

**Comments to *Billions and Billions of Demons*, The New York Review of Books, JANUARY 9, 1997 by Richard C. Lewontin (Alexander Agassiz Research Professor at Harvard)**

We take the side of science **in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs**, in spite of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, **in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories**, because we have a **prior commitment**, a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counterintuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.... (Richard Lewontin, "The Demon-Haunted World," *The New York Review of Books*, January 9, 1997, p. 28., emphases added)

Evowiki comments<sup>1</sup>: Answers in Genesis makes it appear as if by "patent absurdity", Lewontin means evolution, when he is really talking about astronomy. Gitt makes it appear as if Lewontin thinks that materialism cannot be justified and is a personal decision. But in reality Lewontin gives a reason just after creationists stop quoting him. Also, many scientists will disagree with him in the detail creationists are emphasizing, and say that methodological naturalism is a necessary component of science, giving exactly the reason Lewontin gave.

The comments in blue below show that Evowiki itself is taking Lewontin out of context. Lewontin's paper is animated by the need to explain precisely why popular opinion is characteristically doubtful of evolutionary claims. Here's how he begins his article.

"But the Solar System!" I protested.

"What the deuce is it to me?" he interrupted impatiently: "you say that we go round the sun. If we went round the moon it would not make a pennyworth of difference to me or my work." — Colloquy between Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes in A Study in Scarlet

I first met Carl Sagan in 1964, when he and I found ourselves in Arkansas on the platform of the Little Rock Auditorium, where we had been dispatched by command of the leading geneticist of the day, Herman Muller. Our task was to take the affirmative side in a debate: "Resolved, That the Theory of Evolution is proved as is the fact that the Earth goes around the Sun." One of our opponents in the debate was a professor of biology from a fundamentalist college in Texas (his father was the president of the college) who had quite deliberately chosen the notoriously evolutionist Department of Zoology of the University of Texas as the source of

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<sup>1</sup> [http://wiki.cotch.net/index.php/Lewontin\\_on\\_materialism](http://wiki.cotch.net/index.php/Lewontin_on_materialism)

his Ph.D. He could then assure his students that he had unassailable expert knowledge with which to refute Darwinism.

I had serious misgivings about facing an immense audience of creationist fundamentalist Christians in a city made famous by an Arkansas governor who, having detected a resentment of his constituents against federal usurpation, defied the power of Big Government by interposing his own body between the door of the local high school and some black kids who wanted to matriculate.

Young scientists, however, do not easily withstand the urgings of Nobel Prize winners, so after several transparently devious attempts to avoid the job, I appeared. We were, in fact, well treated, but despite our absolutely compelling arguments, the audience unaccountably voted for the opposition. Carl and I then sneaked out the back door of the auditorium and beat it out of town, quite certain that at any moment hooded riders with ropes and flaming crosses would snatch up two atheistic New York Jews who had thechutzpah to engage in public blasphemy.

Sagan and I drew different conclusions from our experience. For me the confrontation between creationism and the science of evolution was an example of historical, regional, and class differences in culture that could only be understood in the context of American social history. For Carl it was a struggle between ignorance and knowledge, although it is not clear to me what he made of the unimpeachable scientific credentials of our opponent, except perhaps to see him as an example of the Devil quoting scripture.

OK. So the stage is set. This paper is about explaining the confrontation between creationism and the science of evolution. Let's not forget that. Lewontin then goes on to explain that in Sagan's opinion, the reason for the rejection is pure ignorance. As such, Sagan spent his life trying to educate the masses in science. But, claims Lewontin, it is impossible to educate everyone in science. There must be more we can do than just the dissemination of academic knowledge. So, the second step goes like this.

Second, to put a correct view of the universe into people's heads we must first get an incorrect view out. People believe a lot of nonsense about the world of phenomena, nonsense that is a consequence of a wrong way of thinking. The primary problem is not to provide the public with the knowledge of how far it is to the nearest star and what genes are made of, for that vast project is, in its entirety, hopeless. Rather, the problem is to get them to reject irrational and supernatural explanations of the world, the demons that exist only in their imaginations, and to accept a social and intellectual apparatus, Science, as the only begetter of truth. The reason that people do not have a correct view of nature is not that they are ignorant of this or that fact about the material world, but that they look to the wrong sources in their attempt to understand.

So, according to Lewontin, the reason people reject science is because they look in all the wrong places and he's not entirely wrong. But by irrational and supernatural explanations he means anything which does not appeal solely to material causes. Ergo, this includes all religions and invalidates the entire cannon, from Chumash down to Megilas Esther, as a source of information on the phenomenal world. In order to counteract this "insidious" condition, Lewontin encourages a radical Marxist approach. There must be a fundamental shift in the social and intellectual order. We must see things differently. We must all adopt a unified and specific social and intellectual apparatus and only then can we be assured that our collective efforts as a society will be geared towards the acquisition of truth. And the name of this apparatus is: Science. Science is the only begetter of truth, nothing else. This, my friends, is the basic Philosophy of Materialism.

Lewontin then goes on to outline Carl Sagan's basic approach and then summarily blows "billions and billions" of holes in it (Carl Sagan was famous for introducing the term "billions and billions" when he discussed the Cosmos in his televised series of the same name). First let's see his review of Sagan.

Sagan's argument is straightforward. We exist as material beings in a material world, all of whose phenomena are the consequences of physical relations among material entities. The vast majority of us do not have control of the intellectual apparatus needed to explain manifest reality in material terms, so in place of scientific (i.e., correct material) explanations, we substitute demons... Most of the chapters of *The Demon-Haunted World* are taken up with exhortations to the reader to cease whoring after false gods and to accept the scientific method as the unique pathway to a correct understanding of the natural world. To Sagan, as to all but a few other scientists, it is self-evident that the practices of science provide the surest method of putting us in contact with physical reality, and that, in contrast, the demon-haunted world rests on a set of beliefs and behaviors that fail every reasonable test. So why do so many people believe in demons? Sagan seems baffled, and nowhere does he offer a coherent explanation of the popularity at the supermarket checkout counter of the *Weekly World News*, with its faked photographs of Martians. Indeed, he believes that "a proclivity for science is embedded deeply within us in all times, places and cultures."...Nearly every present-day scientist would agree with Carl Sagan that our explanations of material phenomena exclude any role for supernatural demons, witches, and spirits of every kind, including any of the various gods...(I say "nearly" every scientist because our creationist opponent in the Little Rock debate, and other supporters of "Creation Science," would insist on being recognized.) We also exclude from our explanations little green men from Mars riding in space ships, although they are supposed to be quite as corporeal as you and I, because the evidence is overwhelming that Mars hasn't got any...Sagan believes that scientists reject sprites, fairies, and the influence of Sagittarius because we follow a set of procedures, the Scientific Method, which has consistently produced explanations

that put us in contact with reality and in which mystic forces play no part. For Sagan, the method is the message, but I think he has opened the wrong envelope.

So essentially Sagan is saying that scientists are devoted to the Scientific Method, a method which consists of objective means and ways of putting us in touch with reality, as opposed to non-scientific methods. This then is why scientists are always rejecting spirits and fairies and little green men from Mars. It is their objectivity which keeps them on the straight and narrow. It is their adherence to the Scientific Method which makes them choose rational explanations and reject ludicrous approaches.

Richard Lewinton disagrees. As Philip Johnson puts it,

“Lewontin, a Marxist whose philosophical sophistication exceeds that of Sagan by several orders of magnitude, came to see the issue as essentially one of basic intellectual commitment rather than factual knowledge.”

Lewontin, in the most incredible display of brutal honesty I have ever seen by a senior member of the academic left, entirely demolishes this image of the scientific establishment. He demonstrates that often-times they do *not* cling to the Scientific Method and that some of the greatest scientific theories promoted by the establishment are no less ludicrous than demons and fairies. I'm going to have to skip a lot of the material because it's about six pages but I'll try to give a taste of what he is saying. I've highlighted some parts...

There is no attempt in *The Demon-Haunted World* to provide a systematic account of just what Science and the Scientific Method consist in, nor was that the author's intention. The book is not meant to be a discourse on method, but it is in large part a collection of articles taken from *Parade* magazine and other popular publications. Sagan's intent is not analytic, but hortatory. Nevertheless, if the exhortation is to succeed, then the argument for the superiority of science and its method must be convincing, and not merely convincing, but must accord with its own demands. The case for the scientific method should itself be “scientific” and not merely rhetorical. Unfortunately, the argument may not look as good to the unconvinced as it does to the believer.

First, we are told that science “delivers the goods.” It certainly has, sometimes, but it has often failed when we need it most. Scientists and their professional institutions, partly intoxicated with examples of past successes, partly in order to assure public financial support, make grandiose promises that cannot be kept. Sagan writes with justified scorn that we're regularly bombarded with extravagant UFO claims vended in bite-sized packages, but only rarely do we hear of their comeuppance.

He cannot have forgotten the well-publicized War on Cancer, which is as yet without a victorious battle despite the successful taking of

a salient or two. At first an immense amount of money and consciousness was devoted to the supposed oncogenic viruses which, being infectious bugs, could be exterminated or at least resisted. But these particular Unidentified Flying Objects turned out for the most part to be as elusive as the Martians, and so, without publicly calling attention to their "comeuppance," the General Staff turned from outside invaders to the enemy within, the genes. It is almost certain that cancers do, indeed, arise because genes concerned with the regulation of cell division are mutated, partly as a consequence of environmental insults, partly because of unavoidable molecular instability, and even sometimes as the consequence of a viral attack on the genome. Yet the realization of the role played by DNA has had absolutely no consequence for either therapy or prevention, although it has resulted in many optimistic press conferences and a considerable budget for the National Cancer Institute. Treatments for cancer remain today what they were before molecular biology was ever thought of: cut it out, burn it out, or poison it.

The concentration on the genes implicated in cancer is only a special case of a general genomania that surfaces in the form of weekly announcements in *The New York Times* of the location of yet another gene for another disease. The revealing rhetoric of this publicity is always the same; only the blanks need to be filled in: "It was announced today by scientists at [Harvard, Vanderbilt, Stanford] Medical School that a gene responsible for [some, many, a common form of] [schizophrenia, Alzheimer's, arterio-sclerosis, prostate cancer] has been located and its DNA sequence determined. This exciting research, say scientists, is the first step in what may eventually turn out to be a possible cure for this disease."

The entire public justification for the Human Genome Project is the promise that some day, in the admittedly distant future, diseases will be cured or prevented. Skeptics who point out that we do not yet have a single case of a prevention or cure arising from a knowledge of DNA sequences are answered by the observations that "these things take time," or that "no one knows the value of a newborn baby." **But such vague waves of the hand miss the central scientific issue. The prevention or cure of metabolic and developmental disorders depends on a detailed knowledge of the mechanisms operating in cells and tissues above the level of genes, and there is no relevant information about those mechanisms in DNA sequences.** (I've highlighted this because it is reminiscent of the state of affairs in evolution) In fact, if I know the DNA sequence of a gene I have no hint about the function of a protein specified by that gene, or how it enters into an organism's biology...

Biologists are not the only scientists who, having made extravagant claims about their merchandise, deliver the goods in bite-sized packages. Nor are they the only manufacturers of knowledge who cannot be bothered to pick up a return package when the product turns out to be faulty. Sagan's own branch of science is in the same business. Anxious to revive a failing public interest in spending large amounts on space research, NASA scientists, followed by the President of the United States, made an immense fuss about the discovery of some organic molecules on a Mars rock. There is (was) life (of some rudimentary kind) on Mars (maybe)! Can little green men in space machines be far behind? If it turns out, as already suggested by some scientists, that these molecules are earthly contaminants, or were produced in non-living chemical systems, this fact surely will not be announced at a White House press conference, or even above the fold in *The New York Times*.

Second, it is repeatedly said that science is intolerant of theories without data and assertions without adequate evidence. But no serious student of epistemology any longer takes the naive view of science as a process of Baconian induction from theoretically unorganized observations. There can be no observations without an immense apparatus of preexisting theory. Before sense experiences become "observations" we need a theoretical question, and what counts as a relevant observation depends upon a theoretical frame into which it is to be placed. Repeatable observations that do not fit into an existing frame have a way of disappearing from view, and the experiments that produced them are not revisited... ([compare this to what Thomas Kuhn, the famous Philosopher of Science, wrote in 1970 "An apparently arbitrary element, compounded of personal and historical accident, is always a formative ingredient of the beliefs espoused by a given scientific community at a given time." sc](#))The standard form of a scientific paper begins with a theoretical question, which is then followed by the description of an experimental technique designed to gather observations pertinent to the question. Only then are the observations themselves described. Finally there is a discussion section in which a great deal of energy is often expended rationalizing the failure of the observations to accord entirely with a theory we really like, and in which proposals are made for other experiments that might give more satisfactory results. **Sagan's suggestion that only demonologists engage in "special pleading, often to rescue a proposition in deep rhetorical trouble," is certainly not one that accords with my reading of the scientific literature.** Nor is this a problem unique to biology. The attempts of physicists to explain why their measurements of the effects of relativity did not agree with Einstein's quantitative prediction is a case no doubt well known to Sagan.

**As to assertions without adequate evidence, the literature of science is filled with them**, especially the literature of popular science writing. Carl Sagan's list of the "best contemporary science-popularizers" includes E.O. Wilson, Lewis Thomas, and Richard Dawkins, **each of whom has put unsubstantiated assertions or counterfactual claims at the very center of the stories they have retailed in the market.** Wilson's *Sociobiology* and *On Human Nature* rest on the surface of a quaking marsh of unsupported claims about the genetic determination of everything from altruism to xenophobia. Dawkins's vulgarizations of Darwinism speak of nothing in evolution but an inexorable ascendancy of genes that are selectively superior, **while the entire body of technical advance in experimental and theoretical evolutionary genetics of the last fifty years has moved in the direction of emphasizing non-selective forces in evolution...**

Third, it is said that there is no place for an argument from authority in science. The community of science is constantly self-critical, as evidenced by the experience of university colloquia "in which the speaker has hardly gotten 30 seconds into the talk before there are devastating questions and comments from the audience." If Sagan really wants to hear serious disputation about the nature of the universe, he should leave the academic precincts in Ithaca and spend a few minutes in an Orthodox study house in Brooklyn. It is certainly true that within each narrowly defined scientific field there is a constant challenge to new technical claims and to old wisdom. In what my wife calls the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral Syndrome, young scientists on the make will challenge a graybeard, and this adversarial atmosphere for the most part serves the truth. But when scientists transgress the bounds of their own specialty they have no choice but to accept the claims of authority, even though they do not know how solid the grounds of those claims may be. Who am I to believe about quantum physics if not Steven Weinberg, or about the solar system if not Carl Sagan? **What worries me is that they may believe what Dawkins and Wilson tell them about evolution.**

So now, let's synopsise what we've learned. Sagan claims that the reason the scientific establishment rejects supernatural explanations is because they are dedicated to the Scientific Method which is purely rational and always passes every objective test of its validity.

Lewontin disagrees. He demonstrates that scientists routinely violate the parameters of the scientific method consequently adopting theories and making assertions that are sometimes

even worse than demons. They're actually counterfactual! At least demons haven't been *disproved*.

If so, why indeed does the scientific establishment reject the supernatural while simultaneously tolerating the most absurd materialistic constructs? The answer, according to Lewontin, is that the current scientific establishment adheres to a specific philosophy, an outlook, which tolerates one form of explanation but disallows the other. As long as the "demonology" is purely material, it doesn't violate the philosophy. So in spite of the fact that many of the establishment's notions are patently absurd, we choose to stick with the establishment rather than defect to the supernaturalists. This is not to say that we shouldn't try and expunge the absurdities from the list of accepted ideas of the establishment. But "defection" is entirely out of the question. We simply cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.

Lewontin is an evolutionist and a card-carrying senior member of the elitist left. He's about to hit you with his one-two knockout punch. He's about to reveal to you that the scientific establishment is basically a group of individuals who are unified by one primary imperative: Materialism. Now obviously he wants to make Materialism a cogent option for thinking people. He wants people to adopt the same world-view as him. The problem is, in order to refute Sagan, he's just gone on a rampage about the "demonology" that exists in Science itself. In order for him to justify Materialism, he needs to switch tracks and do two things.

- 1) He needs to demonstrate that an adherence to Science as a world view does indeed produce ultimate benefits and
- 2) He needs to explain why it is being rejected by so many people. Remember, he took Sagan to task for the same thing. He wrote:

"To Sagan, as to all but a few other scientists, it is self-evident that the practices of science provide the surest method of putting us in contact with physical reality, and that, in contrast, the demon-haunted world rests on a set of beliefs and behaviors that fail every reasonable test. So why do so many people believe in demons? Sagan seems baffled, and nowhere does he offer a coherent explanation of the popularity at the supermarket checkout counter of the *Weekly World News*, with its faked photographs of Martians."

In order to accomplish both #1 and #2, he needs to produce several examples of scientific advances which are counterintuitive, thus accounting for their popular rejection, while simultaneously demonstrating that a stubborn commitment to material causes finally persevered in the end and produced real scientific advances.

With great perception, Sagan sees that there is an impediment to the popular credibility of scientific claims about the world, an impediment that is almost invisible to most scientists. Many of the most fundamental claims of science are against common sense and seem absurd on their face. Do physicists really expect me to accept without serious qualms that the pungent cheese that I had for lunch is really made up of tiny, tasteless, odorless, colorless packets of energy with nothing but empty space between them? Astronomers tell us without apparent embarrassment that they can see stellar events that occurred millions of years ago, whereas we

all know that we see things as they happen. When, at the time of the moon landing, a woman in rural Texas was interviewed about the event, she very sensibly refused to believe that the television pictures she had seen had come all the way from the moon, on the grounds that with her antenna she couldn't even get Dallas. What seems absurd depends on one's prejudice. Carl Sagan accepts, as I do, the duality of light, which is at the same time wave and particle, but he thinks that the consubstantiality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost puts the mystery of the Holy Trinity "in deep trouble." Two's company, but three's a crowd.

Gone are the examples from Cancer. Gone are the examples from the human Genome project. Gone are the examples from space research. Gone are the unsubstantiated theories and counterfactual assertions of people like Dawkins and Wilson. And gone are the snide comparisons between aspects of science and demonology. Now, we've substituted atomic theory, proven, Astronomy and the speed of light, proven, radio signals and how they function, proven, and wave-particle duality, also proven. He then surreptitiously drops the assertion that what seems absurd depends on one's prejudice. This is specifically meant to suggest to you that all you need to do is change your intellectual commitment, your world-view, and viola; you will have shed the shackles of irrational thought and will have entered into a whole new existence of proper thinking. *This* is the point of this paragraph! But it's all subliminal. You don't know what he's getting at until he drops the bomb in the next paragraph. But by then it's too late. He's already crawled into your head. One thing is for sure: Lewontin is not recanting from everything he said in the previous six pages! The first time I read this article it took me some time to figure this out. But clearly he still maintains that science is full of materialistic demonology which is why he rejects Carl Sagan's explanations. With all this in mind, let's see that final paragraph again and answer my initial two questions (What does Lewontin think about the absurdity of some of sciences' theories, amongst them evolution? And if indeed they are absurd, how does he justify adopting "Science" as a world-view?) I have interspersed my comments in the middle so his true meaning can be understood (as opposed to the way EvoWiki would like you to understand it).

Our willingness to accept scientific claims that are against common sense is the key to an understanding of the real struggle between science and the supernatural. *This sentence comes on the heels of the previous paragraph.* Thus, what he means to say is that the fact that scientists are willing to continue to challenge their own intuitions – because they can see the benefits of doing so as pointed out in Lewinton's previous paragraph – is the key to understanding the struggle between science and religion. Non-scientists are not willing to challenge their intuitions because they haven't been taught to think properly. We i.e. the scientific establishment take the side of science *in spite* of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, *in spite* of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, *in spite* of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, *all things that were clearly demonstrated in the preceding*

pages of the article because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. **The uninitiated do not understand what the scientist understands – that without this apparatus, without a fundamental transformation in world-view, we simply would not have been able to arrive at the incredible scientific advancements of today** Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door. The eminent Kant scholar Lewis Beck used to say that anyone who could believe in God could believe in anything. To appeal to an omnipotent deity is to allow that at any moment the regularities of nature may be ruptured, that miracles may happen. **The ultimate justification for Materialism is self-referencing. Materialism is “justified” because if we allow for God, Materialism will be compromised!**

So, EvoWiki likes to juxtapose the previous paragraph in order to mitigate the force of the final one. They would like you to avert your gaze from the clearly stated idea that scientists take the side of science in spite of its absurd constructs, in spite of its failures, and in spite of its open prevarications (counterfactual claims). That would make materialism look bad. So they throw in the previous paragraph and the uninformed person gets confused. He looks at the first paragraph and realizes that all the counterintuitive claims are actually true. So when he gets to the second paragraph, he automatically assumes that Lewontin maintains that Materialism is fully justified and anything in that paragraph which seems to indicate otherwise is just a mistaken reading by him.

The truth is Lewontin *does* challenge science, as we’ve clearly seen. He even challenges evolution. According to Lewontin, the mainstream method of teaching evolution, to millions upon millions of students, is worse than demonology! That’s why he wrote, in his final paragraph, *in spite* of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, All you need to do is read his previous pages and you will see that he is referring to evolution as espoused by mainstream evolutionists like Dawkins and Wilson. The plain truth is, if Lewontin walked into Oxford (Dawkin’s stomping grounds) and heard what the evolutionary biologists were teaching, he would say that the scientific establishment tolerates these absurdities because at least they are an attempt to teach biology in a *material* fashion. This is not to say that Lewontin is not an evolutionist. But his form of evolution differs radically from mainstream evolution. He and S.J. Gould worked together on several projects and both the tempo and the mode of their brand of evolution differ radically from the mainstream.

What’s interesting is that just like Lewontin considers mainstream evolution absurd and only tolerates it because of his *a priori* commitment to materialism, the mainstream evolution people say exactly the same thing about Gould and his theories! Evolutionary biologist, John

Maynard Smith, wrote a review of "Darwin's Dangerous Idea": *Evolution and the Meanings of Life* by Daniel C. Dennett. In Dennett's book, he basically explains how evolution works mathematically via an evolving algorithm. This idea accords with the Dawkinesque picture of gene mutation and the step by step evolution they undergo. So what does he think about Gould. Here's an amazingly similar quote to that of Lewontin about people like Dawkins.

Dennett suggests that criticisms of the neo-Darwinist synthesis come, in the main, from those who are reluctant to believe that they are the product of an algorithmic process and who lust after skyhooks. First among these, he suggests, is Stephen Jay Gould. Gould occupies a rather curious position, particularly on his side of the Atlantic. Because of the excellence of his essays, he has come to be seen by non-biologists as the preeminent evolutionary theorist. In contrast, the evolutionary biologists with whom I have discussed his work tend to see him as a man whose ideas are so confused as to be hardly worth bothering with, but as one who should not be publicly criticized because he is at least on our side against the creationists. All this would not matter, were it not that he is giving non-biologists a largely false picture of the state of evolutionary theory.

So, the scientific establishment is basically an exclusive club of atheists who tolerate each other's absurdities as long as the prime directive is being maintained. Like Yeshaya haNavi characterized the *ovdei avodah zara* of his day: *איש את רעהו יעזורו ולאחיו יאמר חזק*. Each of these evolutionary greats falsifies the other's ideas about evolution. So what do we say? Yes, they're all false!

Scientific atheists just can't make peace with the fact that their minds may not be able to encompass the knowledge and understating of all of reality. To their way of thinking, everything must ultimately come under the overall auspices of science and be modified by it. "Science" can understand anything! Lewontin probably tells himself something like this:

"I know that methodological naturalism causes people to adopt some of the most absurd material causes and we have to fight this whenever possible. In fact, I'm even going to write an article about how ridiculous Wilson and Dawkin's theories are. But it is better to adopt the materialistic view than to allow a Divine Foot in the door. If I do that, the enterprise of science as a whole will fall because you can believe in anything once you believe in God."

That's what he tells himself on a conscious level. On a sub-conscious level, he is thinking that under no circumstance can he allow a Divine Foot in the door because:

"If I allow a Divine Foot in the door, I will actually have to admit that all my scientific explanations for how the universe works, which the great me created with my really smart brain, might be wrong. As soon as I concede the possibility of God, "the regularities of nature may be ruptured, that miracles may happen" thereby falsifying the inherent truth of any of my great intellectual constructs explaining reality."