

# Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion*—a Review-Essay

By Theodore D. Hall, Ph.D.

In recent years, I have said certain unkind things about Richard Dawkins, such as “Dawkins is an affable and bright neo-Darwinist who has seen so little of real scientific value because he has stood on the shoulders of pygmies.” Also, I have called Dawkins a “sophist,” a sophist being an intellectual who creates elaborate arguments in support of propositions or theories that are simply not correct.

*The God Delusion* has opened my eyes to an aspect of Dawkins I hadn't seen before: He is a very decent man. I like that in him. I respect it greatly. Nevertheless ... I have had to conclude that the argument in the *Delusion* book is, alas, sophistical.

Richard Dawkins is, and has been since 1995, the Charles Simonyi Professor of the Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University. Could a scientist so honored, so prolific, so respected, so bedazzling, possibly be a sophist?

*Yes.* Years ago, I came to the rather startling conclusion that Professor Dawkins is a sophist in the course of reading his well-known book *The Selfish Gene*. “Like successful Chicago gangsters,” he writes, “our genes have survived, in some cases for millions of years, in a highly competitive world. This entitles us to expect certain qualities in the genes. I shall argue that a predominant quality to be expected in a successful gene is ruthless selfishness....”

This is baseless conjecture, absurdity reminiscent of those marvelous “Beyond the Fringe” monologues of years gone by. The genes are simply patterns for organismal parts. The genome is definitely not an Al Capone-type bunker; it is merely the New Parts Blueprints Department of the cell.

Dawkins' comparison of the genes to gangsters is an extension to absurdity of a long-revered doctrine in neo-Darwinism called the “Primacy of the DNA.” This doctrine presumes that all organismal behavior, including consciousness, is a product of the DNA. The doctrine is wrong.

In fact, the DNA is third, not first, in the creational assembly line. Primacy belongs to the environment. The DNA is activated by environment signals (step 1), these signals are mediated by the receptor/effector network embedded in the cellular membrane (step 2), and the product of that mediation then activates the genes. The “brain” of the cell, as Dr. Bruce H. Lipton has demonstrated, beyond any doubt, is in the cellular membrane. It is not, as Darwinists suppose, in the genome.

It was very difficult for me to believe that a man as bright as Dawkins didn't know what I, a mere biology watcher, knew. I had to conclude that he was, quite intentionally, a sophist. No other choice. *The God Delusion* suggests clearly the big *why* behind Dawkins' sophisticated mission: Our affable Professor of the Public Understanding of Science is out to fulfill the prophecy of Thomas H. Huxley, Darwin's famous "bulldog," that Science would one day (the sooner the better) put its foot on the neck of Theology.

### **Dawkins & Hawkins**

My favorite sentence in *The God Delusion* is that which starts the second chapter: "The God the Old Testament is arguable the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak, a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully...." Right on, Richard! Any who think that professor Dawkins is not correct in his assessment of the god called Jehovah, should open the Holy Bible and read the book of *Joshua*. In this book of horrors, Jehovah orders his "chosen people" (bad luck for them) to murder every man, woman and child in ancient Palestine—and to kill all the livestock as well. What the goats and sheep had done to offend the great Jehovah I can't imagine. The war thus engendered is still going on!--and now threatens to engulf the entire world in World War III.

Clearly, at least clearly in my view, the mission of the Christ was to dethrone, in the minds of men, the God of Terror and to coronate the God of Love as the true supreme being.

Dawkins is to be congratulated for his clear-eyed assessment of the god (a negative ET?) called Jehovah and for his grand multi-adjectival condemnation of the same. Further, Dawkins is to be congratulated for knocking theology around a bit. However, the scientist who really succeeded in stepping on its neck (orthodox Christian theology) is the brilliant David R. Hawkins, M.D., Ph.D., master of kinesthesiology.

Kinesthesiology, as practiced by Hawkins, is the science of accessing the collective consciousness. For complete information, consult Hawkins' pioneering book *Power Vs Force*.

"The level of truth originally espoused by Jesus Christ," Hawkins writes, "calibrates at 1,000—the highest level attainable on this plane. By the second century, the level of truth of this practice of his teaching had dropped to 930, and by the sixth century, to 540. By the time of the Crusades, at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, it had fallen to its current 498...."

Hawkins identifies the most precipitous decline in Christianity as having occurred in 325 AD, "apparently due to spread of misinterpretations of the [Christ] teachings originating from the Council of Nicaea."

“Christianity’s fall from a calibrated 930 to 498,” Hawkins writes, “must be recognized as the greatest single catastrophe in the history of Western religion. Here we can see the origin of the spiritual divorce from the actual teachings of Jesus Christ that allowed the later atrocities of the Crusades and the Inquisition....”

### **The “God Hypothesis”**

Alas, most Christians suffer the delusion that Jehovah is synonymous with the supreme being. Dawkins goes far beyond attacking this delusion, however; he denounces *all* conceptualizations of God.

One of the sophist’s standard tools-of-the-trade is the “straw man.” A straw man is an unsubstantial representation of that which the sophist wishes to attack. Naturally, the sophist has little difficulty, if any, in knocking down the straw man. In his chapter titled “Arguments For God’s Existence,” Dawkins sets up a number of straw men, then wittily knocks them down.

Among these straw men is “The Argument From Personal Experience.” A very few examples of such experience are offered, all of which are dismissed as hallucinations—products of the mind’s “simulation software.” Conspicuously absent from the discussion are accounts of those who encountered God in near-death experience (NDE). One of the best-documented NDE cases involving an encounter with the Creator is that of a scientist by the name of Mellen-Thomas Benedict. In 1982, after suffering from a terminal illness, Mellen-Thomas died for an hour and a half. Miraculously, he returned to his body with a complete remission of the disease—after an encounter with the “Universal Intelligence.” (See <http://www.mellen-thomas.com>)

Another scientist who experienced “God” is the above-cited David Hawkins. “As my final moment [of life] approached,” Hawkins writes in *Power Vs Force*, “the thought flashed through my mind, *what if there is a God?* So I called out in prayer, ‘If there is a God, I ask Him to help me now.’ I surrendered to whatever God there might be, and went unconscious. When I awoke, a transformation of such enormity had taken place that I was struck dumb with awe.... The world was illumined by the clarity of an Infinite Oneness, which expressed itself as all things revealed in their immeasurable beauty and perfection.”

For a scientist sincerely interested in exploring the “God hypothesis,” accounts such as those offered by Benedict and Hawkins would have to be taken into consideration. Alas, Dawkins utterly ignores the testimonies of those who have undergone NDE.

### **Naughty Richard**

Dawkins’ list of scientists who believe in God is very, very short. No mention is made of Max Planck, the father of quantum physics, who has said, “All matter originates

and exists only by virtue of a force. We must assume behind this force is the existence of a conscious and intelligent Mind. This Mind is the matrix of all matter.”

Further, no mention is made of the fact that Alfred Russel Wallace, the co-founder of Richard’s favorite doctrine (natural selection), came in time to the belief that the universe must be governed by a “great Mind.” Indeed, naughty Richard quotes, without correction, the incorrect opinion of physicist Leonard Susskind, who states, “Modern cosmology really began with Darwin and Wallace. Unlike anyone before them, they provided explanations of our existence that completely rejected supernatural agents....”

For the record: Readers of Darwin’s tomes will find the old guy sometimes invokes a “sublime Creator.” This sublime Creator couldn’t possibly be a *supernatural agent*, right? What’s more, Darwin celebrates, in his book on the voyage of the Beagle, the spread of British-style Christianity throughout the South Pacific. A curious thing for a non-believer to do.

Dawkins’ claim that the doctrine of natural selection replaces, quite satisfactorily, traditional belief in supernatural governance, is nonsense. The first to make this claim was the bulldog, Thomas Huxley. The Darwin-Wallace theory, as Darwinism was first called, took a turn down *Strictly Materialistic Street*, and this was due to the fact that Huxley was driving the movement.

### **The Most Curious Thing**

The most curious thing that I found in *The God Delusion* is the author’s invocation of Darwin’s original (1859) representation of natural selection. “Unrelentingly and unceasingly,’ as Darwin explained, ‘natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world, every variation, even the slightest; rejecting that which is bad, preserving and adding up all that is good; silently and insensibly working, whenever opportunity affords, at the improvement of each organic being.’...”

Mr. Huxley had a problem with Darwin’s conceptualization, which is, obviously, an anthropomorphic substitute for the anthropomorphic divine presence (“His eye is on the sparrow”); and in his own, widely read, accounts of Darwinism, he speaks of natural selection as merely *circumstantial selection* (the same wind that blows one fledgling out of the nest merely ruffles the feathers of another).

Darwin himself abandoned his original conceptualization of natural selection, saying that “survival of the fittest” was a better term for what he meant. Dr. Ernst Mayr, the great authority on Darwinism in the modern period, stated, flatly, “Darwin was wrong” about natural selection. Natural selection, Mayr says, means merely “elimination of the weakest.”

So why is Dawkins validating a conceptualization that is considered by all the other Darwinists to be wrong? Is he saying something he does not actually believe in order to win votes for his thesis that the doctrine of natural selection is the greatest consciousness-

raising crane ever invented? If so, Dawkins is not just a sophist, but the *ultimate* sophist! Or has Dawkins experience a divine guidance moment that has allowed him to see that the original conceptualization of natural selection was, in fact, correct? If so, then we must welcome Richard to the post-Darwinism evolutionary science movement.

### **All Considered**

All considered, *The God Delusion* is an extended polemical exercise well worth a read. I especially like Dawkins' discourse on the anti-religion sentiments of Thomas Jefferson and other founders of our *secular* (thank God) American system of government. As an argument against religion, the book succeeds to some extent; but as an argument against the God hypothesis, the book fails—utterly.

Concerning that hypothesis, what I would like to say is this: The universality of belief in a Creator indicates that the belief is archetypal. What are archetypes? Primary template formulations existing at the interface between the etheric (implicate order) and the physical (explicate order). Unlike Benedict or Hawkins, I have not experienced the etheric Source of the God archetype. Nevertheless, as a result of study of NDE accounts and of the pioneering research into the “afterlife” conducted by the late Robert Monroe and his associates at the Monroe Institute, I am quite certain that the etheric Source is not malignant. Quite the opposite.

Malignancies associated with the God archetype (e.g., the Inquisition) are, to invoke a sentiment expressed in one of my favorite popular songs, “our own damned fault.” They are the product of human negative thinking. Historically, human consciousness is, as one of my mentors has said, “an embarrassment to the Supreme Being.”