

Dawkins' weasel

I just received my first issue of my first *TJ* subscription (volume 15(2)) and was interested to note that it contains two creationist critiques of Richard Dawkins's 'weasel' computer program: a paper by Bergman and correspondence by Truman. Dawkins described his computer analogy in order to contrast the idea of random selection that creationists have advanced (for the purpose of demolishing it) with a multi-step selection model that more closely resembles the ideas of evolution. In this issue of *TJ*, both critics point out reasons why they feel that Dawkins' computer analogy does not provide valid support for evolution.

Your readers might be interested in an alternative analogy that, I feel, models the principles of random mutation and selection rather more convincingly than Dawkins' 'weasel' program, and that avoids some of the weaknesses that 'weasel' critics have pounced on. In particular, this alternative model involves a real biological phenomenon fully supported by experimental evidence, and there is no 'target sequence' selected in advance. The phenomenon I refer to is the 'affinity maturation' of antibodies in which somatic mutation and selection of antibody genes lead to improvements in the function of our immune responses. I have described how this happens in a Web essay. I don't claim that this antibody analogy 'proves evolution', but I think it does argue strongly against the creationist claim that random mutation and selection cannot bring about functional improvements in protein structure.

Edward E. Max
Bethesda, Maryland
UNITED STATES of AMERICA

[Max's ideas and a thorough rebuttal are available at <www.trueorigin.org/spetner1.asp>].

Geocentrism

Danny Faulkner's 'Geocentrism and Creation'¹ purportedly counters

my book, *Geocentricity*.² Although the article is lengthy, it is shallow and often misrepresents geocentricity, geocentrists, the history of the Copernican Revolution, its evidences, and the authority of Scripture. It fails to deal with any of the hard issues, viz. the stance of the Scripture and that of modern science on the matter and the scientific arguments pro and con, but prefers to launch into *ad hominem* arguments, lifting quotes out of context, and misrepresenting the modern geocentric case.³ All three areas of the geocentric arguments, namely, historical, scriptural, and scientific, received a short shrift.

Historical arguments

Faulkner seems ignorant of the true nature of Copernicus's model. It was not centered on the Sun but on the center of the Earth's orbit, making it more complicated for Earth-based calculations than was the original Ptolemaic model. By criticizing *geocentrism*, born of the notion of the crystalline spheres and simplified in the Ptolemaic model, and by dismissing without definition *geocentricity*, Faulkner sets up a straw man, easily demolished. In *Geocentricity*, the same model that Faulkner demolishes is also demolished. Those interested in the distinction between geocentricity and geocentrism, and the definition of heliocentrism (none of the words are in the dictionary), are referred to *Geocentricity*.²

Scriptural arguments

The only reason I'm a geocentrist is because the Scripture demands it. It is nice that science happens to support that position. Faulkner spends his efforts on peripheral scriptures, admitted to be such in *Geocentricity*. Here are the hard scriptures.

If Genesis 1:1, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth' is a clear statement of creationism, then isn't Ecclesiastes 1:5, 'The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose' an equally clear statement of the immobility of the Earth? And what of Joshua 10:13?

'And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, ... So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.'

The Sun is said to stand still. God could have said 'And the Earth stopped turning so that the Sun appeared to stand still', but he didn't. If the inspiring Spirit glossed over the heliocentric truth, how is it the Spirit of truth? Isn't God's creative power such that his very speaking 'the sun stood still' would instantly transform the acentric cosmos unto geocentric? Bible scholars argue that God cannot lie because if he ever did, then the 'lie' would immediately come to pass and no longer be a lie. This, because God spoke the universe into being when it was not. To be consistent, shouldn't those that reject the geocentric model also reject the creationist model?

Or consider Malachi 4:2?

'But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.'

Here the Sun, as a type of Jesus, is said to arise, clearly referring to the resurrection. How, then, can a believer insist that the word 'arise' is literal truth when referring to the resurrection here, yet at the same time insist that it is not literal truth when applied to the Sun in this same verse? And if the heliocentric model is true, then no one before Copernicus could possibly have guessed the 'heliocentric truth.' What else will science 'reveal' that is currently misunderstood by Bible believers: evolution?

Scientific arguments

Faulkner barely touches on the scientific issues although those take up a third of Bouw's *Geocentricity*. Most of those he does touch are rather historic than scientific, such as his insistence that the phases of Venus disprove geocentricity once and for all.

Introductory texts present the heliocentrism as a proven fact, just as they do evolution, but more advanced texts admit that the geocentric model is just