

HEAVENMAXXER

DNA & THE GENETIC CODE — OBJECTION HANDLER | 20 One-Shot Responses

CHEMISTRY / PHYSICS

“It’s all just chemistry and physics — no God needed.”

► Chemistry explains **reactions**. It doesn’t explain **reference**. Why does this codon mean this amino acid rather than another? That’s not a chemistry question — it’s a semiotics question. Francis Crick confirmed the assignments are arbitrary. Chemistry can’t answer arbitrary.

“We just don’t understand the chemistry fully yet — science will explain it.”

► The problem isn’t a gap in chemical knowledge. The problem is categorical: **no amount of chemistry explains why one thing stands for another in an unrelated domain**. That’s not a missing fact — it’s a missing kind of explanation entirely.

RNA WORLD

“Life started with RNA — it was simpler back then. RNA World explains the origin.”

► RNA World doesn’t explain the code — it pushes the question back. You still need an arbitrary mapping between nucleotide sequences and amino acid function. RNA World is about **which molecules came first**, not how symbolic convention emerged. The enigma remains.

“RNA can act as both information storage and a catalyst — that solves the chicken-and-egg.”

► Catalytic function and **coding function** are not the same thing. RNA ribozymes speed up reactions — they don’t assign meaning to sequences. You still need the system that determines what any sequence *means*. Catalysis ≠ convention.

EVOLUTION / SELECTION

“Evolution explains how DNA got better over time — natural selection optimized the code.”

► Selection can only act on a system **that already works**. You need a functioning translation apparatus before selection has anything to select. The question is how the first coding relationship emerged before selection could touch it. Koonin & Novozhilov (2009) call that a ‘universal enigma’ — their words.

“The code evolved gradually — small steps, not all at once.”

► A partial code doesn’t function. Translation requires: a codon table, tRNA charged with the right amino acid, and aaRS enzymes to enforce the assignments. Remove any one — nothing gets built. **Gradual assembly of an irreducibly interdependent system is a dead end at every step.**

“JUST HAPPENED TO WORK”

““It just happened to work” — the chemistry that survived was the chemistry that worked.”

► That’s circular. **What survived is what worked** — agreed. But what made it work? Survival selects among existing functional systems. It does not explain how the first symbolic assignment between codons and amino acids was established. You’ve described the filter, not the source.

“The code is the way it is because those were the conditions on early Earth.”

► Conditions constrain chemistry — they don’t **assign meaning**. Early Earth explains which molecules formed; not why triplet-A stands for amino acid-X rather than -Y. Physical conditions produce necessary outcomes. Codes are arbitrary by definition. Not the same kind of thing.

BUILDING BLOCKS / METEORS

“They’ve found amino acids on meteors — life’s building blocks exist naturally in space.”

► Building blocks are not blueprints. **Having the letters doesn’t give you the language**. Amino acids existing in nature says nothing about how an arbitrary mapping between nucleotide sequences and those amino acids was established. Scrabble tiles don’t write themselves into sentences.

“Panspermia — life was seeded from space / we could be alien in origin.”

► Panspermia relocates the origin, it doesn’t explain it. **Wherever life came from, it arrived with a genetic code**. That code still requires an explanation. Moving the address doesn’t dissolve the question.

MILLER-UREY / ABIOGENESIS

“The Miller-Urey experiment showed amino acids can form from simple chemistry.”

► Miller-Urey produced amino acids under controlled lab conditions — *with intelligent design built in*. More critically: amino acids forming is not the code forming. **You still need the system that assigns those amino acids to specific codon sequences**. The experiment doesn’t touch that problem.

“Abiogenesis is just chemistry we don’t fully understand yet — it’ll be solved.”

► Abiogenesis researchers aren’t just explaining chemistry — they’re trying to explain how a **symbolic system** arose from non-symbolic chemistry. Eugene Koonin calls the code’s origin ‘the most difficult and important problem in evolutionary biology.’ Not a gap — a known hard wall.

GOD OF THE GAPS

“You’re just pointing to what we don’t know and saying ‘therefore God’ — that’s a fallacy.”

► No gap required. I’m not pointing to mystery — I’m pointing to **kind**. In every known case without exception, symbolic conventions — arbitrary mappings between independent domains — are produced by minds. That’s uniform empirical experience, not ignorance. Inference to best explanation, not argument from ignorance.

“Science has explained things before that people attributed to God — same thing here.”

► Those cases involved finding **natural mechanisms** for physical events. This involves explaining the origin of a **symbolic convention**. No natural mechanism has ever been observed producing that. The category is different.

INFINITE REGRESS

“If God designed the code, who designed God? You just push the problem back.”

► The argument isn’t ‘complex things need designers.’ It’s that **symbolic conventions require mind** as the sufficient explanatory category. God is not a symbolic system requiring a prior decoder. You’re applying a rule to something the rule wasn’t built for. The regress doesn’t apply.

“You’re just replacing one unknown (abiogenesis) with another unknown (God).”

► Not equivalent. We have extensive, uniform experience of minds producing symbolic conventions — zero experience of unguided physics doing so. **One unknown has supporting evidence. The other has none.** Inference goes to the better-supported explanation.

OPTIMIZATION / SELECTION

“The code is optimal because selection refined it — that’s evidence of evolution, not God.”

► Even granting selection refined the code: **selection requires a prior working system to act on**. The optimization and origin arguments are separate. Explaining the optimization doesn’t explain how the first coding relationship arose. You’ve answered a downstream question and left the upstream one untouched.

“The code could have been suboptimal at first and improved — we just see the end result.”

► A suboptimal code is still a code. You still need to explain how any coding relationship — even a poor one — arose before selection could refine it. **The question is origin, not refinement.** Pointing to improvement doesn’t explain how you got something to improve.

RELIGION / GOD OF THE BIBLE

“Even if there’s a designer, that doesn’t mean it’s the God of the Bible.”

► Correct — and that’s a separate argument. The DNA argument establishes that the best explanation for the genetic code is a **mind prior to matter** — intelligent, purposeful, not bound by physical law. Whether that’s the God of the Bible is a follow-on question. Don’t skip steps. This one has to land first.

RELIGION / MORALITY

“Religion has caused so much harm — even if God exists, organized religion is bad.”

► That’s a claim about human institutions, not about whether God exists or whether the genetic code has an intelligent cause. **Those are separate questions.** The argument from religion’s failures doesn’t touch the argument from biology. Address the evidence before the institution.

CORE PRINCIPLE: Codes require convention. Convention requires mind. Mind prior to matter = God. | **KEY SOURCE:** Koonin & Novozhilov, IUBMB Life 2009 — ‘universal enigma’ | Freeland & Hurst 1998 — 1-in-1,000,000 optimization

FRAMING: This is inference to best explanation — not God of the gaps. Every known symbolic convention has a mind behind it.