

COMMENT

Even the evolutionist must employ language in order to advertise his theory. The question is: does he understand the language he is using?

Prof. Steve Jones of London University wrote in the Daily Telegraph (17 July 2007) that ‘unintelligent design can beat the most expert engineer’.

Prof. Jones reports a meeting of members of the Genetic and Evolutionary Computation Conference, which took place in the Natural History Museum. He notes that the use of computers in modelling biological evolution is now commonplace. What is new however is employment of unintelligent, randomness by computer scientists. ‘Evolution works in the factory as much as in the field’. Apparently Darwin’s idea of unintelligent design can ‘sometimes’ beat intelligent design.

From the fertile computer of William Latham of Goldsmiths College’ comes a picture— reproduced above Jones’s text—(not a beauty, one might add!) - demonstrating the power of an idling computer to generate shapes.

The computers of these scientists are filled with ‘virtual ants’. Ants appear to behave intelligently, but of course they don’t. One ant finds some food and other ants, using the scent-trail left behind, go to help themselves. Computer scientists fill their computers with ‘virtual ants’ which hunt for solutions. All sorts of industrial problems, like the design of phone networks and the best use of the gates at Heathrow are solved by this method.

Now—with respect—it is not the case that intelligence is not employed. The computer scientists are using computers—products not of randomness and chance but of intelligence and design. Where were the computer scientists when the process of evolution got going originally? The very expression ‘being used’ is non-evolutionary and anti-evolutionary - if you think about it. Evolution happens. No one makes it happen. You observe it (or think you do). But you don’t design it. And you don’t use it. Intelligent scientists are not required to direct it—never have been. They are part of it!

But there is an obvious contradiction at work here. Evolution itself—natural selection working on random mutations—has no end in view, no purpose, no plan, no use to which anything is put. The computer scientists are solving—intelligently *using* this computer technique—to solve problems. Evolution does not do that. No one outside the evolutionary process *uses* it for anything. *We are all part of it.*

Getting past intelligence in the natural order of things is difficult. How could it be done? I’m afraid the computer scientists, anxious to solve their problems, will have to give up and allow their problems to sort themselves out—as evolution has always done—*without computers!* Of course, sorting the gates at Heathrow might take a bit of time. A hundred million years, perhaps?

What is actually happening? It’s roughly analogous to ‘brain storming’. You think of as many ideas as you can in a short space of time. The computer tries this and that and eventually comes up with something. *But without the computer—and the intelligence that produced and uses it—the method just would not work.*