

decrease (de-gradation) of universal structure, including the structure of light. This would suggest a more holistic explanation for the so-called “cosmological” red shift. Go back to our battery/bulb in a closed system analogy. In the beginning the bulb was emitting a bright bluish-white light, but as the battery ran down (as entropy increased) the light became more and more reddish. If we are dealing with a sample size of one closed universe, one in which entropy is increasing, the same principle applies.

No doubt some of the red shifts observed in the universe are caused by a divergence mechanism. But the magnitude of the red shifts associated with some far-away objects suggests a more holistic—systemic—mechanism. Are we missing something here? Is the “runaway universe” really expanding in the manner described by BBC, or is the tail of the “cosmological” red shift wagging the dog of BBC, as Gentry suggests? The fact is that anything that would cause the waveform of light to lose energy would produce a red shift, fooling us into believing that some objects are moving away at incredible speeds, giving us false readings about the rate of expansion, the age of the universe, etc.

Victor Shane
ASA Associate Member
PO Box 19
Summerland, CA 93067
vicshane@compuserve.com

Three Dialogues: A Gentle Connecting Rejoinder

In the spirit of Wittgenstein, if excessive verbiage masks incommensurability, appropriate clarity may be sought by delving right to the heart of the matter. In dialogue #2, Robert Gentry defends an alternative model of the universe alleged to possess “spherical symmetry” with a Cosmic Center which he deems appropriate for fixing “the throne of God ... in the heavenly Sanctuary.”¹ Whatever scientific merits this thesis may have, virtually *banishing* God in this way to a remote location within the universe of his own creation hardly comports with the eternal and *omnipresent* God of Scripture who is in no wise confined by any space time constraints.

As Creator of all that is seen and unseen, God need not even *tip his hand* as to how he created or still creates, which is the central issue behind dialogue #3.² Human limitations simply preclude any *objective* decision as to the possibility of God’s kenotic “hand” operating within *material nature*. But then, perhaps there is no such “hand” to be sought. Following Howard Van Till, the perceived absence of any such “hand” would be fully expected if his handiwork imbues the entire created universe. Denial of Christ is another “belief” position equally consistent with the perceived absence of any “hand” or even handiwork. Nevertheless, believers and “unbelievers” alike must always enter by the same “gate” where available evidence remains underdetermined. Divergent belief expectations notwithstanding, each will find their particular “belief” position to have been validated in accordance with their own expectations.

Therefore dwelling upon “defeating” naturalism or materialism seems an inadequate approach that is inherently limited in virtue of not calculating the function of deep “conversion” into the larger picture. An appreciation of the deep structure of naturalism³ might help to clarify this multi-leveled issue. Beyond this, however, far more than a merely esoteric interaction between theology and science is at stake.

In dialogue #1, Ross McKenzie delves to the required depth by identifying the sort of eye-opening knowledge, even authentic enlightenment, which is available in principle to *anyone* who is sufficiently docile. Unfortunately this is “only accessible to those who already know God through revelation and redemption.”⁴ If docility and enlightenment through Christ truly function as enabling imperatives, as *sine qua non* preconditions for true understanding, presumably the pursuit of prayer for conversion would integrally bind these three dialogues together in a crucial way. Therefore a plea for persistent and genuine prayer on behalf of all unbelievers, wisely including ourselves, seems to be the very heart of this deeply compelling and convoluted matter.

Notes

¹Robert V. Gentry, “Collapse of Big Bang Cosmology and the Emergence of the New Cosmic Center Model of the Universe,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith (PSCF)* 56, no. 4 (2004): 275.

²James Madden and Mark Discher, “What Intelligent Design Does and Does Not Imply,” *PSCF* 56, no. 4 (2004): 286–91; Howard J. Van Till, “Is the ID Movement Capable of Defeating Naturalism? A Response to Madden and Discher,” *PSCF* 56, no. 4 (2004): 292–5; and Madden and Discher, “What Would Count as Defeating Naturalism? A Reply to Van Till,” *PSCF* 56, no. 4 (2004): 296–8.

³T. J. Trenn “What is the Deep Structure of ‘Naturalism?’” *PSCF* 54, no. 1 (2002): 39–40.

⁴Ross H. McKenzie, “Foundations of the Dialogue between the Physical Sciences and Theology,” *PSCF* 56, no. 4 (2004): 252.

Thaddeus J. Trenn
ASA Fellow
POB 639, RR4
Colborne, ON K0K 1S0 Canada
ttrenn@eagle.ca

Natural History in Seventy Words: A Contribution to the Cosmology Dialogue

In the beginning, the Spirit of God stirred absolute nothingness. The stirring generated waves that turned into physical matter with relative space-time and the other laws of nature. Then God dispersed the matter that eventually formed into galaxies. Roughly ten billion years later, God intervened to bring forth the first cellular life, and God continued to orchestrate mutations and natural selection that culminated with the formation of anatomically modern humans.

James E. Goetz
7 North West Street
Coudersport, PA 16915
jimgoetz316@yahoo.com