

Book Review: The Accidental Species...Misunderstandings of Human Evolution

By Henry Gee, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2013, pages 218

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"Evolution is a word we use to describe changes in organisms due to the interaction of hereditary variation, superabundance, environmental change, and time. Evolution has neither memory nor foresight. It has no scheme, design, or plan...In and of itself, evolution carries no implication of progression or improvement. Absolutely none. Zip. Nada. "(Preface-Kindle 1%).

Two Kindle pages later: "In this book I shall show you how and why the view of evolution presented in the popular media is wrong and why we cannot use it to bolster our own position in creation. I shall also show you how to challenge what one reader of a draft of this book has called "human exceptionalism"--the tendency to see human beings as exceptional by virtue of various attributes as language, technology, or consciousness. There is nothing special about being human, any more than there is anything special about being a guinea pig or a geranium. This insight should allow you see the world afresh, and marvel at each and every creature as it is, for its innate wonder and uniqueness, not as a way station toward some nebulous, imagined transcendence."

Another two pages: "In reality, science is about neither Facts nor Truth, but the quantification of doubt...All scientific discoveries are provisional, set to be overturned by results gained from more data, better instrumentation, and new ideas....That is, science is not about Truth, but Doubt; not Knowledge, but Ignorance; not Certainty, but Uncertainty.

And he ends his Preface with: "Once upon a time we thought the earth was the center of the universe, but were shocked to find that this was not the case. We thought that Man was the pinnacle of Creation, but despite Darwin, many still cling to this view--for which there is neither any excuse nor justification."

After his Preface destroys contemporary evolution but with Gee adamantly still believing in it, we are then treated to ten chapters of his doubt mania--worth scanning for his *proclaimed* negations, his *science based dogmatic* Doubts, his *declared* Ignorances, and his *pontificated* Uncertainties. We read about fossils, dogs, crows, bacteria, pigs, people, guinea pigs, prehumans, geraniums, and more non-human things galore. This becomes a real spiritual experience as is common from pseudo-scientists expressing their beliefs outside the periodic table. It was a fun-head shaking scan as I imposed his factual untruth "science" dogma on his own work.

The penultimate Chapter 11: The Way We Think is worthy of brief comment. Basically, "self-awareness" is "sentience" and all creatures have it as a "materialist" identity to existence. Gee obviously confines consciousness of *self-giving* no expansion to consciousness-of-*consciousness* (C²) which clearly enables humans to partially escape from materialism, such as being able to fly without feathers, write with computers, among other human creations, as well as un-natural anti-human destructions like contraception, abortion, genderlessness, children as irrelevant, and anti-nature polluting everything almost. For Gee, "thinking" is, as for all other creatures, without the awareness to celebrate birthdays or the significance of consciousness-of-consciousness.

The last chapter is "Afterword: The Tangled Bank"--about 5 kindle pages. He professes that he wants to end his book on a "crumb of comfort" because reviewers were distressed at his "extended dustup" of everything he minimalizes. His offered comfort is that all existence scenarios are still meaningless including the "stories" humans tell about anything and everything, but that humans must take comfort in "stories"--like he did in chapters 2 thru 10. Thus, he closes by

unwittingly speaking about his story-filled book, proving it to be an oxymoronic example of his

anti-existential nihilism and his own "imagined transcendence".

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