Intelligent Design Of The Universe Essay, Research Paper

Intelligent Design of the UniverseThe search for knowledge about the origin of humanity is as old as its inhabitants. Since the early1800’s mankind has narrowed the debate to creation by a Supreme Being and the theory ofevolution. Ever since then, science has been at odds against religion. Now it appears that scienceis returning to religion. Scientists are finding proof that the universe was created by a SupremeBeing. The word evolution refers to the change of something over a period of time(Webster’s 634). Inbiology, the theory of evolution is “the complex of processes by which living organisms originatedon earth and have been diversified and modified through sustained changes in form andfunction”(Valentine). This theory proposes that between 4 million and 10 million years ago, allorganisms on earth had a common ancestor and that through a process of evolution, all livingorganisms descended from this common ancestor(Coyne). Chevalier de Lamarck, a French naturalist proposed a theory of evolution in 1809. His idea didnot get much scientific consideration until Charles R. Darwin announced his theory ofevolution(Coyne). Darwin published “his most famous book, On the Origin of Species by Meansof Natural Selection”(Valentine) in 1859. Darwin stated that offspring resemble their parents, yetthey are not exactly identical to them. He also noted that some of these differences were noteffects of their environment, but actually were passed down from parents to children(Valentine). Darwin is the most well known scientist to write on evolution. There are many different variations on the theory of evolution. Darwin states that natural selectionis the main reason for the evolution of life. The fight for food, water and other necessities benefitsthose creatures who are well adapted for the struggle. Those that cannot survive, die with nooffspring to continue their genetic line. Natural selection is also called survival of the fittest. Anotherrelated idea to evolution is gradualism. “Gradualism is the idea that evolutionary changes do notoccur suddenly but over large amounts of time, ranging from decades to millions of years”(Coyne). Genetic drift is another way that scientists define evolution. When two of a species mate, theiroffspring gets 23 chromosomes from both parents. When a gene does not split and combinecorrectly, a mutation occurs. This mutation will get passed down from the creature to its offspring. In this way a species can permanently be changed(Coyne). Scientists who have accepted thegeneral theory of evolution as fact disagree among themselves about the ratio of importancebetween natural selection and genetic drift. They also disagree about what caused the apparentgaps in fossil layers. New species “abruptly”(Valentine) appear in the fossil record with noapparent mutation from another species, then remain unchanged for long periods of time. They donot seem to exhibit the gradual changes that would be expected by modernevolutionists(Valentine).Many people, including those in the scientific community, do not accept the theory of evolution asfact. When Darwin was alive, his theory was attacked by many scientists and religiousleaders(Coyne). In the 1900’s, United States public high schools began teaching evolution inscience classes. By the 1920’s, laws in twenty states to ban the teaching of evolution in publicschools had been proposed by people who did not want their children being indoctrinated. “Theyconsidered the teaching of the theory to be part of a dangerous trend toward the separation ofreligious beliefs from everyday life”(Coyne). Several of the proposed laws were passed into effectin states including Arkansas and Tennessee. “The ACLU challenged the Tennessee law in 1925 bydefending a teacher named John T. Scopes, who had volunteered to stand trial on the charge ofteaching evolution”(Coyne). The ACLU lost the case but because of bad press, creationistsappeared ignorant to science. However, in 1968 the Supreme Court of the United States “ruledthat laws banning the teaching of evolution were unconstitutional because they made religiousconsiderations part of the curriculum”(Coyne). The courts continue to give rulings on creation andevolution in schools, some have come as recently as 1987(Coyne). The fight to keep evolution outof the classroom is still persevering. Those who are pushing to keep evolution out of the public schools are primarily creationists. Creation is the belief that a Supreme Being created the universe and all its contents fromnothing(Vawter). Many different people have believed different stories of how and why this wasaccomplished. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are a few of the major faiths that teach Creation. There are many differences in what different people believe. Many Jews and Christians with aliteral interpretation of the Bible or the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, believe thatGod created the universe and all that is in it in six 24 hour days. They believe that each species onearth has remained relatively the same since the Creation. These people “base their beliefs on theBible”(Eve) and some use fossil evidence of long consistencies and abrupt changes(Valentine). Others believe that God created everything, but not in six days. Still others believe that Godcreated the universe by lighting the fuse: the big bang was God’s way of creating the universe. Many people have gone in search for proof that the universe was created by a Supreme Being. The case for Intelligent Design was argued by Reverend William Paley of Carlisle, England in his1802 book Natural Theology. Take, for instance, a rock and a watch. How old are the twoobjects? The rock has “remained more or less the same perhaps since the earth wasformed”(Miller 24). The watch is different because of the intricate gears, springs and parts. It wasproduced with a specific design and knowledge of the watchmaker, and watchmakers have notbeen around forever. Paley knew “there cannot be design without a designer; contrivance withouta contriver…. The marks of design are too strong to be got over. Design must have had a designer. That designer must have been a person. That person is God”(Miller). Paley’s examples areunderstandable examples that form “a line of reasoning known as the ‘argument fromdesign’”(Miller). Even some evolutionists have come to realize that humanity is not an accident, even if they disagreewith the six, 24 hour days belief. The Anthropic Principle is based on so called “technicalobservations about the evolution of the universe since the Big Bang”(Glynn 28). This principle has

concluded that not only was the creation of the universe not an accident, but “the existence ofhuman life is something for which the entire universe appears to have been intricately fine-tunedfrom the start”(28). This principle is based on universal constants such as Planck’s constant and thegravitational constant. It started out as a list of coincidences, but as the list grew the more itappeared as if the universe had been designed for humanity to exist(29). The second law of thermodynamics has been extensively studied by scientists and people asanother proof of creation. The second law of thermodynamics can be stated:”The thermodynamic principle which governs the behavior of systems is that, as they aremoved away from equilibrium, they will utilize all avenues available to counter the appliedgradients. As the applied gradients increase, so does the system’s ability to oppose furthermovement from equilibrium”(Schneider 30). In every system, the entropy, or disorder, will increase, not decrease. This is one of a number ofdifferent analogies to simplify this law. There is a box with ten equal compartments. Ten thousandmarbles are released into one compartment. If the box is randomly shaken, it is expected that themarbles would pass through the open doors in each compartment and there would beapproximately 1000 marbles in each compartment. It is highly improbable, yet not impossible thatif the box continued to be shaken randomly, that all the marbles would go back into the samecompartment they started in(28). The second law of thermodynamics is an excellent argument for creation. Creationists stand in”awe of the perfection of the earth… If it were a little farther away from the sun the entire planetwould be one gigantic Antarctica; if it were a little closer, it would be one continuous SaharaDesert. Earth’s placement is precise; and that, my friends, is not a result of chance”(Limbaugh154). There are infinite numbers of variables. If one were changed just slightly, like the distancefrom the sun, Earth would be unhabitable and humans would not exist. This preciseness leadsthese people to use the second law of thermodynamics as an argument. An ordered world likeEarth could not exist in a universe that was created by an explosion. Humanity itself is a good example for creation. The differences between other animals in natureand humans are vast. However, many evolutionists claim that we are animals ourselves. JonathanSwift shows the absurdity of this comparison in the fourth book of Gulliver’s Travels. Guliver isliving between two extremes: the reason based Houyhnhms and the savage Yahoos. Gulliver triesso hard to fit in with the Houyhnhms, or horses. They “conclude that Gulliver ‘must be a perfectYahoo’”(Suits 116), yet Gulliver believes that he is more Houyhnhm. This struggle can representthe origin struggle.The evolutionists say that humans were once like the Yahoos, but by saying that humanity evolvedbecause of an haphazard accident, they are claiming that humans are now the superior being in theuniverse. They claim we are like the Houyhnhms(Sagan). Humans are not like that. TheHouyhnhms are divorced of passion. “They have no shame, no temptations, no conception ofsin”(Williams 62). Marriage is “‘one of the necessary actions in a reasonable being’”(63). Thesedefinitely do not identify humanity. Gulliver “understands none of this”(72). Humans have the abilityto use reason and humans have certain inherent desires that cannot be reasonably explained: love,marriage, and a sense of right and wrong. Still the debate continues. It seems “the double standard at work here is breathtaking”(Glynn 32). Scientists who believe in evolution are free to use detailed accounts of what happened 4 billionyears ago and base it on Darwin(Sagan). “But the moment scientists begin marshalling ratherconsiderable and persuasive evidence for the opposite case, their speculation risks being brandedby colleagues as ‘unscientific’”(Glynn 32). This parallels the third book of Gulliver’s Travels. Theways of the respected Laputan people were very precise, according to Gulliver. All their wise menreject what seems obviously the best way preform a task(Williams 49). Member of the Academyare seen trying to weave with spider web and make ice into gunpowder(Swift 196). Such acts ofstupidity are Swift’s attack on the Royal Society of England in Swift’s time; however the applyperfectly to many of the scientists who reject what they do not want to see. The argument about the origin of the universe will definitely continue. There will be those whoargue both sides until this world comes to its end. To what extent people believe the Biblicalteachings or what some scientists teach is a personal decision. Darwin concluded his book:”There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originallybreathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gonecycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless formsmost beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved”(Miller 32). The more science seems to dig and research about the origins of humanity, the less likely it is thatEarth and all the creatures on it were an accident. All the precision, consistency and detail point toan universal architect, a Supreme Being, God. Bibliography(please disreguard my mess for now)Coyne, Jerry A. “Evolution.” World Book. CD-ROMEve, Raymond A. “Creationism” World Book. CD-ROMGlynn, Patrick. “Beyond The Death of God.” National Review May 6,1996:28-32. Limbaugh, Rush. The Way Things Ought to Be. 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