

**DETECTING THE FINGERPRINTS OF GOD:  
THE INTELLIGENT DESIGN MOVEMENT AND CATHOLIC SOCIOLOGY**

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*The Intelligent Design Movement offers a compelling critique of the materialist metaphysical assumptions underlying much of modern natural science. These same assumptions serve as a foundation for much of modern sociology, often making it hostile to a Catholic perspective. The author examines the Intelligent Design Movement as a model for sociologists who attempt to practice their discipline within a Catholic framework.*

In his treatise on the “Journey of the Mind to God,” Saint Bonaventure explains that it is in reflecting on the vestiges or traces (*vestigia*) of God in the material universe that our hearts begin their ascent to God.<sup>1</sup> The ancient idea that God’s creation can teach us about Him, much as the contemplation of a work of art can tell us about the artist, is well attested by the Church in both Scripture and the writings of the Church Fathers.<sup>2</sup> Until recently it was also an assumption of scientists.<sup>3</sup> However, the publication in 1859 of Charles Darwin’s *Origin of Species* articulated a perspective that sought to sever the connection between the creation and its Creator. Since that time many scientists, both natural and social, have come to assume that the mysteries of life and reality lie solely in the material realm.

Yet the inadequacies of metaphysical materialism as a guide to science are being addressed with renewed vigor by an intellectual movement that presents convincing evidence that the universe is designed. Scientists within this movement find that the characteristics of the natural world—its form, its organization, its intricacy, and even its beauty—display remarkable evidence of the action of God. These “fingerprints of God,” the *vestigia* of Saint Bonaventure, are not limited to the natural world. Many characteristics of the social world encourage the human person to thrive: faithful marriages, the self-sacrifice of parents for their children, loving

rather than exploitative relationships in the economic sphere. Social scientists today often dismiss these social patterns as overly restrictive or antiquated. However, compelling scientific evidence of their benefit to the human person suggests that their consistent advocacy by the Church is due to something more than the general conservatism of institutional religion. Rather, their presence implies that man really was created according to the design of his Maker, and that social science freed from materialism will find in the social patterns which promote the good of the human person evidence of God's fingerprints in the social world.

In this essay I will examine the intelligent design movement as a model for sociologists who attempt to practice their discipline within a Catholic framework. Just as the commitment to metaphysical materialism blinds the life scientist to the weaknesses of the current theoretical orthodoxy, so it also distorts the social scientist's understanding of the nature of man and human society. The rejection of materialism, however, faces stiff resistance. The experiences and strategies of the proponents of intelligent design may thus prove useful to Catholic social scientists who work in disciplines that are frequently hostile to a Christian perspective.

### **A CHALLENGE TO CURRENT SCIENTIFIC ORTHODOXY**

Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection is one of the most influential ideas in modern intellectual history. Seeking to identify a material cause for the existing forms of life, Darwin claimed that chance variation among members of a species would furnish some members a reproductive advantage that would, through gradual and cumulative change over many generations, result in new species.<sup>4</sup> No divine intellect was necessary to guide or design the forms of plants, animals, or man. Chance alone was the force behind who we are.<sup>5</sup>

Upon its introduction, the theory of natural selection inspired extraordinary controversy. Its scientific merit, of course, drew a large part of the criticism, but the religious implications of the theory provoked the most heated debates. Even among scientists themselves, the most troubling aspects of the theory were its likely effects on religious beliefs and deeply held philosophical understandings of the nature of man.<sup>6</sup> One of the most eminent of Darwin's scientific critics, Adam Sedgwick, wrote to him that what he sought to do with his theory threatened to "brutalize" humanity, "sinking the human race into a lower grade of degradation than any into which it has fallen since its written records tell us of its history."<sup>7</sup>

Yet in spite of the radical nature of the theory, it was accepted by much of the public and most of the scientific establishment within a decade of its publication.<sup>8</sup> The younger scientists embraced it most quickly, perhaps because they were more loosely bound to the existing theoretical categories and because the theory gave them the opportunity to assert themselves in their fields over the "old guard."<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, throughout the century and a half since its introduction, the theory's critics have persisted, both in the scientific community and the general population.<sup>10</sup> Although today science educators speak as though the theory has been proven conclusively,<sup>11</sup> they report with consternation that much of the American public remains unconvinced.<sup>12</sup> Apparently, many people, though not informed by the scientific details of evolutionary biology, sense something about the theory that does not agree with their understandings of reality.

Objection to the theory is sometimes based on a literalist reading of the Biblical account of the creation of man and the world, a perspective usually labeled "creationism." Over the past decade, however, an intellectual movement labeled "intelligent design" has entered the

controversy with a different mode of engagement. While proponents of intelligent design (ID) are opposed to the materialist and atheistic assumptions which they see at the base of Darwinism, the chief thrust of their argument is that the principal fault of the theory is its failure as science.<sup>13</sup> They claim that, because scientists are so bound to the materialist metaphysical assumptions of Darwinism, they are unable to judge the theory impartially on purely scientific grounds. What the ID movement attempts to do is to free science from its unnecessary enslavement to metaphysical materialism, opening it to the possibility that the natural world is the product of an intelligent agent rather than mere chance, as claimed by Darwin's theory.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the natural world there are countless examples of living organisms and physical systems that carry the distinct mark of having been designed. Though we did not witness the construction of these systems, they exhibit a pattern that we cannot credibly attribute to chance. Almost sixty years before Darwin published the *Origin of Species*, William Paley recorded the classic statement of this idea. Paley supposes that, in the midst of a country walk, he stumbles upon a stone and asks himself how it came to be there. His answer is that, for anything he knew to the contrary, "it had lain there for ever." But if later he finds a watch upon the ground and asks himself the same question, he would certainly not give the same answer. For, as Paley explains, "when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose... that the watch must have had a maker: that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction, and designed its use." But if this is true for the watch, a relatively simple device, then Paley reasons it must be far more true for the wonderful

mechanisms in nature. “For every indication of contrivance, every manifestation of design, which existed in the watch, exists in the works of Nature; with the difference, on the side of Nature, of being greater and more, and that in a degree which exceeds all computation.”<sup>15</sup>

William Dembski, a prominent figure in the modern ID movement, has systematized the identification of this design-like character with his concept of specified complexity.<sup>16</sup> When an intelligent agent acts he often leaves a pattern that is not displayed by random events. The pattern exhibits both a high level of complexity and also conforms to a preexisting (specified) configuration. Random events may be complex in that they contain many discrete parts or actions; but that chance could give rise to a complex configuration that at the same time conforms to a previously specified pattern is highly improbable.

There are, for example, organ systems such as the eye or the bacterial flagellum that contain many specific parts, all of which are required for the mechanism to function successfully.<sup>17</sup> The Darwinian explanation assumes a gradual accumulation of the parts of such a system, but unless each part contributes to the survival of the organism, the mechanism of natural selection has nothing to act upon. That all the parts would by chance come together in just this specified pattern is extremely improbable. That improbability vanishes, however, if the parts have been intentionally combined according to a design.

It is not only among living organisms that we find evidence of intelligent design. Physicists have long noted that the universe exhibits many characteristics that give it the appearance of being “fine-tuned.” The remarkable mathematical orderliness of the universe, the precise values of the universal constants necessary to sustain life, the delicate balance necessary among the physical forces of the universe, all strongly suggest that the universe was designed by

a magnificent intelligence.<sup>18</sup> Such incredible coincidences create great difficulties for those who wish to maintain a solely materialist explanation of the universe. Yet proponents of Darwinian orthodoxy continue to defend their position, occasionally going to such lengths as to posit the existence of an infinite number of unobservable parallel universes, a conjecture that, because it cannot be tested empirically, is thoroughly unscientific.<sup>19</sup>

In his examination of science and its limits, Stanley Jaki explains that science has an unsurpassed ability to examine systematically the hard-edged, clear-cut concepts called quantities. However, as important as quantitative concepts are, they cover only a small part of our understanding of reality, and questions of a non-quantitative nature are beyond the limits of science. For example, while science may provide the instruments to measure with great precision the intensity of light or the frequency of electromagnetic waves, questions about the existence of these phenomena are philosophical queries that no amount of scientific measurement will answer.<sup>20</sup>

Scientists are prone to claim a great deal more for their discipline than is justified, even to the point that some presume that whatever cannot be measured or expressed in quantitative terms is illusory. Father Jaki notes this tendency especially among mainstream biologists. “Evolutionary biologists,” he explains, “have only contempt for philosophy, although it alone can justify their great unifying vision, which is much more than science, strictly speaking. What they do is climb the rungs of an essentially philosophical ladder in order to see much farther than would be allowed, strictly speaking, by the data at hand. However, once at the top of the ladder, they haughtily kick it away.”<sup>21</sup>

The difficulty, therefore, is not that a metaphysical position serves as the basis for the practice of science, but rather that the metaphysical position is mistaken for the science. Darwinists fail to see that materialism is not a necessary foundation for scientific explanation and that other metaphysical positions can serve as well or better. The contribution of the ID movement is its demonstration of the fact that metaphysical materialism actually stifles the scientific enterprise.<sup>22</sup>

#### **APPLICATION TO SOCIOLOGY**

Sociology was institutionalized in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries within a society that had accepted Darwin's theory. The effect of Darwin's ideas on social theory was profound, and in some cases even led to the explicit adoption of a Darwinian-inspired theoretical model. Numerous examples, from social Darwinism to sociobiology, demonstrate the influence of Darwin's ideas on social theory.

Yet more important than these theoretical derivations, many of which have been discredited, was the impact of Darwinism on the underlying assumptions of sociologists. In Darwin's model, man evolved by natural selection in precisely the same manner that all animals evolved. Like other animals, he is the product of merely natural or material forces. Any end or purpose to man's existence, therefore, originates with man. For most sociologists, the only intelligent designer behind human behavior is man himself.

Disclaiming any divine or transcendent purpose for man has important consequences for the social scientist, particularly the social engineer. If man is the product of blind forces of nature, merely modified by the social conventions that happen to exist in a particular time or

place, is he not justified in refashioning himself in any new image? Unconstrained by a transcendent understanding of the nature of man, there are few limits to the forms of social arrangements that can be generated. In the absence of secure principles, fashion and sentiment will guide the process. If we find distasteful, for example, a father's authority in the family, we can introduce programs to weaken that authority and even make the father superfluous. If we believe that the institution of marriage is too exclusionary because it is limited to couples of the opposite sex, we can redefine it to include partners of the same sex or groups of more than two. If we resent the limitations placed on a woman's sexual freedom from unwanted pregnancy, we can make abortion readily available and encourage her in its use by claiming that it is only a medical procedure. In all of these actions, the Catholic understanding of a human nature designed by God is dismissed in favor of a mere disposition that can be altered in response to a change in fashion.

Yet, when not driven by particular political agenda, social research has demonstrated that these novelties in social relationships can cause considerable suffering. As the level of divorce in the U.S. climbed to new heights in the 1970s, many social scientists did their best to minimize and even deny its detrimental effects.<sup>23</sup> However, an impressive body of research over the past decade has refuted those earlier claims, demonstrating dramatically the impact of divorce and fatherlessness on poverty, child abuse, teenage pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, school failure, and children's physical and mental health.<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps the most heated controversy in contemporary society is the legalization of abortion. Proponents of abortion have long maintained that its legalization is a great benefit to women. This is overwhelmingly the perspective adopted by the most popular sociology

textbooks and probably reflects the opinion of most social scientists today.<sup>25</sup> However, a growing body of research demonstrates that for women abortion is not the benign procedure claimed by its practitioners, but a practice with grave and, often, hidden physical, psychological, and social costs.<sup>26</sup> Those who resist attempts to limit abortion have tried to ignore or impugn this research, but the growing number of high quality studies makes this increasingly difficult to do.

Other examples could be cited. Cohabitation is thought by a majority of young adults to be “a good idea” for young couples prior to marriage. Indeed, over half of first marriages today are preceded by some period of cohabitation.<sup>27</sup> Yet research has for years demonstrated a marked increase in the likelihood of divorce for couples who cohabit prior to marriage.<sup>28</sup> In addition to all the costs associated with divorce, cohabitation appears to be one of the most significant determinants of child abuse.<sup>29</sup> Another important issue is homosexuality, although the ideological conflict here is so intense that sound research is especially difficult. Media and academic elites have redefined homosexuality and many other forms of sexual deviance as simply alternative life styles. In fact, the very concept of deviance has been all but eliminated from the social sciences.<sup>30</sup> Yet it is estimated that through elevated risks of disease and violence, homosexual males suffer a twenty- to thirty-year loss in life expectancy.<sup>31</sup>

These and other examples of good social research confirm the wisdom and benefit of Catholic teaching about appropriate social and behavioral patterns. This is precisely the point made by Patrick Fagan as he described the Heritage Foundation’s web site, the “Family and Society Database.” Gathering hundreds of individual findings for inclusion into the database convinced him that “the social sciences well done can not help but support divine natural law.”<sup>32</sup> In other words, the most successful social arrangements—the ones that promote most consistently

the good of the social actors—are those that conform to the pattern that the Church identifies as being instituted by God, our Designer.

If man is merely the product of random and purposeless natural forces, why are the novel approaches to social arrangements not more successful? Why is it that the social patterns that appear to be most conducive to man's happiness have been advocated above all by an institution that claims to have been established by God? This ancient body, the Church, has promulgated her teaching without the benefit of modern science, yet she presents a set of principles for regulation of social life that are far more successful than those of the most highly trained social engineers. The modern world may be embarrassed at the refusal of the Church to update her teachings with a new set of truths, but why does careful social research corroborate so exactly the instruction of this “outdated” institution?

Of course, faithful Catholics will find nothing strange in the fact that the enduring teachings of the Church promote the fulfillment and happiness of her people. But what is especially interesting is how the findings in the social sciences, like those in the natural sciences presented by the proponents of ID, seem unintentionally to point to the design and action of God in the world. The social research cited above was not undertaken in order to argue for any particular metaphysical position; nevertheless, the almost uncanny congruity of these findings with the Catholic understanding of man puts in great doubt the materialist assumptions of purposelessness and chance.

The indicators of intelligent design, the vestiges or fingerprints of God, are more obscure in the social than in the natural world. For the non-human world has no choice but to act according to the nature assigned by God. The characteristics of the natural world that so readily

suggest His design cannot be hidden because an organism refuses to act according to its nature. But God created man with free will, which gives us the choice either to live according to His design or in opposition to it, to cooperate with His grace or not. Thus, the common behavior in many human families, broken by infidelity and selfishness, will hardly leave an observer with a sense of God's involvement.<sup>33</sup> Yet when human beings live with each other according to God's will, His design is far easier to detect.

### **LESSONS FROM THE ID MOVEMENT FOR A CATHOLIC SOCIOLOGY**

There are lessons that those who attempt to do social science from a Catholic metaphysical position can learn from the ID movement in the natural sciences. One lesson is that freeing oneself from the metaphysical shackles of Darwinism can improve the scientific enterprise. The reflexive defense of Darwinian orthodoxy hinders, rather than helps, the attempt to do science well. In the same fashion, if sociologists repudiate the common materialist assumptions of their discipline, they can more readily produce social research that is helpful to human society because it is true to the nature of man. The increasingly open response to some of the research examples cited above suggests that research of high quality will often—and, we hope, inevitably—break down opposition that is based on metaphysical predispositions.

Second, it is not a goal of the ID movement to create a “Christian biology,” if one means by that phrase a science whose findings are derived from or necessarily in accord with Christian theological or doctrinal statements. This fact distinguishes the ID movement from what is labeled “creationism,” for the latter approach is based on a forced concordism, and frequently exhibits an anti-intellectual bias and a fear of the empirical findings of science. Metaphysical

assumptions, Catholic or otherwise, are not, strictly speaking, a part of science itself. In that sense, there is no more a Catholic psychology or a Catholic sociology than there is a Catholic physics. But all sciences are founded upon metaphysical assumptions, and these assumptions can be false, as they are with materialism. When we speak of a Catholic sociology, therefore, we ought to mean that the practice of the science follows its own logic but is guided by a Catholic understanding of human and social reality.

Metaphysical materialism has become so closely tied to modern science that some maintain that it is integral to it. Yet rejecting materialism as a basis of either the natural or social sciences does not signify that one has adopted an anti-scientific “creationist” or “fundamentalist” perspective, although those who defend Darwinism would like us to assume that it does.<sup>34</sup> The fear of such a charge may tempt some to dismiss the argument of the ID movement, both in its application to the natural sciences and to the social sciences. But as Father Richard Neuhaus has written: “When it comes to cultural and academic respectability, Christians who are insecure about what they view as their newly won ‘place at the table’ are terrified that they might be suspected of harboring ‘creationist’ sympathies. They should get over it.”<sup>35</sup>

“To get over it” is not advice that is easy to follow. There are many barriers in the academic world to those who would challenge the common materialist assumptions, particularly if one does it from a Christian orientation. Peer review is crucial in many areas of professional life, and most of one’s colleagues are likely to hold to the modern orthodoxies. Social scientists pride themselves on being progressive and “counter-cultural,” but when the challenge comes from an authentically Christian world-view, they defend obstinately the status quo. Peer evaluation in promotion and tenure decisions, in the submission of material for publication, in

honors and grants, exercises a powerful restraint on the actions of those who do not conform. This fact reminds us once more that courage is a necessary virtue in the Christian life, in the academic world as much as anywhere.

## CONCLUSION

Science, natural or social, cannot prove that the universe is the product of God's design rather than the purposeless result of blind chance. To attempt to do so, first of all, would defy the limitations of science, which is uniquely suited to measure the quantitative properties of the material world but miserably inept at explaining its origin or existence. But more importantly, science cannot provide irresistible proof of the action of God in the world because to do so would repudiate one of God's greatest gifts to man, his free will. Particularly in our era, when science is misconstrued as the final arbiter of truth, scientific certainty would overwhelm our freedom to accept or reject God's revelation and so make faith unnecessary.<sup>36</sup>

Yet the observations of science can, when not obscured by metaphysical blinders, point to the One who created us and sustains us. The natural world is filled with elements of beauty and order that point to the loving hand of our Designer. Human society also reveals the fingerprints of God, though the traces are often masked by our sins. But by keeping our eyes and minds open to the evidence of God's action in the social world, we may overcome the blindness of materialism and produce social research of higher quality because it is true to the nature of man.

## ENDNOTES

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1. Saint Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, "Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum." Translated as "The Mind's Road to God," by George Boas, The Johns Hopkins University, 1953, available on the EWTN web site at [www.ewtn.com/library/SOURCES/ROAD.TXT](http://www.ewtn.com/library/SOURCES/ROAD.TXT).
2. "For from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator." Wisdom 13:5 (*RSV*). Other passages which can be cited in this regard are Romans 1:19-20; Psalm 19:1-6; Job 12:7-9. In addition, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and the Fathers of both the first and second Vatican Councils teach that God can be known in part from the world He created. *The Navarre Bible: St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1990), pp. 72-73.
3. The historical research of Pierre Duhem demonstrates that science emerged successfully in only one civilization: medieval Catholicism. It is ironic that today it is so often assumed that science and the Christian faith contradict one another. On the contrary, as Duhem wrote in his 1911 letter to Father Bulliot, the Dean of the Philosophy Faculty of the Institut Catholique in Paris: "A teaching which pretends to have established the irreducible antagonism between the scientific spirit and the spirit of Christianity is the most colossal lie and also the most audacious which has ever attempted to dupe the people." Stanley L. Jaki, *Scientist and Catholic: Pierre Duhem* (Front Royal, Virginia: Christendom Press, 1991), 237. See also Stanley L. Jaki, *The Savior of Science* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2000).
4. Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
5. It is the purely materialist nature of Darwinism, rather than its espousal of an evolutionary hypothesis, that is contrary to Catholic thought. "[T]heories of evolution which, in accordance with the philosophies inspiring them, consider the mind as emerging from the forces of living matter, or as a mere epiphenomenon of this matter, are incompatible with the truth about man." John Paul II, Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, October 22, 1996. ([www.cin.org/users/james/files/message.htm](http://www.cin.org/users/james/files/message.htm)). See also Anthony Andres, "The Pope and Evolution," *Faith & Reason* (Winter 2001): 393-403
6. Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution* (Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, 1996), pp. 280-281
7. Letter from Adam Sedgwick to Charles Darwin, December 1859, reprinted in David L. Hull, *Darwin and His Critics: The Reception of Darwin's Theory of Evolution by the Scientific Community* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 157-159.
8. Himmelfarb, p. 307.
9. Himmelfarb, p. 295.

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10. Stanley Jaki observes that “a most respectable minority of biologists” who oppose Darwinism survives today, in spite of the fact that acceptance of a scientific revolution is usually universal after the first generation of critics is gone. *The Savior of Science*, pp. 158-159.

11. For example, in his introduction to Carl Zimmer’s, *Evolution: the Triumph of an Idea* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), p. x, Stephen Jay Gould claims that “evolution...has been validated to an equally high degree” as the belief that the earth is round rather than flat. From the context it is clear that “evolution,” for Zimmer as well as for Gould, refers to a Darwinian or neo-Darwinian interpretation.

12. Jason Rosenhouse, “Leaders and Followers in the Intelligent-Design Movement.” *BioScience*, v. 53, (Jan. 2003) p. 6-7; Barbara Forrest, “The Newest Evolution of Creationism,” *Natural History* v. 111 (Apr. 2002) p. 73-80. According to *Science and Engineering Indicators, 2002*, published by the National Science Foundation, about half of the American population (53 percent) believe that “human beings, as we know them today, developed from earlier species of animals.” Of course, the vague phrase, “developed from earlier species,” does not specify Darwinian natural selection as the mechanism of development, but could encompass an intelligently directed or designed development. So the degree of acceptance by the American public of what these educators believe to have been proven is certainly even lower than they estimate.

13. In his introduction to a recent compilation of essays by proponents of intelligent design, William Dembski writes: “For the record, therefore, let’s be clear that the opposition of design theorists to Darwinian theory rests in the first instance on strictly scientific grounds.” William A. Dembski, “Introduction.” P.12 in William A. Dembski and James M. Kushiner, *Signs of Intelligence: Understanding Intelligent Design* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001).

14. Phillip E. Johnson, *Reason in the Balance: The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law & Education* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1995).

15. William Paley, *Natural Theology* (London: Wilks and Taylor, 1802).

16. William A. Dembski, “Signs of Intelligence: A Primer on the Discernment of Intelligent Design.” Pp. 171-192 in William A. Dembski and James M. Kushiner, *Signs of Intelligence: Understanding Intelligent Design* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001).

17. This idea is well developed by Michael Behe in his discussion of “irreducible complexity.” Michael Behe, *Darwin’s Black Box: the Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York: Free Press, 1996). Darwin himself recognized the difficulty posed to his theory by the eye. “I remember well the time when the thought of the eye made me cold all over, but I have got over this stage of the complaint, and now small trifling particulars of structure often make me very uncomfortable.” Letter to Asa Gray, April 3, 1860, *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, vol. II, p. 296, cited in Stanley Jaki, *The Savior of Science*, p. 148.

18. Walter L. Bradley, “The ‘Just So’ Universe.” Pp. 157- 170 in William A. Dembski and James M. Kushiner, *Signs of Intelligence: Understanding Intelligent Design* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001).

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19. Karl D. Stephan, "Tegmark's Parallel Universes: A Challenge to Intelligent Design?" *ISCID Archive*, April 29, 2003, available at [www.iscid.org/papers/Stephan\\_TegmarksUniverses\\_042903.pdf](http://www.iscid.org/papers/Stephan_TegmarksUniverses_042903.pdf).
20. Stanley L. Jaki, "The Limits of a Limitless Science." Pp. 1-23 in Stanley L. Jaki, *The Limits of a Limitless Science and Other Essays* (Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books, 2000).
21. Jaki, "The Limits", p. 14.
22. Some of the proponents of ID disagree with Stanley Jaki's conception of science and believe that it is part of science *per se* to infer design. William A. Dembski, "The Third Mode of Explanation: Detecting Evidence of Intelligent Design in the Sciences." Pp. 21-22 of *Science and Evidence for Design in the Universe* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000). Fr. Jaki's claim that the theoretical "vision" is "more than science" receives support from, among others, the Holy Father: "A theory is a metascientific elaboration, distinct from the results of observation but consistent with them. By means of it a series of independent data and facts can be related and interpreted in a unified explanation." John Paul II, Pontifical Academy of Sciences, October 22, 1996.
23. David Popenoe, *Life without Father* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 59-61.
24. Norval Glenn, Steven Nock, Linda Waite, et al., *Why Marriage Matters: Twenty One Conclusions from the Social Sciences* (New York, NY: Institute for American Values, 2002); Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher, *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially* (New York: Doubleday, 2000). In spite of the impressive literature showing the devastating effects of divorce, there are still efforts to deny them. See Elizabeth Marquardt, "A Refreshing and Mysterious Review of Books about Divorce." (New York, NY: Institute for American Values), May 7, 2002.
25. See, for example, my content analysis of the most popular social problems textbooks in "*Gaudium et Spes* as a Foundation for Teaching the Social Problems Course," presented to the 2001 Annual National Meeting-Conference of the Society of Catholic Social Scientists, Ave Maria School of Law, Ann Arbor, Michigan, October 26, 2001.
26. Elizabeth Ring-Cassidy and Ian Gentles, *Women's Health after Abortion* (Toronto, Ontario: deVeber Institute for Bioethics and Social Research, 2002).
27. David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, *Should We Live Together: What Young Adults Need to Know about Cohabitation before Marriage*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (The National Marriage Project, 2002), p. 3.
28. *Ibid.* pp. 4-5.
29. Patrick F. Fagan and Kirk A. Johnson, "Marriage: The Safest Place for Women and Children," Backgrounder # 1535 (The Heritage Foundation, April 10, 2002).
30. Anne B. Hendershott, *The Politics of Deviance* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002).

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31. Paul Cameron, Kirk Cameron, and William L. Playfair, "Does Homosexual Activity Shorten Life?" *Psychological Reports*. Vol. 83 (1998): 847-866.

32. Patrick Fagan, "The Family Findings Database: an International Cooperative Project by the Heritage Foundation." Plenary session presented to the 2002 Annual National Meeting-Conference of the Society of Catholic Social Scientists, Ave Maria School of Law, Ann Arbor, Michigan, October 18, 2002. The purpose of the web site ([www.familydatabase.org](http://www.familydatabase.org)) is to provide ready access to the results of good social research on issues of great contemporary interest. Fagan recognizes that social scientists and other academics often have ideological reasons to ignore research that supports a Christian understanding of social issues. A web site that makes it easy for students to search the literature on these issues can circumvent unresponsive faculty and give the students access to good social research even when their teachers are unwilling to do so.

33. John Henry Newman examined this issue with great perception in his *Apologia*. He likened human society to "a boy of good make and mind, with the tokens on him of a refined nature, cast upon the world without provision, unable to say whence he came, his birth-place or his family connexions." Only by attributing this condition to some "mystery" in his past, could one "account for the contrast between the promise and the condition of his being." Newman identifies the "mystery" that accounts for the contrast between the promise for human society and its actual condition as original sin. John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (London: Penguin Books, 1994), pp. 216 - 220.

34. Consider merely the title of the following book by a prominent critic of intelligent design: Robert T. Pennock, *Tower of Babel: The Evidence Against the New Creationism* (MIT Press, 1999).

35. Richard John Neuhaus, "While We're At It, The Public Square," *First Things* (March 2002): 68-88.

36. I borrow this point from Father Jaki, who applies it to his examination of the relationship of science and miracles. "The medicine of miracles, those powerful supports of faith, will be dispensed sparingly. If not, man's freedom will be overwhelmed and his worship of God will no longer be the kind of 'reasoned worship' as demanded by Paul (Rom 13:1). This is why God performed his miracles most of the time, including his *magnalia*, in such a way as to make them appear to be the enhancement of natural processes." Stanley L. Jaki, *Bible and Science* (Front Royal, Virginia: Christendom Press, 1996), pp. 207-208.