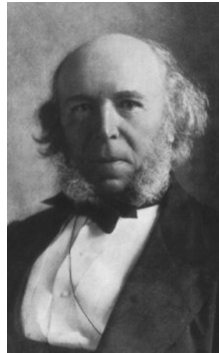


HERBERT SPENCER:



THE PHILOSOPHER WHOM THOSE WHO HAVE NO OTHER PHILOSOPHER CAN APPRECIATE¹



"Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation."

— [Herbert Spencer](#), 1870



"Evolution is a change from a nohowish untalkaboutable all-alikeness, to a somehowish and in-general-talkaboutable, not-all-alikeness, by continuous somethingelsifications and sticktogetherations."

— The Reverend Thomas Penyngton Kirkman (1806-1895)



"As it seems to me, we have in [Herbert Spencer](#) not only the profoundest thinker of our time, but the most capacious and most powerful intellect of all time. Aristotle and his master were no more beyond the pygmies who preceded them than he is beyond Aristotle. Kant, Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling are gropers in the dark by the side of him. In all the history of science, there is but one name which can be compared to his, and that is Newton's...."

— F.A.P. Barnard

1. "The philosopher whom those who have no other philosopher can appreciate" is a fair description of this gent, traceable to Professor William "Please Stop Jerking My Chain" James's 1912 MEMORIES AND STUDIES.

HERBERT SPENCER

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1820



April 27, Thursday: [Herbert Spencer](#) was born in Derby, Derbyshire, England.

In the beginning he didn't have one idea in his head. (Later on in life, more's the pity, he would get one idea into his head — and not be able to get it out.)

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

5th day 27 of 4 M / Our Moy [Monthly] Meeting is held at [Portsmouth](#) & looking towards [Greenwich](#) quarter next week, thought it most proper to be at home today to prepare for a longer absence - Find a hevvy cold on me this evening.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

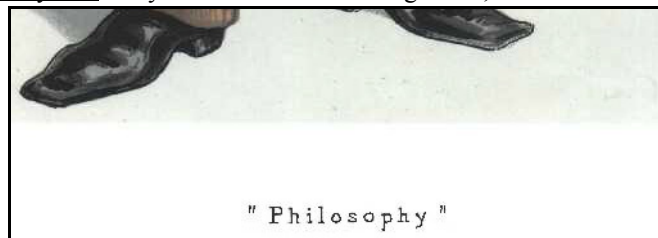
1831



[Herbert Spencer](#), 11 years old, was attending Dr. Sprutzheim's lectures on phenology.²

He did not yet style himself a philosopher and did not yet look exactly like the lithograph on the following page.³

This lithograph would be done in 1879 by Francis Carruthers Gould for Vincent, Brooks, Day & Son and would appear in [Vanity Fair](#). As you can see in this enlargement, the label at the bottom reads "Philosophy":



2. Bear in mind that in 1947 Aldo Leopold would refer to [Henry Thoreau](#) as the American "father of phenology."

What is phenology? The term derives from the Greek *phaino* meaning to show or to appear, and this is the science of periodic biological events in the animal and plant world as influenced by the environment, especially weather and climate. Sprouting and flowering of plants in the spring, color changes of plants in the fall, bird migration, insect hatches, and animal hibernation are all examples of phenological events. Plants are special, highly sensitive weather instruments that integrate the combined effect of weather factors such as temperature, rainfall, humidity, wind, and sunshine in their growth response. They can be observed year after year and dates recorded when certain growth stages, such as opening of leaf buds or appearance of first flowers occur. Recently, phenology has been identified as a crucial contributor to global change research. Understanding the interaction between the atmosphere (weather and climate) and the biosphere (living organisms) is a necessary part of efforts to improve models of Earth's physical systems and monitor the impact of global climate change.

3. In fact, he would never look like this. For instance, the stovepipe hat is a style which he never deigned to wear, due to his Quaker sympathies of egalitarianism. And, he was famous for his unwillingness to dress for any occasion, or to wear the cravat — so this image is heavily satirical and sly.

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VANITY FAIR.

April 26 1879.



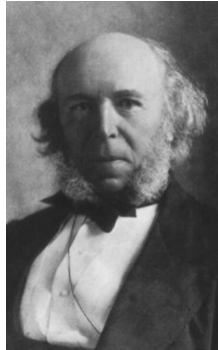


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1837

After a few months of trying to teach school, [Herbert Spencer](#) decided to become a railway civil engineer.

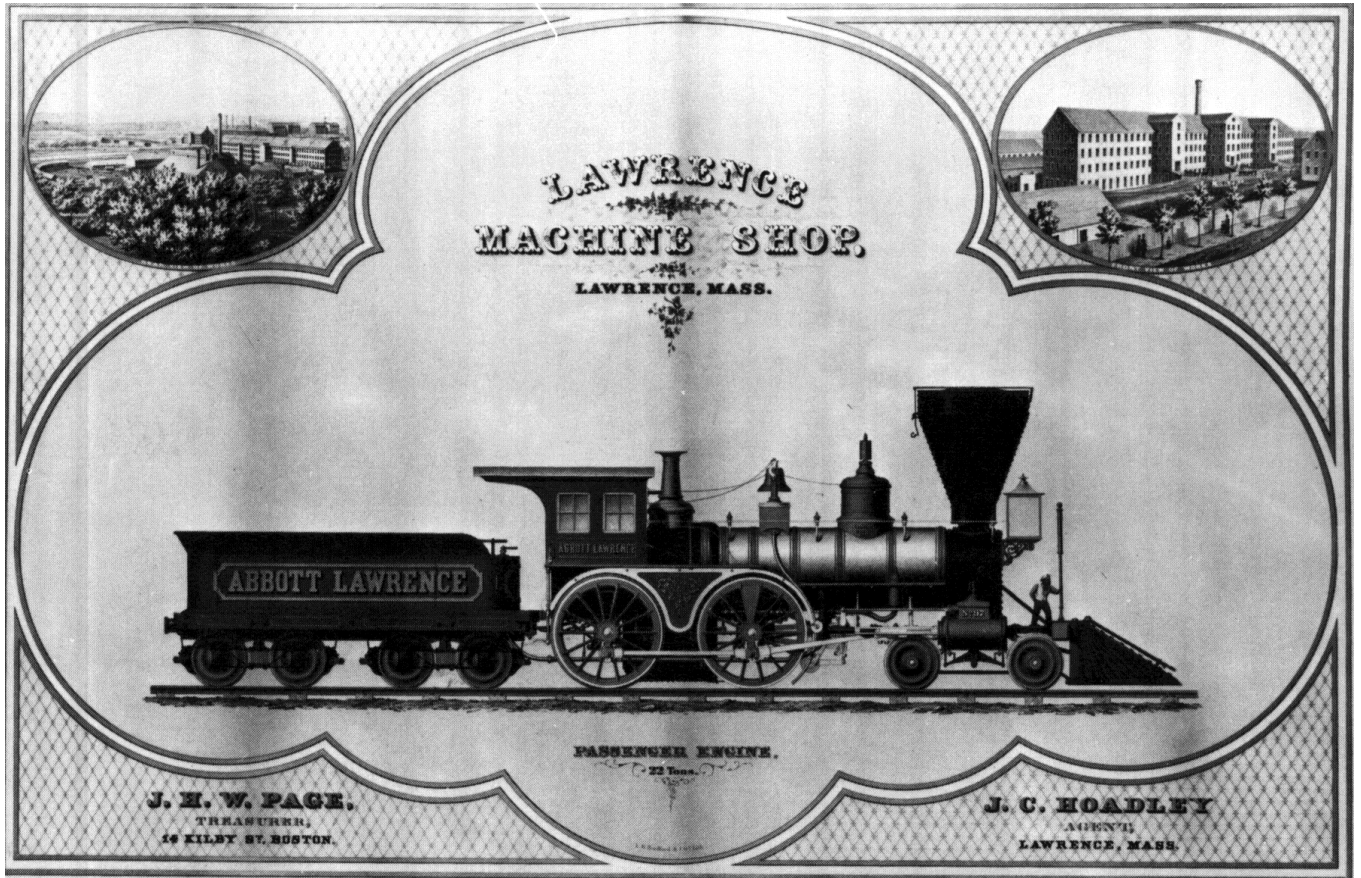


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1841

In England, a young student named [Herbert Spencer](#) was giving up on railway civil engineering, presumably for the same reasons that he had previously thrown over being a schoolmaster.



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1843

Some letters [Herbert Spencer](#) had written to the English weekly The Nonconformist were republished as a pamphlet, THE PROPER SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT. Government does more harm than good the moment it goes beyond the simple upholding of natural rights. It is wicked to attempt to prevent the poor from perishing. Wicked, wicked, wicked. It is cruel. Cruel, cruel, cruel. Do not interfere with God's will, but be an English gentleman, and stand aside and watch! Get this, God wants you to enjoy your cigar.

1847

Lola Montez fled her situation as countess of Landsfeld and mistress to King Ludwig I in the midst of riotous demonstrations against her; the furor she had helped to create by her liberal and anti-Jesuitical influence upon him then forced his own abdication.

Hermann Ludwig von Helmholtz (1821-1894) articulated a doctrine that would later travel under the rubric “Conservation of Energy,” in his *ÜBER DIE ERHALTUNG DER KRAFT* (“ON THE CONSERVATION OF FORCE”). The heat generated by muscles can be accounted for as the result of a complex chemical reaction that is more similar to than dissimilar from any of the very simple heat-producing chemical reactions that might occur when a chemist pours some one non-organic chemical into some other non-organic chemical in a test tube in a lab. There is therefore no need for any inventive or elaborate or special “vitalistic” explanation. In this same year, using a device that continuously measured blood pressure, Karl Friedrich Wilhelm found that the circulation of the blood was a mere fluidic process that could be fully explained in ordinary physical terms.

[Benjamin Disraeli](#), future prime minister, proposed in *TANCRED, OR THE NEW CRUSADE* that

All is race; there is no other truth.

In other words, white is right and (–oh, incidentally, you must know that) Jews are Caucasians rather than Semites.



Professor [Louis Agassiz](#) accepted a professorship of zoology at [Harvard College](#). In this year, also, appeared his *AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF NATURAL HISTORY*, IN A SERIES OF LECTURES DELIVERED IN THE



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HALL OF THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS, NEW YORK. BY PROFESSOR AGASSIZ. ILLUSTRATED WITH NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS. ALSO, A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR (New-York: Greeley & McElrath, Tribune Buildings).

AGASSIZ'S INTRODUCTION

His former student [Charles Frédéric Girard](#) followed Professor Agassiz to Harvard, as an assistant.

In this year, also, the [German](#) traveler Johann J. von Tschudi was offering in his TRAVELS IN PERU, DURING THE YEARS 1838-1842 ON THE COAST, AND IN THE SIERRA, ACROSS THE CORDILLERAS AND THE ANDES, INTO THE PRIMEVAL FORESTS, just then being published in London in English translation, racist remarks which would subsequently be brought forward in such accounts as [Dr. Josiah Clark Nott's](#) and [George Robins Gliddon's](#) foundational textbook of the new racist American anthropology, to be published in London in 1854, TYPES OF MANKIND: OR, ETHNOLOGICAL RESEARCHES, BASED UPON THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS, PAINTINGS, SCULPTURES, AND CRANIA OF RACES, AND UPON THEIR NATURAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, PHILOLOGICAL, AND BIBLICAL HISTORY: ILLUSTRATED BY SELECTIONS FROM THE UNEDITED PAPERS OF SAMUEL GEORGE MORTON, M.D., AND BY ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PROF. L. AGASSIZ, LL.D., W. USHER, M.D.; AND PROF. H.S. PATTERSON, M.D., and again subsequently be brought forward in 1876 by [Herbert Spencer](#) in Volume I of his THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY, and again subsequently to be brought forward by an Austrian politician imprisoned in [Germany](#) in 1925-1926, in his book about his struggles, entitled [MEIN KAMPF](#). Some lies are so choice, they can never die.

EVOLUTIONARY ETHICS

[Professor Samuel George Morton's](#) "Hybridity in Plants and Animals considered in reference to the Question of the Unity of the Human Species" appeared in [Silliman's Journal](#). The author concluded that from the standpoint of the science of biology, all members of our species needed to be considered to be parts of the same human family — regardless of race.

[Herbert Spencer](#), not yet a famous explainer but merely a railway engineer in Birmingham, spoke with a Liverpool gentleman who highly recommended to him the sensational publication VESTIGES OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF CREATION.

December: When [Waldo Emerson](#) met [Herbert Spencer](#) at Derby, Spencer of course self-described as a great admirer of Emerson's ESSAYS.⁴



4. Waldo would in a much later timeframe confess that he had no awareness whatever of Spencer's oeuvre.

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1848

In England, [Herbert Spencer](#) became a sub-editor on The Economist.



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1851

In England, the forces of establishmentarianism explanationism exerted their sway, in the guise of [Herbert Spencer](#)'s SOCIAL STATICS: THE CONDITIONS ESSENTIAL TO HUMAN HAPPINESS SPECIFIED, AND THE FIRST OF THEM DEVELOPED. The message was that all we have to do to correct social injustice is wait for things to work themselves out, time being on our side.⁵ It was this book which originated the theory which has come down to us misnamed as Social Darwinism, an attitude or approach to life which would much more precisely be denominated Social Spencerism, or Social Dubyaism.



(It was this Spencer, in fact, not [Charles Darwin](#), who urged the deployment of the term “evolution,” Darwin preferring the more neutral “descent with modification.” Darwin favored “descent with modification”

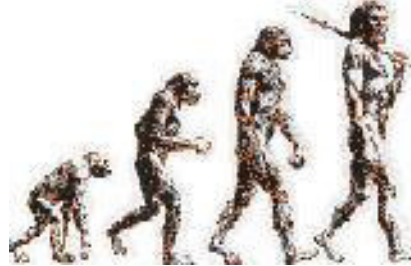
5. The non-Hicksite, Orthodox, Evangelical Quaker meeting in Philadelphia (which is to say, the apartheiders, the segregationists) evidently read this book, for just prior to the US Civil War these good white people would attempt to give profound moral advice based upon it to America's enslaved black people: wait, obey, time is on your side.



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because it did not suggest progress; Spencer favored “evolution” because it did suggest progress:



It was Spencer, not Darwin, who coined the phrase “survival of the fittest.” It was Spencer, not Darwin, who was a foe of free education for all. If that wasn’t enough, Spencer was also the enemy of the postal service. If that wasn’t being individualistic enough, he was also the enemy of all regulation of city housing conditions. If that wasn’t hostile and brutal enough, he was also the enemy of all construction of city public sanitary systems and sewerage. The people who cannot provide such things for themselves, as far as he was concerned, ought to simply be allowed to die off and get the hell out of his face. To have any pity for the unfortunate would be to create “greater misery” for “future generations,” something only a pussy would be guilty of. The pitiers among us are “sigh-wise and groan-foolish.” All this would cause [Darwin](#) to sigh.)

PROTO-NAZISM

Blind to the fact that under the natural order of things society is constantly excreting its unhealthy, imbecile, slow, vacillating, faithless members, these unthinking, though well-meaning, men advocate an interference which not only stops the purifying process, but even increases the vitiation – absolutely encouraging the multiplication of the reckless and incompetent by offering them an unfailing provision.

...

All evil results from the non-adaptation of constitution to conditions. This is true of everything that lives....

Equally true is it that evil perpetually tends to disappear. In virtue of an essential principle of life, this non-adaptation of an organism to its conditions is ever being rectified; and modification of one or both, continues until the adaptation is complete. Whatever possesses vitality, from the elementary cell up to man himself, inclusive, obeys this law. We see it illustrated in the acclimatization of plants, in the altered habits of domesticated animals, in the varying characteristics of our own race....

Keeping in mind then the two facts, that all evil results from the non-adaptation of constitution to conditions; and that where this non-adaptation exists it is continually being diminished by the changing of constitution to suit conditions, we shall be prepared for comprehending the present position of the human race....

Concerning the present position of the human race, we must therefore say, that man needed one moral constitution to fit him for his original state; that he needs another to fit him for his present state; and that he has been, is, and will long continue to be, in process of adaptation. By the term civilization we signify the adaptation that has already taken place. The changes that constitute progress are the successive steps of the transition. And the belief in human perfectibility, merely

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amounts to the belief, that in virtue of this process, man will eventually become completely suited to his mode of life.... Progress, therefore, is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of civilization being artificial, it is a part of nature; all of a piece with the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower. The modifications mankind have undergone, and are still undergoing, result from a law underlying the whole organic creation; and provided the human race continues, and the constitution of things remains the same, those modifications must end in completeness....

One true inheritor of this line of thought:



"I cannot see why man should not be just as cruel as nature."

— Adolf Hitler



(Well then again, I have to confess that just as Darwin was not a Social Darwinist, so also Spencer was not exactly a Social Spencerist, or Social Dubyaist. For instance when he made his triumphal tour of America in 1882 and was the guest of honor of a plutocratic banquet at Delmonico's in New York on November 9th, everyone there praised him for his Whiggism and triumphalism — and then he stood up, guest of honor that he was, and informed the assembled biggies that he had no respect whatever for their work ethic. They should rest on their assets and try to have more fun, he advised. What's the point in taking money away from other people if you aren't enjoying yourself?)

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1852

[Herbert Spencer](#)'s article "The Development Hypothesis" repudiated the idea of special creation.

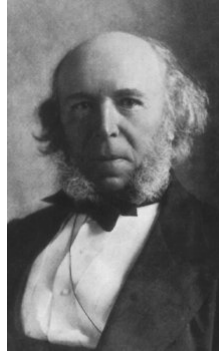


Spencer used the term "evolution" in this essay. He did not coin the term, as we can see by the fact that during this same year Frederick Douglass used the term in the course of one of his speeches. By that word—if Spencer could be said to have meant anything at all by it—he meant something like the manner in which a bud unfolds into a flower (make appropriate hand motion here), or the manner in which an embryo develops into an infant, or the manner in which a volcanic cone adds to itself in successive eruptions.

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July 16, Friday: According to Frederick Karl's biography of George Eliot, Marian Evans wrote to [Herbert Spencer](#) basically saying that she couldn't live without him. –He would sluff her off, introducing her to a friend of his, pretending to others that her nose was simply too long for his exacting tastes (it is probable that they were never intimate, and even that he died still a virgin).



Father [Isaac Hecker](#), C.S.S.R. wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), Esq.



July 16, Friday: *Chenopodium album*(?) Pigweed. The common form of the arrow head with larger clear white flowers. Also another arrowhead with a leaf shaped not –not in flower.

Xyris — — — yellow eyed grass –with 3 pretty yellow petals atop. The forget me not is still abundant. There is sport in the boys watermill which grinds no corn & saws no logs –& yields no money –but not in the man's. *Pyrus arbutifolia melanocarpa* –fruit begins to be black. *Cephalanthus occidentalis* button-bush– The bass on Conantum is a very rich sight now –though the flowers are somewhat stale –a solid mass of verdure & of flowers with its massed & rounded outline– Its twigs are drooping weighed down with pendulous flowers –so that when you stand directly under it & look up you see one mass of flowers –a flowery canopy– Its conspicuous leaflike bracts too have the effect of flowers. The tree resounds with the hum of bees –bumble bees & honey bees –rose bugs & butterflies also are here— — a perfect susurrus –a sound as C says unlike any other in nature –not like the wind as that is like the sea. The bees abound on the flowers of the smooth sumac now. The branches of this tree touch the ground –and it has somewhat the appearance of being weighed down with flowers. The air is full of sweetness. The tree is full of poetry. I observe the yellow butterflies everywhere in the fields and on the pontederias –which now give a faint blue tinge to the sides of the rivers.– I hear the link link fall like note of the bobolink (?) in the meadows –he has lost the bobo off. Is it the Goldfinch that goes twittering over but which I cannot see? This is a still thoughtful day –the air full of vapors which shade the earth preparing rain for the morrow. The sarsaparilla berries are black. The weeds begin to be high in low grounds & low wood paths –the *Eupatorium purpureum* & Golden rods &c suggesting a certain fecundity & vigor in nature –so that we love to wade through their ranks. The *Rhixia Virginica* the meadow beauty high colored, more beautiful than you remembered. The *stachys aspera* or hedge nettles looking like a white prunella with a long spike in the meadows. The *platanthera lacera* ragged Orchis –an unpainted flower. Is that delicate rose purple flower in the Miles swamp with a long slender pannicle & large leaves in a sort of whorl with long petioles the *Desmodium acuminatum* –pointed leaved tick-trefoil or *hedysarum*? The *lechea major* larger pin weed everywhere in dry fields– Is it open?

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1853

In England, [Herbert Spencer](#), upon receiving his inheritance, quit his job as a sub-editor.



(It was beneath him. He wasn't as cunning about this as the Reverend Emerson had been when Emerson had received his money. He didn't give any sermon explaining how he had to resign because he had moral qualms about the Sacrament of Sweaty Inkstained Markup. He just went "Hey, take this job and shove it." He just slipped out the back, Jack, and he was free.)



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1855

In England, Part I of [Herbert Spencer](#)'s THE PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY was published. Since he had only one idea, and it was a big idea, it was simplicity itself for him to write book after book about his one big idea. The books wrote themselves, book after book. The books didn't sell at all well in England, but in America they flew off the shelves like hotcakes. He was telling the "Go-Aheader" Americans what they wanted to hear.⁶

1856

Mr. [Herbert Spencer](#) had a "nervous breakdown," or became depressed or something. For the remainder of his life he would be struggling to cope with this. His discussion of it, in his autobiography, would be interminable (which is one good reason among many, that you have permission to ignore that tome).

6. And what was this one big idea? It seems to have been that if you can bring yourself to pander shamelessly to the supremacy of Whiggery, no Whiggist is ever going to see through you. "Hold still, dear, this may hurt a bit for a while but it's all for the best."

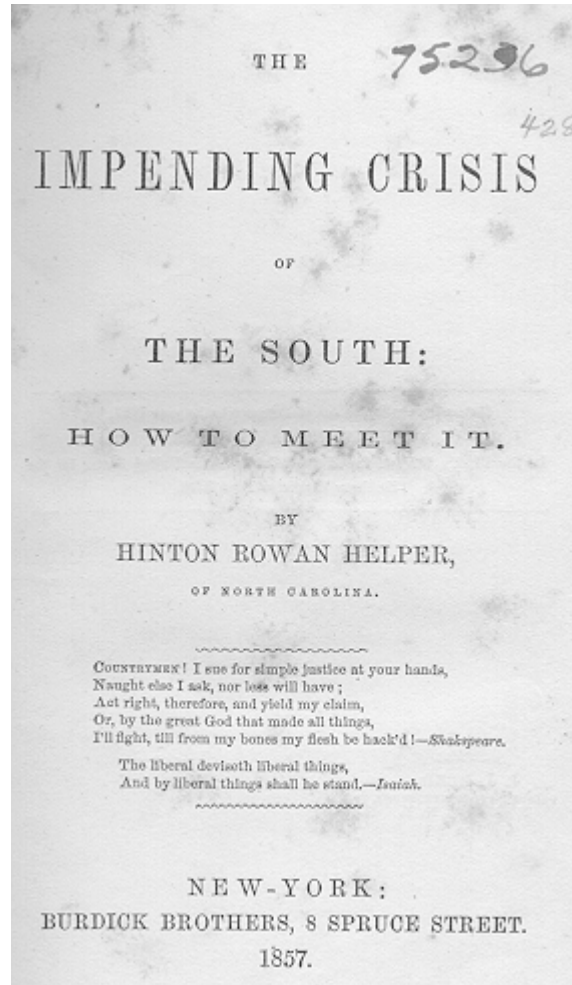


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1857

Hinton Rowan Helper's polemical compilation of census data *THE IMPENDING CRISIS OF THE SOUTH: HOW TO MEET IT* was published in [Baltimore](#), expanding upon what we now have come to regard as a pleasant



conceit—the idea that oppression actually is unprofitable to the oppressor— and proclaiming also the pleasant conceit that [Waldo Emerson](#), who had originally espoused this idea in the 1844 “EMANCIPATION IN THE

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BRITISH WEST INDIES”, was America’s “most practical and profound metaphysician.” Hoo boy!



This Emerson-admirer was an egregious case of what you would term an Antislavery Racist. –Which is to say, he was a Southern white man, from [North Carolina](#), who owned no slaves, whose fixation was that he was being victimized. It wasn’t the blacks who were being harmed by slavery, it was real decent folks, white folks like him who were being harmed by slavery. All these darkies, who belonged to other people, were impacting his life! He hated the nigger who was doing him wrong, he hated the slavemaster who was doing him wrong. What he needed most urgently was a lily-white, pure America of which he could be proud, where he could stand tall. Slavery was a tainted and archaic social system that was standing in the way of white people’s cultural and material progress. Blacks were a tainted and inferior group who had no business being over here, in our brave New World, in the first place.⁷

7. Hinton Rowan Helper. THE IMPENDING CRISIS OF THE SOUTH: HOW TO MEET IT. [Baltimore](#), Maryland, 1857. This interesting book has been republished in Cambridge MA in 1968. For more on this guy and his not-all-that-novel conceit that the victims were victimizing him and needed to be trumped, see Bailey, Hugh C. HINTON ROWAN HELPER: ABOLITIONIST-RACIST (University AL: 1965).

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"History, among its many ironies, often places enemies in life into various positions of posthumous conjunction."

— Stephen Jay Gould



This antislavery racism, which did not want slaves to exist because it did not want blacks to exist, is to be compared and contrasted with the proslavery racism of the Irishman John Mitchel, who, as long as blacks did exist, needed for them to exist as slaves. In this year Mitchel gave up trying to become a farmer and created the Southern Citizen.



According to Noel Ignatiev's **HOW THE IRISH BECAME WHITE**, "To be acknowledged as white, it was not enough for the Irish to have a competitive advantage over Afro-Americans in the labor market; in order for them to avoid the taint of blackness it was necessary that no Negro be allowed to work in occupations where Irish were to be found."



IRISH PHYSIOGNOMY.

According to the jokes that were going the rounds in those days among non-Irish white racists (the bulk of the population, actually), the Irish were "Negroes turned inside out" while the American free blacks were "smoked Irish."

It has been well said, that inside the charmed Caucasian chalk circle it is the sum of what you are not -not Indian, not Negro, not a Jew, not Irish, etc.- that make you what you are. And, that's as true now as it was then.

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A crisis would break out in the discussions of this attitude about how to achieve progress, in December 1859 during the uproar over the John Brown raid on Harpers Ferry by abolitionists.

Speaking of progress, in this year in England, [Herbert Spencer](#)'s article "Progress: its Law and Cause" began to apply his one big idea, a principle that he had derived from K.E. von Baer, that the biological development of an organism proceeds from a homogenous state to a heterogeneous state, to the solar system, to animal species, to human society, to industry, to art, to language, to science, and to the kitchen sink. This infatuation eventually led to his friend Thomas Henry Huxley commenting about him that Spencer's idea of a tragedy was "a deduction killed by a fact."



Mary Ann Shadd Cary gave birth to a daughter, Sarah. In this period her gazette The Provincial Freeman was becoming encumbered in debt.

In this year George Fitzhugh's CANNIBALS ALL! OR, SLAVES WITHOUT MASTERS was printed in Richmond VA by the firm of A. Morris. This author would oppose secession until civil war began, arguing that a slaveholding Confederacy could not survive until the advanced capitalist countries had likewise abandoned capitalist competition and its bourgeois individualism. After the loss of the war both Helper and Fitzhugh would becoming more and more negrophobic, more and more idiosyncratic, and sink into obscurity.

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CANNIBALS ALL!

OR,

SLAVES WITHOUT MASTERS.

BY

GEORGE FITZHUGH,

OF FORT ROYAL, CAROLINE, VA.

"His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him."—GEN. xvi. 12.

"Physician, heal thyself!"—LUKE iv. 23.

RICHMOND, VA.

A. MORRIS, PUBLISHER.

1857.

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June 26: In Springfield, Illinois, Abraham Lincoln spoke against the Dred Scott decision.



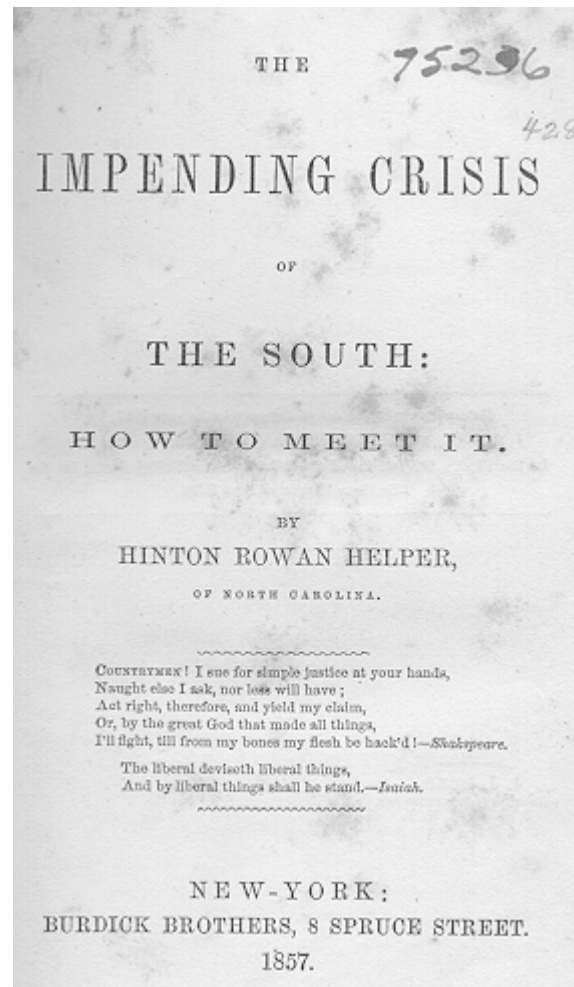
This man had no rights that any white American was bound to respect. None at all. Nope.

The 1st edition of Hinton Rowan Helper's polemical compilation of census data *THE IMPENDING CRISIS OF THE SOUTH: HOW TO MEET IT* was published in [Baltimore](#), expanding upon what we now have come to regard as a pleasant conceit –the idea that oppression actually is unprofitable to the oppressor– and proclaiming also the pleasant conceit that [Waldo Emerson](#), who had originally espoused this idea in the 1844 “EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES”, was America's “most practical and profound metaphysician.” Hoo boy! What Helper was proposing amounted to a comprehensive racial boycott by all whites against all persons of color. These coloreds couldn't help but be unfair low-price low-quality competition for decent, honest, clean white workingmen such as him. He proposed a total ostracization of any white man so unaware of the needs of white people as to utilize the labor of a nonwhite. No union with slaveholders! It would become a crime to so much as possess a copy of this racist book in the American South.



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There was a blurb by Horace Greeley in the New-York Tribune and Weekly Tribune. When Senator James Mason of Virginia read Helper's statistical study, he considered that its intent was "to array man against man in our own States." Helper's attitude was plain. He minced no words. He recommended to all white Americans that for fundamental economic reasons an abolitionist is your "best and only true" friend. I will quote *passim* in the manner in which it is customary to quote from such a treatise on attitude as *MEIN KAMPF*, in illustration of the plainness of Helper's message.⁸

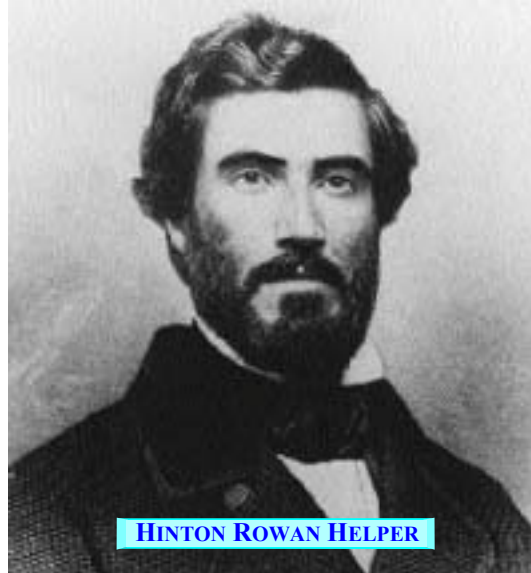


You must either be for us or against us.... [The white masses are going to] have justice peaceably or by violence.... Do you aspire to become the victims of white nonslaveholding vengeance by day, and of barbarous massacre by the negroes at night?... [Slavery is] a perpetual license to murder.... In nine cases out of ten [slaves are] happy to cut their masters' throats.

8. Anyone who desires to evaluate the accuracy and representativeness of the constructed paragraph of quotation is urged to consult the original, which is a quick and entertaining read if one pays attention to the textual paragraphs while ignoring the enormous quantities of utterly irrelevant and tendentious and pretentious statistical tabulation.

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HINTON ROWAN HELPER

This Emerson-admirer was an egregious case of what you would term an Antislavery Racist. —Which is to say, he was a Southern white man, from [North Carolina](#), who owned no slaves, whose fixation was that of the victim. It wasn't the blacks who were being harmed by slavery, it was real decent folks like him who were being harmed by [slavery](#). All these slaves, who belonged to other people, were impacting his life! He hated the nigger who was doing him wrong, He hated the slavemaster who was doing him wrong. What he needed most urgently was a lily-white, pure America of which he could be proud, where he could stand tall. Slavery was a tainted and archaic social system that was standing in the way of white people's cultural and material progress. Blacks were a tainted and inferior group who had no business being here in our brave New World in the first place.⁹

The Democrats immediately attempted to neutralize Helper's dangerous racist abolitionism by issuing Gilbert J. Beebe's *A REVIEW AND REFUTATION OF Hinton Rowan Helper's "IMPENDING CRISIS"*. They charged that their political opponents, the Republicans, were using this treatise as their "text-book."

A crisis would break out in the discussions of this attitude about how to achieve progress, in December 1859 during the uproar over the John Brown raid on Harpers Ferry by abolitionists.

Speaking of progress, in this year in England, [Herbert Spencer](#)'s article "Progress: its Law and Cause" began to apply his one big idea, a principle that he had derived from K.E. von Baer, that the biological development of an organism proceeds from a homogenous state to a heterogeneous state, to the solar system, to animal species, to human society, to industry, to art, to language, to science, and to the kitchen sink. This ideology-driven infatuation eventually led to his friend Thomas Henry Huxley commenting about him that Spencer's idea of a tragedy was "a deduction killed by a fact."

9. This interesting book has been republished in Cambridge MA in 1968. For more on this guy and his not-all-that-novel conceit that the victims were victimizing him and needed to be trumped, see Hugh C. Bailey's *HINTON ROWAN HELPER: ABOLITIONIST-RACIST* (University of Alabama, 1965).



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HERBERT SPENCER

1859

November 24, Thursday: Henry Thoreau wrote to Calvin H. Greene.

Concord Nov. 24. '59

Dear Sir,

The lectures which you refer to were reported in the newspaper, after a fashion, the last one in some half dozen of them, and if I possessed one, or all, of those reports I would send them to you, bad as they are. The best, or at least longest one of the Brown Lecture was in the Boston "Atlas & Bee" of Nov 2^d. May be half the whole— There were others in the Traveller— The Journal &c of the same date.

I am glad to know that you are interested to see my things, & I wish that I had them in a printed form to send to you. I exerted myself considerably to get the last discourse printed & sold for the benefit of Brown's family—but the publishers are afraid of pamphlets & it is now too late.

I return the stamp which I have not used.

I shall be glad to see you if I ever come your way

[One-third page missing]

Yrs truly

Henry D. Thoreau

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ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES BY MEANS OF NATURAL SELECTION, OR THE PRESERVATION OF FAVORED SPECIES IN THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE was published to acclaim and controversy by a gentleman naturalist with whose work Thoreau was already familiar. Have you ever wondered how [Charles Darwin](#) ever got his ORIGIN book, with its so utterly novel and abhorrent thesis, through the London presses? The standard accounts merely say that he sent off his MS and it was published.



ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES

But what actually happened was that Charles Lyell fronted for him with a publisher, John Murray, and based on this recommendation Murray, being himself an amateur geologist, accepted the MS sight unseen. Once he got his hands on the actual manuscript, he became quite disenchanted at what he had committed himself to. He commented, in fact, that this new theory of descent with modification was like “contemplating the fruitful union of a poker and a rabbit.” The new theory was “absurd.” Pointing out to Darwin that “everybody is interested in pigeons,” he urged that the MS be entirely rewritten to limit the author’s remarks to pigeons, with only a brief reference to general principles. His recommendation, he confessed, was based upon a standard publishers’ fantasy, that of placing a copy of his book on the tea-table of every pigeon-fancier in Britain. The publisher was willing to put out only an edition of 1,250 copies, which at fifteen shillings was quickly sold out.

The argument about this had driven Darwin to one of those English water-resorts for “the cure.” While at this resort he was reading a new novel, ADAM BEDE, and on the evening of this day on which ORIGIN came out, George Eliot ([Herbert Spencer](#)’s girlfriend, sort of, although we have room to hope that they were never

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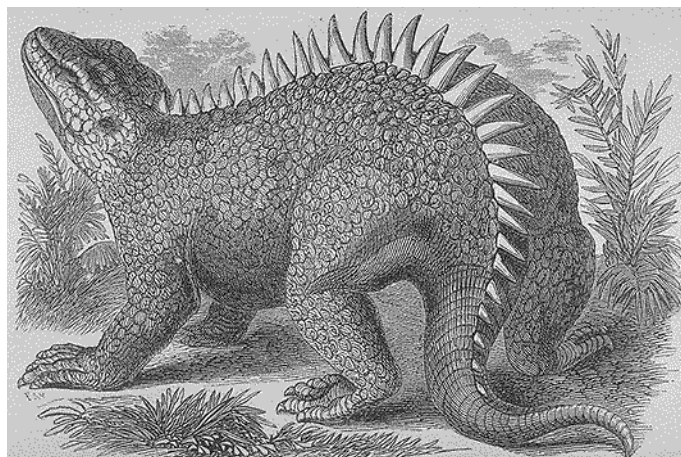
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intimate) read Darwin's book.



We don't know either what he thought of her fiction or what she thought of his nonfiction. We do know that the publisher's trepidations would prove to have been unwarranted, that two pirate editions would quickly roll off the American presses without the formality of permission or the forwarding of any royalties — and that at Cambridge College, William Whewell would not tolerate such a treatise as the *ORIGIN* to be placed in the library stacks.

The natural history encyclopedias of the 19th Century rarely included extinct animals. An exception was Samuel Goodrich's *ILLUSTRATED NATURAL HISTORY* published in this year, in which, upon a notice of the common chameleon, the audience suddenly found itself in the presence of "fossil lizards." Below is its woodcut of the *Hylaeosaurus*. Other illustrations show the *Iguanodon*, the *Megalosaurus*, and a collection of marine reptiles such as *Ichthyosaurus*. All these illustrations had been copied from the Crystal Palace concretions. *Hylaeosaurus* had been discovered by Gideon Mantell in 1832 and had been announced in his *GEOLOGY OF THE SOUTHEAST OF ENGLAND* in 1833. It was one of Richard Owen's original three dinosaurs and stood proud on the relocated Crystal Palace's grounds:



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[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal for this day reads:



Clear and fine for the season. Left Concord at 8¹/₂ A.M.

Frederick Douglass's ship was arriving on this day in Liverpool harbor.

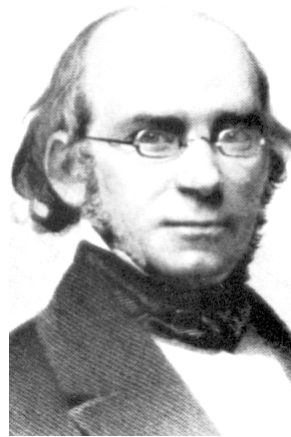
In a private letter, the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#), who was entirely unfamiliar with evolutionary theory, confessed on this day to Francis Jackson (the namesake grandfather of the mentally imbalanced Francis Jackson Meriam of the Harpers Ferry raid whom Thoreau would help escape, supposedly toward Canada) that the reason he did not like slavery was, that if these inferior colored people were allowed to have any place at all in human society, they would merely take the opportunity to **fecundate**. To be kind to them was merely to create more of them that one would need to be kind to. The Reverend was an Aryan possessed of Aryan common sense, a veteran of preaching in downtown Boston to other Aryans possessed of Aryan common

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sense, and so of course he belabored the obvious, that:

An Anglo-Saxon with common sense does not like this Africanization of America.



Brit horrified at slavery

USer horrified at slavery

Confusing Darwinism with Spencerism and triumphalism (that is, with “Social Darwinism,” as is so very usual), the Reverend [Parker](#) would eventually get around to congratulating himself that on account of his deeply ingrained racism he had been “Darwinian before Darwin” (actually, in this “Anglo-Saxon” Aryan race-soulism of his, what he was in fact was Hitlerian before Hitler).¹⁰



November 24. The river has risen considerably, at last, owing to the rain of the 22d. Had been very low before.

See, on the railroad-slope by the pond, and also some days ago, a flock of goldfinches eating the seed of the Roman wormwood. At Spanish Brook Path. the witch-hazel (one flower) lingers.

I observe that ferns grow especially where there is an abrupt or broken bank, as where, in the woods, sand has been anciently dug out of a hillside to make a dam with and the semicircular scar has been covered with a sod

10. [Adolf Hitler](#), a Catholic, understood something about Christianity which few Christians are able to accept. “Christianity is a rebellion against natural law, a protest against nature” (HITLER’S TABLE TALK, Weidenfield and Nicolson, London 1963). Many German Christians supported Hitler because they had the spirit of Hitler within them while they supposed they had the spirit of Christ within them. Even today some Christians are unable to accept the truth of this remark, because they have the spirit of Hitler, or the Emperor Constantine, within them while they suppose they have the spirit of Christ within them. That sort of Christianity was in fact the only sort of Christianity which my mother in Indiana had ever known, which is why she could not consider me a Christian but needed to agonize over me as an “atheist” howevermuch I insisted that I was attempting to follow the way of Jesus as I construed it. If someone were to tell these “Constantinian” Christians that Hitler said that two plus two equals four, they would try to find some perversity in this remark by which to dismiss it (the guy lost a war, and that has forever discredited him as the leader of the state church), and if someone told them that the problem is not that Hitler did not know what true Christianity is, but that the actual problem is that they themselves do not know what true Christianity is, they My mother was in fact, like E.O. Wilson the Harvard sociobiologist, an admirer of Ronald Reagan. Wilson perceived President Reagan as the model of the “soft-core altruist,” which is the good because fake kind of altruist who does not qualify as a Christian “enemy of civilization” (Edward O. Wilson, ON HUMAN NATURE, Harvard UP, Cambridge MA 1978, page 157) because he does not operate out of a mere mindless death-wish. As Mary Midgley has pointed out, “Social Darwinism or Spencerism is the unofficial religion of the west. The official western religion, Christianity, is well known to be rather demanding and to have its eye on the next world rather than this one. In such situations, other doctrines step in to fill the gap. People want a religion for this world as well. They find it in the worship of individual success” (Mary Midgley, EVOLUTION AS A RELIGION: STRANGE HOPES AND STRANGER FEARS, Methuen, London 1985, page 140). The mock altruist is a person whose calculating “good behavior” is well rewarded. His “psychological vehicles are lying, pretense and deceit, including self-deceit, because the actor is most convincing who believes that his performance is real” (page 156). The real altruist, the hard-core one, “irrational,” would in fact be Social Darwinism’s enemy, sociobiology’s enemy, and the enemy of civilization. There were some German Christians, a few, to leaven Hitler’s loaf; they insisted on their right to die by way of the cross rather than the sword. There are some American Christians, a few, to leaven America’s loaf; they are of course condemned, but here they are.

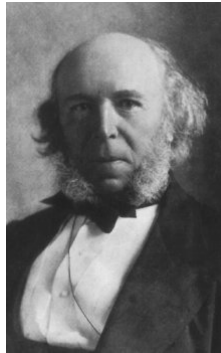
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and shrubs again. The shelter and steepness are favorable when there is shade and moisture. How pretty amid the downy and cottony fruits of November the heads of the white anemone, raised a couple of feet from the ground on slender stalks, two or three together,—small heads of yellowish-white down, compact and regular as a thimble beneath, but, at this time, diffusive and bursting forth above, somewhat like a little torch with its flame,—a very neat object!

1860

[Herbert Spencer](#) issued a prospectus and began accepting funding for the eventual publication of a encyclopedic treatment of his attitude problem, Social Darwinism, which was to be grandly entitled THE SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY. (It's wonderful he was able to scheme to do this, although quite alarming that anyone would give him any money — well, he was a man for his times! :-)



Gosh, you don't
look Nazish

This synthetic philosophy of course was paving the way for [Nazism](#):



"I cannot see why man should not be just as cruel as nature."

— [Adolf Hitler](#)

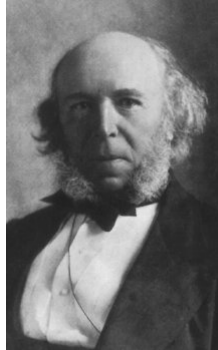


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1862

[Herbert Spencer](#)'s FIRST PRINCIPLES: The supreme power in the universe is utterly inscrutable, so don't try to scrute it.



1866

July 2, day: [Alfred Russel Wallace](#) complained to [Charles Darwin](#) about his unfortunate choice of terminology. "Natural selection" simply was not doing the trick. The common reader was misunderstanding this to mean that a pagan deity, Nature, was doing the selecting. Wouldn't Darwin please switch to the use of the self-explanatory and non-confusing terminology so ably sponsored by [Herbert Spencer](#), "survival of the fittest"? (Fortunately, Darwin would resist this suggestion.)

1870



"Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation."

— [Herbert Spencer](#), 1870




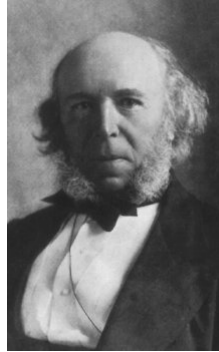
1873



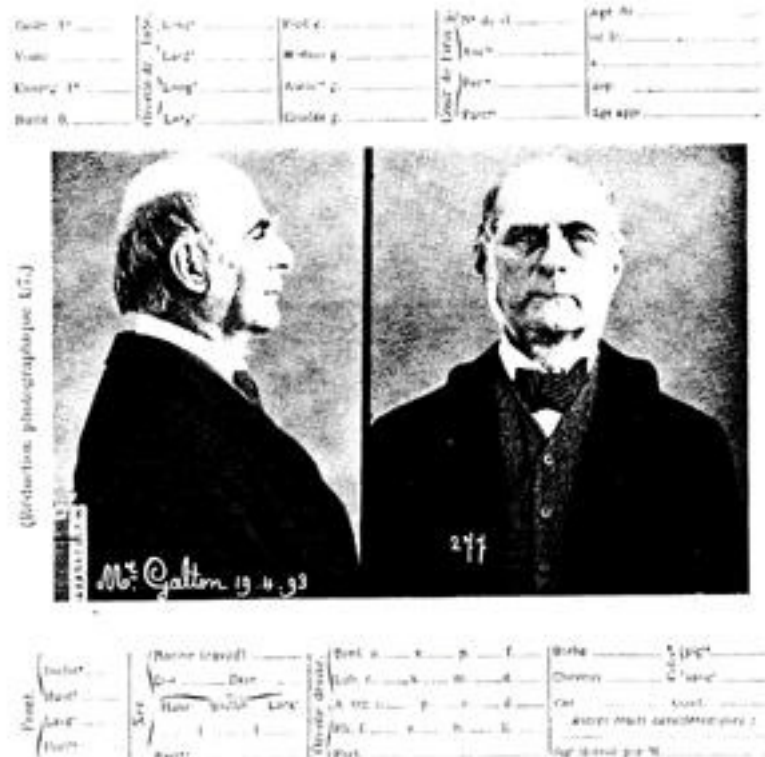
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 In the “Slaughter-House Cases” 83 U.S. (16 Wall.) 36, 21 L.Ed. 394, the Supreme Court discussed the purpose of the Reconstruction Era’s XIIIth Amendment to [the federal Constitution](#) and the meaning of “involuntary servitude” in a manner which is totally unintelligible unless one takes into account the geist of the age as expressed in the sociological ruminations of that age’s philosopher of record, [Herbert Spencer](#), and as



expressed in the scientistic ruminations of that age’s pseudoscientist of record, Sir Francis Galton. (For an illustration of how this Amendment is treated even today in consequence of the neglect of subsequent enabling legislation by the federal congress, consider Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer Co. (1968) 392 U.S. 409, 88 S.Ct. 2186.)



Effectively, what the XIIIth had outlawed was a mere word, a mere concept. From the point of enactment of this amendment forward, anything referred to within the law of the United States of America as “slavery” would be ipso facto vulnerable to legal interception; however, all one needed to do to avoid these legal

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cancellations of one's dominion over others here was, to carefully refrain from ever referring to these dominations by employment of that legally proscribed term, "slavery." This situation had been implemented very simply, merely by our never having assigned to the constructs "slave," "slavery," and/or "enslavement" any specific legalistic definition within our state and/or federal criminal statutes, or within our body of case-law precedent. In all of America in all of the years subsequent to our Civil War, not one single American citizen has ever been punished, or even convicted, or even arraigned, or even taken under arrest, for any crime of having enslaved another American citizen. It is as if this never ever was the case. The perfect out has been, that whatever we do to others, we are very simply not ever to refer to this as an "enslaving" of them. You're home free regardless of who you exploit or of how you exploit, so long as you watch your mouth while you do so.



The beginning, with [Herbert Spencer](#)'s DESCRIPTIVE SOCIOLOGY, of a long series of publications which would eventuate in THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY, in which the human species is viewed as nothing more than another animal species sharing in the very general struggle for existence which is the only thing which leads to the survival of the fittest species through the suppression of unfitness, and thus although apparently vicious does serve a benign end (so long, of course, as misguided or weak individuals are prevented by wise and farsighted individuals from attempting to mute the viciousness of the struggle, for such fools might in the weakness of their pity prevent or stall the benign end from being realized, and thus be the cause of great and unnecessary suffering). Upon Spencer's death he would leave an endowment which would continue the publication of such vitally critical materials until they would stand complete in nineteen parts bound in calfskin as of 1934: THE NINETEEN PARTS OF WHIGGISM EXPOUNDED UPON NINETEEN TIMES OVER.¹¹



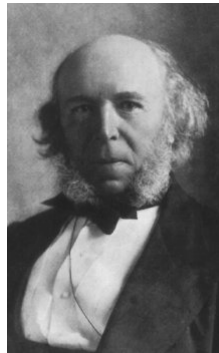
11. I'm kidding. That wasn't the actual title.

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1876

[Herbert Spencer](#), in Volume I of his THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY published in this year in England, was guilty of uncritically passing along racist remarks which had originated with the German traveler Johann J. von Tschudi in TRAVELS IN PERU, DURING THE YEARS 1838-1842 ON THE COAST, AND IN THE SIERRA, ACROSS THE CORDILLERAS AND THE ANDES, INTO THE PRIMEVAL FORESTS, published in London in English translation in 1847, racist remarks which had subsequently been brought forward in such accounts as [Dr. Josiah Clark Nott](#)'s and [George Robin Gliddon](#)'s foundational textbook of the new racist American anthropology, published in London in 1854, TYPES OF MANKIND: OR, ETHNOLOGICAL RESEARCHES, BASED UPON THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS, PAINTINGS, SCULPTURES, AND CRANIA OF RACES, AND UPON THEIR NATURAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, PHILOLOGICAL, AND BIBLICAL HISTORY: ILLUSTRATED BY SELECTIONS FROM THE INEDITED PAPERS OF SAMUEL GEORGE MORTON, M.D., AND BY ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PROF. L. AGASSIZ, LL.D., W. USHER, M.D.; AND PROF. H.S. PATTERSON, M.D. Spencer thus made these racist lies available to an Austrian politician who would repeat them in the 1925-1926 timeframe in his book about his struggles, *MEIN KAMPF*. Some lies are so choice they never die.



1878

June 19: [Waldo Emerson](#) indicated no familiarity with the writings of [Herbert Spencer](#).¹²

1880



"Evolution is a change from a nohowish untalkaboutable all-alikeness, to a somehowish and in-general-talkaboutable, not-all-alikeness, by continuous somethingelsifications and sticktogetherations."
 — The Reverend Thomas Penyington Kirkman (1806-1895)



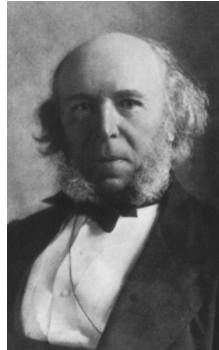
12. Another thing we can't accuse him of.

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1884

[Herbert Spencer](#)'s MAN VERSUS THE STATE.



1896

[Herbert Spencer](#)'s THE SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY (this is the 2d most massive volume he ever wrote — the most massive of course being his autobiography).



1902

In this year [Herbert Spencer](#) yet lived, and [Bertrand Russell](#) supposed he could hear that man's voice speaking out of the whirlwind in the BOOK OF JOB — well, he didn't much like what he thought he heard:

Some, though they feel the demands of the ideal, will still consciously reject them, still urging that naked Power is worthy of worship. Such is the attitude inculcated in God's answer to Job out of the whirlwind: the divine power and knowledge are paraded, but of the divine goodness there is no hint.¹³

13. Cf. "A Free Man's Worship," THE BASIC WRITINGS OF BERTRAND RUSSELL, NY, 1961, page 68.



1903

[David Hume](#) had asserted back in 1737-1740 in his *A TREATISE OF HUMAN NATURE: BEING AN ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE THE EXPERIMENTAL METHOD OF REASONING INTO MORAL SUBJECTS* that people who attempted to draw ethical conclusions from natural facts were thinking irrationally, because such an inference from “is” to “ought” was entirely illicit.

In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark'd, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary ways of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when all of a sudden I am surpriz'd to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, is, and is not, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an ought, or an ought not. This change is imperceptible; but is however, of the last consequence. For as this ought, or ought not, expresses some new relation or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it shou'd be observ'd and explain'd; and at the same time that a reason should be given; for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it.

Others have suggested that the term “good” is merely an affirmation of approval, and that, as such, all talk about The Good may be understood as the assertion “I approve.” Despite these attempted corrections, people had continued unashamedly in such sins of thought. At this point Professor G.E. Moore asserted, in his book *PRINCIPIA ETHICA*, that when his contemporaries such as Mr. [Herbert Spencer](#) attempted to make assertions about ethics by appealing to a definition of the term “good” in terms of one or more natural properties such as “pleasant,” “more evolved,” “desired,” etc., such as “pleasure” in the case of hedonists, or “survival” in the case of evolutionary ethics, they were merely committing over and over a “naturalistic fallacy.”

There can be no doubt that Mr. Spencer has committed the naturalistic fallacy.

It is preposterous, he implied, to claim that what is natural is inherently good or right, or that what is unnatural is inherently bad or wrong, simply because the term “good” (in the sense of intrinsic value) is indefinable, is merely the name we use for a simple, non-natural property, “one of those innumerable objects of thought which are themselves incapable of definition, because they are the ultimate terms by reference to which whatever is capable of definition must be defined.” Moore classified this “naturalistic fallacy” as an instance of a more general type of fallacy, which we might call the “definitional fallacy,” which is committed whenever a statement to the effect that some object has a simple indefinable property is misunderstood as a definition that gives the meaning of the simple indefinable property:

That “pleased” does not mean “having the sensation of red,” or anything else whatever, does not prevent us from understanding what it does mean. It is enough for us to know that “pleased” does mean “having the sensation of pleasure,” and though pleasure is absolutely indefinable, though pleasure is pleasure and nothing else whatever, yet we feel no difficulty in saying that we are pleased. The reason is, of course, that when I say “I am pleased,” I do not mean that “I” am the same thing as “having pleasure.” And similarly no difficulty need be found in



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my saying that "pleasure is good" and yet not meaning that "pleasure" is the same thing as "good," that pleasure means good, and that good means pleasure. If I were to imagine that when I said "I am pleased," I meant that I was exactly the same thing as "pleased," I should not indeed call that a naturalistic fallacy, although it would be the same fallacy as I have called naturalistic with reference to Ethics.

It has been pointed out that it would be hard to discover a more spectacular misnomer, anywhere in philosophy's history of spectacular misnomers, than this "naturalistic fallacy" thingie. The naturalistic fallacy may be an egregious blunder, but it is simply not naturalistic and not a fallacy. As found originally in the writings of Moore it amounted to the notion that "good" is a basic term and we should not be attempting to define such fundamentals, simply because they are fundamental: one can define a term only by reference to other terms more fundamental than it. The writings of Moore's followers would become more various, because some of them would attempt to explicate the fallaciousness of this fallacy by the making of an absolute distinction between facts and values pace Hume, or emotions or attitudes or whatever, whereas others would attempt to create an absolute distinction between description and prescription. (I once wrote to Dr. Alfred H. Kelly, the author of a treatise on the popularization of Darwinism in Germany between 1860 and 1914, *THE DESCENT OF DARWIN*, telling him that although I was awed by the skillful manner in which he balanced, in his work, all the complex details of German writings on evolutionary ethics, I had also been deeply disturbed by that work. Somehow, in studying it, I had kept having the feeling that the attitude is wrong, and in the back of my mind I had kept trying to sense what it was. I was unable to focus entirely on what I was learning. It was similar to the way I get disturbed when I recollect how casually Moore dismissed the "naturalistic fallacy" in ethics. He was surely aware of the trouble that has been caused in philosophy, I suggested, by Moore's remark on this important phenomenon. Ditto with Hume, of course. There have been endless papers attempting to reconstruct precisely why the inference from "is" to "ought" is always so entirely invalid. If only these scholars had recognized what a need there was for good advice and good counseling, and had attempted to **help** people in their intellectual difficulties! My complaint about his *THE DESCENT OF DARWIN*, therefore, was that he seemed to be doing the same thing as Hume and Moore: that is, not giving adequate reasons for his assertions. The impression I got was that he was dismissively categorizing, as merely "popular," any and all attempts to infer from the life sciences to ethics, and thus was carrying forward this academic tradition of unhelpfulness.)

December 8: [Herbert Spencer](#) died in Brighton, Sussex, England.

1904

In Chapter 6 of *THE SEA WOLF*, Jack London's character Wolf Larsen had learned his facts from Charles Darwin but had acquired his attitudes from [Herbert Spencer](#). Therefore knew of some facts that are recounted in *WALDEN*, but he applied to these facts an utterly non-Thoreauvian understanding: "...life is the cheapest thing in the world.... Nature is a spendthrift. Look at the fish and their millions of eggs. For that matter, look at you and me.... Life? Bah! It has not value. Of cheap things it is the cheapest.... Nature spills it out with a lavish hand. Where there is room for one life, she sows a thousand lives and its life eats life...."



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1908

Indiana voided any and all marriages between a white person and a person of $\frac{1}{8}$ th or more Negro blood. In this year, also, the Natal Native Affairs Committee published a report in which the desirability of an intermarriage ban was discussed but not formally proposed, and in this report they specifically invoked [Herbert Spencer](#)'s condemnation of intermarriage on the ground that it led in the 2d generation to incalculably chaotic character traits. Also during this year, the LOUISIANA CIVIL CODE, Article 94, prohibited and voided all intermarriage between white persons and persons of color, and ACT 87 made "concubinage between a person of the Caucasian race and a person of the negro race a felony, fixing the punishment therefore and defining what shall constitute the concubinage" (penalty imprisonment of one month to one year with or without hard labor). In this same year, however, the Louisiana Supreme Court in *State v. Treadaway* (126 Louisiana 1908) acquitted Treadaway of the charge of miscegenation "because his companion was an octoroon, and an octoroon was not 'a person of the negro blood or black race.'" This, the court argues, was because "[t]here are no negroes who are not persons of color; but there are persons of color who are not negroes" (see 1910 for Louisiana's legislative response).

1912

Professor William James's MEMORIES AND STUDIES dismissed [Herbert Spencer](#) as "the philosopher whom those who have no other philosopher can appreciate."

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1925

July 18: The 1st volume of [Adolf Hitler](#)'s "My Prisons" opus, *MEIN KAMPF*, was published by Max Amann. Would you like to be inspired?

Hitler would be in prison in [Germany](#) this year and the next. He was what you'd call a political prisoner.

WORLD WAR II



This jailhouse author, we notice now, was guilty of uncritically passing along racist remarks which had originated with the German traveler Johann J. von Tschudi in *TRAVELS IN PERU, DURING THE YEARS 1838-1842 ON THE COAST, AND IN THE SIERRA, ACROSS THE CORDILLERAS AND THE ANDES, INTO THE PRIMEVAL FORESTS*, published in London in English translation in 1847, racist remarks which had subsequently been brought forward in such accounts as [Dr. Josiah Clark Nott](#)'s and [George Robin Gliddon](#)'s foundational textbook of the new racist American anthropology, published in London in 1854, *TYPES OF MANKIND: OR, ETHNOLOGICAL RESEARCHES, BASED UPON THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS, PAINTINGS, SCULPTURES, AND CRANIA OF RACES, AND UPON THEIR NATURAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, PHILOLOGICAL, AND BIBLICAL HISTORY: ILLUSTRATED BY SELECTIONS FROM THE UNEDITED PAPERS OF SAMUEL GEORGE MORTON, M.D., AND BY ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PROF. L. AGASSIZ, LL.D., W. USHER, M.D.; AND PROF. H.S. PATTERSON, M.D., and again subsequently been brought forward in 1876 by [Herbert Spencer](#) in Volume I of his *THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY*. Some lies are so choice, they never die.*

LOUIS AGASSIZ

Of course, as we all know, Hitler was the sort of guy who would only use biological weapons if he could get away with it.

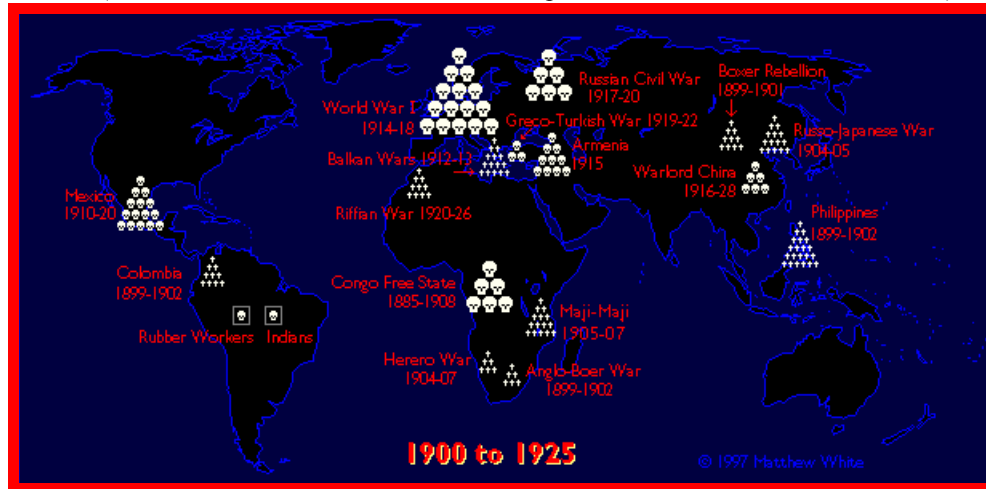
He wasn't like us at all.

WORLD WAR II

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(What he would do would be a radical departure from what had come before ;-)



1926

[Herbert Spencer](#) had always obtained a much better reception in America than in England. For instance, at this point Will Durant devoted to Spencer almost one out of every ten pages of his THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY: THE LIVES AND OPINIONS OF THE GREATER PHILOSOPHERS, which he had published originally as a series of Little Blue Book motivational pamphlets for wage workers one entire issue of which had been about Spencer. He actually awarded Spencer more face time than Plato, or Aristotle, or Kant, or Nietzsche!

1944

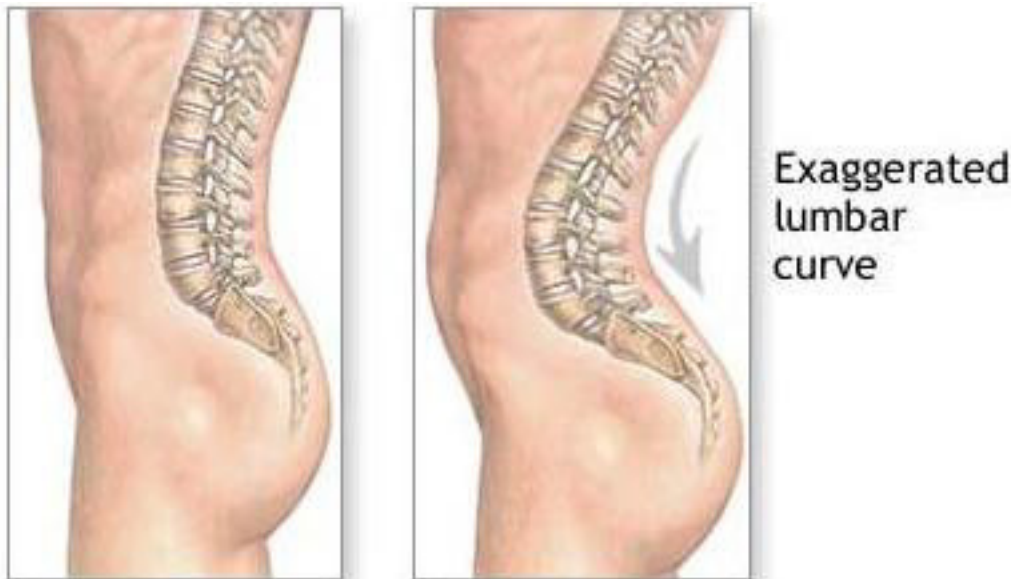
Richard Hofstadter devoted an entire chapter of SOCIAL DARWINISM IN AMERICAN THOUGHT 1816-1915 to a derogation of [Herbert Spencer](#), arguing that the vogue for his writings in late 19th-Century America had inspired Andrew Carnegie and William Graham Sumner into greedy fantasies of the utter righteousness of an unprincipled capitalism. Spencer was characterized as a person to whom the unfortunate were so much detritus. His social philosophy “walked hand in hand” with reaction, making it little more than a “biological apology for laissez-faire.”

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1954

Some of Professor W.H. Sheldon's naked photographs of male students went into his *AN ATLAS OF MEN*. Others would go into a study at Harvard University's Department of Hygiene funded by the merchant W.T. Grant. Summarized by E.A. Hooton in his book *YOUNG MAN, YOU ARE NORMAL*, the study attempts to develop an "effective combination of scientific and educational techniques whereby the physical and mental capacities of the individual may be accurately appraised at a sufficiently early stage of his development to enable him to use his knowledge to guide him to a life of happiness and successful endeavor." In other words, if you're upright you're all right, but if your spine happens to be noticeably twisted you need to be told early on — that you ought to go spend your life working in a factory somewhere.



You need to know that you'll never amount to anything before you waste any energy trying.
You need to be told that higher education simply isn't for the likes of you.

ASSLEY

As a high school student in Wabash, Indiana, I had taken a course in Physics and a course in Electricity under Mr. Lawrence Oliver, our high school's science instructor, and at this point I enrolled for his elective Biology course. One day, in this classroom, something entirely remarkable happened. At the beginning of a class, Mr. Oliver went 'Now today, we are all going to sit quietly and read Chapter 8 of our textbook to ourselves. There will be no talking. I will accept no questions. When the class bell rings, you are to close your book and leave. From this point, none of you are to attempt to speak to me.' I turned to Chapter 8 in our textbook, to discover that the title of the chapter was "Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution." I had heard the name Darwin, since my mother Mildred Geraldine Mattox Smith had previously had my little sister Carolyn Jane and I going from door to door in our Wabash neighborhood, handing out a tract with a picture of a bald man and a picture of a chimpanzee on its cover and fulminating against atheists in our public school system.

Meanwhile, the medical doctor in the biggest house (by far) in our neighborhood was sent to prison for drug dealing, and this grand house stood empty. I found a way that I could crawl up a drainpipe and get into the garage, and inside the garage I found that the back door was unlocked. I crept through the empty house, looking around, and in one of the upstairs rooms I found a bookshelf with a series of leatherbound books. It was the



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complete works of someone named [Herbert Spencer](#). I took a look and was fascinated. I removed the books one by one by way of the garage and that drainpipe, and stowed them in the loft of our garage at 723 Spring Street. I also stole a nice lamp for my mother. I began to read them from cover to cover in my room at night, and was amazed at the complexity and profundity of this man's thought. I absorbed the fact that evolution was an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion during which matter was passing from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity, and during which the retained motion was undergoing a parallel transformation, and learned that what we humans needed to do in order to be decent and competent was to put ourselves on the cusp of this wave and attempt to ride it forward into a grand future.¹⁴

On a Thursday night, after prayer meeting and the Call to the Altar at the South Side Evangelical United Brethren Church, I approached our pastor, the Reverend William Nangle. I inquired, "Is evolution true? What about those fossils and such?" The Reverend William Nangle explained the matter to me. When God created the universe, he created Adam and Eve with bellybuttons. Now, these bellybuttons were not scars where the umbilical cord had been attached to them when they were infants in their mothers' wombs, because they had never been babies. These bellybuttons were simulated bellybuttons placed there by God. We were created in God's image so obviously God also has a bellybutton. In the same way, when God created the sequoia trees on one of the six days of Genesis, he created adult sequoia trees that had annual growth rings inside their trunks. If Adam and Eve had chopped down one of these gigantic trees, they would have been able to count just thousands of rings, representing thousands of annual growth seasons. These were not real grown rings but simulated growth rings, placed in the trunks in full detail at the moment of their creation by God — who is so powerful that He can do anything. Likewise, when God on one of the six days of Genesis created the mountains, he put fossil marine clamshells at the tops of some of these mountains — shaped stones. Nothing is impossible for God.

"But, Reverend Nangle," I went, "why did God go to all that trouble?" Reverend Nangle explained to me that "Nothing is any trouble for God. He put those annual growth rings in the trunks of those sequoias in order to provide you, now, with evidence that the earth must already have existed before He created it. He put those fossil marine clamshells in the rocks of the mountains in order to provide you, now, with evidence that the earth existed for millions of years before He created it. This is your test. If you can listen to your High School science teacher, and look at the rings in the trees, and look at the fossils in the rocks, and believe that God created the universe in six days a few thousand years ago exactly as He has told us in his Book of Genesis in his Bible, his Holy Scripture, then you have passed your test of faith. You will go to Heaven when you die, because your faith is strong and true. You were predestined for Heaven and in this way you can know in advance that that insuperable reward is your personal destiny. If, however, here and now, you find yourself **tempted** by these evidences of evolution, what that means is that you are failing your test of faith. You will go to Hell when you die, because you were predestined for Hell at the moment of your birth. In this way you can know in advance that that fiery furnace is your personal destiny. It is all up to you."

(Of course I do recognize that instead of asking the Reverend Nangle about evolution, I should have been asking him about burglary — but this is now and that was then. At the time, although I was very aware of God's commandment against stealing, I was indignant because of the way the drug doctor's wife had acted toward me and my little sister. One day in the autumn we had made a deal to rake her enormous yard for fifty cents, and had struggled for hours raking and bagging leaves and carrying them off until it was too dark to see, but when we rang her doorbell again we received only a quarter — as she pointed out, we had taken care of only one side of the yard. She had acted as a faithful Social Darwinist.)

14. At the time, very clearly, an Indiana boy in a bookless household who was still too young to be permitted inside the adult section of the town's Carnegie Library, I had no other philosopher to appreciate.



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: May 17, 2013

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place your requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.
Arrgh.