

“The Case for a Creator”
Session 2: The Case for Intelligent Design
By Rev. Rick Dietzman
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INTRODUCTION

Psalm 19:1-4

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world.

The focus of Lee Strobel's book, *The Case for a Creator* is to argue that intelligent design is the best explanation for our universe.

I. The Evidence of Cosmology

In 1929, astronomer Steven Hubble determined that galaxies beyond our Milky Way were moving away from us. This led to the Big Bang Theory, the idea that the universe had a distinct beginning.

“Whatever begins to exist has a cause” - The kalam cosmological argument

II. The Fine Tuning of the Universe

“Over the past thirty years or so, scientists have discovered that just about everything about the basic structure of the universe is balanced on a razor's edge for life to exist.” Robin Collins

There are more than thirty separate parameters that require precise calibration in order to produce a life sustaining planet.

“The multiple universe argument can be summarized this way: ‘There could have been millions and millions of different universes, each created with different dial settings of the fundamental ratios and consonants, so many in fact that the right set was bound to turn up by sheer chance. We just happen to be the lucky ones.’”
Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers*

III. The Evidence of Biochemistry

DVD segment (7 minutes) – Nature’s Machines

Q: Do you agree with Michael Behe’s assertion that the bacterial flagellum “machine” could not have been assembled by chance?

“Most scientists speculated that the deeper they delved into the cell, the more simplicity they would find. But the opposite happened.” Michael Behe, LeHigh University

DVD segment (3 minutes) – Irreducible Complexity

Q: Do you agree with the conclusion that it is impossible to put an irreducibly complex organism together gradually, and at the same time, maintain its functionality at each successive step?

Charles Darwin wrote in *Origin of Species*, “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.”

The question here is, do new insights in to the complexity of cells and organisms make it harder and harder to accept the idea that things happen by chance.

POST SCRIPT: During our class discussion it was mentioned that since the concept of “Irreducible Complexity” was articulated in a 1996 book by Michael Behe, *Darwin’s Black Box*, many Darwin supporters have said the idea breaks down, and that transitional forms have been found for the evolution of the flagellum. When Lee Strobel interviewed Behe in 2004 for his book, Behe commented “The best Darwinists have been able to muster is to say that the flagellum has components that look like the components of other systems that don’t have as many parts, so maybe somehow this other system had something to do with the flagellum. Nobody knows where this subsystem came from in the first place, or how or why the subsystem may have turned into a flagellum.” (p 206, *The Case for a Creator*). For more on this, read Chapter 8 of the book.

I've read through a selection of critiques, and it seems the most polished argument offered against irreducible complexity is an experiment on e-coli mutation (Kenneth Miller cites the lab work of Barry G. Hall on E. coli, which he asserts is evidence that "Behe is wrong." Note this has nothing to do with the flagellum "machine" directly. See the links below for more on that.) Otherwise, what is offered is the presence of a sub system similar to the flagellum which might mean something (and incidentally which some say evolved hundreds of millions of years *after* the flagellar motility system), and much ado about the parts of the "mousetrap" that might have other functions. (Something which seems irrelevant to me: You can have magnets and wires which serve many functions, but it's quite a leap to assemble them into a rotating motor). Behe is rejected by the scientific community primarily because he seems to put "God in the gaps" and hasn't given enough time for discoveries of transitional forms to fill the gaps.

See "The flagellum unspun" for Miller's critique of "Irreducible complexity"
<http://www.millerandlevine.com/km/evol/design2/article.html>

See "Limited Evolutionary Potential" for an analysis of the e-coli experiment
<http://www.detectingdesign.com/galactosidaseevolution.html>

IV. DNA and the Origin of Life

Q: Can you think of another source, besides intelligence that is capable of producing information?

"Human DNA contains more organized information than the Encyclopedia Britannica. If the full text of the encyclopedia were to arrive in computer code from outer space, most people would regard this a proof of the existence of extraterrestrial intelligence. But when seen in nature, it is explained as the workings of random forces." George Sim Johnson, *Did Darwin Get it Right?*

"The exquisite order displayed by our scientific understanding of the physical world calls for the divine." Vera Kistiakowski, professor of physics MIT

