There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.

[conclusion of *Origin of Species*]
1. Tremendous diversity of life!
2. Structural complexity of these organisms
3. Apparent purposive or adaptive nature of their features

Questions Evoked?
1. How has organic diversity originated, how is it maintained?
2. How have complex organisms come into being?
3. What forces have molded their adaptive features?
4. When and where did the various organisms appear?
5. Why have organisms (including humans) appeared?

Thomas Burnet (1681)

• Typical pre-18th century view of Earth and its changes

"no truth concerning the Natural World can be an enemy of religion; for Truth cannot be an enemy to Truth, God is not divided against himself"

"We think him a better Artist that makes a Clock that strikes regularly at every hour from the Springs and Wheels which he puts into the work, than he that hath so made his Clock that he must put his finger to it every hour to make it strike"
Jean Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829)

- Early evolutionary thought - “ladder thinking”

Lamarck’s “Ladder”

- Continuum between physical and biological world (after Aristotle)
- *Scalae Naturae* (“Ladder of Life” or “Great Chain of Being”)

Lamarck’s “Ladder”

- Life progresses upward due to an internal drive towards perfection = transmutation
- Why are primitive organisms still around?
  - Spontaneous generation of new life constantly
- Mechanism of change?
  - Inheritance of acquired characters

Lamarck’s (1809) fourteen level ladder hierarchy

- There is no one linear ladder (Georges Cuvier)
Lamarck’s later “Tree”

- Lamarck (reluctantly) influenced by Cuvier’s arguments
- Appended table in 1809 (vol. 2 of *Philosophie Zoologique*) showing two lines of spontaneous generation with subsequent branching

Lamarck’s 1809 appendum

- By 1815 Lamarck announced his conversion to branching as the fundamental pattern of “evolution”
- “In its production of the different animals, nature has not fashioned a single and simple series”

Lamarck’s 1815 “tree”

Lamarck’s later “Tree”

- His last book (*Analytical System of Positive Knowledge of Man*, 1820) has gone largely unnoticed

“Reptiles come necessarily after fishes. They build a branching sequence, with one branch leading from turtles to platypuses to the diverse groups of birds, while the other via lizards toward the mammals. The birds then build a richly varied branching series, with one branch ending in birds of prey.”

S.J. Gould, 1999

Lamarck’s later “Tree”

Robert Chambers (1844)

- The only pre-Darwin “evolution” book that English speakers could read in 1840s and 1850s
Robert Chambers (1844)

- Darwin later stated that *Vestiges* – although flawed – set the stage for acceptance of his ideas of evolution set down in his book *Origin of Species* in 1859

- Immediate criticism on one main point: denial of special creation for each species

Charles Darwin (1859)

> Darwin himself never uses the word "evolution" in *Origin of Species.* He calls the process "descent with modification".

Robert Chambers (1844)

- Bosanquet (Biblical scholar) published his rebuttal the next year and based it primarily on the issue of special creation

Bosanquet's criticism of the *Vestiges* was based on the issue of special creation.
The three main claims of Darwinian evolution

- Living species are related by common ancestry [descent]
- Change through time occurs not at the organism but at the population level
- The main cause of adaptive evolution is natural selection [modification]

Evolution - a definition

The change of genetic materials (DNA, genes, chromosomes = genotype)
and thus physical attributes (morphology, physiology = phenotype)
within and among populations and species through time and space

Evolution vs. Religion?

Some conflict already early on between religion and ideas of evolution

1860 debate between Bishop Samuel Wilberforce of Church of England and Thomas Henry Huxley (‘Darwin’s bulldog’)

Darwin’s “Tree-thinking”

only figure in *Origin of Species* - illustration of ‘descent with modification’
Surely God’s power and glory were revealed more clearly in natural laws than in a peppering of miraculous interventions.”

William Benjamin Carpenter — Christian physiologist and paleontologist — after reviewing Darwin’s Origin of Species

“A Natural Law is as sacred as a Moral Principle”

“Every scientific truth goes through three states: first, people say it conflicts with the Bible; next, they say it has been discovered before; lastly, they say they always believed it”

BioLogos — one positive example of scientists and theologians working together

Evidence for Evolution
• misinformation, disinformation, pluriformation
• “rugged individualism”- clinging to our own intuitions, personal experiences
• confirmational bias – reinforce one’s existing worldview
• science communication problem!

• “Science appeals to our rational brain, but our beliefs are motivated largely by emotion, and the biggest motivation is remaining tight with our peers”
• “The Internet has democratized information, but it has made it possible to live in a “filter bubble” that lets in only the information with which you already agree”
Evidence for Evolution

Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution

Theodosius Dobzhansky

Anatomists, cellular biologists, prokaryote geneticists, membrane and protein transport physiologists, gene sequencers, genomicists, etc.

... their data only makes sense assuming that chloroplasts are modifications of an ancient blue green bacteria ancestor — endosymbiotic event

Evidence for Evolution - Common Ancestry

- Classification ✔
- Hierarchical distribution of traits ✔
- Homology ✔
- Vestigial Structures ✔
- Fossil record ✔
- Biogeography ✔
- Variation among populations ✔
- Speciation ✔
- Agreement between gene trees ✔

✔ = examined in this course to various degrees

Darwin’s “Tree Thinking”

Genealogical tree of Queen Victoria (1819-1901)

Pigeon breeding lineages from ancestral rock pigeon
1. Hierarchical Classification

Darwin’s major finding was a scientific explanation (using the tree metaphor) for:

(1) why organisms appear similar to other organisms,
and (2) why these organisms appear related in a hierarchical (nested) fashion

• Groups of species appear more similar than they do with other groups
• That observation alone could be consistent with a number of explanations of the origin of life’s diversity
Darwin’s simple explanation was that each species did not independently acquire every character but rather each inherited it from a common ancestor who first derived it — a "fossil" footprint.

The distributions of characters in a hierarchical fashion is only explained by "trees". Groups are “nested” within successively larger groups, each “clade” defined by its own set of evolutionary novelties.

On the ordinary view of each species having been independently created, we gain no scientific explanation of any one of these facts. We can only say that it has so pleased the Creator . . . that He has impressed on them the most extraordinary resemblances, and has classed them in groups subordinate to groups.
"Unless one is willing to take the position that God has placed these decapitated AREs [ancient repetitive elements] in these precise positions to confuse and mislead us, the conclusion of a common ancestor for humans and mice is virtually inescapable. This kind of recent genome data thus presents an overwhelming challenge to those who hold to the idea that all species were created ex nihilo."

Evolution thus predicts that species descended from a common ancestor should share homologous characters - derived from the same structure(s) - but that they will show divergence in these characters through time.

The forelimb of all these vertebrates are homologous but modified:

Unrelated species (different ancestors) will show convergence in similar niche.

"On my theory, unity of type is explained by unity of descent"  
Darwin, 1859

- Darwin’s work on orchids convinced him that all species possess the basic homologous floral parts
- although these are highly modified for roles in quite different pollination systems

Angraecum sesquipedale (Orchidaceae)
2. Evidence through Homology

EvoDevo studies now provide genetic bases for the homology (or not) of basic features in plants and animals.

And how they have been modified.

ABC model of floral identity

• few gene differences involved in quite different looking flowers (Mimulus - monkey flowers)

• transcription factors not structural genes important in trait differences

2. Evidence through Homology

Molecular tinkering - major process for forming the diversity of life

Hox Genes - EvoDevo

Gene family, spatial organization, development

Halteres into wings
Antennae into legs

Hox Genes - EvoDevo

Molecular tinkering - major process for forming the diversity of life
3. Vestigial Structures

Evolution predicts that species occupying very distinct environments from that of a common ancestor might show **vestigial structures**.

- **Rudimentary tooth in lower jaw of a baleen whale**

3. Vestigial Structures

Parasitic and non-green dodders retain "fossil" non-functional chloroplasts as a vestigial structure inherited from a common ancestor with morning glories.

- **Convolvulus - morning glory**

3. Vestigial Structures

The pelvic girdle seen in reptiles and mammals as an adaptation for support in tetrapods, is vestigial in whales — it is a "fossil" footprint of their ancestry and serving no function today in swimming descendants of tetrapods.

4. Fossil Record

‘Missing links’ — transitional forms

- Fossil record is rich & consistent with information from hierarchical relationships based on morphology and DNA.
4. Fossil Record

‘Missing links’ — transitional forms

- Archaefructus in terms of age and morphology is consistent with an early basal angiosperm
- fossils often now placed in phylogenetic analyses

4. Fossil Record

‘Missing links’ — transitional forms

- fossil DNA has also been sequenced (‘Jurassic Park’)

4. Fossil Record

‘Missing links’ — transitional forms

"I 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.”

Darwin, in Origin of Species
4. Fossil Record

- now a wealth of fossils showing transitional forms from a putative ancestral Mesonychid type to modern whales has been uncovered

**Early stages were clearly terrestrial**

Paleontologist Phil Gingerich with 40 my old Basilosaurus with small hind legs in Egypt

4. Fossil Record

‘Missing links’ — transitional forms

- what should ‘missing links’ look like?
  - intermediate between chimp and human?
  - No! that is ‘ladder of life’ or “progression” thinking
  - each species is a ‘tip’ species with its own derived traits

• in tree thinking, ‘missing links’ are seen in a progression from a common ancestor with a sister species
  - the common ancestor may or may not look like the sister tip species
Darwin needed two chapters in the *Origin of Species* to cover his ideas on geographical distributions of organisms.

“I am prepared to go to the stake, if requisite, in support of the chapters on the geological and geographical distribution of life.”

Thomas Huxley after reading the *Origin of Species*

**5. Biogeography of Life**

"... that grand subject, that almost keystone of the laws of creation, Geographical Distribution"

Closely related species replace themselves across a continent

Convergent structures in bill and body shape in flower visiting birds from four different continents: North America, Australia, South America, and Africa
5. Biogeography of Life

Congruence of distribution patterns and earth history

Distributions of organisms, extant and extinct, provided the first evidence in 1920 for the then heretical idea of continental drift

- Glossopteris - Permian "fern"
- Mesosaurus - Permian freshwater reptile
- Cynognathus - Triassic land reptile
- Lystrosaurus - Triassic land reptile

6. Direct Observation

Evolutionary change in formation of crop plants

Documenting change within 100s or 1000s years due to human or artificial selection - often with "major" phenotypic modifications but due to small numbers of genes

6. Direct Observation

Evolutionary change within and among populations

Evolutionary changes in pepper moths (*Biston betularia*) coupled with natural selection

*Agrostis tenuis* growing on a copper mine in Britain — natural selection for copper tolerance in 150 generations
6. Direct Observation

Evolutionary change within and among populations

Directional selection in size of o‘hia flowers in 150 years due to loss of long-beaked honeycreeper species

Metrosideros – o‘hia

HAWAI’I’S BIRDS

6. Direct Observation

Evolutionary change within and among populations

Character displacement of floral color in zones of overlap of the geographic ranges of two similar colored species of phlox

Hybrids are sterile, but character displacement of floral color reduces interspecific pollen transfer by pollinators

Phlox (Polemoniaceae)

6. Direct Observation

Origin of recent species

• origin of new polyploid species in last 150 years (multiple times in different places)!

Tragopogon - goat’s beard

Doug & Pam Soltis

6. Direct Observation

Origin of old species

H. annuus

Re-synthesized in the lab

Loren Rieseberg

H. paradoxa

Helianthus anomalus
7. Molecular Evolution

Organisms contain within themselves a “DNA fossil footprint”

... and different stories are told by different genomes

The Fact of Common Ancestry

On the ordinary view of each species having been independently created, we gain no scientific explanation of any one of these facts. We can only say that it has so pleased the Creator . . . that He has impressed on them the most extraordinary resemblances, and has classed them in groups subordinate to groups.