

## The World as We Know It

Strange how men use intelligence in attempting to disprove intelligent design.

**T**he Hawaiian Islands are volcanic in origin. Molten lava from deep below the ocean floor escaped into the cool Pacific waters and hardened into mountains, only the tops of which break the surface and appear to us as islands. Occasional volcanic eruptions spill hot lava down the mountainside, threatening everything in its path with incineration. The lava eventually cools and hardens, becoming a dark rock of jagged shapes. Along the coastal highway appear patterns of white rocks against the black lava. These are actually chunks of coral skeletons made of white calcium carbonate that have been arranged into letters and words. Some send birthday wishes and some exalt the most recent senior class. One formation simply says, “WE GO BEACH.”

Could these patterns and words be caused by waves randomly tossing coral chunks onto the lava? We quickly dismiss this as nonsense. Still, we are invited by evolutionary theory to believe that matter has the natural tendency to self-assemble into living machines much more complex than coral words. And that structures such as the feathers and hollow bones needed for birds to have arisen from reptiles were not intentionally designed but are the result of undirected chance and natural selection. Intelligent design theorist William Dembski has developed a three step method, or algorithm, to determine whether a given pattern exists by necessity, chance, or by deliberate design.<sup>1</sup> He calls the “characteristic trademark or signature” of intelligence, “specified complexity.” To be considered the result of intelligent action a pattern must first be rare—one of many possible choices of patterns; then complex—improbable; and finally, specified—following independent rules like those of English grammar.

We are sure the coral words on the lava did not form by chance because they are rare, complex, and specified. A similar application of Dembski’s method to the biological world makes it difficult to support a non-intelligent source for all of life. Yet this is exactly

what standard evolutionary theory asserts. Here, then, is one of the core problems many people have with the whole idea of evolution: it simply does not fit the reality of the world as we know it. Intentional dog or orchid breeding has never resulted in a dog becoming a reptile or an orchid becoming an oak tree. That is, even deliberate, selective, and intensive breeding cannot cross the boundaries between genetic types. How then could undirected chance accomplish this so easily and so often?

Photo: Michael Windheuser



Today we see life coming only from pre-existing life rather than coming spontaneously from non-life. Like coral words on lava, living things show the marks of having been designed. Intelligent choices appear to have been made between competing biological design options. Complex biological structures are used where they are needed. And levels of organization, integration, and regulation exist between cells, organs, and organisms that seem to be imposed on them. Life is specified complexity and specified complexity, like the coral words “WE GO BEACH,” does not happen by chance. 🌀

—MICHAEL G. WINDHEUSER, PH.D.

1 M. Behe, W. Dembski, S. Meyer, *Proceedings of the Wethersfield Institute*, vol. 9, *Science and Evidence for Design in the Universe* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2000).