

## VI

### The Mouse That Laughed

#### *Irreducible Complexity*

*“...Natural selection can only choose systems that are already working...if a biological system cannot be produced gradually it would have to arise as an integrated unit, in one fell swoop, for natural selection to have anything to act on.”*

Michael J. Behe<sup>1</sup>





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**Irreducibly complex mechanisms require a system of inter-dependent, coordinated components in order to function.**  
**A computer without a hard-drive is useless.**

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### **A Whale of a Tale**

When Charles Darwin surmised *“Natural selection acts only by taking advantage of slight successive variations; she can never take a great and sudden leap, but must advance by short and sure, though slow, steps,”*<sup>2</sup> Michael Behe’s take on irreducible complexity had yet to be written.

Darwin’s bear-to-whale fantasy underscores the absurdity!  
*“I can see no difficulty in a race of bears being rendered, by natural selection, more and more aquatic in their structure and habits, with larger and larger mouths, till a creature was produced as monstrous as a whale.”*<sup>3</sup>

Stuck with evolution’s fact-free fantasy (from fish-to amphibians-to reptiles-to-mammals), the appropriate place of the whale in the sequence, posed a conundrum.

If the warm-blooded whale, a mammal, descended from an egg-hatched, cold-blooded reptile, the chain of organic life transitions stood in jeopardy, seriously out-of-kilter..

Darwin’s whale-from-a-bear patch-work scenario only compounded the glaring inconsistency!

A winter hibernating, furry, land-based mammal with paws and claws, transiting to a sleek denizen of the deep-blue-sea *“as monstrous as a whale,”* ignores logic and lacks supporting evidence.

(Insert photo of bear, 5 x 7, with credit line and caption)



Ocean-going whales are out of sync with evolution’s sea-to-land scenario. Attempting to solve the conundrum, Darwin imagined “monstrous” whales might have evolved from bears.

Suggesting *Ambulocetus* is a “walking whale,” an extinct, 11 foot, four-legged, land-based critter, lacking a blowhole, flippers and missing a whale’s rudder-like tail, matches Darwin’s bear-to-whale absurdity.

Why would descendants of a self-sufficient, land based bear, seek refuge in the ocean’s salt-water depths in order to survive?

And had the imagined bear-to-whale evolution actually occurred, why do bears continue to roam the landscape after Darwin predicted “that not one living species will transmit its unaltered likeness to a distant futurity.”<sup>4</sup>

Understandably, Darwin himself recognized the untenable assertion by abandoning the conjecture in all post-1859 editions of *The Origin of Species*.

Any bear attempting transit to whale status by natural selection or otherwise would be destined for a watery grave---as helpless as a car without wheels or a desk-top printer without an ink cartridge.

### **The Laughing Mouse**

Irreducible complexity is the “joker” in evolutionism’s card deck!

Since natural selection rejects a component part that doesn’t work, any incomplete, irreducibly complex cell, organ, or system would be discarded by the natural selection process. The reality of irreducible complexity prevents activation of the very natural selection critical to neo-Darwinism’s formula.

Michael Behe, originator of the “irreducibly complex” phrase, approaches the world of molecular machines by introducing the simple mousetrap with its five basic parts anchored by four staples.

One skeptic reportedly suggested the trap could do without the wooden base by stapling the metal parts to the floor. The argument fails---the wood floor itself becomes an essential part to the irreducibly complex mechanism.

A fully functioning mousetrap is the product of an intelligent act. The household contraption could neither design nor build itself. It requires the complete package for minimal function. A spring too weak, a trigger too short, or a missing staple and the mouse would steal the cheese, survive unscathed and chuckle with the last laugh.

No one argues that inanimate objects like mousetraps or computers design themselves without input from an intelligent source. All living mechanisms display designs infinitely more complex than inanimate objects designed by human intelligence.

Darwin admitted, *“If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed, which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.”*<sup>5</sup>



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**Remove any part of an “irreducibly complex” mousetrap and the mouse walks away with the cheese and the last laugh.**

### **Molecular Machinery**

**“Break down”** time has arrived! Michael Denton’s analysis takes Darwin at his word, challenging make believe.

*“My fundamental problem with the theory is that there are so many highly complicated organs, systems and structures, from the nature of the lung of a bird, to the eye of the rock lobster, for which I cannot conceive of how these things have come about in terms of a gradual accumulation of random changes.*

*“It strikes me as being a flagrant denial of common sense to swallow that all these things were built up by accumulative small random changes. This is simply a nonsensical claim...a huge number of highly complex systems in nature cannot be plausibly accounted for in terms of a gradual build-up of small random mutations.*

*“Everybody knows the lung of the bird is unique in being a circulatory lung rather than a bellows lung...It doesn’t require a great deal of profound knowledge of biology to see that an organ, which is so central to the physiology of any higher organism, its drastic modification in that way by a series of small events is almost inconceivable. This is something we can’t throw under the carpet again because,*

*basically, as Darwin said, if any organ can be shown to be incapable of being achieved gradually in little steps, his theory would be totally overthrown.”*<sup>6</sup>

*“If anyone was chasing a phantom or retreating from empiricism it was surely Darwin, who himself freely admitted that he had absolutely no hard empirical evidence that any of the major evolutionary transformations he proposed had ever actually occurred. It was Darwin, the evolutionist, who admitted in a letter to Asa Gray, that one’s ‘imagination must fill up the very wide blanks.’ ”*<sup>7</sup>

### **Bacterial Flagellum**

In the landmark words of Michael J. Behe’s catchy phrase, simple life forms in molecular systems are “*irreducibly complex.*”

*“...Canyons separating everyday life forms have their counterparts in the canyons that separate biological systems on a microscopic scale. Like a fractal pattern in mathematics...unbridgeable chasms occur even at the tiniest level of life.”*<sup>8</sup>

Prime example of a molecular machine is the bacterial flagellum with its 40 separate components, 30 of which are unique.

The microscopic propeller cranks at an amazing 100,000 RPM’s per minute and is capable of stopping and reversing on a quarter turn. If any one single component is missing, the entire organelle breaks down, incapable of function. Time is of the essence: its an all or nothing at all scenario; each component must be in place concurrently for the mechanism to function.<sup>9</sup>

Behe cites the chemical apparatus marshaled by the half-inch bombardier beetle as an irreducibly complex system in action. When threatened by an enemy it can release a scalding hot liquid as a defense mechanism.

*“The components of the system are (1) hydrogen peroxide and hydroquinone, which are produced by the secretory lobes; (2) the enzyme catalysts, which are made by the ectodermal glands; (3) the collecting vesicle; (4) the sphincter muscle; (5) the explosion chamber; and (6) the outlet duct.”*

Dr. Behe inquires, First, *“What exactly are the stages of beetle evolution, in all their complex glory? Second, given these stages, how does Darwinism get us from one to the next?”*<sup>10</sup>

*“As the number of required parts increases, the difficulty of gradually putting the system together skyrockets, and the likelihood of indirect scenarios plummets. Darwin looks more and more forlorn.”*<sup>11</sup>

### **Power in the Blood**

Blood anchors life. Unique formulas match the need of each species. One of four blood types flows through human veins. Transfusing blood from ape to man can kill; extreme blood loss can kill; blood too thin to clot can kill; and blood that clots at the wrong time and place can kill.

Behe defines the magical qualities of clotting.

*“If blood congeals at the wrong time or place...the clot may block circulation as it does in heart attacks and strokes...A clot has to stop bleeding all along the length of the cut, sealing it completely. Yet blood clotting must be confined to the cut or the entire blood system of the animal might solidify, killing it.”*<sup>12</sup>

Properly functioning blood clotting in the human circulatory system that can save life involves no fewer than twenty steps.

*“The blood coagulation cascade” utilizes “proteins in promoting clot formation” and proteins “involved in the prevention, localization, or removal of blood clots.”*<sup>13</sup>

*“None of the cascade proteins are used for anything but controlling the formation of a blood clot. Yet in the absence of any one of the components, blood does not clot, and the system fails...Not only is the entire blood-clotting system irreducibly complex, but so is each step in the pathway.”*<sup>14</sup>

*“Remember a mousetrap spring might in some way resemble a clock spring, and a crowbar might resemble a mousetrap hammer, but the similarities say nothing about how a mousetrap is produced.*

*“In order to claim that a species developed gradually by a Darwinian mechanism a person must show that the function of the system could ‘have been formed by numerous successive, slight modifications.’ ”*<sup>15</sup>

Mathematical odds say, “no way!” Blood clotting could not evolve *“by numerous successive, slight modifications.”*

Tissue Plasminogen Activator binds to several substances including fibrin. TPA *“has four different types of domains...the odds of getting those four domains together is 30,000 to the fourth power. Now if the Irish Sweepstakes had odds of winning of one-tenth to the eighteenth power, and if a million people played the lottery each year, it would take an average of about a thousand billion years before anyone (not just a particular person) won the lottery. A thousand billion years is roughly a hundred times the current estimate of the age of the universe.”*<sup>16</sup>

*“We calculated the odds of getting TPA alone to be one-tenth to the eighteenth power; the odds of getting TPA and its activator together would be about one-tenth to the thirty-sixth power...Such an event would not be expected to happen even if the universe’s ten-billion year life compressed into a single second and relived for every second for ten billion years...The fact is, no one on earth has the vaguest idea how the cascade coagulation came to be.”*<sup>17</sup>

### **Jawbone Dentition**

Donald R. Moeller, a science researcher blessed with joint physician/dentist credentials, shoots down any possibility that unique dentition sizes and shapes result from mutations. Logic devastates neo-Darwinism’s reliance on *“numerous, successive, slight modifications”* as core dogma!

Get ready for some “jaw-boning” with oversized words beyond everyday conversations!

Modern craniofacial/maxillofacial genetics demonstrates that pleiotropy is present in all of the approximately one hundred genetic disorders.

*“Thus the simplistic idea of genetic mutations being able to cause only incremental small useful changes in the occlusion and/or jaw relationships is not supported by current research. There are no known mutations affecting single tooth morphology or single tooth enamel microstructure.*

*“Any viable theory which attempts to explain the complex interaction and precision of the maxillofacial-occlusal complex must include genetic mechanisms, developmental processes, and fossil evidences of these processes affected by mutations and natural selection.*

*“Current publications in orthodontics and oral and maxillofacial pathology thoroughly document that dysfunctions in all of the cranio-maxillo-occlusal systems actually do occur, and are based on known mutations and malfunctions of development. Examples include: (1) malpositions and eruption sequencing dysfunction causing teeth to either remain unerupted and cause cysts or crowding; (2) maxillo-mandibular growth discoordination causing mandibular prognathism (protruding lower jaw).*

*“These developmental departures should therefore be expected in the fossil record, especially since chordate-maxilloocclusal relationships are so widely varied across species boundaries. An endless parade of transitional variations of all the subsystems should be evident, as well as the problematic effects caused by lack of coordination between the subsystems.*

*“Multiple examples of malposed teeth, cysts in jaws, retained deciduous teeth, maxillary-mandibular growth and size discoordination, losses of entire classes of teeth, variation in eruption height of the various classes of teeth, tooth size arch-discrepancy variation, animal size, and tooth size coordination, should be in the fossil record.*

*“This evidence is not seen.*

*“The subsystem of tooth replacement presents a quandary. The reptiles have a "wave-like" replacement of every third tooth, yet all early mammals have a whole set replacement of their deciduous teeth.*

*“There are no transitional dentitions. The earliest deciduous dentitions are fully functional.*

*“The same quandary appears with respect to tooth attachment. There are at least eight, well-developed methods of tooth attachment in the chordates, none of which could be called primitive or advanced or could be arranged in a sequence from simple to complex. Furthermore, failure of the attachment apparatus would*

*be evidenced by missing teeth due to dysfunction in periodontal attachment.  
Transitional attachment mechanisms are not found in the fossil record.*

*“What the craniofacial and maxillary occlusal fossil evidences suggest is that all ten subsystems (and probably more) were fully functional in all chordates from their first appearance in the fossil record. There is absolutely no fossil evidence of either developmental processes or pathology which would suggest any evolutionary process leading to the development of the dentition.*

*“There is also no known genetic or developmental process to suggest a legitimate mechanism to support an evolutionary basis for the development of the precision exhibited by the dental apparatus.”<sup>18</sup>*

Dr. Moeller’s insight illustrates irreducible complexity’s reality!

### **Systemic Inter-Dependence**

Conceptual design of molecular mechanisms requires intelligence. Assembling the systems requires insight beyond the capacity of nature’s whims. Charles Darwin assembled a wish list of predictions, preconceptions, assumptions, and uncorroborated assertions in weaving together the whole cloth of life without design or designer.

He *“ransacked other spheres of practical research work for ideas...But his whole resulting scheme remains, to this day, foreign to scientifically established zoology, since actual changes of species by such means are still unknown.”<sup>19</sup>*

All living mechanisms function irreducibly complex.

It’s a case of all or nothing at all with the human eye. Sight is contingent upon every lens, blood vessel, and nerve in place and fully operational. The same with ears, hearts and lungs.

*“Break down”* is the inevitable fate of piece-meal gradualism! Part-way-there transitionals couldn’t survive whether whales transiting from bear ancestors or birds from dinosaurs!

There is no reason for an Intelligent Creator to require millions of years to assemble a brain or any life system. Recognition of Supreme power accepts the plausibility of a creation event at the command of the Lord God Almighty in the blink of an eye.



**The idea that cold-blooded reptiles qualify as bird ancestors faces hurdles. How did scales become feathers, and just how do bright-colored feather patterns contribute to survival?**

Park Rangers at Tennessee’s Reelfoot Lake protect wildlife and restore the injured. When recovery is complete, healthy eagles are released to circle the heavens.

A screech owl, surviving a collision with a car, lost an eye in the accident. Park Rangers say that a bird (like the red-tailed hawk, blessed with acute vision extending a mile in any direction) couldn’t survive in the wild with a single eye.

Perhaps Darwin’s gradual eye evolution theory, beginning with tissue theoretically able to recognize light, couldn’t do the trick for an owl or a hawk. The eye of an arthropod also astounds.

Arthropod eyes *“have always been complex---and there have always been arthropods...The bee’s ability to convey the location of a food source to fellow workers via a sophisticated ‘dance’ is legendary.”*<sup>20</sup>

Trilobites “*could see an undistorted image under water...with undistorted vision in all directions...to determine distance...while at the same time have the optimum sensor for motion detection.*”<sup>21</sup>

Irreducible complexity pervades eye structure and function, regardless of species.

A hawk, flapping half-formed wings while trying to hunt with eyes scarcely able to detect night from day, couldn’t feed or protect itself. A less “evolved” parent, even if miraculously alive, couldn’t help its crippled offspring.

Whether an eye, wing, or foot, however long or short its “evolution” time, it could never function in transitional format. Extinction intrudes, long before expiration of evolution’s postulated mega-million year deep time.

Swallows swoop to mud puddles, scavenging nest material. Eagles build 3-foot wide nests in tree tops. Parrots arrayed in multi-colored hues and oversize beaks mimic human sounds. Peacocks spread their array of iridescent feathers while notifying neighborhoods of intruders with ear-piercing screams.

Virtually nothing, either in the fossil record, molecular biology, or today’s experience, confirms existence of partially or non-functioning intermediates linking these magnificent birds to reptile ancestors.

### **Survival at Risk**

When the delicate balance of a complex life is disrupted by dysfunction, life terminates. Conversely, life, as well as its sophisticated systems (eg, the arthropod’s vision), can’t spring from an incomplete organism missing critical components.

Prolonged failure to function is a recipe for the destruction of most any living system trapped interminably in a prolonged series of intermediate states. A creature trying to evolve a wing from a leg, unable to walk or to fly, is destined to die.

Irreducible complexity comes into play ecologically. Life systems function inter-dependently. Trees contribute food and attract

rainfall; water grows green grass; and cattle munch grass. Living nature hangs on a multitude of ecosystems, existing and operating simultaneously in ecological balance.

Fossils composing the Cambrian Explosion demonstrate irreducible complexity in action. More than 7,000 species appeared fully-functional and without evidence of prior ancestry.

Life did not require vast chunks of deep time to originate abruptly, fully-formed and in perfect balance. Multiple plant and animal kinds, appearing simultaneously and functioning in concert, provided an irreducibly complex eco-system from the beginning..

Irreducible complexity underscores an all-or-nothing reality!

Nature bursts with dynamic change. Thanks to genes present in every genome from the beginning, life kinds adjust, assuring survival while maximizing nature's smorgasbord of colors, shapes and sizes.

A genome's ability to adjust, doesn't support Darwin's postulates. Diversity capacity within each genome is not evolution. Transition to new, radically different body plans never happens.

Bacteria may develop immunity to drugs but consistently remain bacteria; black or white moths continue to produce moths; and finch beaks appear in multiple sizes and shapes but finches never "evolve" into red-headed woodpeckers.

Irreducibly complex mechanisms, whether non-living or living, are non-functional until fully-formed. Half-formed hearts and lungs are no more practical than half-built automobiles. The fossil record provides little comfort suggesting partially formed, non-functional systems ever existed.

### **Evolution's Slippery Slope**

Sir William Dawson, a Darwin contemporary, condemned evolution theory head-on.

*"This evolutionist doctrine is itself one of the strangest phenomena of humanity...a system destitute of any shadow of proof, and supported merely by*

*vague analogies and figures of speech...Now no one pretends that they rest on facts actually observed...*

*“Let the reader take up either of Darwin's great books, or Spencer's Biology, and merely ask himself as he reads each paragraph, ‘What is assumed here and what is proved?’ and he will find the whole fabric melt away like a vision...We thus see that evolution as an hypothesis has no basis in experience or in scientific fact, and that its imagined series of transmutations has breaks which cannot be filled.”<sup>22</sup>*

The century since Darwin cast his vote for molecule-to-man by accident has not be kind to the theory. Swedish biologist, Søren Løvtrup, scoffed at the scenario. *“I believe that one day the Darwinian myth will be ranked the greatest deceit in the history of science.”<sup>23</sup>*

An “Intelligent Design” advocate, writing in, 2009, spotlighted some of the more recent scientific setbacks gnawing away at evolution’s core fabric..

*“In a year in which Darwin’s disciples were celebrating the 200th anniversary of his birth that the 150th anniversary of the publication of On the Origin of Species, mainstream scientific journals published articles declaring:*

*(1) the modern synthesis was dead, (2) Darwin’s tree of life should be abandoned, (3) new “missing links” were a bust, (4) limits to Darwinism were demonstrated in the lab, (5) evolutionary icons like the peppered moths reverted back to their old colors, (6) the Cambrian Explosion lacks any plausible materialist explanation, and (7) an interdisciplinary revolution is occurring in biology that rejects the reductionist paradigm of Darwinian evolution.”<sup>24</sup>*

Twenty-first century reality confronts evolution!

---Darwin drew a blank at explaining the origin of first life on earth, be it spontaneous generation or otherwise.

---Evolutionist Ernst Mayr concedes, *“All species are separated from each other by bridgeless gaps; intermediates between species are not observed.”<sup>25</sup>*

---Millions of fully-formed complex life kinds appear abruptly, without a trace of prior ancestry.

---Living species closely resemble ancient ancestors. Contrary to

Darwin's prediction that all species would be wiped out and replaced by descendant generations of different life kinds, earth's strata bulges with stasis.

---Darwin's "tree of life," with its alleged chain of continuity, shows only a cupboard virtually bare of transitional fossils. Gaps dominate. Discontinuity reigns supreme.

---Molecular biology's electron microscope demolished "simple" cell mentality while uncovering the magnificence of the living cell and its unique DNA code of life.

---The Modern Synthetic Theory of Evolution dug deep attempting to salvage Darwinian thought by coupling mutations with natural selection as the dual driving forces producing evolutionary chains. This one-step-forward "solution" exposed a trail of two-step-back problems.

(1) Mutations typically corrupt genetic information, never adding information or upgrading the quality of the organism.

(2) Five-hundred-million years is not enough time to accumulate the millions of beneficial mutations essential for random chance to accidentally manufacture an irreducibly complex human from a fish.

The Modern Synthetic Theory of Evolution teeters on the brink of long-overdue last rites.