Evolutionary Theory

Name

Institution

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Non-scientists do not comprehend the word theory in letter and spirit. Non-scientists are unable to understand the difference between theory and hypothesis. A theory is not a hypothesis. A theory is the most accurate, most complete, best kind of knowledge that humans have yet created. The subject of theory, like gravity or evolution, is a fact. A very, very strong fact, and as you dig down, not a single fact but a collection of facts. A theory takes into account every known fact on that subject, every point-observation made and recorded. It creates a model of that subject that consistently explains or accepts all of these facts. And that model can be used to make predictions about facts we don’t yet know. And when new facts are discovered, they are measured against these models. Maybe the models explain the facts, maybe they don’t and need to be improved. The work of Science is doing all of these things.

Science is more beautiful and exciting than any mythology ever could be. Mythologies are by their very nature static, unchanging, and thus, dead. There are over 5,000 different gods that were at some point worshipped by humanity, and many of them come up with their own creation myths. The creation of the world and all of its creatures today, though most of them are long forgotten, known only to Archeologists. If they all ceased to exist today, they might as well be replaced, but with 5,000 different mythologies. The scientific evidence supports the idea that life exhibits a pattern of descent with modification that scientists call “evolution.” The evidence also supports the origin of life from non-living molecules by a natural process which we call “abiogenesis.”

According to scientists, there is not even a shred of credible evidence that contradicts the theory of evolution (variation of life over times via the process of Natural Selection). However, there are still questions to answer and records to complete, but there is nothing going in Science that will change the notion that Darwinian Evolution accurately describes the process by which life evolved on Earth. Since the publication of The Origin of Species, the amount of scientific evidence, from myriad scientific disciplines, that supports the notion that descent with modification, moderated via the process of natural selection, is so completely overwhelming that no theory in all of science, is more supported or better substantiated.

As long as people are suffering because of the various cruelties of the world, the gap between scientist and non-scientists’ view can never be abridged. There will always be frustration and anger. Some people will blame their state on religious beliefs, many of which can definitely instigate terrible behavior. Others will blame “godless” science and reason, which do destabilize cherished ideas without offering new mythic narratives. So, perhaps the debate between scientists and non-scientist on evolutionary theory can only end (or at the very least, become less heated) when there is no reason to play the blame game anymore and people feel both materially and psychologically secure and stable (Bensaude-Vincent, 2001). Perhaps, science and religion will someday learn to cooperate with each other (without diluting their strengths in any way), in order to achieve this goal. A more wholesome society would have the rationality and technical know-how of a successful scientific community, but also the social solidarity and warmth of a good religious community. Achieving this kind of society is the real problem of mind and matter.

As a consequence of the failure to communicate such essential concepts, people would go around calling evolutionary theory a “faith” then you are bound to elicit a strong response. The theory of evolution by natural selection is not a faith, it’s a scientific theory strongly supported by evidence. It is the only credibly rational model for the emergence of species. Non-scientists, who hold religious ideas will face issues with the natural subjectivity of our cognitive equipment that people who hold scientific ideas don’t possess (Reiss, 2005). This means that in discussing ideas that utilize different aspects of the brain (the intuitive approach of religion and the deductive approach of science), people will always tend to project their un-faced doubts about the validity onto the other person.

**References**

Bensaude-Vincent, B. (2001). A genealogy of the increasing gap between science and the public. *Public Understanding of Science*, *10*(1), 99–113.

Reiss, S. (2005). Human individuality and the gap between science and religion. *Zygon®*, *40*(1), 131–142.