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HMS Beagle

On August 29, 1831, Darwin received a letter broaching the idea of his sailing on the *Beagle*. After his father reluctantly decided to allow him to go and after Captain FitzRoy overcame his qualms about the troubling shape of the young naturalist's nose, Darwin embarked on a voyage around the world — and the rest is history. To celebrate the anniversary, NCSE is [offering](#) [4] advance on-line publication of a handful of reviews on recent books about Darwin.

- Keith Thomson reviews Ralph Colp Jr.'s *Darwin's Illness* (University of Florida Press, 2008), commenting, "the story of Darwin's health is like a mystery novel from which the last chapter has been deleted ... this is a really valuable book. Everyone seeking to understand Darwin should read it and choose among the rival explanations of what brought him so low while he was achieving such greatness."
- John Waller reviews Adrian Desmond and John Moore's *Darwin's Sacred Cause* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009), concluding, "another splendid book from Desmond and Moore, the product of vast learning and deep sympathy, conveyed with often lyrical prose. If there are difficulties with the claims they make, they have at least provided, as Darwin said of his fledgling theory in 1837, a 'theory by which to work.'"
- Léo F. Laporte reviews Keith Thomson's *The Young Charles Darwin* (Yale University Press, 2009), commenting, "Thomson carefully and economically dispels the apparent paradox of 'an ordinary boy, rather below the common standard of intellect' becoming the young genius in his thirties formulating the outlines of his revolutionary theory."
- And Sander Gilboff reviews Benjamin Wiker's *The Darwin Myth*, concluding, "the book's claims are unsurprising, since they are mostly Discovery Institute talking points that date back to the mid-1990s and have been rebutted many times since then. The biographical interpretations may be original, though. They also verge on fantasy, so I recommend this book to Harry Potter fans, in

case they want to see how a real-life Rita Skeeter operates."

These reviews will all appear in forthcoming issues of *Reports of the NCSE*. So if you like what you see, why not subscribe to *RNCSE* today? Reviews such as these, detailed reports on antievolution activity across the nation and around the world, original scientific articles and critiques of creationism — what's not to like? Don't miss out — [subscribe](#) [5] now!

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