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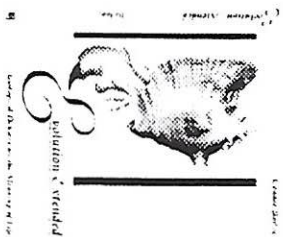
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### Evolution Extended: Biological Debates on the Meaning of Life

ed. Connie Barlow. *The MIT Press*, 1994, 333 pages, \$24.95 hardcover.

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*Evolution Extended: Biological Debates on the Meaning of Life*, certainly lives up to title in one respect; it is truly a

forum for biological debate on evolution. The book is not literally a debate, but rather a series of quotations from various articles, speeches, and books that deal with evolution.

The editor, Connie Barlow, has carefully chosen excerpts and quotations from sources as well recognized as Darwin and Huxley and diverse as Pope John Paul II and the U.S. Supreme Court.

This volume is divided into four large sections. The first part encompasses the question, "Is evolution going anywhere?"; The second deals with the tools and

metaphors of evolution or the stories behind many descriptive pieces of terminology such as the Red Queen Effect. The next section entitled "Embracing the Cosmos" looks at evolution from a larger, more philosophical perspective, and the final section examines the connections between evolution and religion. The first three parts usually encompass a wide variety of viewpoints on any given issue, and often include actual rebuttals to a particular scholar's thoughts on an issue or philosophy. The final section, which deals with evolution and religion is not as balanced as its predecessors, completely neglecting rebuttals or statements from the creationists whom it denounces. Apart from this omission, *Evolution Extended* is truly an open forum.

The book is also complemented with a number of diagrams, illustrations, and artwork. It is a fault of the editors of many science textbooks to choose random pieces of artwork which do not correlate well with the text, but Barlow is the exception to this rule. The line drawings of fauna and diagrams scattered throughout the text generally fit well with the text, and the choice of artwork was superb. For example, a painting by Georgia O'Keeffe enti-

led Clam Shell, accompanies a statement by Darwin describing how a bivalve's beautiful shell is a product of the variability of organic beings and the action of natural selection.

*Evolution Extended* is highly accessible to the casual reader. Although some background in biology may be helpful in reading this book, the words of some of the masters of evolution speak for themselves as their arguments are generally lucid and easy to follow. For example, an discourse by Richard Dawkins, best known for his "selfish gene" theory, describes the pressures of selection as result of predation in terms of arms races, economic costs, and high-speed technology.

As mentioned in the beginning, this book does fulfill its role as a forum for biological debate, but admittedly whether it addresses the issue of the meaning of life has been skirted in this review. For the meaning of life, suggested reading includes Origin of Species, or alternatively, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. The Hitchhiker's Guide does state that the meaning of life is forty-two, so perhaps Darwin's work might be of more use.

- Mike Colucco