

Chapter 2:9 Social Darwinism

¹⁹⁴Prior to the development of science and its evasive offerings, humans had already found a way to avoid the condemning truths of a cooperative, all-loving, innocent past and of a consciousness-induced ‘fall from grace’, which was to simply assert that nature is brutally competitive and aggressive—‘**red in tooth and claw**’, as Tennyson put it (*In Memoriam*, 1850)—and that’s why we are. Basically, we looked around and saw that animals always appear to be fighting and competing with each other and instead of acknowledging that our instinctive orientation is to be cooperative and all-loving, we said that our instincts are similarly ruthlessly competitive and aggressive. We said that we have brutal, savage animal instincts that our conscious mind has to somehow try to control. As was mentioned in par. 153, it was an absolutely brilliant excuse, because instead of our instincts being all-loving and thus unbearably condemning of our present non-loving state, they were made out to be vicious and brutal; and, instead of our conscious mind being the villain, the cause of our corruption, the insecurity of which made us repress our instinctive self or soul or psyche and become psychotic, it was made out to be the blameless, psychosis-free mediating ‘hero’ that had to manage those supposed vicious instincts within us! It was all a terrible reverse-of-the-truth lie, but a hugely relieving one for humans seeking relief from the human condition.

¹⁹⁵What happened when Charles Darwin presented his idea of natural selection in his momentous book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* was that the excuse that claimed we have ‘savage’, ‘barbaric’, ‘backward’, ‘brutish’, ‘bestial’, ‘primitive’ animal instincts within us was supposedly given a biological basis through the misrepresentation of natural selection as a ‘survival of the fittest’ process. Natural selection is the process by which some members of a population reproduce more than others in a given environment, and, most significantly, in the first edition of *The Origin of Species* Darwin left it undecided as to whether those individuals that reproduced more could be viewed as winners, as being ‘fitter’. However, in later editions Darwin’s associates, Herbert Spencer and Alfred Russel Wallace, persuaded him to substitute the term ‘natural selection’ with the term ‘survival of the fittest’ (Letter from Wallace to Darwin, 2 Jul. 1866; *The Correspondence of Charles Darwin*, Vol.14, p.227 of 706). While Darwin’s friend and staunch defender, the biologist Thomas Huxley described the term ‘survival of the fittest’ as an ‘**unlucky substitution**’ (1890; *Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley Vol.3*, ed. Leonard Huxley, 1903, ch. 3.7), from the point of view of humanity needing to contrive an excuse for its divisive selfish, competitive and aggressive behaviour it was a *lucky* substitution because it reinforced the dishonest but human-condition-relieving argument that our instincts are competitive and selfish and that we, in the sense of ‘we’ being our conscious thinking self, are blameless. (I should mention that later in chapter 4 in par. 358 it will be explained that Darwin’s original position, where he left it undecided as to whether those who reproduced more are ‘fitter’, was right because being unconditionally selfless, where you give your life to help others and don’t seek to reproduce more, *can* be a biologically meaningful—‘fitter’—outcome.) How much we have adopted the false ‘savage instincts’ excuse is apparent in how our conversations are saturated with comments like: ‘We are pre-programmed to try to dominate others and be a winner in the battle of life’; and ‘Our preoccupation with sexual conquest is due to our primal instinct to sow our seeds’; and ‘Men behave abominably

because their bodies are flooded with must-reproduce-their-genes-promoting testosterone'; and 'We want a big house because we are innately territorial'; and 'Fighting and war is just our deeply-rooted combative animal nature expressing itself'; and 'Religions are merely our survival-driven group mentality expressing itself'; and the most common comment of all that 'It's just human nature to be selfish'.

Chapter 2:10 Sociobiology/Evolutionary Psychology

¹⁹⁶There were, of course, serious problems with this so-called Social Darwinist contrived excuse that 'nature is selfish and that's why we are'. For starters, it didn't account for instances in nature where selflessness occurs, such as in ant and bee colonies where workers slave selflessly for the whole colony. And secondly, and most particularly, it didn't account for *our* instinctive memory of having lived in a cooperative, loving, 'Garden of Eden'-like existence, which is our selfless, consider-the-welfare-of-others, born-with, instinctive moral nature, the 'voice' of which is our 'conscience'.

¹⁹⁷Seeking to address these cracks in the argument, biologists developed the theory of Sociobiology, with E.O. Wilson acting as its main proponent. Later known as Evolutionary Psychology, this theory explains, truthfully enough, that worker ants and bees are *not* actually being unconditionally selfless, truly altruistic when serving their colony because, when doing so, they are fostering the queen who reproduces their genes, which means their apparent selfless behaviour is, in fact, just a subtle form of selfishness: they are helping the queen to selfishly reproduce their genes. But in terms of maintaining the primary agenda of avoiding the unbearable and unacceptable issue of the human condition at all costs, this idea of selfless behaviour actually being a subtle form of selfishness, where you indirectly promote the reproduction of your own genes by fostering others who are related to you—your kin—was then not surprisingly, but *in this case* extremely dishonestly, commandeered to explain *our* moral instincts. Yes, it was claimed that *our* moral inclination to help others was no more than an attempt to reproduce our genes by supporting others whose genes we shared, with any anomalies put down to '**misplaced parental behavior**' (George Williams, *Adaptation and Natural Selection*, 1966, p.vii of 307)! As Wilson boldly summarised, '**Morality has no other demonstrable function**' other than to ensure '**human genetic material...will be kept intact**' (*On Human Nature*, 1978, p.167 of 260); even saying that '**Rousseau claimed [that humanity] was originally a race of noble savages in a peaceful state of nature, who were later corrupted...[but what] Rousseau invented [was] a stunningly inaccurate form of anthropology**' (*Consilience*, 1998, p.37 of 374)!!

¹⁹⁸So, in saying our moral soul is still basically selfish, the old 'nature is selfish and that's why we are selfish' excuse was preserved; the same 'I'm going to determinedly avoid, not confront, the human condition' attitude had been upheld.

¹⁹⁹The problem that *then* emerged, of course, was that this denigration of our moral self as nothing more than a subtle form of selfishness was both deeply offensive to and entirely inconsistent with what we all in truth know about our moral instincts, which is that they *are* unconditionally selfless, genuinely altruistic. As the journalist Bryan Appleyard pointed out, biologists '**still have a gaping hole in an attempt to explain altruism. If, for example, I help a blind man**