

***Against Secular Creationism: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Biology. ***

This year marks two auspicious events in the history of reason. It is two hundred years since Charles Darwin's birth and one hundred and fifty years since the publication of *The Origin of Species*. These facts should be cause for celebration amongst philosophers since, for the first time in history, Darwin established conclusively that human beings are firmly part of the natural world, striking a death blow at all forms of irrationalism. So well established empirically and conceptually is the theory of evolution by natural selection that opponents should be treated with the same bemused condescension with which we regarded Flat Earthers or believers in Ancient Astronaut theory. For the most part this is the case: Creationism holds little attraction, even in Schools of Theology.

Yet, there exists a more pernicious version of Creationism which lurks in Departments of Humanities and shockingly even among philosophers. I refer to such a view as Secular Creationism. While it makes no overt appeal to the literal truth of *Genesis* /its intellectual structure and tactics are remarkably similar. For, at its root, lies the doctrine of human exceptionalism and like many of their peers in the Bible Belt Secular Creationists are troubled by the disturbing moral and political consequences of accepting Darwinism.

In this paper I will distinguish between genuine conceptual and ethical worries that have been provoked by crude interpretations of Darwinian theory, such as Evolutionary Psychology and a kind of intellectual childishness that denies the relevance of biology to human affairs /tout court./ This takes many forms but typically it is based upon an appeal to the uniqueness of human culture. I will show how recent work in philosophy of biology allows one to view supposedly unique human characteristics in the light of evolutionary theory without sacrificing their distinctive characteristics.