

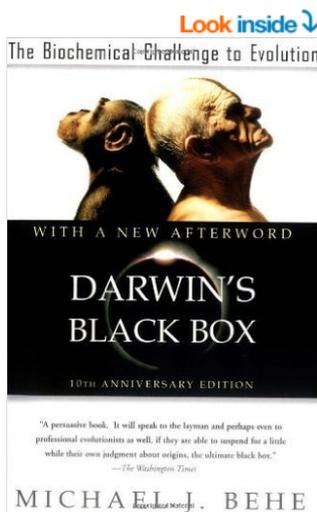
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by Michael J. Behe (Author)

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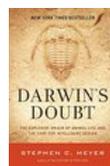
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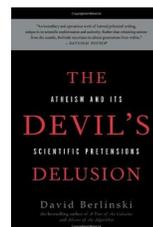
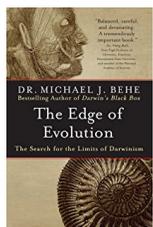
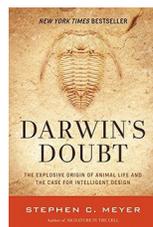
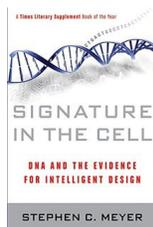
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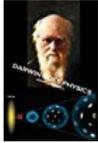
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"An argument of great originality, elegance, and intellectual power. . . . No one can propose to defend Darwin without meeting the challenges set out in this superbly written and compelling book." -- David Berlinski, author of *A Tour of the Calculus*

"Overthrows Darwin at the end of the twentieth century in the same way that quantum theory overthrew Newton at the beginning." -- George Gilder in *National Review*

"[Behe] is the most prominent of the small circle of scientists working on intelligent design, and his arguments are by far the best known." -- H. Allen Orr in *The New Yorker*

"When examined with the powerful tools of modern biology, but not with its modern prejudices, life on a biochemical level can be a product, Behe says, only of intelligent design. Coming from a practicing biologist. . . this proposition is close to heretical." -- *The New York Times Book Review*

#### About the Author

**Michael J. Behe** is a Professor of Biological Science at Lehigh University, where he has worked since 1985. From 1978 to 1982 he did postdoctoral work on DNA structure at the National Institutes of Health. From 1982 to 1985 he was Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Queens College in New York City. He has authored more than forty technical papers, but he is best known as the author of *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*. He lives near Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, with his wife and nine children.

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**Paperback:** 352 pages  
**Publisher:** Free Press; 2nd edition (March 13, 2006)  
**Language:** English  
**ISBN-10:** 0743290313  
**ISBN-13:** 978-0743290319  
**Product Dimensions:** 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.4 inches  
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### Biography

I am Professor of Biological Sciences at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania. I received my Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the University of Pennsylvania in 1978. My current research involves delineation of design and natural selection in protein structures. In addition to teaching and research I work as a senior fellow with the Discovery Institute's Center for Science & Culture.

In addition to publishing over 35 articles in refereed biochemical journals, I have also written editorial features in Boston Review,

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### A book misunderstood both by its supporters and detractors

By [Drew Stein](#) on May 5, 2005

Format: Paperback

No one can possibly deny that this is a well-written, well-explicated book, worthy of any idle summer day. As a student of molecular biology and philosophy, Behe was able to provide explanations for events that I know are well beyond my level, yet still make them accessible. So then, if this book is a well written piece of literature, why are there so many mixed reviews?

The question isn't so much the subject matter, but the context and prejudice the reader brings to it. Both those pro and against this book desperately want it to be Creationist. This is a gross simplification of a very complicated matter. While many authors want to simplify Darwinism and their stance, Behe takes the opposite approach. He mentions irreducible complexities not as a means of awing the reader into believing in a god figure, but to demonstrate that the gradualism preached in Darwinism has many holes in it.

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**An worth read failed attempt to**

And the fact that Darwinism is fallible is really the core of the issue. After talking to one of my biology professors and one of my biochem professors, its pretty understood that many points of Darwinism is up for contention. For instance, Darwin proposed that the initial foundation of life would take a much longer time than fossil records show. Behe is not assaulting the principles of aethism and forcing religion on people; rather he asks the question, if Darwin was alive today and knew the things about molecular biology available now, would he still propose his theory?

Behe makes many concessions, going on the record to say that he believes man was descended from a common ancestor as the apes and that the world was created billions of years ago. He also recognizes Darwinism does occur. It just isn't the sole means of evolution, especially at the molecular level.

If you want a good book to read and have an interest in science and contemporary issues, you should definitely pick up the book. Even if you don't agree with the conclusions (I didn't), Behe teaches the subject with such clarity and passion that you will come away having learned something.

13 Comments 142 people found this helpful. Was this review helpful to you?   [Report abuse](#)

### Argument from Design at the cellular level

By I. Westray on November 22, 2000

Format: Paperback

Michael Behe's an apologist, by far the best apologist I've run across, for the "argument from design" objection to evolutionary theory. (Essentially argument from design amounts to "See that watch? How could it have come about without a watchmaker? How could any of its parts have originally 'evolved' independently? If they didn't, how did the watch spring up out of nowhere?" And so on.) Intelligently, Behe recognizes that the argument from design has been responded to pretty thoroughly at the species level. (For example, evolutionary theory has worked out how the bones of the ear evolved from a bone that articulated reptilian jaws.) So Darwin's Black Box, unlike countless somewhat apoplectic "creationist" writings, chooses the territory for its argument very carefully. Behe concedes natural selection as a force at the level of complete organisms: certain Amazon reviewers seem not to have noticed that he does allow humans and apes a common ancestor, for a glaring example.

The narrowly defined argument Behe wants to stake out is in the biochemical realm. There, he thinks, he can make a case for "irreducible complexity." In short, he thinks he can convince us that the interdependent, complex systems that constitute such things as cilia in cells could not possibly have come about as the piecemeal result of natural selection.

The first half of this book is comprised of lengthy, extremely accessible and enjoyable descriptions of exactly how the smallest cellular mechanisms work. The latter half consists of an attempt to assert the irreducible complexity of those mechanisms. If cilia in cells can't be accounted for by natural selection, says Behe, then there must be intelligent design at work on that level.

To synopsize: Behe concedes the evolution of organisms, but argues that the complexity of life at the cellular level proves the existence of "intelligent design" -- of God. God, in a sentence, is in the cellular details for Behe.

I wouldn't dream of endorsing or refuting this book's arguments here. I'm not here to blow on already hot embers for anyone; I just thought an intelligent reader would want to understand the basic outlines of what this book tries to do. Some of the positive reviews from religious types seem not to have been based on this book at all..

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### Enlightenment... or Not?

By S. Cooney on May 22, 2007

Format: Paperback

I picked this book up several years ago after reading an essay entitled "The Deniable Darwin" by David Berlinski. I thought the book was excellent and recommend it to those seeking to explore the "Evolution vs. Intelligent Design" debate.

Consider those who claim to have debunked this book carefully. The so-called "debunking" of the irreducible complexity of the bacterial flagellum and the blood-clotting cascade are out there online for anyone who knows how to use a search engine. Check it out. Behe has responded online to his critics as well. Judge for yourself who fares better.

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Absolutely love this book. I have bought many copies to give away. A must-read!  
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### Wonderful

This is wonderful book , it proves that Evolution is not true and and Darwin theory is a hoax ,and Life comes from Life BioGenesis Thanks Mr Behe  
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Many of Behe's critics here point to the Dover school board decision as settling the issue once and for all. But science doesn't work that way. Yesterday's heretic is today's hero.

Behe's argument that irreducible complexity at the cellular level can't be explained by Darwinist principles is a powerful one. He's the barbarian at the gate. Don't take my word for it - listen to the shrill tone of the critics here. They take this book personally - I mean they really hate it. When they defend their theory by personally attacking its critic as they've done here, one has to wonder "What's up"?

What's fascinating is that the critics of Behe's book dismiss him and all of his supporters as religious fanatics. They snort and say "It's not science"... Again, judge for yourselves. This book is what it says it is, a challenge to evolution. So far, they haven't really answered it, although they say they have.

So-called microevolution is not disputed by anyone. Macroevolution is another matter entirely. There is no theory (except for Gould's punctuated equilibrium) that adequately addresses the fossil record. And if evolution is gradual (as it must be), what to say about the so-called Cambrian Explosion, 510 million years ago, when most if not all the major phyla (types of life) came into being in just a few million years? That means every major type of specialized cell for all the different types of life on earth- they all came into existence within an extremely short period, geologically speaking. There's really no explanation for it. Prior to Behe's book, the problem of the fossil record and the Cambrian Explosion were two of the biggest challenges to evolution. Now we add irreducible complexity.

A hundred years ago the physicists who proposed and supported the "Big Bang" theory to explain their observations of the night skies were mocked, ostracized from their faculties, etc... for being "Creationists" and "Christians" in supporting such a Creationist-friendly idea. Today the Big Bang is taken as fact, with little or no attention paid to the religious element - it's science, plain and simple.

Two of Darwinism's biggest supporters (Dennett and Dawkins) have just published books arguing that religion and God are of no use - delusions that have run their course. Dawkins even made a film about it. It's truly a passion with him - "curing" people of the God Delusion (the title of his book).

Is that a type of science? Is Dawkins's premise (there is no God) falsifiable? Hint: it's impossible to prove a negative. Dawkins's unshakeable convictions approach that of an Evangelical Christian, his "faith" in atheism is truly absolute. As is the faith of the other atheists posting reviews of this book.

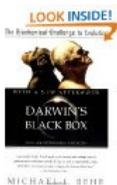
In and of itself that's not a problem. But when they support evolution by addressing its critics with ad hominem personal attacks, evolution can't help but take on the cloak of an "anti-religion", and these fundamentalist atheists have not done the science underlying this controversy any favors at all.

And they actually wonder why 70% of the population doesn't believe in evolution.

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