



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on March 6, 2016

Scientists Say Human Hand Designed by “Creator” — Prompting Backlash from Colleagues

It’s just a paper about the hand. It bears the not-very-titillating title “Biomechanical characteristics of hand coordination in grasping activities of daily living.” But now its authors could use a helping hand after receiving the back of someone else’s.



Written by three researchers from China’s Huazhong University and one from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, the [paper](#) was published January 5 in the *PLOS ONE* journal. And what was its supposed trespass?

It referenced the Creator numerous times.

This created intense controversy, with some scientists and even *PLOS ONE* editors calling for a retraction and other scientists threatening a boycott. And the journal did ultimately print a [retraction](#) on March 4, apologizing to readers for the “inappropriate language.”

As for samples of such, the *Independent* [reported](#):

In the opening sentences of the study, it claims the link between muscles and [hand movements](#) is the product of “proper design by the Creator.”

Later, it says human hand coordination “should indicate the mystery of the Creator’s invention,” and concludes by again claiming the mechanical architecture of the hand is the result of “proper design by the Creator.”

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For the authors’ part, they repudiated the language in the paper’s comments section, attributing it to “translation errors rather than [to] a belief in intelligent design,” the *Independent* wrote.

As for the reaction, it sometimes approached the tone of a fundamentalist defending dogma. Aside from critics calling the paper’s publication “sloppy” and “unacceptable,” biomedical engineer Simon Rascovsky [tweeted](#) “The [#Creatorgate](#) article is a harmful disgrace.”

Of course, some might say that a scientific journal should confine itself to what can be scientifically proven, and intelligent design doesn’t fall into that category (at least for now). Yet it should be noted — especially by those wont to cite “consensus” — that rejecting Intelligent Design out of hand is wholly contrary to science’s historical norm. As the *Independent* [reported](#) in 2007 in an interview by Nick Jackson:

Stuart Burgess is Professor of design and nature in the department of mechanical engineering at Bristol University. He argues that intelligent design is as valid a scientific concept as evolution.

Current scientific philosophy is to rule out completely the possibility that a creator was involved. But there is no scientific justification for making such a sweeping assumption. Science should



always be open-minded.

Newton, Kelvin, Faraday and Pascal had no problem with a creator and with design. There is no reason why a modern scientist cannot take the same position as these eminent scientists.

As for what such scientists actually said, here's a sampling:

- "The more I study science, the more I believe in God." — Albert Einstein
- "The gift of mental power comes from God, Divine Being, and if we concentrate our minds on that truth, we become in tune with this great power." — Legendary Serbian-born physicist and futurist Nikola Tesla
- "I believe that the more thoroughly science is studied, the further does it take us from anything comparable to atheism.... If you study science deep enough and long enough, it will force you to believe in God." — Lord William Kelvin, great mathematical physicist noted for his work on thermodynamics
- "I have looked into most philosophical systems and I have seen that none will work without God." "Science is incompetent to reason upon the creation of matter itself out of nothing." — Physicist and mathematician James Clerk Maxwell, considered as great as Einstein and Newton by many.
- And, finally, "The question of whether there exists a Creator and Ruler of the Universe has been answered in the affirmative by some of the highest intellects that have ever existed."

Oh, the last one is from the evolutionists' evolutionist, Charles Darwin himself.

Thus, Einstein's and other great scientists' statements refute the notion that science inevitably leads one away from God. So the real issue here isn't good or bad science, but bad philosophy and emotional attachments. That is to say, the explanation for the rampant atheism among many modern scientists is not that they're scientific, but that they're modernists.

And this colors their work. Contrary to what these scientists may think, they aren't taking a neutral approach to the matter of God. Rather, implicit in their oft-expressed evolutionism is the furtherance of another scientifically improvable idea: that God does not exist. As New York University law and philosophy professor Thomas Nagel, an *avowed atheist*, [wrote](#) in the essay "Public Education and Intelligent Design":

The campaign of the scientific establishment to rule out intelligent design as beyond discussion because it is not science results in the avoidance of significant questions about the relation between evolutionary theory and religious belief....

From the beginning it has been commonplace to present the theory of evolution by random mutation and natural selection as an alternative to intentional design as an explanation of the functional organization of living organisms. The evidence for the theory is supposed to be evidence for the absence of purpose in the causation of the development of life-forms on this planet. It is not just the theory that life evolved over billions of years, and that all species are descended from a common ancestor. Its defining element is the claim that all this happened as the result of the appearance of random and purposeless mutations in the genetic material followed by natural selection due to the resulting heritable variations in reproductive fitness. It displaces design by proposing an alternative.

And this is the point. Evolution treats not just the "what" of life's origin and development, but also the "why"; that is to say, its explanation is that there is no why, that life is merely a cosmic accident. This is



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to go beyond science and to tread in — and on — the theological realm.

In reality, these scientists would be wise to worry less about the theistic Einsteins in their midst and instead direct their fire at the rampant fraud in their field. As I [reported](#) in 2014, retraction of science papers for fraud or misconduct is 10 times as common today as in 1975.

Instead, these scientists are busy pushing a philosophical/atheological message — something beyond their area of competence — and have created what Professor Nagel called “a counterorthodoxy, supported by bad arguments.” In fact, science’s unscientific Church of Atheism is so powerful that, as Professor Burgess [put it](#), “Three hundred years ago, there was so much support for intelligent design that life could be difficult if you were an atheist. Now the opposite is true; life can be difficult if you show the slightest sympathy for intelligent design.” And the backhanded hand researchers are Exhibit A.

A person who wasn’t just scientific, but sage, would realize that such overwrought opposition to theological content is not a product of the intellect, but the emotions. As Burgess pointed out, “Some people are worried about the implications of the existence of a creator.” After all, such a reality means that one’s sins really are sins, not just “lifestyle choices,” and people can react violently to anything threatening their passions. But as Burgess concluded, “It’s not science to rule something out because you don’t like the implications.”

For sure. It’s not science — or scientific — at all.



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