

A role of the origin of species by charles darwin

[Science](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Darwin's Origin of Species and its Influence on Literature

The question of the origin of life, the human form and its characteristics is one that has been debated and pondered upon by thousands of philosophers for aeons. Creationism and Evolution are the most popular and important theories to date. There are, however, thousands of posterities to these two core premises.

To the same effect, Charles Darwin had purported a myriad of theories that stemmed from the broad concept of Evolution. One such immensely important theory is the Origin of Species. The theory pre-dominantly states that, individuals less suited to the environment are less likely to survive and less likely to reproduce; individuals more suited to the environment are more likely to survive and more likely to reproduce and leave their heritable traits to future generations, which produces the process of natural selection. Along with this hypothesis Darwin also proposed many other inferences such as despite periodic fluctuations the population mostly remains the same and that variations accumulate over time to form new species.

Darwin wrote the first edition of the Origin of Species in 1858. It was written shortly after the Protestant Reformation which had made the Bible largely available to the common masses, popularising creationism in the already overzealous religious fanaticism of the people.

The Origin of Species theory drew a lot of interest from writers. There were multiple perspectives and opinions published by authors who either entirely disagreed or incorporated their own discernment into their work.

However, Darwin's book also caused an influx of science fiction in the Victorian era. Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, Charles Kingsley and Edgar Rice Burroughs to name a few were pre-eminent writers of the genre. They dealt vastly with the concept of God and man and the consequent struggle for power between them. Authors such as Thomas Hardy, George Eliot, Alfred Lord Tennyson and George Bernard Shaw were, to some extent, influenced by Darwin's theory. This influence is unambiguously mirrored in their published work.

Natural selection is the most widely explored concept of Darwin's theory in the Victorian Age. Tennyson in his poem, *In Memoriam*, wrote, " fifty seeds and only one to bear" depicting the competition nature faces from death and the eternal struggle for survival.

The Mill on the Floss also elucidates on the same concept, however, the perspective and context are altered. The importance of good breeding and origin are rendered through the character of Deronda. There are two turning points in his search for his family origins, the first one is meeting Mariah with her search for her lost mother and brother, and meeting his mother who is believed to be dead. The discovery of his mother's identity-Leonora Halm-Eberstein, adds the final piece to the puzzle of his origin. He is a Jew. He can now be fully accepted by both Mariah and her whole family.

H. G. Wells, on the other hand, completely refutes the Darwin's natural selection and survival of the fittest theory in his book, *The Time Machine*. He presents the ultimate and absolute degeneration of man, wherein, the rich devolve into helpless fools and the poor into subterranean cannibals. Wells

aimed to propagate his theory, natural selection and careful, guarded procreation does not guarantee an unspoiled population and that circumstances and situations inevitably change as time goes on.

Darwin's theory had been fragmented and devoured separately by authors in the Victorian period. Books such as Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde too have allusions to the theory showing that almost all writers of the time had their own individual opinions on the novel concept. The discussions and debates on Darwin's theory became so popular and well-known that it led to the conception of the Social Darwinism construct.

The Origin of Species theory and the entire concept of evolution was utterly neoteric. In a time when the only available answer to the question of our origin was God, the idea of man as a self-evolved species was predictably hard to absorb.