

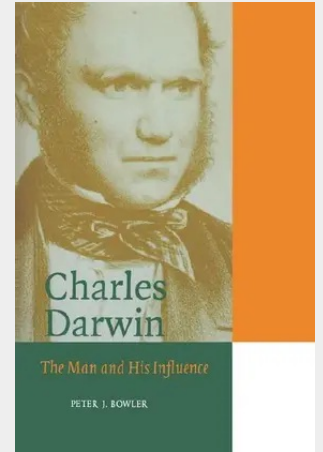
Bowler

Charles Darwin

The Man and His Influence

Darwin's enormous influence on science and culture, begun during his lifetime, is still very evident today. The Origin of Species excited much debate and controversy, challenging the foundations of Christianity, yet underpinning the Victorian concept of progress, and today still evokes powerful and contradictory responses. Yet he was not first to publish evolutionary ideas and his theory of natural selection was not accepted by many of his contemporaries. Peter Bowler's study of Darwin's life and influence combines biography and cultural history. He shows how Darwin's contemporaries were unable to appreciate precisely those aspects of his thinking that are considered scientifically important today. Darwin was a product of his time, but he also transcended it, by creating an idea capable of being exploited by twentieth-century scientists and intellectuals who had very different values from his own.

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