

Exploring the shift in worldview post-Darwin's theory

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Darwin's theory of evolution caused a shift in how people perceived the world, and tried to understand their surroundings. Slack, in his book 'The Battle over the Meaning of Everything', writes "what [the dover trials were] really about was neither evolution nor ID, but the worldviews they enabled" (Slack, 39-40). Slack points out something very important and fundamental idea that Darwin's theory revolutionized the way individuals thought about the world, their worldview, and was not just a theory that needed to be applied. It dramatically shifted people's view of different fields, different concepts and introduced new ideas to fields that it wouldn't directly be applicable to.

Talk about defining and explaining Darwin's theory that could cause revolutions, and how it could create shifts in understanding.

Different ways of defining, and understanding the theory. It leaves it more open-ended and open for people to interpret and adapt to their own understanding of the world.

Moreover, another interesting observation is that many individuals have different views of definitions of natural selection or the theory of evolution. This is interesting to observe as it depicts the different ways

Pagel, in his book 'Wired for Culture: Origins of the Human Social Mind', writes "Natural selection does not maximize happiness or even well-being, but rather long-term reproductive success" (Pagel, 24).

Dawkins, in his book 'The Selfish Gene', "[although] evolution may seem, in some

vague sense, ‘good thing’, especially since we are a product of it, nothing actually ‘wants’ to evolve. Evolution is something that happens, willy-nilly, in spite of all the effort of the replicators (and nowadays of the genes) to prevent it happening” (Dawkins, 19).

“Man selects only for his own good: Nature only for that of the being which she tends.”
(Darwin, Origin)

Talk about how people applied their understanding/thoughts before Darwin’s theories

Talk about people’s thoughts and representations after his theory came out.

Pagel looks at how languages evolve by applying the biological evolution and nature selection theory as a template.

“Evolution, he said, permits a relativistic, purposeless, Godless view of the world, in which self-aggrandizement and pleasure are sufficient ends in themselves, and the only objective measure of goodness is reproductive fitness.” (Slack, 40-41)

“Our invention of culture around that time created an entirely new sphere of evolving entities. Humans had acquired the ability to learn from others, and to copy, imitate and improve upon their actions” (Pagel, 2).

“Our cultural survival vehicles were built not from coalitions of genes but from coalitions of ideas roped together by cultural evolution” (Page, 46).

References

- [1] Darwin, Charles, and W. F. Bynum. *On the Origin of Species: By Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life*. London: Penguin Classics, 2009. Print.
- [2] Pagel, Mark D. *Wired for Culture: Origins of the Human Social Mind*. N.p.: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013. Kindle Edition.

- [3] Slack, Gordy. *The Battle over the Meaning of Everything: Evolution, Intelligent Design, and a School Board in Dover, PA*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007. Kindle Edition.
- [4] Dawkins, Richard. *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford; New York: Oxford UP, 2006. Print.