natural selection, that observation of certain facts indicates invisible evidence that is incapable of explanation but that is so convincing, it must be held as establishing specific truth. However, Copernicus, Newton, or Einstein never would have considered this approach as science — never.

The Origin of Species was published in London in 1859, and it sold out on the first day it became available. The public was ready for this theory. It was accepted, not because it was great science, but because it was what people wanted to believe, and it was set in the form of great rhetoric.

Indeed, Darwin launched a scientific revolution. He changed the essence of science. No longer was strict experimentation necessary to ascertain the principles of nature, but mere speculation when held in agreement by a body of designated experts alone could determine truth. And as a consequence, society went on to establish psychology, sociology, politics, law, and many other social disciplines of study, as in essence the same as science, though in reality their findings are mostly based on mere speculation.

by Montgomery Paul Webb

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Charles Darwin — A Great Scientist?!??

Note the following quote from the *Forward* of *The Origin of Species: by Means of Natural Selection or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* by Charles Darwin, with a *New Forward* by Patricia Horan, Avenel Books, New York, 1979.

"Darwin is called the most important figure in the history of biology, more important than Copernicus, Newton, or Einstein, ranking only with Aristotelian philosophy and the scientific revolution in his impact on history...When *The Origin of Species* was written, the theory of evolution in biology was already an old, even discredited one. In the late editions of *The Origin of Species,* Darwin listed over thirty predecessors... Why then is Darwin's work the revolutionary one? Because of the amount of evidence patiently sifted. And because he found a plausible mechanism to explain how species can change: by means of natural selection."

This type acclaim of Darwin is typical in our society. However, in actually going on to read the book, which few people do, such high praise of Darwin quickly begins to seem most curious. The book is about 450 pages, but one cannot help but be struck by how constantly Darwin sets out his evidence utilizing phrases such as "I presume... my conviction... there can be no doubt... I think... I believe... there is reason to believe... I cannot doubt... owing to mysterious laws... it seems pretty clear... I am strongly inclined to suspect... the whole subject must, I think, remain vague, nevertheless... I am fully convinced... it seems to me probable... no one supposes..."

Darwin goes on and on, wherein instead of citing facts established by the scientific method, he presents premises that seem to him to be true, as the bases of his conclusions. At one point, he even sets out support for his theory by noting "Ask, as I have asked, a celebrated raiser of Hereford cattle, whether his cattle might not have descended from longhorns, and he will laugh you to scorn."

However, in the *Introduction* to *The Origin of Species,* Darwin states that he cannot provide references and authorities to support his position, but the reader must merely have confidence in his accuracy, and then, he notes that he is not able to give a full and balanced statement of relevant facts and arguments on the issues.

To make up for his inability to establish factual truth through evidence, Darwin at times essentially attempts to assert that knowledge can be determined by a scientific priesthood coming to an agreement. Note the following quotes from chapter two, *Variation under Nature.*

"Hence, in determining whether a form should be ranked as a species or a variety, the opinion of naturalists having sound judgement and wide experience seems the only guide to follow...

"It must be admitted that many forms, considered by highly-competent judges as varieties, has so perfectly the character of species that they are ranked by other highly-competent judges as good and true species...

"Close investigation in most cases, will bring naturalists to an agreement how to rank doubtful forms."

At times the Roman Catholic Church will uphold a position as truth, noting the general agreement of priests as support. Then, reasoning by non-priests contrary to the position does not have to be considered. However, non-Catholics often object to such a process, by noting that people cannot become priests without first agreeing to other assumptions about the truth. The process is a matter of faith, not science.

Perhaps, Darwin uses more of a priestly approach for his findings, as his formal education consisted only of a bachelor's degree in theology, which he received in 1831 at Christ College, Cambridge University. He had no formal education in science. His father had urged him to pursue the study of medicine, which Charles attempted, but he quickly dropped out of the courses of instruction.

However, if what truly sets out Darwin's work on evolution as superior is his explanation of how natural selection occurs, a review of his position on this mechanism is particularly relevant, which he covers in chapter four, *Natural Selection.*

The following quotes represent his position on natural selection.

"Under domestication, it may truly be said that the whole organisation becomes in some degree plastic. Let it be borne in mind how infinitely complex and close-fitting are the mutual relations of all organic beings to each other and to their physical conditions of life. Can it, then, be thought improbable, seeing that variations useful to man have undoubtedly occurred, that other variations useful in some way to each being in the great and complex battle of life, should sometimes occur in the course of thousands of generations? If such do occur, can we doubt (remembering that many more individuals are born than can possibly survive) that individuals having any advantage, however slight, over others, would have the best chance of surviving and of procreating their kind? On the other hand, we may feel sure that any variation in the least degree injurious would be rigidly destroyed. This preservation of favourable variations and the rejection of injurious variations, I call Natural Selection...

"It may be said that natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world, every variation, even the slightest; rejecting that which is bad, preserving and adding up all that is good; silently and insensibly working, whenever and wherever opportunity offers, at the improvement of each organic being in relation to its organic and inorganic conditions of life. We see nothing of these slow changes in progress, until the hand of time has marked the long lapse of ages, and then so imperfect is our view into long ago past geological ages, that we only see that the forms of life are now different from what they formerly were...

"It is, however, far more necessary to bear in mind that there are many unknown laws of correlation of growth, which, when one part of the organisation is modified through variation, and the modifications are accumulated by natural selection for the good of the being, will cause other modifications, often of the most unexpected nature."

It seems Darwin is saying in regard to