CONSCIOUSNESS AND COMPUTERS

In Computer’s July 2007 issue, Neville Holmes, who usually provides some references to back up his position, wrote what appears to be a secular antireligious article, without any justification of his claims (The Profession, “Consciousness and Computers,” pp. 100, 98-99).

Historical documents indicate that animals have long been known to have self-awareness. Our cat was not only self-aware but showed emotions such as jealousy and love.

Holmes also erroneously claims that complex animals evolved from simple ones. Clearly, this could never happen, as the second law of thermodynamics, as well as all observational experiments, have shown.

Science requires the ability to confirm results with independent experiments. Evolution cannot be confirmed. It is merely the faith of the antireligion faction that believes in Darwin, instead of logic and facts.

Humans have been degrading over the centuries and are now more prone to disease and other problems. No new senses have evolved, and no new species have emerged. And mouthing a stallball line about just needing more time would be neither logical nor scientific.

A far better explanation is that all life is based on a preprogrammed DNA that has a calendar/clock capability and instantiates the existing potential in different forms at different times and circumstances. That is at least plausible.

Should Holmes or others then claim that that would invoke God, which they do not believe in, they would still have the problem of explaining where their first simple animals came from. Did they appear from nothingness following a random flash and boom because in the infinite duration of time events of probability zero could happen? They certainly did not “evolve” to become more complex.

Since none of this can be proven logically, the simplest solution—that is, programmed DNA—would be the better option based on the logic of Occam’s razor.

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Neville Holmes responds:
I’m not clear why I am taken to be an atheist. I am aware of myself as an agnostic with a tendency to numinism.

On evolution, I have found Howard Bloom’s book Global Brain (howardbloom.net) to be fascinating reading, but it’s somewhat overloaded with formal citations.

ERRATUM

In my article titled “Supporting Resource-Constrained Collaboration Environments” (The Profession, June 2007, pps. 108, 106-107), there is an error in Figure 3. The date in the file name is shown as 060704 when it should be 070704.

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