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by Stephen C. Meyer (Author)

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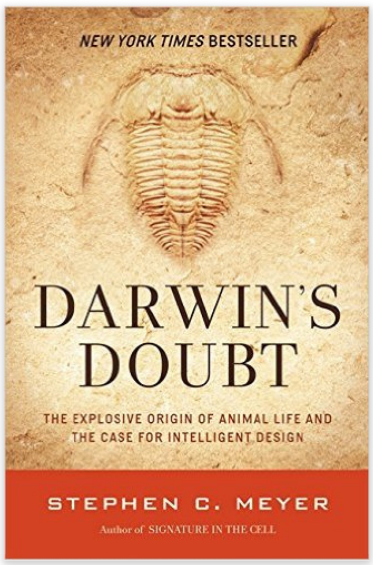

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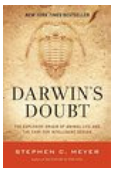
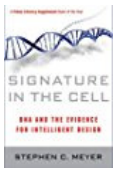
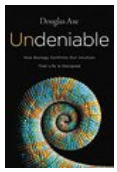

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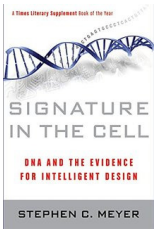

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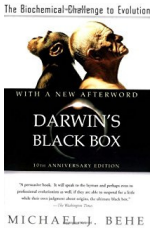

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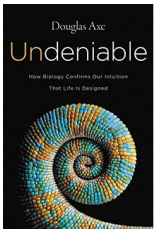

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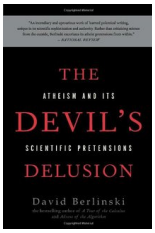

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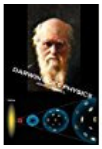

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"It's hard for us paleontologists to admit that neo-Darwinian explanations for the Cambrian explosion have failed miserably....Meyer describes the dimensions of the problem with clarity and precision. His book is a game changer" (**Dr. Mark McMenamin**, paleontologist at Mt. Holyoke College and coauthor of *The Emergence of Animals*)
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"Darwin's Doubt represents an opportunity for bridge-building rather than dismissive polarization—bridges across cultural divides in great need of professional, respectful dialogue—and bridges to span evolutionary gaps." (**Dr. George Church**, professor of genetics at Harvard Medical School and author of *Regenesis*)

"Meyer writes beautifully. He marshals complex information as well as any writer I've read....a wonderful, most compelling read." (**Dean Koontz**, *New York Times* bestselling author)

"*Darwin's Doubt* is by far the most up-to-date, accurate, and comprehensive review of the evidence from all relevant scientific fields that I have encountered in more than forty years of studying the Cambrian explosion." (**Dr. Wolf-Ekkehard Lonnig**, senior scientist emeritus (biologist) at the Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research)

"Meyer demonstrates, based on cutting-edge molecular biology, why explaining the origin of animals is now not just a problem of missing fossils, but an even greater engineering problem at the molecular level....An excellent book and a must read." (**Dr. Russell Carlson**, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of Georgia and technical director of the Complex Carbohydrate Research Center)

"*Darwin's Doubt* is an intriguing exploration of one of the most remarkable periods in the evolutionary history of life.... No matter what convictions one holds about evolution, Darwinism, or intelligent design, *Darwin's Doubt* is a book that should be read, engaged and discussed." (**Dr. Scott Turner**, professor of biology at the State University of New York and author of *The Tinkerer's Accomplice*)

"It is a tour de force...This book is well informed, carefully researched, up–to–date and powerfully argued. It confronts Darwin's doubt and deals with the assumptions of Neo–Darwinism. This book is much needed and I recommend it to students of all levels, to professionals and to laypeople." (**Dr. Norman C. Nevin OBE, BSc, MD, FRCPath, FFPH, FRCPE, FRCP**; Professor Emeritus in Medical Genetics, Queen's University, Belfast)

"*Darwin's Doubt* is another excellent book by Stephen Meyer. Stephen Meyer has clearly listened to the arguments of those who are sceptical about intelligent design and has addressed them

From the Back Cover

The Evidence That Darwin Could Not Explain

Charles Darwin knew there was a significant event in the history of life that his theory did not explain. In what is known today as the "Cambrian explosion," many animals suddenly appeared in the fossil record 530 million years ago without apparent ancestors in earlier layers of rock. In *Darwin's Doubt*, Stephen C. Meyer tells the story of the mystery surrounding this explosion of animal life and makes a compelling case for the theory of intelligent design as the best explanation for the origin of the Cambrian animals and the biological information necessary to produce them.

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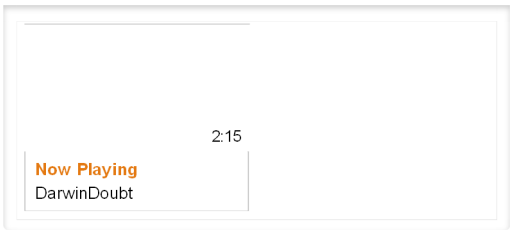

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Biography

Dr. Stephen C. Meyer received his Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge in the philosophy of science. A former geophysicist and college professor, he now directs the Center for Science and Culture at the Discovery Institute in Seattle. In 2004, Meyer ignited a firestorm of media and scientific controversy when a biology journal at the Smithsonian Institution published his peer-reviewed scientific article advancing intelligent design. Meyer has been featured on national television and radio programs, including The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, CBS's Sunday Morning, NBC's Nightly News, ABC's World News, Good Morning America, Nightline, FOX News Live, and the

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I actually read the entire book...

By M.C. Travis on July 23, 2013

Format: Kindle Edition

I just finished a word-for-word reading of this latest offering from Philosopher of Science Stephen C. Meyer. It's not necessary for me to summarize the book's content here, as that has been done by other thoughtful reviewers.

Many accusations have been leveled at this book, which isn't surprising given the controversial nature of its implications. It seems that the word "pseudoscience" is being tossed around a lot. This is incredibly ironic, because the vast majority of the scientific discussion in Darwin's Doubt is based on scientific literature written by scientists who are not even proponents of intelligent design. Meyer does a tremendous job of outlining paper after paper after paper, and he includes the full citations so that any careful reader can check to make sure that nothing is misrepresented or taken out of context. This is exactly what philosophers of science are highly trained to do. (I don't think many of Meyer's detractors even comprehend what philosophy of science IS.) Philosophers of science do sweeping surveys of the work being done in a particular field, document areas of strong disagreement between the prominent scientists in that field, and locate weaknesses in the over-arching theory or theories. Meyer does an excellent job of this in Darwin's Doubt. Every time I had a mental red flag as I was reading his commentary on a specific bit of research, he would answer my concern within another page or two. He maintains a very professional and respectful tone throughout, to his great credit.

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Probably the best book Ive read on Neo Darwinism!

Pretty mind boggling book! When one looks at the Cambrian Explosion from so many angles, you are asking yourself, "where is the tree of life? Read more

Published 7 days ago by George E. Nettles

Stephen Meyer's book "Darwin's Doubt" is a great sequel to "Signature..."

After reading Stephen Meyer's book "Signature in the Cell" I was curious why he would write about

Ultimately, Meyer has compiled an impressive amount of peer-reviewed research on the Cambrian phenomenon and the related bio-information problem. He has organized it in a way that flows logically from one chapter to the next. He highlights the strengths of the relevant research and often cites other peer-reviewed literature that directly contrasts with the research he is examining. He offers his own analysis along the way. In the final section, he ties everything together into a logically coherent argument for design.

Now, of course many will disagree with the conclusions Meyer has drawn from the science. But those who have actually done a cover-to-cover reading of the book (and understood it) won't dismiss it with trite, fallacious labels. The majority of negative "reviews" I've seen completely misrepresent the book and even Meyer's credentials. I see little evidence that they even read the book, as they attempt to discredit arguments that Meyer never made, or they get his arguments completely wrong. This kind of zealous intellectual irresponsibility is quite telling.

It's been very entertaining to read the ongoing commentary on Evolution News and Views (an intelligent design news site) about all the pseudo-reviews floating around on the internet.

[For the record, my career background is genetic research and biotechnology. I recently did my graduate work in the history and philosophy of science, with a concentration in origins sciences.]

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A Physicist's Viewpoint

By Kenneth G. Sewell on September 7, 2013

Format: Hardcover

Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design

As a physicist, I have long wondered why any scientist would hesitate to examine data to determine if a theory is right or wrong. Science history is replete with examples of noted scientists taking a stand which delayed research into a vitle area. Yet other lesser known scientists pushed on and demostrated that new data demostrated the wrong stance of the noted individuals.
Evolution has long been dominated by those seemingly afraid to look at data. That was possible when it was a science not based on mathematics, but now, the stage is changing. I am eagerly awaiting the new discoveries and what they reveal. I just hope the ones now controlling the literature are replaced with open minded scientists who only seek the truth. That's the foundation of science; a search for the truth. That is one reason this book is welcome and needed. All young scientists entering these fields should read it.

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Demands to be read even if your beliefs are firm

By D. Snoke on June 21, 2013

Format: Hardcover

When I first saw that the new book by Steve Meyer, Darwin's Doubt, centered on the Cambrian Explosion, I was loathe to read it. I had been led to believe over the years that everything that could be said about the Cambrian Explosion has already been said. I was quite happy to believe that the only real discontinuities in the story of life occurred at the origin of life and at the origin of human consciousness.

I should have known better; science marches onward, and old arguments get reexamined as new data arises. Steve Meyer's book is a wonderful, comprehensive case that the origin of the major types of animals, namely the phyla, is just as strikingly discontinuous as the the origin of life. As such, it represents a solid second volume complementary to his previous work, Signature in the Cell, which focused on the origin of life.

I had come to think that discussing the Cambrian Explosion was misguided because of two arguments: 1) that the explosion was merely an artifact of the fact that organisms before that time did not have hard bones or shells, and 2) that the explosion was short on the geological time scale, but was really quite long on the biological time scale. Meyer disposes of both of these arguments quite handily. On the first, modern science shows that soft-bodied organisms are well preserved in the strata before, during, and after the Cambrian. Also, many of the body types which appear in the Cambrian can't even be imagined without their hard parts to give them structure. An earlier, boneless

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version could not have had the same body plan at all. On the second objection, Meyer shows that the geological time scale has gotten more compressed over the years, not less; best estimates now are 5-10 million years, which is quite short geologically. Meyer then spends a good number of chapters establishing what the natural time scale is for evolution.

From a physicist's perspective, I am used to thinking of time as a relative thing (for electrons in solids, a few trillionths of a second can be a long time, while for stars in clusters, a few million years can be a short time.) What makes something a short time or a long time is the natural time scale of the system-- much less than the natural time scale is short, and much longer than the natural time scale is long. A fairly convincing case has been made in the literature of molecular clocks that the natural time scale for evolution of the degree seen in the Cambrian is a billion years, not 5 million years. Even that billion-year time scale may be an underestimate, if one looks at the microscopic details of protein folding. Thus the intrinsic biological time scale is not less than the geological time scale, and the Cambrian Explosion does indeed occur in a fantastically short time. Meyer cites many evolutionists who acknowledge this problem; the Cambrian problem has not gone away for those who are really in the know, no matter what popularizers may say.

This is a solid scientific review, not a polemic diatribe. It also comes at a good time. Like Signature in the Cell, it comes after 10-20 years of debate on intelligent design. Thus Meyer can summarize the back and forth of the debate in a nice story-like approach. The story is not one of gaps in our knowledge constantly being filled, but the paradox of the Cambrian becoming sharper and sharper. Again, when evolutionists talk to each other instead of to the public, they are remarkably candid about this, and Meyer well documents this with many quotes.

After posing the problem, Meyer discusses some of the non-orthodox, semi-Darwinian proposals floated in the last few decades, such as Gould's punctuated equilibrium and epigenetic neo-Lamarkianism. All of these are built on a surprising amount of hand-waving, invoking new terms but brushing over the actual physical mechanisms. One section I was quite happy about was the section on "self-organization", promoted by Kaufmann, Prigogene, and others. This area has had a strong following in the physics world for three decades, but I have always thought it was sterile, for the reasons that Meyer cites. Essentially, getting "order" from natural self-organizing process and getting "information" are two totally different things. "Order" is easy-- all you need is a natural length scale to arise in a system and "spontaneous symmetry breaking" will lead to orderly patterns on this length scale. This is true of atomic crystals at low temperature and rows of clouds in the sky. But the very nature of information, whether in DNA or human writing, precludes natural forces from generating it. DNA can hold information precisely because there is no natural force demanding the nucleic acids be in one location or another. All information requires this type of "contingency", that is, openness to many possible choices; a system which is driven to one required state holds no information. (Something I was not aware of before reading this book: there is another, equally information-rich, code in biological systems, known as the "sugar code", which is written on the outside of cells to govern their interactions. Like the DNA code, there is no force driving the locations to hold one piece of information instead of another.)

And this is also the problem with identifying where the information came from. Many anti-ID critics demand that ID proponents identify the physical process by which the information came into being. But by its very nature, information is fungible--it can be exchanged into many different forms. Any system with many physical possibilities and no force driving the system to any of them can hold the same information. Thus the demands of the anti-ID critics are like a person who would demand that you deduce from reading a novel whether it was first written with pen and ink, or with a typewriter, or with a modern computer processor. While one can easily identify information when one has it, the very fact that information can remain the same while being embodied in any number of different media, makes it impossible to deduce a physical cause for it.

A few small things that I would have liked to see Meyer address: 1) in his discussion of the molecular clock data, he points out the variation in the numbers over a wide range, but doesn't discuss at all the scientific concept of "uncertainty". Having different numbers for the same measurement vary by a factor of ten or more does not mean the numbers are meaningless, unless the claimed uncertainty is much less than the scatter. 2) He mentions that the molecular clock data don't work at all for histones, but doesn't mention that the reason histones are highly conserved is because they are an integral part of the reproduction system-- one change there and you die. A proper molecular clock calibration would be a "weighted average" in which each gene is weighted by the likelihood that a change will kill the organism. Apparently this has not been done in the literature yet in any quantitative way.

One of the fascinating side stories, which I have heard in ID circles for years but have not before seen

documented as Meyer does, is the problem of making consistent genetic trees. I have often heard evolutionists, such as Francis Collins, make the argument for universal common descent by showing two genes in different species that have remarkable similarity but key differences, such as a fusion of two genes or a viral insertion. The argument basically goes: species 1 has the pattern A-B-C-D-E-F, while species 2 has the pattern A-B-C-X-D-E-F. What is the likelihood that these would be so similar in two unrelated species? Is this not clearly an insertion of X going from 1 to 2, or a deletion of X going from 2 to 1? Sounds good as far as it goes, but the problem comes when you try to do it for many more than two species. Let's write this relationship as 1> 2. Suppose now that you look at four organisms, and find the relationships 1>2, 2>3, 3>4, and 4>1 in four separate genes. Can you make a consistent tree from that? What if I further tell you that 1 is a plant, 2 is an insect, 3 is an animal, and 3 is a worm? Now, this is a fictional example, but are you willing to bet the farm that no such relationship can exist in nature? It turns out that relationships like this are all over the place. To explain it, some evolutionists invoke "convergent genetic evolution", which means that that same gene (same sequence of DNA) arose two times, independently. I could sort of buy convergent structural evolution (e.g. placental wolves and marsupial wolves that look nearly identical but have very different DNA), but convergent gene sequences? It defines the imagination. I once met a German scientist who told me he lost his faith in Darwinism after realizing he could not make self-consistent genetic trees (but he is not willing to come out of the closet out of fear for his career). In general, although I don't think there are a lot of theological stakes in the question of universal common descent, I am surprised at how weak the case for it is.

Meyer ends with general thoughts on ID, similar to his arguments at the end of Signature in the Cell. His experience, like mine, is that some people literally can't "see" God as an explanation, because they have defined God-explanations as non-explanations. Meyer doesn't go into detail about the jump from knowing what human intelligence can do, to invoking non-human (presumably divine) intelligence as a similar causal agent, but the case can be easily made. I have addressed myself in an essay available at christianscientific.org.

Overall I don't expect this to change the views of diehard atheist evolutionists, but I would hope that my theistic evolutionist friends will give this book a close reading. A caution: this is a tome that took me two weeks to go through in evening reading, and I am familiar with the field. Like the classic tome Goedel, Escher, Bach, it simply can't be gone through quickly. I was struck that the week it was released, within one day of shipping, there were already hostile reviews up on Amazon. Simply impossible that they could have read this book in one night.

763 Comments 800 people found this helpful. Was this review helpful to you? Yes No
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A very intriguing read

By BobT on September 6, 2013

Format: Hardcover

If one takes the time to read through it and check the references. I find it interesting that many of the so-called "reviews" parrot the same message. I wonder if they read the same book as me! I took my time, read through the book, checked some (not all) of the references, and I can't find where Dr. Meyer distorted or lied about any information.

What I do find is an easy to understand, thought provoking, and contrarian view, which is probably what has the evolutionists up in arms. While curious about the Cambrian Explosion myself, and how so many life forms suddenly (relatively speaking) appeared, I had not done research into the topic. Finally, a work that not only explains another possibility, but does so cogently and with a viable alternative to evolution, which now, I find sorely lacking.

Thank you Dr. Meyer for your time, effort, and insight!

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