
The Case for a Creator

Contributed by Gene Herr

It has been the popular belief for decades that science and Christianity are light years apart. However, as our knowledge of cosmology, astronomy, physics, biochemistry, and DNA has continued to grow, this supposed gap has all but disappeared. Lee Strobel, award-winning journalist and former atheist, explores these and many other compelling evidences in his latest book, *The Case for a Creator*. In this article we will discuss just a handful of these evidences, as presented in his book, and find out how “science itself is steadily nailing the lid on atheism’s coffin.”^{1} Let’s begin with the argument from cosmology.

Cosmology

Cosmology is the study of the origin of the universe. In investigating this field of study, Lee Strobel interviews philosopher and theologian, Dr. William Lane Craig. Craig describes in great detail what he calls “one of the most plausible arguments for God’s existence, the Kalam cosmological argument.”^{2} This argument has three simple steps: Whatever begins to exist has a cause. The universe began to exist. Therefore, the universe has a cause.

Craig then explains that when he first began to defend the Kalam argument he anticipated that the first step of the argument, whatever begins to exist has a cause, would be almost universally accepted. It was the second point, the universe began to exist, which he believed would be more controversial. However, so much evidence has accumulated, Craig explained, “that atheists are finding it difficult to deny that the universe had a beginning. So they’ve begun to attack the first premise instead.”^{3}

One such attack was presented in the April 2002 issue of *Discover* magazine. In an article entitled “Guth’s Grand Guess,” the author describes how quantum theory allows for things—“a dog, a house, a planet”—to be materialized out of a quantum vacuum. One professor is quoted as saying, “Our universe is simply one of those things which happens from time to time.”^{4} Could such an audacious claim be valid?

Craig debunks this claim by making two very important points. First, “These subatomic particles the article talks about are called ‘virtual particles.’ They are theoretical entities and it’s not even clear that they actually exist as opposed to being merely theoretical constructs.”^{5} Secondly, however, “these particles, if they are real, do not come out of nothing. The quantum vacuum is not what most people envision when they think of a vacuum — that is, absolutely nothing. On the contrary, it’s a sea of fluctuating energy.” This begs the question, So where does this energy come from? It must have a cause. So even quantum theory fails to explain the origin of the universe without a Creator. Rather, as Craig explains, the first cause of the universe is the transcendent personal Creator^{6} of the Bible which states that “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Anthropic Principle

What is called the anthropic principle essentially states that “all seemingly arbitrary and unrelated constants in physics have one strange thing

in common — these are precisely the values you need if you want to have a universe capable of producing life.”{7} To explore the particulars of this, Strobel interviews Robin Collins, who has doctorates in both physics and philosophy.

Collins, who has written several books on this subject, is asked to describe one of his favorite examples. He proceeds to illustrate the fine-tuned properties of gravity. He does so by comparing the range of possible gravitational force strengths with an old-fashioned linear radio dial that spans the entire width of the known universe. He says,

“Imagine that you want to move the dial from where it’s currently set. Even if you were to move it by only one inch, the impact on life in the universe would be catastrophic. . . .

“That small adjustment of the dial would increase gravity by a billion-fold. . . .

“Animals anywhere near the size of human beings would be crushed. . . . As astrophysicist Martin Rees said, ‘In an imaginary strong gravity world, even insects would need thick legs to support them, and no animals could get much larger.’ In fact, a planet with a gravitational pull of a thousand times that of the Earth would have a diameter of only forty feet, which wouldn’t be enough to sustain an ecosystem. . . .

“As you can see, compared to the total range of force strengths in nature, gravity has an incomprehensibly narrow range of life to exist.”{8}

Collins goes on to discuss several other constants which show a remarkable degree of fine-tuning such as the mass difference between neutrons and protons, electromagnetic forces, strong nuclear forces, and the cosmological constant. In fact, one expert has said that “there are more than thirty separate physical or cosmological parameters that require precise calibration in order to produce a life-sustaining universe.”{9}

It is this amazing degree of fine-tuning within physics which Collins believes is “by far the most persuasive current argument of the existence of God.”{10} The deeper we dig,” Collins concludes, “we see that God is more subtle and more ingenious and more creative than we ever thought possible. And I think that’s the way God created the universe for us—to be full of surprises.”{11}

Astronomy

It had been said for years that “There’s nothing unusual about Earth. It’s an average, unassuming rock that’s spinning mindlessly around an unremarkable star in a run-of-the-mill galaxy—a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark,’ as the late Carl Sagan put it.”{12} However, this is no longer thought to be the case. Even secular scientists are talking about the astounding

convergence of numerous unexpected "coincidences" that make intelligent life possible on Earth, and in all likelihood, nowhere else in the universe.

In exploring these recent discoveries, Lee Strobel meets with Dr. Guillermo Gonzalez and Dr. Jay Wesley Richards, coauthors of the book *The Privileged Planet*. After hashing out a long list of unique characteristics of our own galaxy, our sun, and our planet, they then began to discuss another amazing coincidence: "a whole new dimension of evidence that suggests this astounding world was created, in part, so we could have the adventure of exploring it."¹³

One of the more interesting examples given is that of a solar eclipse. Perfect solar eclipses have allowed scientists to do things such as determine specific properties of stars and confirm predictions associated with Einstein's theory of relativity. Such things would be extremely difficult to explore if it weren't for total eclipses. However, such eclipses are unique to Earth within our solar system. Of the nine planets and over sixty moons, only Earth provides the optimal scenario for viewing an eclipse. This is possible because our moon, which is 400 times smaller than our Sun, happens to also be exactly 400 times closer. This allows for just the right conditions for a perfect solar eclipse.

What intrigues Gonzalez is that "the very time and place where perfect solar eclipses appear in our universe also corresponds to the one time and place where there are observers to see them."¹⁴ Richards adds, "What is mysterious is that the same conditions that give us a habitable planet also make our location so wonderful for scientific measurement and discovery. So we say there's a correlation between habitability and measurability."¹⁵

Indeed, this is exactly what we would expect if an all-loving, all-powerful God created the universe not only to sustain man but also, and most importantly, that man could find Him through it.

Information

In 1871, Darwin suggested in a personal letter that life may have originated spontaneously "in some warm little pond, with all sorts [of chemicals] present."¹⁶ However, in his day the immense complexity of living cells was virtually unknown. Today that's not the case. Modern science has revealed that cells are extremely complex and that this complexity is governed by the information packed structures of DNA. This raises the question, "Where did this information come from?"

To answer this question Strobel enlists the help of Dr. Stephen Meyer, who has degrees in physics, geology, history, and philosophy. During the course of their discussion, Meyer elaborates on various explanations as to the origin of information in the first living cell. After describing the virtual impossibility of simple random chance over time producing such information, and acknowledging the fact that "virtually all origin-of-life experts have utterly rejected" such an approach,¹⁷ Strobel focuses Meyer in on a more recent attempt at an explanation, that which at times has been called biochemical predestination.

Meyer says the idea is that “the development of life was inevitable because the amino acids in proteins and the bases, or letters, in the DNA alphabet had self-ordering capacities that accounted for the origin of the information in these molecules.”{18} He then goes on to explain why this notion just isn’t true.

First, he notes that the kind of self-ordering we see in nature, such as that in salt crystals, is repetitive; a particular sequence is simply repeated over and over again. “It would be like handing a person an instruction book for how to build an automobile,” Meyer explains, “but all the book said was ‘the-the-the-the-the.’ You couldn’t hope to convey all the necessary information with that one-word vocabulary.”{19}

Secondly, and more importantly, he points out that science has demonstrated the complete absence of any attraction between the four letters of the DNA code themselves. “So there’s nothing chemically that forces them into any particular sequence,” Meyer states. “The sequencing has to come from outside the system.”{20}

For Strobel, as well as many scientists, the conclusion is compelling: “An intelligent entity has quite literally spelled out evidence of His existence through the four chemical letters in the genetic code. It’s almost as if the Creator autographed every cell.”{21}

Consciousness

Webster defines consciousness as “the quality or state of being aware especially of something within oneself.”{22} According to Darwinists, the physical world is all there is. Consciousness, therefore, is nothing more than a byproduct of the properties of chemicals. As far back as 1871, evolutionists believed that the “mind is a function of matter, when that matter has attained a certain degree of organization.”{23} Is this really true? Is the mind simply, as MIT’s Marvin Minsky put it, “a computer made of meat”{24} Or is the Bible correct in its assertion that men and women are comprised of both material and immaterial components?

To address this question, Strobel interviews Dr. J. P. Moreland, who has degrees in chemistry and theology, and a Ph.D. in philosophy. One of the most compelling arguments presented by Moreland during this interview was the positive experimental evidence that consciousness and the self are more than simply a physical byproduct of the brain. “For example,” Moreland said, “neurosurgeon Wilder Penfield electrically stimulated the brains of epilepsy patients and found he could cause them to move their arms or legs, turn their heads or eyes, talk, or swallow. Invariably the patient would respond by saying, ‘I didn’t do that. You did.’ According to Penfield, ‘the patient thinks of himself as having an existence separate from his body.’ No matter how much Penfield probed the cerebral cortex, he said, ‘There is no place . . . where electrical stimulation will cause a patient to [think].’ That’s because [thought] originates in the conscious self, not the brain.”{25}

As Strobel notes in agreement, it is evidence like this which has led one pair of scientists to conclude that "physics, neuroscience, and humanistic psychology all converge on the same principle: mind is not reducible to matter. . . . The vain expectation that matter might someday account for mind . . . is like the alchemist's dream of producing gold from lead."{26}

Conclusion

It is evidences like these, as well as the many others presented by Lee Strobel, which has continued to persuade scientists in every field of study that there must be a Designer. Naturalistic explanations are not sufficient to explain the beauty, complexity, and design that we observe both around us and within us. Strobel, indeed, presents an amazingly strong case for a Creator.

Notes

- Lee Strobel, *The Case for a Creator* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2004) jacket.
- Ibid, 97.
- Ibid, 98.
- Brad Lemley, "Guth's Grand Guess," *Discover* (April 2002) p. 35.
- Strobel, 101.
- Ibid, 110.
- Ibid, 126.
- Ibid, 132.
- Ibid, 132.
- Ibid, 130.
- Ibid, 150.
- Ibid, 153.
- Ibid, 185.
- Ibid, 186.
- Ibid, 186.
- Francis Darwin, *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin* (New York: D. Appleton, 1887), 202.
- Strobel, 229.
- Ibid, 232.
- Ibid, 234.
- Ibid, 235.

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- Ibid, 244.
 - Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., s.v., "Consciousness."
 - Thomas Huxley, "Mr. Darwin's Critics," Contemporary Review (November 1871)
 - Strobel, 250.
 - Ibid, 258.
 - Ibid, 272.

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