

Can Darwinism Explain New Life Forms?

Edited excerpts from Stephen Meyer's book *Darwin's Doubt*

Dr. Stephen Meyer's book *Darwin's Doubt* demonstrates the improbability of the emergence of new life forms through Darwinian evolution. The book documents some of the work done by Douglas Axe whose mutagenesis experiments highlight the problem for Darwinists.

Proteins are made of particular amino acid chains. These proteins are the building blocks of all physical life. If there are 20 possible amino acids to work with, the number of possible amino acid combination sequences for a modest-length protein of 150 sites (amino acid residues) is 20 to the 150th power which is 1 in 10 to 195th power.

Then it was asked, what is the ratio of functional sequences to all possible sequences? This would establish the probability of random amino acids forming stable, properly-folded functional proteins. The experiments showed that the sequence and the fold were critical to function. The number of functional folds turned out to be only 1 in 10 to the 77th power. In other words, a functional protein by random sequence changes was extremely rare, even for a short protein. Random changes almost always destroyed function.

But could the opportunity for this rarity over the history of life be enough to make its occurrence not so rare? Axe used bacteria, the most common organism and its many generations, plus all other life, estimated over 3.8 billion years, assuming every organism produced a mutation (a different sequence). The number of trials for Darwinian evolution was hereby estimated to be 10 to the 40th. That divided by the number of possible sequences (10 to the 77th) gives a 1 in 10 to the 37th probability of generating a gene sequence capable of producing a novel protein fold and function over the entire history of life.

Remember, something is probable at greater than 1 in 2 (or 50%). So 1 divided by a 1 with 37 zeros is virtually or practically impossible. So Axe concluded that the Neo-Darwinian mechanism (i.e., natural selection operating on random genetic mutations) cannot explain the creation of new genetic information and proteins necessary for new life forms. A new gene arising by Darwinism is vastly more probable to be false than true.

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If this gene reproduction is by *existing* gene mutation, natural selection destroys the non-functioning intermediates and thus will not be preserved. So this is a dead-end for Darwinists. So maybe gene reproduction from *nonfunctional* or *neutral* regions of the genome could freely mutate without deleterious consequences to the organisms' survival. But without natural selection's "guiding hand", the Darwinist is stuck with depending solely on the accidental stumbling upon the right sequences, which is infinitesimally small (1 in 10 to the 37th power).

Without design, not only would the chance of first life be negligible, but also new life forms as well. This is what Charles Darwin was concerned about in what is called the Cambrian Explosion--which over time has only become a bigger problem for Darwinists. This edited excerpt is just a taste of Meyer's work which shows intelligent design to be a much better explanation for the history of life than the random, unguided forces of Darwinism.

Here is a write-up Frank Turek did on Meyer's book: [Frank Turek - Darwin's Doubt](#)