

ODYSSEY

University of Idaho Library ILL



ILLiad TN: 445892

Borrower: OLP

Lending String:

*NTD,VHS,ZBM,NAM,LAF,IAL,KUK,GZQ,WAU,NT
E,ORU

Patron:

Journal Title: Canadian philosophical reviews =
Revue canadienne de comptes rendus en
philosophie.

Volume: VIII **Issue:**

Month/Year: 1988 **Pages:** 285-7

Article Author: W. A. Rottschaefer

Article Title: Review of Robert Richards' Darwin
and the Emergence of Evolutionary Theories of
Mind and Behavior

Imprint: South Edmonton, Alta. : Academic Print.
& Pub., ©1981-©1996.

ILL Number: 170902843



Call #: Per B1.C32

Location:

ODYSSEY ENABLED

Charge

Maxcost: 30.00IFM

Shipping Address:

Lewis & Clark College
Watzek Library, ILL
0615 SW Palatine Hill Rd
Portland, OR 97219-7899

Fax: 503-768-7282

Ariel:

Email: ill@lclark.edu

atic Putnam's relatively undefended view that he can have the critical capacities to reject the moral picture given in *Brave New World* without at the same time acquiring enough restrictive content to give us the unifying moral image of an Aristotelian ethics. (And here his identification of Aristotelian ethics with a happiness-based ethics [48-9] does not sit well with his comment on 'the insensitivity of happiness-based ethics to issues about *means*' [60].) Second, one would have liked Putnam's remarks about the cognitivism/non-cognitivism issues in ethics to have addressed directly what is a major concern of many non-cognitivists, the relation between moral judgments and action. There is much in the text – for example, his comments about the making of values and moral images (78-80) – to suggest that there are interesting arguments to be given here.

The recent discussions about metaphysical realism and internal or anti- or quasi-realism are concerned with philosophically important issues and in other works Putnam has done much to shape this debate. *MFR* will not end the controversy, but it does give us a valuable articulation of a set of theses absolutely central to the debate.

Anne Jaap Jacobson
Rutgers University

Robert Richards.

Darwin and the Emergence of Evolutionary Theories of Mind and Behavior.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1987.

Pp. xvii+699.

US\$29.95. ISBN 0-226-7199-4.

Robert Richards is out to overturn the received view of Darwinism (RV). According to RV, Darwinism is philosophically materialistic, mechanistic and amoral. It excludes God and reduces mind to brain. It recognizes only physical laws. And it eliminates moral meaning from human life. In this rich, complex, well written and beautifully produced volume, Richards, a historian and philosopher of science at the University of Chicago, argues for an alternative view of Darwinism (AV), one which is compatible with religious perspectives, non-reductionistic about the nature of mind and the laws governing nature and which provides an evolutionary basis for ethics. He contends that an examination of nineteenth century evolutionary theories of mind and behavior (ETMB), those of Darwin, Spenser, Wallace, T.H.

Huxley and their successors, Romanes, Morgan, James and Baldwin, will display the superiority of AV as an historical interpretation of Darwinism.

Richards begins by showing that the roots of ETMB, as reflected in the works of Cabanis, Lamarck, Frederic Cuvier and Erasmus Darwin, can be found in the sensationalist philosophical tradition of the Enlightenment. Their attempts to account for the instinctual bases of behaviors in a way compatible with that tradition led to the proposal that the inheritance of the effects of habitual practice, the use mechanism, explains the evolution of both anatomical and behavioral structures.

In the next four chapters Richards traces the development of Darwin's conceptions of the mechanisms of evolutionary change and their applicability to humans. According to Richards, answering the question of how to give an evolutionary account of the moral sense was central to Darwin's construction of the concept of natural selection. The philosopher James Macintosh had contended that humans were motivated by a God-given moral sense to act in ways that coincided with moral criteria discoverable by reason. Darwin argued that the moral sense was a development of evolutionarily based social instincts. At first, Darwin relied on the use mechanism to show how dispositions to act for others that may have originated for selfish reasons could over generations produce spontaneously altruistic actions purged of selfish motives. But as Darwin came to rely more on natural selection for explanations, he was faced with the problem of how to explain behaviors that provided no direct advantage to the agent. Richards contends that the works of naturalist natural theologians, especially that of Kirby and Spenser, not only influenced and confirmed Darwin's convictions about natural selection but also challenged him to show how natural selection could explain the phenomena of the altruistic behaviors of neuter insects. And he concludes that the long delay between Darwin's initial insights about natural selection and the publication of the *Origin* was due in significant part to Darwin's efforts in meeting this challenge. Darwin's solution was group selectionist. Applying that solution to human social instincts, Darwin argued that altruistic dispositions were selected for because of the community good.

Two informative and insightful chapters on Spenser follow. One of Richards' goals is to restore the historical importance of Spenser's contributions to Darwinism. To this end he emphasizes the merits of Spenser's views for developing both an evolutionary epistemology and an evolutionary ethics. In Richards' view, the development and defense of an evolutionary ethics by both Darwin and Spenser refutes the RV characterization of Darwinism as amoral.

In subsequent chapters on the work of Romanes, Morgan, James and Baldwin, Richards shows that the RV portrayal of Darwinism as materialistic and mechanistic is inaccurate and that his AV of Darwinism as religiously open and non-reductionistic better fits the historical evidence. In a final chapter we see how in the early part of this century, as the new science of genetics emerged and before the Neo-Darwinian synthesis was achieved, ETMP lost favor due to increasing doubts about the adequacy of evolutionary theory, the development of social scientific approaches antithetical to evolutionary explanations, and the tarnished career of the social applications of genetics. According to Richards RV was a product of this period. But the coming of ethology and sociobiology reflect, according to Richards, the reemergence of ETMB and the opportunity to reestablish AV as the genuine representative of Darwinism.

In his conclusion Richards shows how Darwinian historical scholarship reflects both the differing emphases of historiographic method, from internalist to externalist, and the varying estimates of the scientific status of Darwinism. The book also contains two important appendices in which Richards spells out some of the philosophical lessons of his historical account. In the first Richards discusses historiographic methods in the history of science and argues for the superiority of a natural selection model (NSM) of both the discovery and justification of scientific ideas. In the second he outlines his defense of an evolutionary ethics based on Darwin and sociobiology.

Richards' case for the superior historical accuracy of AV is attractive; but, as he recognizes, Darwinians championed diverse philosophical positions. This diversity suggests that what holds Darwinians together is not a set of philosophical theses but a scientific research programme concerning the evolutionary bases of mind and behavior. Moreover, Richards himself supports only an emergentist view of mind and evolutionary ethics with any sort of detailed argument. Both the scientific uncertainties of ETMB and the diversity of philosophical implications of ETMB make any adherence to AV problematic. Finally, NSM gives a more comprehensive account of the multifaceted data of the origins of ETMB than do its competitors. But it does not give much enlightenment about their justification both because NSM requires, in Richards' view, that we know the end of the scientific story about ETMB (but we do not) and because his NSM of the justification of scientific claims and change is underdeveloped.

Despite these difficulties, I recommend this book very highly. Richards' version of Darwinian views of mind and behavior should be of great interest not only to historians and philosophers of biology and psychology but to philosophers generally.

William A. Rottschafer
Lewis and Clark College