

The Evolution of God

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When evolution is outlawed, only outlaws will evolve.



I don't approve of the way the argument over evolution has evolved. Darwin thoroughly yanked the chain of collective Christianity regarding natural selection.

And suddenly, by the standards of Christianity at that time, it became mandatory that an evolutionist also be an atheist.

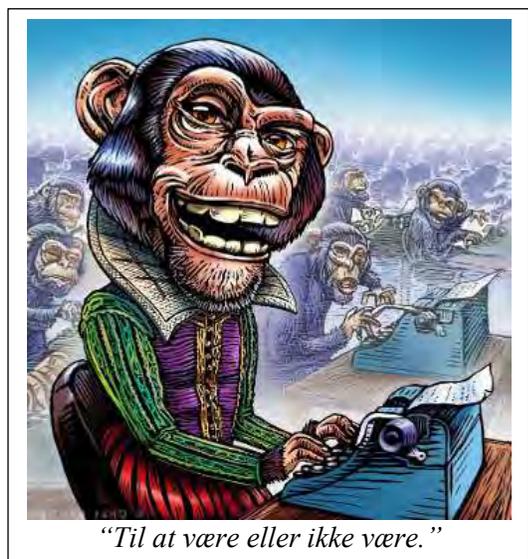
However, Darwin was also a gnarly racist, claiming superiority of white over black. And he was a sexist, writing in his autobiography, "the average mental power in man must be above that of women." Oddly, these two notions didn't bother the Christian establishment one bit in 1859. That's the part of Darwin they liked. Robber barons like J.D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie, along with Karl Marx and Hitler liked those parts as well, in addition to natural

selection. Bummer.

Today, most religious people accept that a faster wolf will catch more bunnies and give birth to better bunny hunters, and that Leonardo Da Vinci's kid was probably a good artist too. The original burr under the saddle of Christianity is a non-issue these days.

There is still a problem when seemingly entire new species are apparently created out of whole cloth. Was it a case of random spontaneous creation or were God and the helper angels busting their chops to build a better water bug?

Can randomness result in order? What about the idea that billions of chimps flailing away at typewriters would eventually write "Hamlet?"



Or even the lyrics to, "Teen Angel," the stupidest song on the planet.

This urban myth always assumes the monkeys would type in English. If we're going for Hamlet, I think we should insist on Danish. It would be just as likely for them to randomly type the melancholy Dane's "to be or not to be," in his own language.

That a gazillion chimps could do this is one of those "cocktail party truths" I used to unpack to try to impress girls with thick glasses. I figured girls with thick glasses were smarter, and therefore better suited for survival and reproduction. But as it turns out they're mostly just regular girls who don't see well. The actual smart ones never let me get within a mile.

I stumbled through post-adolescence as a walking study in failed social theories. Darwin would have had fun with me.

But I digress. The "infinite monkey theorem" (cool name, huh?) has been shot in the head pretty thoroughly by real scientists. The odds of chimps typing even one clean limerick are some fraction of a googolplex (a number so big the universe doesn't have enough room for all the zeroes).

Statistically, it approaches never. They wouldn't even come up with "Häagen-Dazs," a nonsensical word invented to sell ice cream by sounding Danish.

So how does a new species suddenly appear? How would I know? They just do. But I have some thoughts as to why, although I can't prove it. Intuitively it comes down to my understanding that God is both a parent (of humanity) and a creator. From there, I extrapolate based on people I know who are also parents and creative. The creative urge in people is hardwired to the creative urge in God.

I would never call the creation process random, because that's not how artists work. That doesn't mean the artist is never surprised by the results. At last count there were 10 quintillion insects alive on Earth (1 with 19 zeros behind it). They represent around a million-and-a-half species, and is only somewhere between 20 and 80 percent of the bugs we think we know about. That's science's way of saying we don't have a clue how many.

I've never thought of God as a control freak, and the insect situation tells my intuition that God is okay with happy accidents.

I think God's loving heart is the blueprint for evolution.

Until Moses, man related to God with burnt offerings. Simple, but kind of hard to know where one stood, grace-wise. At one point, God gets a bellyful of our shenanigans and floods the whole place. After it's over, God has regrets and promises not to do that again.

When Moses came, God put it in writing and we had ten clear laws. The Commandments helped, but it was a hard world and there didn't seem to be a lot of mercy to go around. All these eons, God is learning and growing as a parent. At the same time we are learning and growing as children. Everyone is evolving.

It took Jesus to finally call God "Father." Jesus also popularized the idea of forgiveness. This was huge. Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, Baha'ullah, Zoroaster, and a great many others added pieces to the picture puzzle. We no longer burn people at the stake for saying God is both male and female. Or that men and women are co-equal, or that science and religion are essentially the same. Some are okay with all this; others hate it. But the conversation is happening.

This is evolution of the heart, and I think it is a much more important level of evolution than even bugs and apes.

I also think the environmental world of critters emulates the evolution going on within God's creative soul. Sometimes progress happens in increments and sometimes in big, inexplicable leaps.

Consider your own children. As they grew, didn't you also grow as well? As the parent of a young adult, you are emotionally more evolved than you were when they were in diapers. Their world is more intricate than it was before, and your love became more multifaceted to accommodate that.

I don't think God was born finished. What parent is?

Therefore, I believe God walks a continual road of self-discovery and continues to create, learn and grow as we do. This implies that God is not only deeply attached to us, but that God's happiness desperately requires unrestrained love from human beings to a degree much more deeply-felt and intense than we ever imagined. We're a lot more important to God than we thought.

I get my understanding of this from how my heart reaches out to my own children.

I think we really have no idea how bottomless and ardent is God's longing for us.