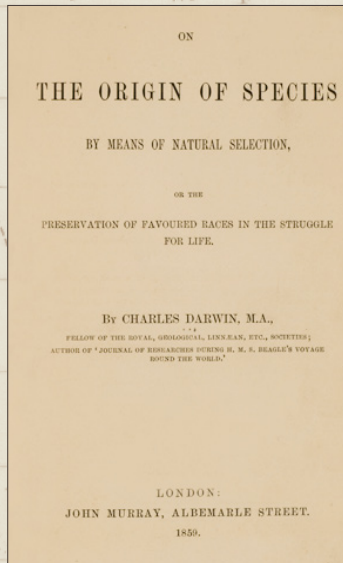


FINISHED PROOFS?

A SYMPOSIUM TO CELEBRATE THE 150th ANNIVERSARY
of the PUBLICATION OF *ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES* (1859)



1 October 2009

9:00 AM – 6:15 PM

Lister Hill Auditorium,

National Library of Medicine,

National Institutes of Health

8600 Rockville Pike, Bldg. 38A,

Bethesda, MD



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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Organized by the History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine and the Office of History, National Institutes of Health.

On 1 October 1859 Charles Darwin wrote in his diary “finished proofs.” The proofs he referred to were those of *On the Origin of Species*, which appeared in print the following month, a landmark in the history of science.

Darwin may have finished the page proofs, but the process of persuading scientists and the public about evolution had just begun. Darwin pieced together evidence for his theory of natural selection from many sources, including studies of domestic breeding, anatomical similarities among species (“homology”), embryology, the sequential order of fossils, and the presence of vestigial organs. But whether this evidence constituted “proof” of evolution was questioned at the time, and it remains unsettled today, in part because of changes in science, in part because of broader cultural and religious concerns about evolution. The “proofs” were far from finished in 1859.

This symposium brings together leading historians, philosophers, and scientists to explore changing understandings of Darwinian theory in the last 150 years. It has two general aims. First, it seeks to trace the different ways in which evolution has been understood in this period, and how these ways of understanding relate to the changing basis of scientific evidence on evolution. Second, it seeks to explain why scientific “proofs” of Darwinian evolution have been unpersuasive to many individuals, including those who promote creationism and intelligent design. Their perspectives on evolution have raised important questions about the nature of the evidence in favor of evolution, and the relationship between proof and belief. Put another way, a focus on Darwin’s critics and supporters can illuminate the many different ways in which “proof” has been understood in the last 150 years.

Location: Lister Hill Auditorium, National Library of Medicine (NIH)
8600 Rockville Pike, Bldg. 38A
Bethesda, MD

Date: 1 October 2009

Time: 9:00am – 6:15pm

A B C D E F G H I K L

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PROGRAM

8:30am-9:00am

Coffee

9:00am -9:15am

WELCOMES

Donald A.B. Lindberg, Director, National Library of Medicine
Elizabeth Fee, Chief, History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine
Robert Martensen, Director, Office of History, National Institutes of Health

PRESENTATIONS

9:15am-10:15am

Celebrating Darwin in 2009

Janet Browne, Aramont Professor of the History of Science, Harvard University

10:15am-11:15am

Is Darwinism Past Its 'Sell-by' Date?

Michael Ruse, Lucyle T. Werkmeister Professor of Philosophy, Florida State University

11:15am-11:45am

Break

11:45am-12:45pm

Evolution in America: A Short History of the First 150 Years

Barry Werth, Author of *Banquet at Delmonico's: Great Minds, the Gilded Age, and the Triumph of Evolution in America*

12:45pm-1:45pm

Lunch

1:45pm-2:45pm

Comparative Genome Sequencing: Using Evolution to Decode the Human Genome

Eric Green, Scientific Director, National Human Genome Research Institute

2:45pm-3:45pm

Biodiversity and the Future of Life

Edward O. Wilson, University Research Professor, Emeritus, Harvard University

3:45pm-4:15pm

Break

4:15pm-6:15pm

COMMENTARY AND GENERAL DISCUSSION

Commentators:

Maxine Singer, Carnegie Institution for Science

Joe Palca, Science Correspondent, National Public Radio

Nathaniel Comfort, Associate Professor, Department of the History of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University

Alan E. Guttmacher, Acting Director, National Human Genome Research Institute

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HOW THE MEETING WILL WORK:

- *Presentations:* Each presenter has 40 minutes for his or her presentation, after which there will be a brief period of up to 20 minutes for questions and discussion.
- *Commentary and General Discussion:* Each commentator has 10 minutes for his or her comments on the presentations. Presenters will be offered an opportunity to respond, after which the chair will open the discussion to the audience.

DIRECTIONS, SECURITY, AND OTHER INFORMATION:

Sign language interpretation will be provided. Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodation to participate may contact Ba Ba Chang at (301-496-5405), e-mail changb@mail.nih.gov, or the Federal Relay (1-800-877-8339).

Directions, maps, security, parking, etc.: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/about/visitor.html>

Organizer: David Cantor
Deputy Director
Office of History
National Institutes of Health

