

Two Particularly Egregious Creationist Lies

I'm now going to deal with two particularly pernicious and venomous lies, one frequently propagated by various sections of the corporate creationism industry. The first being the "Darwin was a racist" lie., the second being the assertion that Hitler based his racial politics upon evolutionary biology.

As an example of how frequently this pair of duplicitous falsehoods appear in the public domain, I recently encountered this post on a forum I frequent:

How can you say he wasn't a racist when literally in his book he talks about sub human species and refers to the Africans and South Americans as sub humans. Hitler as well used evolutionary ideas to promote nazism.

So, let's deal with each of these lies in turn, shall we?

[1] "Darwin was a racist" - Refutation Part 1

This noxious piece of garbage is easily countered, courtesy of the fact that Darwin's entire collection of writings are now available online [here](#).

Among the accounts that destroy this venomous lie, is the account of Darwin engaging in a furious argument with Captain Fitzroy aboard *HMS Beagle*, in which he made his view of slavery as anathema vigorously known. The account is presented online [here](#), as follows:

Fitz-Roy's temper was a most unfortunate one. It was usually worst in the early morning, and with his eagle eye he could generally detect something amiss about the ship, and was then unsparing in his blame. He was very kind to me, but was a man very difficult to live with on the intimate terms which necessarily followed from our messing by ourselves in the same cabin. We had several quarrels; for instance, early in the voyage at Bahia, in Brazil, he defended and praised slavery, which I abominated, and told me that he had just visited a great slave-owner, who had called up many of his slaves and asked them whether they were happy, and whether they wished to be free, and all answered "No." I then asked him, perhaps with a sneer, whether he thought that the answer of slaves in the presence of their master was worth anything? This made him excessively angry, and he said that as I doubted his word we could not live any longer together. I thought that I should have been compelled to leave the ship; but as soon as the news spread, which it did quickly, as the captain sent for the first lieutenant to assuage his anger by abusing me, I was deeply

gratified by receiving an invitation from all the gun-room officers to mess with them. But after a few hours Fitz-Roy showed his usual magnanimity by sending an officer to me with an apology and a respect that I would continue to live with him.

There are other vignettes pointing to Darwin's abhorrence of slavery, one of which is found [here](#):

I feel glad that this happened in the land of the Brazilians, for I bear them no good will—a land also of slavery, and therefore of moral debasement.

Indeed, Darwin made several pertinent observations about the hideous practices made possible by institutionalised slavery in Brazil during his visit, all of which he condemned.

[2] The Role Of Quote Mining In The Construction Of This Lie

However, the lie about Darwin's views on race is in no small part due to a particularly egregious quote mine. For those who wish to know more about the mendacious practice that is quote mining, a practice that is rampant in creationist circles, then the [Talk Origins](#) has an entire section devoted to this practice, and said frequency of occurrence within creationist propaganda. Indeed, the website has [a special section devoted to creationist quote mines](#), and a special section devoted to [creationist quote mines of Darwin's writings](#). All of the aforementioned should be disturbingly illuminating to anyone who, while possessing an interest in *honest* discourse, hasn't encountered this corpus of duplicity before.

It is one particular noxious quote mine that I draw everyone's attention to at this juncture, namely this one:

At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world.

This egregiously dishonest out of context extract is peddled on numerous creationist websites, and the diligent will have no difficulty in finding this quote mine replicated in numerous places. However, when we examine the **complete paragraph** from which this snippet was clipped, an entirely **different** picture emerges, viz:

The great break in the organic chain between man and his nearest allies, which cannot be bridged over by any extinct or living species, has often been advanced as a grave objection to the belief that man is descended from some lower form; but this objection will not appear of much weight to those who, convinced by general

reasons, believe in the general principle of evolution. Breaks incessantly occur in all parts of the series, some being wide, sharp and defined, others less so in various degrees; as between the orang and its nearest allies—between the Tarsius and the other Lemuridæ—between the elephant and in a more striking manner between the Ornithorhynchus or Echidna, and other mammals. But all these breaks depend merely on the number of related forms which have become extinct. At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace throughout the world the savage races. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes, as Professor Schaaffhausen has remarked,¹⁶ will no doubt be exterminated. The break will then be rendered wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilised state, as we may hope, than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as at present between the negro or Australian and the gorilla.

Source: [The Descent of Man, Vol 1, pp 200-201](#)

What we discover, is that the snippet in question **was lifted from a paragraph devoted to an entirely different topic, namely, the manner in which extinction of living organisms may affect our ability to construct family trees.**

[3] "Darwin was a racist" - Refutation Part 2

Now, apart from the fact that this paragraph was considering the effect of extinction upon phylogenetic reconstruction (even though that exact term would come after Darwin, this is what is being discussed here), several other pertinent facts also aid in the destruction of this venomous lie. The first being that **Darwin was, no doubt, well aware of the activities of some of his fellow humans.** Not least the activities of several of his fellow Britons, who at the time were pursuing colonialism and imperialism with frightening vigour. **History teaches us that on numerous occasions, said pursuit of colonialism and imperialism involved lethal military force.**

Even given the quaint and archaic prose he chose to deploy in his writings, it's obvious to any honest reader of his work, that he regarded the likely elimination of indigenous peoples as a tragic, brute fact, and not, as sleazily asserted by creationists, some sort of desirable future objective. He saw the writing on the wall in an age where the first ironclad warships were still new technology, and breech loading artillery an experimental development. **He was well aware that some would use these tools for conquest and resource theft, and that indigenous peoples armed with little more than bows and arrows would find themselves fighting a harrowingly unequal war.**

Indeed, his view that imperialists would eventually erase indigenous peoples from the face of the Earth, has taken a new twist in recent years, with the advent of wars fought for resources by states acting on behalf of global corporations, and the use thereby of barely controlled mercenary armies.

But, in his day, his prediction was being made all the more tragically likely, by, wait for it, **Christian missionaries** sent out from imperial Britain to “convert” the natives. These missionaries acted with uncontrolled zeal to eliminate indigenous cultures, and replace them with a slavish devotion to a carefully cultivated religiosity, the real aim of which was to pave the way for imperial conquest. Those same missionaries were also ready to call upon military assistance to deal with any recalcitrant resistance to conversion.

One doesn't have to exert much effort, to learn how the Christian religion was weaponised in pursuit of colonial and imperial conquest, not just by the overlords of the British Empire of course. Spain had been involved in the same business since the time of Columbus, and even elementary history textbooks cover such topics as, for example, the Conquistadors, and the manner in which they effectively wiped out at least three Mesoamerican indigenous civilisations. **A process conducted, of course, at least three centuries before Darwin was born.**

Racism, and the verminous pressing into service thereof for reasons of conquest and political control, has been a festering sore upon human history for a very long time, and Abrahamic religions have their fair share of indulgence therein to account for. Indeed, the whole “Hamitic Races” garbage was wielded on a grand scale by the Ku Klux Klan, which was erected specifically as a Christian and creationist organisation. This particular piece of venomous nonsense is still peddled today in Ken Ham's sleazy “creation museum”.

[4] What Darwin Really Thought About "Races"

As for what Darwin really thought about “races”, let s turn to [pages 214-216](#) of *The Descent of Man*, viz:

It is not my intention here to describe the several so-called races of men; but to inquire what is the value of the differences between them under a classificatory point of view, and how they have originated. In determining whether two or more allied forms ought to be ranked as species or varieties, naturalists are practically guided by the following considerations; namely, the amount of difference between them, and whether such differences relate to few or many points of structure, and whether they are of physiological importance; but more especially whether they are constant. Constancy of character is what is chiefly valued and sought for by naturalists. Whenever it can be shewn, or rendered

probable, that the forms in question have remained distinct for a long period, this becomes an argument of much weight in favour of treating them as species. Even a slight degree of sterility between any two forms when first crossed, or in their offspring, is generally considered as a decisive test of their specific distinctness; and their continued persistence without blending within the same area, is usually accepted as sufficient evidence, either of some degree of mutual sterility, or in the case of animals of some repugnance to mutual pairing.

Independently of blending from intercrossing, the complete absence, in a well-investigated region, of varieties linking together any two closely-allied forms, is probably the most important of all the criteria of their specific distinctness; and this is a somewhat different consideration from mere constancy of character, for two forms may be highly variable and yet not yield intermediate varieties. Geographical distribution is often unconsciously and sometimes consciously brought into play; so that forms living in two widely separated areas, in which most of the other inhabitants are specifically distinct, are themselves usually looked at as distinct; but in truth this affords no aid in distinguishing geographical races from so-called good or true species.

Now let us apply these generally-admitted principles to the races of man, viewing him in the same spirit as a naturalist would any other animal. In regard to the amount of difference between the races, we must make some allowance for our nice powers of discrimination gained by the long habit of observing ourselves. In India, as Elphinstone remarks,¹ although a newly-arrived European cannot at first distinguish the various native races, yet they soon appear to him extremely dissimilar; and the Hindoo cannot at first perceive any difference between the several European nations. Even the most distinct races of man, with the exception of certain negro tribes, are much more like each other in form than would at first be supposed. This is well shewn by the French photographs in the Collection Anthropologique du Muséum of the men belonging to various races, the greater number of which, as many persons to whom I have shown them have remarked, might pass for Europeans. Nevertheless, these men if seen alive would undoubtedly appear very distinct, so that we are clearly much influenced in our judgment by the mere colour of the skin and hair, by slight differences in the features, and by expression.

Note how he opened that exposition with the words "*the several so-called races of men*". Already, he was starting to think in terms of differentiating between superficial and rigorous characteristics. Indeed, I'll repeat this part of his exposition, because it provides a valuable insight:

Whenever it can be shewn, or rendered probable, that the forms in question have remained distinct for a long period, this becomes an argument of much weight in favour of treating them as species. Even a slight degree of sterility between any two forms when first crossed, or in their offspring, is generally considered as a decisive test of their specific distinctness; and their continued persistence without blending within the same area, is usually accepted as sufficient evidence, either of some degree of mutual sterility, or in the case of animals of some repugnance to mutual pairing.

Now at this point, I experienced a sort of "light bulb over the head" moment, when I realised that *this was possibly the first explicit statement of the biological species concept*^[1], along with the first explicit statement of the concept of *assortative mating*^[2]. But, that tangential diversion aside, this passage also tells us that he manifestly regarded so-called "racial differences" as superficial from the standpoint of actual biology, in the last paragraph of his exposition. Unlike actual racists.

Later on, we have this, from page 226:

But the most weighty of all the arguments against treating the races of man as distinct species, is that they graduate into each other, independently in many cases, as far as we can judge, of their having intercrossed. Man has been studied more carefully than any other organic being, and yet there is the greatest possible diversity amongst capable judges whether he should be classed as a single species or race, or as two (Virey), as three (Jacquinot), as four (Kant), five (Blumenbach), six (Buffon), seven (Hunter), eight (Agassiz), eleven (Pickering), fifteen (Bory St. Vincent), sixteen (Desmoulins), twenty-two (Morton), sixty (Crawfurd), or as sixty-three, according to Burke.¹⁷ This diversity of judgment does not prove that the races ought not to be ranked as species, but it shews that they graduate into each other, and that it is hardly possible to discover clear distinctive character between them.

Incidentally, footnote 17 reads as follows:

See a good discussion on this subject in Waitz, 'Introduct. to Anthropology,' Eng. transl. 1863, p. 198-208, 227. I have taken some of the above statements from H. Tuttle's 'Origin and Antiquity of Physical Man,' Boston, 1866, p. 35.

which provides us with an example of **proper citation of prior art**, as practised by every competent scientist, something we never see from mythology fanboy apologetics. But I digress.

[5] An Example Of The Taxonomic Issues

In addition, pages 227 and 228 cover some of the issues that have faced taxonomists ever since Linnaeus launched the discipline as a rigorous scientific enterprise, and which even today, sometimes results in consternation among the taxonomic fraternity until the sledgehammer of DNA analysis is brought to bear on the matter.

Indeed, as an invertebrate zoologist, I'm aware of a particularly fascinating example of the issues involved, courtesy of a South American butterfly known as *Styx infernalis*. This species ended up with this taxonomic designation for a reason - namely, that an analysis of its detailed anatomy, revealed this insect to be, in effect, a "parts bin" special, containing features found in four different Lepidoptera Families. Over the past 100 years or so, this unfortunate insect has been causing taxonomists to scratch their heads with respect to its exact Family placement, hence it being handed a taxonomic name effectively translating as "the butterfly from Hell".

Staudinger originally placed this insect in the Pieridae, whereupon a re-examination led to it being moved to the now defunct Family Erycinidae. Ehrlich classified it as part of the Lycaenidae, in a SubFamily called the Styginae, while one worker in the field proposed that it be classified in its own unique Family, the Stygidae. Other workers proposed that it reside in the Riodinidae, where it enjoyed a tenuous status until DNA analysis was brought to bear upon it, which finally cemented its place in the Riodnidae, but with a twist - instead of being in the SubFamily Euselasinae, where almost all of the other South American members of the Family are placed, it was found to be part of the SubFamily Nemeobiinae, which is of Old World origin and distribution.

Now if this sort of hoo-ha can arise from a butterfly, it should come as no surprise that a species as diverse in appearance as *Homo sapiens* should have caused 19th century taxonomists some headaches.

Once again, the data is informative here.

So, having dealt with the "Darwin was a racist" lie, it's time to move on to that other pernicious creationist lie, namely the lie that Hitler based his racial politics on evolutionary theory ...

[6] The "Hitler Was An Evolutionist" Lie

I'll refer directly to my searchable electronic copy of the Unexpurgated Edition of *Mein Kampf*, which is freely downloadable from the Gutenberg Project website, courtesy of [this link](#), in order to begin my destruction of this lie.

First of all, let's perform a little experiment. Let's see if Darwin is mentioned anywhere in *Mein Kampf*, shall we? What do I find when I perform the requisite text search? I find this:

Number of occurrences of "Darwin" : ZERO

Number of occurrences of "God" : 37

Number of occurrences of "Almighty" : 6

Number of occurrences of "Creator" : 8

Hmm, starting to look as though once again, real world data is destroying this particular piece of garbage with thermonuclear ordnance. But, even better, is this passage, from pages 245 to 246 of *Mein Kampf*, viz:

Even a superficial glance is sufficient to show that all the innumerable forms in which the life-urge of Nature manifests itself are subject to a fundamental law - one may call it an iron law of Nature - which compels the various species to keep within the definite limits of their own life-forms when propagating and multiplying their kind. Each animal mates only with one of its own species. The titmouse cohabits only with the titmouse, the finch with the finch, the stork with the stork, the field-mouse with the field-mouse, the house-mouse with the house-mouse, the wolf with the she-wolf, etc.

Deviations from this law take place only in exceptional circumstances. This happens especially under the compulsion of captivity, or when some other obstacle makes procreative intercourse impossible between individuals of the same species. But then Nature abhors such intercourse with all her might; and her protest is most clearly demonstrated by the fact that the hybrid is either sterile or the fecundity of its descendants is limited. In most cases hybrids and their progeny are denied the ordinary powers of resistance to disease or the natural means of defence against outer attack.

That passage constitutes **practically a canonical version of the creationist "kinds" nonsense**. In short, **Hitler's view of biology was closer to creationism than to evolutionary biology**.

Meanwhile, the Nazis' real attitude to evolution was demonstrated during their book burning episode. Courtesy of [this website](#), we find the following set of guidelines from *Die Bücherei*, the handbook of works deemed seditious by the Nazis, and hence to be removed from public libraries and universities to be destroyed (specifically, from page 279 thereof):

6. Schriften weltanschaulichen und lebenskundlichen Charakters, deren Inhalt die falsche naturwissenschaftliche Aufklärung eines primitiven Darwinismus und Monismus ist (Häckel).

Which translates to:

Writings of a philosophical and social nature whose content deals with the false scientific enlightenment of primitive Darwinism and Monism (Häckel).

In other words, **the Nazis removed evolutionary textbooks from schools, universities and libraries, and destroyed them.**

This should once and for all, nail the lie that Hitler's views on biology had any connection with evolutionary theory. Indeed, his entire racial politics centred upon the division of humans into synthetic "racial" monocultures, and the elevation of one particular monoculture (the "Aryan race") to a special, privileged status.

Anyone who has actually studied evolutionary biology will know that monocultures are the very *antithesis* of a sound entity, from the standpoint of long term survival. Instead, a species is best protected from extinction, when it possesses *genetic diversity* that can provide the fuel for escaping some catastrophe. The vast fortunes that have to be spent by agrobusiness protecting crop monocultures from disease and the ravages of insects are a case in point.

Another useful body of data is provided by European royal families, which engaged in restriction of the gene pool when selecting partners for various heirs to the thrones in question. The most lurid example being provided by the Habsburgs, whose inbreeding led to frankly frightening results among their offspring – Charles II of Spain provides possibly *the* canonical example of the genetic catastrophes that arise from monoculture-inspired inbreeding.

Charles II of Spain was beset throughout his life by extended periods of ill health, to the point where it was remarked by a contemporary French ambassador, "he is so ugly as to cause fear, and looks ill". The historian John Langdon Davies summarised him thus: "Of no man is it more true to say that in his beginning was his end; from the day of his birth, they were waiting for his death".

Suffering from hydrocephalus, beset at an early age by rickets, impotent, and manifesting some fairly florid physical and mental disabilities, it's safe to say that Charles II of Spain was a genetic disaster zone. No less than *sixteen* generations of Habsburg inbreeding culminated in this unfortunate individual, described by the American historians Will and Ariel Durant as "short, lame, epileptic, senile and completely bald before 35, he was always

on the verge of death, but repeatedly baffled Christendom by continuing to live”.

The idea that humanity is best served by turning it into a genetically homogeneous monoculture, is **violently** at variance with the *genuine* ideas of evolutionary biology, Charles II of Spain merely provides us with one florid example of this principle, the inbreeding required to maintain a monoculture being genetically disastrous for the offspring in question.

Only either the woefully ignorant or the duplicitous, could ever peddle the idea that Hitler’s monoculture view of humanity had **any** basis in evolutionary biology, even before we take note of the Nazis actively engaging in *destruction* of textbooks on evolutionary biology. But logical consistency and consonance with demonstrable fact, have never played a part in creationist apologetics.

Notes:

[1] The **biological species concept** is as follows: a *species* is an *assemblage of living organisms*, all members thereof being capable of producing fertile and reproductively competent offspring with each other. Note how this contrasts sharply with the *taxonomic* approach to species, which is based upon *type specimens*, that in effect constitute a *selected snapshot of the species in question, at a particular point in the history of the species*, and which are used as a ‘reference standard’ against which future collected specimens are compared.

[2] **Assortative mating** is the name given to the preference of living organisms for other organisms with particular physical or behavioural phenotypes, as choices for mating. Under normal circumstances, this process acts as a barrier to hybridisation between species, that could in some circumstances constitute a genetic “dead end”, but can also exert influence resulting in speciation events. See, for example, Diane Dodd’s scientific paper on *Drosophila pseudoobscura*, and the scientific literature covering *Rhagoletis pomonella*.