



Uncommon Dissent: Intellectuals Who Find Darwinism Unconvincing

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Recent years have seen the rise to prominence of ever more sophisticated philosophical and scientific critiques of the ideas marketed under the name of Darwinism. In *Uncommon Dissent*, mathematician and philosopher William A. Dembski brings together essays by leading intellectuals who find one or more aspects of Darwinism unpersuasive. As Dembski explains, Darwinism has gathered around itself an aura of invincibility that is inhospitable to rational discussion—to say the least: "Darwinism, its proponents assure us, has been overwhelmingly vindicated. Any resistance to it is futile and indicates bad faith or worse." Indeed, those who question the Darwinian synthesis are supposed, in the famous formulation of Richard Dawkins, to be ignorant, stupid, insane, or wicked.

The hostility of dogmatic Darwinians like Dawkins has not, however, prevented the advent of a growing cadre of scholarly critics of metaphysical Darwinism. The measured, thought-provoking essays in *Uncommon Dissent* make it increasingly obvious that these critics are not the brainwashed fundamentalist buffoons that Darwinism's defenders suggest they are, but rather serious, skeptical, open-minded inquirers whose challenges pose serious questions about the viability of Darwinist ideology. The intellectual power of their contributions to *Uncommon Dissent* is bracing.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

If you've never heard the term "post-Darwinian," welcome to the world of thinkers who reject evolutionary theory and its reliance on the notion of chance (i.e. "random mutation"). In this provocative volume, biologists, mathematicians and physicists as well as theologians and other intellectuals—many affiliated with the Discovery Institute, which espouses the concept of intelligent design—argue, as editor Dembski writes, that "the preponderance of evidence goes against Darwinism." The contributors invoke mathematics and statistics to support their theory that an "intelligent cause is necessary to explain at least some of the diversity of life." In other words, the degree of diversity and complexity in life forms implies the need for an intelligent designer. The nature and identity of this designer is not discussed by all the writers; others call this intelligence God. Supporters of intelligent design differentiate themselves from creationists, but they, too, argue that their theory should be taught in high school biology courses. Anyone interested in these debates and their implications for education will find this collection to be important reading.

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About the Author

William A. Dembski is an associate research professor in the conceptual foundations of science at Baylor University as well as a senior fellow with Seattle's Discovery Institute. His most important books are *The Design Inference* (Cambridge University Press, 1998) and *No Free Lunch* (2002).

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