

The Arguments of Evolution & Creationism, A Kantian Reconciliation

Two things fill the mind with an ever new and increasing wonder and awe,
the oftener and the more steadily we reflect on them:
the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.

Immanuel Kant, Critique of Practical Reason

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Introduction

Since Charles Darwin published his seminal work, *The Origin of Species*, in 1859, an ongoing battle has been waged between religious fundamentalists (mostly Christian) and scientists concerning the moral worth of human beings. Scientists tend to downplay the ethical/moral dimensions of evolution, whereas the religious “creationists” often argue that the theory of evolution, if true, means that humans have no special relationship to God, have no value, and are not capable of being “moral.” Since this criticism is a normative argument and not a common descriptive or factual argument, it cannot threaten the “truth” or “falsity” of the theory of evolution; instead it points out “atrocious” implications of this theory. The normative arguments take one of two forms: they either claim the theory of evolution is false due to its being incongruent with “true” background knowledge (the Bible, fundamentalist theism, etc.), or they demand that one not believe in evolution because of its morally undesirable consequences (i.e. “it might be true, but one shouldn’t believe in it”).

This type of value-attack (a “normative argument”) on the descriptive enterprise of science (specifically the theory of evolution) must be argumentatively repelled. While scholars such as Philip Kitcher have attempted to do so, I believe a new approach that has been overlooked in the relevant literature can be explored. This paper will explore how the division between noumenal and phenomenal “realities,” as postulated by the 18th century philosopher Immanuel Kant, can be applied to analyze and answer the creationist’s normative argument against evolution, all the while safeguarding the theistic urge toward human moral value. First, I will review the normative argument for the moral “evils” of evolution¹; second, I will argue that the Kantian approach can appreciate the force of this argument; and lastly, that a Kantian philosophy can resolve the evolution/moral value “antinomy” by using the noumenal/phenomenal distinction.

I. Normative Arguments against the Theory of Evolution

Creationists advance two types of arguments against the theory of evolution: one that concludes that evolution is a false depiction of reality, and another that argues that the theory of evolution, if true, should not be believed because of the morally bad consequences to such a belief. Both of these arguments are normative in that values and moral claims take a special role in their content. The initial argument shall be labeled the “Unity Argument” because of epistemic disunity the theory of evolution supposedly has with the theist worldview. The theory of evolution violates the “unity” (in relation to a creator) of human moral worth and the natural world. The second argument shall be called the “Moral-Pragmatic Argument” because of its focus on beliefs and their practical consequences.

The Unity Argument

The Unity Argument begins with the “assumption” or “background truth” that humans have special moral value; we are in some special way “united” with a creator. This statement stems from prophecy, revelation, holy texts, etc. Thus the theory of evolution, if it is to be a true description of this world, must be coherent with this over arching truth. To complicate matters further, the theist believes that this special moral value comes from God and our being created in His image. The syllogism (albeit a simplified one) takes the form of a modus tollens:

1. If the theory of evolution were true, then humans would have no special moral value.
2. Humans have a special moral value.
3. Therefore, the theory of evolution is false.

The Unity Argument can be found in Wysong’s analysis. He argues that “Atoms have no morals, thus, if they are our progenitors, man is amoral.”² While this argument commits the composition fallacy, it does highlight a common fear among creationists; it points out the non-special nature of human existence. For creationists, humanity resting in a hodgepodge of atoms does not seem comforting to us, especially in regard to “desired” traits such as morality. Another similar argument is that animals lack true reflective morality; thus, when humans are said to

evolve from animals, our similarity to our ancestors also extends to the important inability to possess moral systems. Since the creationists “know” that humans do have a special moral value, they are forced to label the theory of evolution “false” because of the lack of coherence with their established knowledge base.

The Unity Argument also claims that the theory of evolution contradicts the known revelation of God (i.e. the Bible), thus making it an obviously false description of the facts resident in this world. As Kitcher indicates “The root of the trouble is that the theory of evolution contradicts a literal reading of the first eleven chapters of Genesis.”³ The first book of the Bible, Genesis, clearly and plainly indicates the creation of humans and all other creatures by God. Creationists perceive a glaring contradiction between a literal reading of God’s truth in Genesis and the account that the theory of evolution gives. Thus, the battle is one between science and God. Moore points out this relationship between science and God, stating “all facts are God-oriented—facts are either for God or against God. Even the facts of science have the fullest and most complete meaning as they are placed in an intellectually sound relationship to creative acts of Christ.”⁴ Moore is arguing that the facts of science must always be coherent with Biblical (revealed) truth in order to be “intellectually sound” (read: true). Watson ups the ante for belief in God by arguing “The only God worthy of mankind’s trust and adoration is the God who can accurately describe the world’s past, as a basis for predicting the world’s future.”⁵

It appears that theists⁶ who are committed to a fundamentalist religion must also be committed to a literal view of God’s word (the Bible); this in turn prevents any type of theistic commitment to the theory of evolution, and instead focuses on the creation account in Genesis as a literal record of fact.⁷ The epistemological commitments of theists make them examine all scientific theories against the touchstone of revealed truth. Failure to be “unified” with this background of knowledge necessitates (for the theist) that the putative theory must be rejected.

The Moral-Pragmatic Argument

The Moral-Pragmatic Argument uses similar rhetorical weapons, but aims at a different target; it argues that belief in the theory of evolution would bring about abhorrent or “evil” moral guidelines and tendencies in humans, and therefore should not be taught or believed in as a “true” theory. Moore indicates that evolution is not only compatible with atheism and

communism, but also actively fosters these types of ideology.⁸ Morris argues that evolutionary thought has been responsible for the ideas of Marx, Nietzsche, Stalin, Hitler, etc. Morris sums it up when he says "...since men and women are believed to have evolved from animals, then why shouldn't we live like animals?"⁹ Creationists believe that the theory of evolution, if true, would promote indiscriminant mating (read "sex") and violence;¹⁰ humans would be merely a different type of animal.

What lies behind the normative criticisms of evolution as espoused in the Moral-Pragmatic argument? Why is evolution so particularly frightening to those committed to the belief in a personal God? It seems that the answer to these questions lies in the fact that evolution "destroys" the special place of humanity in the universe. It does this in two ways: first, belief in evolution supposedly destroys human moral value and the human relationship to God, and second, acceptance of evolution seems to demand rejection of the Bible as God's true word/revelation.

The arguments for evolution destroying human morality by unifying us with the "vicious" animals, was briefly explicated above. The creationists deny the theory of evolution because it seemingly disempowers so many of their cherished religious assumptions, truths, and ideas; thus, they produce a dichotomy between being part of immoral nature or being part of God (in his image, etc.). A consequence to this argument is that our belief in our animality destroys our special relationship to God, the true source of all moral virtue. Moore writes:

Belief in the creation of human beings by God provides a more fulfilling answer for the question, Who am I? You are a creation of a God who loves you and wants you to have full fellowship with Him by realizing yourself as His creation. This relationship is understandable to one who seeks to know his Creator, and removes the alienation and separation that results from belief in an "evolved" origin of humankind.¹¹

Moore appears to be arguing that belief in the theory of evolution precludes or destroys the special relationship humans have to a personal creator (God), which results in the real and natural pain of separation (from one's loving creator) and the subsequent alienation. Moore continues by indicating the impact of this separation on human moral worth:

Personal dignity, value, and worth are lost in viewing a human being as simply a made-over animal, another “evolved” member of a species. If a person sees another human being as God’s creation, he realizes the individuality, personality, and uniqueness of that human being, as well as of himself. The personality of human beings can be understood as coming ultimately from God—who created all creatures, including humankind.¹²

Creationism recognizes the incredible worth that each individual has since he or she is a special creation of a powerful, loving God; evolution denies this special relationship by attributing our origins to matter and chance. Evolution seems to deny the personal worth, and even the personality of each individual; as Moore’s argument indicates, we become just another species of animal that is caught in the process of evolution. If animals lack individuality and personality (as in the eyes of many creationists they do), then acceptance of evolution would imply humans lack personality too. We would lose our special relation to God; no longer would we believe that we participate in God from our creation in His image. Moore points out that the key question is “Is the individual in right relation with God the Creator—with Jesus Christ as Redeemer and Savior? For if Jesus Christ is not personally known as Lord, Master, and Creator of all things, then evolution, as amoeba [sic] to man, is the only basic substitute.”¹³ The primary issue here revolves around the seeming exclusivity of these two options; either Jesus is creator or evolution holds the reins. If this is the fundamental dichotomy, it is not surprising that the normative argument is very successful in swaying support away from evolutionary theory. Who wants to give up an orderly moral universe in which one has great personal worth (because of a loving, omni-potent creator) for an uncertain moral universe which has no objective moral value as the basis of a fallible scientific theory? The question becomes, is this normative argument against evolution without any merit? What can explain its conclusions and its rhetorical power?

II. Kantian Sympathy for the Normative Argument

Kantian Sympathies

The over-arching urge that pushed Kant toward writing the Critique of Pure Reason was to limit reason to make room for faith.¹⁴ Kant saw that reason was being misused by the scholastic and the dogmatic philosophers, such as Wolff and Leibniz, in order to discern objective knowledge about God, freedom, etc. that really corresponded to no object. Kant believed that humans had a very special place and value in this world, and believed that God played an important role in living our lives (he was a devote Pietist). Thus Kant could sympathize with the creationist concern over science and objective knowledge destroying human value and deity. Just as Kant reconciled Newton and empirical philosophy with a rational faith in God and a rational morality, so too can the creationists use Kant's argumentation to shore up their cherished ideals (and not reject science in the process).

Brief Lesson in Kant

Next, a brief description of Kant's views on human epistemological conditions shall be presented. The keystone of Kant's philosophy is his phenomenal/noumenal division of the "world." This divide does not specify two different objects, insomuch as it indicates two approaches or views human knowledge must take.¹⁵ The basis of this divide is the element that the human mind injects into experience. Beck argues that this division of human knowledge is important in a limiting sense—the boundaries of the phenomenal delineate the reaches of human sensibility.¹⁶ Objects can be thought of as noumenal in that this way of conceiving them as free from all human experience; thus, all objects that humans can actually experience must be phenomenal, as these are the objects that are conditioned by human forms of intuition (sensibility). Phenomenal "objects" are the way that things appear to us (humans), and are determined not solely by the object, but mostly by the influence of the mind's structure and synthesis.

The mind, through its synthesis of empirical intuitions and pure concepts (categories) resident in the structure of the mind "produce" the objects we experience in reality; these are Kant's phenomenal "objects." Noumenal "objects," or things-in-themselves, are objects as we do

not and cannot ever experience them. Ewing indicates that this concept is needed to explain the given elements to our experiences; while humans cannot know or experience objects without the form and influence of their cognitive faculties, the noumenal object (as extending outside of human sensibility) must be presupposed.¹⁷ Our knowledge of objects is limited to the phenomenal world, but this world is somehow related to a postulated noumenal world, which is free from our mind's synthetic activities and serves as the base from which our intuition proceeds. The postulation of noumenal objects is necessary as a limit on our theoretical speculation. Paton points out that noumenal objects provide an ultimate limit to human knowledge and serve as a tacit recognition that human knowledge is not absolute—instead, one must recognize the contribution his or her cognitive faculties have in experience by positing noumenal objects as the ground of experience.¹⁸ The categories of reality, causality, substance, etc. all apply exclusively to the epistemological claims concerning phenomena; noumena are beyond the reach of our theoretical knowledge merely because they are not conditioned by the faculties contributing to that knowledge.

The categories can be used to think of noumena, but not to know them in a theoretical, objective sense.¹⁹ Beck points out that this thought of the categories is not mere “fiction,” but can instead be a rational guide to how we must think about such unknowable (in the theoretical sense) objects.²⁰ Reason demands unity and systematicity for Kant, and so the categories can be used to think about the complete sense of an object, although humans can only encounter objects in experience that include an element of sensibility. These concepts serve a regulative function in theoretical reason and also serve as the source of practical ideas in morality of immortality, God, etc. For Kant, thought about such practical ideas cannot be empirical (theoretical); instead, it must be guided by the practical employment of the categories as ideas of reason. These concepts do not point towards an object or a relation of objects in our everyday experience; instead they are guiding “Ideas of reason.” Their most important employment is in the guidance of human activity as it relates to systemic ideals—how a community of humans ought to act as governed by the moral law, how an agent in a creation under the power of God should act, etc. These types of concepts serve as the foundation for rational faith and moral precepts of God, immortality, and freedom. In short, the ideas of reason (noumenal concepts) serve as the grounds for a determinant moral order. We can never know an object that corresponds to them, but we are

practically²¹ compelled to believe in these concepts. Thus, the distinction between the world of appearances that we help to create (phenomenal) and the world as it really is (noumenal) can be useful in reconciling the realms of theoretical knowledge (knowledge of objects) with practical knowledge (morality or rational faith).

The Creationist “Collapse”

Given this Kantian distinction, one can see how creationists believe they have a cogent normative argument due to their collapse (albeit unconsciously) of the phenomenal world into the noumenal. The creationist normative argument, like Hume’s attack on causality, assumes that the world we experience is the world as it is (as the noumenal world). In the Critique of Practical Reason, (CPrR) Kant points out the error that Hume made in dealing with causality, stating, “I granted that, when Hume took the objects of experience as things in themselves (as is almost always done), he was entirely correct in declaring the concept of cause to be deceptive and an illusion...”²²

Hume had not found the concept of causality in objects themselves because he was treating them as noumenal objects, as things as they were in themselves. While this was in line with his extremely passive notion of the human mind and its “soaking in” of perceptions from the world,²³ his argument’s main assumption was directly challenged by the noumenal/phenomenal division within Kant’s epistemology. Kant continues this line of argumentation in CPrP on page [53]/55:

From my investigations, however, it resulted that the objects with which we have to do in experience are by no means things in themselves but only appearances. Furthermore, if we assume that they are things in themselves, it is impossible to see how, if A is granted, it would be contradictory not to grant B, which is altogether different from A... but it is very understandable that A and B as appearances in one experience must necessarily be connected in a certain manner (e.g., with reference to their temporal relations) and that they cannot be separated without contradicting that connection by means of which experience is possible, in which experience they become objects and alone knowable to us.²⁴

Kant is arguing that given a phenomenal interpretation of our experience, one can explain the inherent necessity in concepts such as causality. This concept applies only to phenomenal objects, and thus delineates the realm of empirical investigation (i.e. natural science from theology). The concept and category of causality cannot be applied to objects outside of the phenomenal realm, but as a pure concept, it can be applied to thinking about noumena—Kant points out that “the objective reality of the concept remains and can even be used with reference to noumena, though the concept is not in the least theoretically determined, and no knowledge can be effected with it.”²⁵

The categories and pure concepts (Ideas of reason) must be employed within their correct limits; they apply in a different fashion to either the phenomenal world or the postulated noumenal world. Creationists should appreciate this argument, in that a central tenant of theological teaching is that humans are finite, imperfect, and limited in the areas of goodness and knowledge. The Kantian position seems to be more humble than the creationist certainty over what God is and has done.

This Kantian divide between phenomenal and noumenal allows for a theoretical (scientific) explanation of necessary determination and causality in the phenomenal world, and provides a practical (moral) explanation for our “experienced” freedom as based in the noumenal world. The world as we experience it (the phenomenal world) must be causally determined; pure chaos is not allowable by our category of causality. We always temporally and perceptually attribute a cause to every event that we experience.

Creationists unknowingly collapse all of “reality” into the noumenal (things as we see them are as the objects really are), much like Hume did in his treatment of causality. Since the physical/phenomenal world is determined and causally necessitated, the collapse of phenomenal to the noumenal would provide their argument with some validity. If we experience things as they really are and causality was necessarily applicable to this world, the theory of evolution would seem to destroy much of our moral value because we would be caught in the process of change from one type of animal to another. If one is searching for a transcendental basis for morality and moral worth, and he or she assumes the whole of reality is limited to experience of things as they are (the noumenal), then one would only find a naturally determined and caused basis for reality; morality and moral value, due to the absence of freedom, would not exist. This

collapse of the phenomenal into the noumenal, as in the case of Hume's search for causality, almost foreordains the conclusion that humanity has no special value or place. Creationists are then forced to take one of three course rhetorically; one, join science (accept evolution) and give up key tenets of their faith; two, reject science outright and dogmatically adhere to the truth of their faith; or three, attempt to reconcile the theory of evolution and their faith in a rational manner. The last option appears to be the superior one, and the Kantian system provides a framework for this reconciliation.

If the collapse of the noumenal and phenomenal is thought to be the correct description of reality, one can deduce that the Bible's moral value must stem from its accurate depiction of the world, because this is the only world or perspective it can be referring to. If this is the case, creationists have a powerful motivation to deny the truth of the theory of evolution because it denies (Unity Argument) or destroys (Moral-Pragmatic Argument) the place and role of a creator (see section 1 above). No longer is Genesis discussing the creation of the world, but instead it is a verifiable, literal account of how the world was formed that can be scientifically tested. This obviously threatens religion and the "truth" of the Bible due to the nature of many of its claims; either they would not pass as a scientific truth claim/hypothesis or they would not "match up" with reality in the scientific verification process. As most theists accept their doctrines as a sort of background "truth" or "revelation," the theory of evolution will seem obviously incoherent with this truth and will be rejected.

Another reason this collapse lends credibility to the normative argument is epistemological in nature. If the Kantian description of theoretical knowledge is accepted (concepts must be joined with sense-data to give objective knowledge), then important "objects" such as freedom, moral duty, immortality, souls, and God all disappear because they provide no sensuous intuition to be paired with a concept; thus, phenomenal reality, if collapsed into the noumenal reality results in a cold, scientific world that leaves little room for common precepts of morality and religion. The destruction of God is especially worrisome to creationists/theists; God as the Creator is not only explicitly challenged by evolutionary theory, but also is indirectly assaulted by the determined and causally self-sufficient world that that their collapse puts before them. The assumption of experiencing things-in-themselves leads to this causally determined

world, and leads to such theories as evolution, which if correct, explain away God's role in this naturalistic world.

III. Kantian Resolution of the Normative Argument

The normative argument hinges on human experience being "limited" to the only reality or perspective possible; the noumenal. The creationist believes that science attempts to describe a causally necessitated world, and that theories such as evolution threaten their theism. Thus, theists mount an increasing attack upon science to preserve their cherished religious doctrines and beliefs.²⁶ This section will attempt to provide two responses to the normative argument against evolution: first, an argument that works from within the collapse of noumenal and phenomenal realities, and second, the argument that moral worth, morality, and God all reside within the noumenal realm, outside of theoretical (scientific) claims.

The Teleological Response

Initially, one can argue that even if humans experience reality as it is (the collapse of the phenomenal into the noumenal), morality and moral worth can still exist. Kant provides a possible teleological source for morality in the purpose of reason. In the CPrR, he argues that the supreme aim of reason is to be practical (moral); even speculative reason eventually resolves into practical usefulness.²⁷ In the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals (Foundations), Kant argues that reason must exist to bring about morality:

Now if its [an organized being] preservation, its welfare—in a word, its happiness—were the real end of nature in a being having reason and a will, then nature would have hit upon a very poor arrangement in appointing the reason of the creature to be the executor of this purpose. For all the actions which the creature has to perform with this intention, and the entire rule of its conduct, would be dictated much more exactly by instinct, and that end would be far more certainly attained by instinct than it ever could be by reason...in fact, we find that the more a cultivated reason deliberately devotes itself to the enjoyment of life and happiness, the more the man falls short of true contentment...But

reason is given to us as a practical faculty, i.e., one which is meant to have an influence on the will.²⁸

Kant is arguing that reason must have a purpose, its purpose cannot be to attain survival, reproduction, pleasure, and happiness (because instinct is much more effective), so it must exist to provide us with a source of morality and moral worth.

While this teleological argument²⁹ was only a minor part of Kant's system and is not readily accepted by most ethicists or scientists today, it does provide an immediate answer to the normative argument. That argument, as proffered by most creationists, basically states that without a transcendental being or world (which their assumptions a priori exclude), morality cannot emerge in the world-as-it-is. Kant's argument works well in a "collapsed" world because it fits in with the seemingly "purposive" activity of natural selection and the refinement of most surviving organs to some purpose. Admittedly, this argument has some serious problems, such as the role of freedom/determinism in the collapsed world of the creationist and the chance that reason could be a useless organ that somehow managed to survive the pressures of natural selection.

Argumentative Reconciliation Utilizing Kant

A much better line of argumentation against the normative argument of the creationists is to bring Kant's phenomenal/noumenal divide to bear as a way to safeguard science and theoretical knowledge (i.e. evolutionary theory) and practical knowledge (i.e. morality and moral worth). The creationist's normative argument rests on an implicit collapse of the phenomenal world into the noumenal world; in other words, the idea that humans experience the world as it really is. For the purposes of this paper, we will assume that Kant's theoretical arguments from the CPR concerning the role of the understanding in experience and the ideality of space and time all are sound enough to challenge the creationist collapse of the phenomenal into the noumenal.³⁰ As examined in section 2 of this paper, Kant's ideas of the mind contributing form and structure to our perceptions is not an unrealistic thought; it is then reasonable to postulate the theoretic relationship between the noumenal and phenomenal "worlds" that can be thought of or

known. Additionally, it seems that creationists would welcome any new assumption that allowed for faith in God, freedom, and morality.

Just as the postulation of a noumenal world separate from a human-created phenomenal world solved Hume's problem of causality, it too can resolve the apparent antinomy between the theory of evolution being descriptive of the world and the moral sentiments and values we believe humans possess. The theoretical and the practical elements in our experience will be safely separated from any contradictory positions. In order to see how this is so, we look to how Kant conceptualizes the theoretical and practical in his conclusion to the CPR, "Two things fill the mind with an ever new and increasing wonder and awe, the oftener and the more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me." In this passage, Kant is setting forth the phenomenal world, represented by the heavens of astronomy, against the noumenal world, epitomized by morality. Kant continues on by explicating each of these realms. First, the phenomenal:

The heavens begin at the place I occupy in the external world of sense, and broaden the connection in which I stand into an unbounded magnitude of worlds beyond worlds and systems of systems and into the limitless times of their periodic motion, their beginning and their duration.³²

Then the noumenal is characterized:

The latter begins at my invisible self, my personality, and exhibits me in a world which has true infinity but which is comprehensible only to the understanding—a world with which I recognize myself as existing in a universal and necessary (and not, as in the first case, merely contingent) connection, and thereby also in connection with all those visible worlds.³³

The metaphor is simple and accurate. Astronomy is typical of the theoretical sciences and their description of the phenomenal world, whereas morality (entailed by our freedom as members of an intelligible realm) is best postulated as being part of the noumenal world.

Kant seems to anticipate the type of objection that creationists (theists) would have to modern evolutionary theory—that it destroys our value and importance. Kant extends this argument to cover our place in the phenomenal world:

The former view [the starry heavens above me] of a countless multitude of worlds annihilates, as it were, my importance as an animal creature, which must give back to the planet (a mere speck in the universe) the matter from which it came, the matter which is for a little time provided with vital force, we know not how.³⁴

The vastness of our universe makes the finite point of life we call an individual seem incredibly remote and distant from any type of moral value or special place in the universe. Our true value and worth comes from our putative participation in the noumenal world, a postulation that we have to make to account for our (supposed) freedom and transcendental reason.³⁵ It is this thought that Kant includes in his conclusion:

The latter [the moral law within me], on the contrary, infinitely raises my worth as that of an intelligence by my personality, in which the moral law reveals a life independent of all animality and even of the whole world of sense—at least so far as it may be inferred from the final destruction assigned to my existence by this law, a destination which is not restricted to the conditions and boundaries of this life but reaches into the infinite.³⁶

For Kant, our moral worth lies in our autonomous participation in morality; a morality that is not sensuously driven or conditioned, but instead, has as its own end the treatment of rational beings as equal ends in themselves.³⁷ The “starry heavens” may cause us to feel minuscule, but our postulated involvement in the noumenal realm gives us the greatest dignity that one can possess.

The Kantian position can ease fears of determinism that the theory of evolution may foster. Since freedom cannot be proven to be theoretically true or false (Kant 1993), practical reason must decide whether freedom deserves the status as a practical belief or whether it should be discarded. As Beck indicates, Kant feels that freedom is such an integral part of human experience, morality, and decision making that we must assume we have the capability to be free

from sensuous determination and instead be able to be autonomously determined (to be members of the noumenal world).³⁸ Since we have the capability to act on grounds that are not empirical in nature (phenomenal), we must assume that this determination (the moral law) comes from our interaction with the noumenal world. Thus, in the Foundations and in the CPrR, Kant argues that reason leads us to morality (not to be systemically discussed in this paper) and to a practical belief in our membership in the noumenal world. Our moral worth and morality stems from our participation in the noumenal. Reason gives us both science and morality, albeit in different realms of knowledge and argument. Kant argues that the only thing that can be good in the world is the good will.³⁹ It is this argument in the Foundations that points toward the source of goodness in human action—that which is to be morally worthy or not is the will of an individual, and its implementation through the power of choice. Thus, humanity's intrinsic worth lies within its capability to possess a good will, which is created through the non-sensuous causality of the moral law. It is this moral law that must be postulated as a law of the noumenal world, and in turn, we must practically suppose we are free to choose our determining laws from either the sensuous (phenomenal) world or from the noumenal world (the moral law).

The creationists should try to adopt this phenomenal/noumenal distinction, as it allows for a division between the statements of science and the claims of faith. If creationists can realize that evolution deals with origins and mechanisms of the phenomenal world, of which our category of causality renders everything deterministic, then the moral value of humans is not logically precluded by evolutionary theory. Instead, this theory (and all of science in general) deals in the currency of theoretical claims, claims about objects. These claims necessarily involve the combination of sensuous intuitions (that are intersubjectively verifiable) with the common faculty of reason and understanding to produce knowledge of objects. Creationists should attempt to safeguard their faith in the noumenal realm, which not only promises a possible explanation for human freedom (from sensuous determination), but also refuge for the concepts of God, immortality, and the moral worth of humans. Of course, God cannot be known in an objective sense, but only as a matter of practical, rational faith.⁴⁰ Matters of religion and morality would be placed in the practical sphere (the noumenal), not as knowledge of what is (objects), but as postulates of what should be or what one hopes will be. Science, on the other hand, would be confined to the realm of describing the relations within the phenomenal world,

and not dealing with morality or the unique nature of human reason to transcend sensuous nature (both through practical and pure uses).

Conclusion

The rhetoric of the creationist position against the theory of evolution is a very interesting area of analysis. This paper has examined some of the various arguments and motivations that propel the creationist position toward legitimacy, and more importantly has shown a path to reconciling moral value and science. The creationists put the power of their argumentation into creating and maintaining a dichotomy; science on one side, morality on the other. They are attempting to persuade individuals based on the choice between the “good” (the moral) and the true, a choice that only occurs with the misappropriation of logic. The Kantian position provides a solution that allows for the good and the true to co-exist. While this paper will not persuade many creationists to avidly support the theory of evolution, it may shed some light on the issues of power, motivation, and argument that center around this putative description of human origins.

Notes

1. More sophisticated and detailed arguments have been produced against the theory of evolution, but this paper focuses on some common normative arguments that find wide appeal in the popular press, “lay” theistic circles, etc. The veracity of these arguments and their logical invalidity warrant critical attention. Even more important are the fears that underlie these common positions.
2. R.L. Wysong, *The Creation-evolution Controversy* (Midland, MI: Inquiry Press, 1976), 6.
3. Phillip Kitcher, *Abusing Science: The case against Creationism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1983), 186.
4. J.N. Moore, *Questions and Answers on Creation and Evolution* (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1976), 91.
5. D.C. Watson, *The Great Brain Robbery* (Chicago IL: Moody Press, 1976), 13.
6. This paper deals mostly with “fundamentalist” theists and creationists; both share a common penchant for a strict and literal interpretation texts.
7. Phillip Kitcher, *Abusing Science: The case against Creationism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1983).
8. J.N. Moore, *Questions and Answers on Creation and Evolution* (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1976).
9. H.M. Morris, *The Troubled Waters of Evolution* (San Diego, CA: Creation-Life Publishers, 1974), 167-168.
10. Phillip Kitcher, *Abusing Science: The case against Creationism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1983).
11. J.N. Moore, *Questions and Answers on Creation and Evolution* (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1976), 81.
12. *Ibid.*, 81.
13. *Ibid.*, 91.
14. Howard Caygill, *A Kant Dictionary* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1995).
15. Henry E. Allison, *Idealism and Freedom: Essays on Kant’s Theological and Practical Philosophy* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

16. Lewis W. Beck, *A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1963).
17. A.C. Ewing, *A Short Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1967).
18. Henry J. Paton, *Kant's Metaphysic Experience: A Commentary on the First Half of Kritik Der Reinen Vernunft (Vol. 2)* (New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1951).
19. One can think of an something, but without the sensuous intuition to add to the concept, there is no guarantee or even probability that the concept though will refer to an object in the world; it is merely a concept within one's mind. To know something, in an objective sense, is to use a concept to refer to an object and to have sensuous intuition that place that concept's referent in the real world; the concept actually refers to an object outside of one's mind.
20. Lewis W. Beck, *A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1963).
21. "Practically" refers to moral belief; in Kant's usage, knowledge was either "theoretical" (concerned with objects, how the world is, etc.) or "practical" (concerned with how the ideal world hould work, how we should act, etc.).
22. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1996), 55.
23. Samuel Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre: A history of Philosophy* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, INC, 1993).
24. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1996), 55.
25. *Ibid.*, 56.
26. Carl Sagan, *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark* (New York, NY: Random House, 1995).
27. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1996), 55.
28. Immanuel Kant, *Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985), 395-396.

29. Paton summarizes this teleological position in his analysis (see Kant, 1964) of Foundations:

If the function of reason in action were merely to attain happiness, this is a purpose for which instinct would have been a very much better guide. Hence if we assume that reason, like other organs, must be well adapted to its purpose, its purpose cannot be merely to produce a will which is good as a means to happiness, but rather to produce a will which is good in itself (p. 18).

30. See Beck 1963; Brook 1994; Harper & Meerbote 1984; Kant 1993; Kant 1996; Paton 1951; Smith 1950.

31. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1996), 55.

32. *Ibid.*, 169.

33. *Ibid.*, 169.

34. *Ibid.*, 169.

35. Lewis W. Beck, *A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1963).

36. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1996), 55.

37. Allan Wood, "Humanity as an End in Itself," in *Kant's Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals: Critical Essays*, ed. P. Guyer (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC, 1998).

38. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1996), 55.

39. Immanuel Kant, *Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985).

40. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New Jersey, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993).