



What the Alligator didn't Know: Natural Selection and Love in Our Mutual Friend

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This essay reads *Our Mutual Friend* as Dickens's rejoinder to Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection, and sees it as a novel that is profoundly shaped by the imaginative impact of Darwin's work. However, the direct influence of *On the Origin of Species* is not the essay's major concern. Instead, the essay sees this novel as a response to some of the questions posed by Darwin's work about how a natural world driven by chance and contingency, death, waste and hunger might be redeemed.

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