory, and then, as Jesus grew up, ensured that they were reproduced in Jesus' brain.

Notes

[1]David F. Siemens, Jr., "On Freedom and Incarnation in Nonreductionistic Materialism," *PSCF* 58, no. 2 (2006): 165.
[2]P. G. Nelson, "Neuroscience, Free Will, and the Incarnation," *PSCF* 58, no. 1 (2006): 86–7.
[3]Cf. P. G. Nelson, *Big Bang, Small Voice: Reconciling Genesis and Modern Science* (Latheronwheel, Caithness, Scotland: Whittles, 1999), 109–10.
[4]Romans 3:5.

P. G. Nelson
25 Duesbery Street
Hull, HU5 3QE
England
P.G.Nelson@hull.ac.uk

Creationism or Methodological Naturalism: A Response to Finlay, et al.

In "Creation versus Creationism," (*PSCF* 58, no. 3 [2006]: 236–9), Finlay, et al. criticize Christians who attack and debunk "evolution," yet their article is a classic example as to why thinking Christians should reject "evolution" as promoted by the scientific community. Thinking Christians accept naturalistic microevolution but understand that compelling evidence for the naturalistic evolution of humans from a common ancestor with the chimpanzee and for the naturalistic generation of new families of proteins does not exist.

Finlay, et al. provide data that compare similarities between the human and chimpanzee genomes. They conclude, "Chimps and humans are related genetically." Thinking Christians would concur, but genetic relatedness is not evidence for any agency that could cause genetic alterations.

Yes, "Humans differ from chimps by about 200 large duplicated or deleted segments." However, such segments of DNA could be identical whether they were generated, altered or deleted by naturalistic processes or by an intelligent agency. Since DNA does not reveal causative agency, neither do RNA, proteins, homologous structures or fossils.[1] In macroevolution, causative agency cannot be determined from scientific data, and it is not naturalistic by default.

Without any supporting data, Finlay, et al. state dogmatically, "The differences between chimp and human genetic sequences reflect natural genetic processes." Such unfounded statements concerning agency are a major reason for Christian opposition to "evolution." Rather, scientists should ask, "Is the naturalistic evolution of *Homo sapiens* from a common ancestor with the chimpanzee probable?" If one were to ask Charles Darwin, he would have responded by saying that there were endless variations,[2] innumerable progenitors,[3] and an unlimited number of generations.[4] His invocation of the infinite has fogged rational thinking.

What are the facts? *Homo sapiens* evolved from a common ancestor with the chimpanzee about 7 million years