

Evolution is Not Science

July 2000 - CSFNM Rebuttal to NMSR Essay

This is Essay1b in a series of debate topics between CSFNM and NMSR.

Something positive: NMSR repetitively refers to the THEORY of evolution. NMSR says, "evolutionary theory explains and makes comprehensible a whole host of phenomena." But does the theory of evolution fit the evidence? Ptolemy augmented Aristotle's geocentric theory of planetary motion with complicated diagrams and mathematical data, giving the geocentric view a pseudo-scientific appearance not based on evidence.

"Evolution" refers to two things. (1) Relatively minor variations or adaptations (e.g., changes in the size of finch beaks or the coloration of peppered moths) - a scientific fact confirmed by observation also called micro-evolution. (2) Extension of adaptive changes such that all creatures could have developed from a common ancestor called macro-evolution. The latter is not a scientific fact confirmed by observation.

NMSR says although evolution "can't be 'repeated' in a laboratory, we can still make reliable inferences about past earth history ..." Methods leading to historic inference can be scientific but historic inference itself does not meet the definition of science. NMSR examples of fingerprints, DNA samples, planetary motion, and atomic particles are observable, testable, and qualify as science. They are not historic inference. DNA reproduction is an example of intelligent design, not mindless evolution.

NMSR says evolution "predicts the similarities of bio-molecules of various species ..." This is an a priori assumption that also applies to intelligent design.

CSFNM agrees with the NMSR definition of science. In addition, a theory must be well defined and restricted so that it can be determined what it is not. The late Nobel Laureate Richard Feynman said science must be in a continual process of falsification.

NMSR says "evolution can be easily falsified in principle" if there was a creature with "no ancestors from which they might have descended." Stephen Jay Gould (Harvard Geology & Paleontology Professor, 1977) says "All paleontologists know that the fossil record contains precious little in the way of intermediate forms; transitions between major groups are characteristically abrupt." A simple way to state these transitions is that they do not exist. All 200 human features formerly labeled as vestigial have been found to have functions (Bergman/Howe PhDs, 1990).

NMSR says "The theory of evolution is a constantly-improving ..." The theory of evolution applied to itself? It takes intelligence to improve a theory.

"Our theory of evolution has become ... one which cannot be refuted by any possible observations. Every conceivable observation can be fitted into it. It is thus 'outside of empirical science' but not necessarily false. No one can think of ways to test it. Ideas, either without basis or based on a few laboratory experiments carried out in extremely simplified systems, have attained currency far beyond

their validity. They have become part of an evolutionary dogma accepted by most of us as part of our training." Paul Ehrlich (Stanford Biology Professor) and L. Charles Birch (Sydney Biology Professor), 1967

The theory of evolution has become a scientific religion that many scientists have accepted and supported by interpreting their observations and ignoring other scientific observations to fit their view.