

Encore Books  
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## THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

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### Introduction:

Question of cause: Dice or deity? Chance or design?

What do we mean by *science*?

Method definition: no supernatural allowed

Goal definition: trying to find out truth

If the supernatural exists (and does anything), then these definitions are not equivalent.

Recognizing the presence of mind in scientific research

archaeology/anthropology: arrowhead?

search for ET intelligence: radio signal?

prob 10,000 bits sufficient to recognize in either case

simplest bacteria has  $10^{12}$  bits = 100 million pp *Encyclopaedia Britannica*

What's wrong with the naturalistic alternative?

### Formation of Proteins:

Miller-Urey experiment 1953; frequently repeated under various conditions

-- have yet to produce 2 of 20 amino acids in any such experiment

Arginine, Histidine

-- regularly produce lots of other amino acids not in 20

-- produce lots of other stuff that would interfere with following steps

-- need reducing atmosphere (less than 1% oxygen)

but photo dissociation of  $H_2O$  creates a problem here

-- polarity of amino acids (all left handed)

### Formation of Nucleic Acids:

Robert Shapiro, "Improbability of Prebiotic Nucleic Acid Synthesis"

Robert Shapiro, *Origins: A Skeptic's Guide to the Creation of Life on Earth*, 182ff:

-- get low yields even with pure chemicals

-- need drastically different conditions for various

steps: acidity, temperature, catalysts

-- competing reactions (IPNAS, 569bottom)

-- how do nucleotides find each other?

### The Problem of Self-Replication:

See Newman and Byl articles in *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*:

Formation time for simple self-replicator estimated at about  $10^{79}$  years.

Chance of happening since big bang is  $10^{-69}$ .

### **The Problem of Bootstrapping:**

Evolutionists assume that life can get from simplest possible to simplest ever observed by mutation & natural selection, but no evidence this will produce complex mechanisms from simple ones.

Analogy of producing meaningful text by randomly adding & changing letters, even with natural selection.

### **The Problem of Information:**

Easy to solve this with a mind behind the universe; seems impossible without.  
(see Hubert P. Yockey, *Information Theory and Molecular Biology* [Cambridge, 1992]).

Chesterton (*Orthodoxy*, 41): "The Christian is quite free to believe that there is a considerable amount of settled order and inevitable development in the universe. But the materialist is not allowed to admit into his spotless machine the slightest speck of spiritualism or miracle."