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## NOVA Show Discusses Creationism

### NCSE Acts as Consultant

NCSE's goal of being an important media resource regarding evolution and creation "science" issues is rapidly being realized. Last fall, NCSE was contacted to act as an advisor for the NOVA program "God, Darwin and Dinosaurs." Executive Director Eugenie Scott provided background information, as well as referrals to a number of scientists who appeared on the program. The show first aired in February of 1989, and in general we are reasonably pleased with how it turned out.

The program discusses the "scientific" creationism controversy, showing clips from a debate between Duane Gish of the Institute for Creation Research and evolutionist anthropologist (and NCSE Supporter) Vincent Sarich, as well as the controversy in Twin Falls, ID over the teaching of "scientific" creationism in the district discussed in *C/EN* 8(4):11-14. Texas Liaison Ronnie Hastings is shown discussing the Paluxy River "mantracks," and NCSE Supporters Douglas Futuyma and Michael Ruse, as well as historian/lawyer Edward Larson explain evolution, the history of creationism, and the nature of science. A large portion of the show presents evidence for organic evolution, such as the distribution of the Hawaiian honeycreeper birds. Evolution is presented as a solid, verifiable scientific idea accepted almost unanimously by scientists, but still controversial for religious and social reasons.

The producer tells us that they have received a bundle of negative mail complaining about the "bias" against creationism; some NCSE members felt it didn't hit hard enough against the scientific failures of creationism. However, a New York Times review found the show "fair and dispassionate".

In March, evolutionists in Texas showed it to community groups to educate people about "scientific" creationism during the discussion over the Texas Proclamation (the state approved curriculum: see article in "National News".) For transcripts (\$5) write NOVA, c/o WGBH, Box 322, Boston, MA 02134. For videotapes (\$250) call Coronet, 1-800-621-2131.





## NUCLEUS

### Evolution Workshops for Teachers to be Held

#### Evolution and the Nature of Science Institute for High School Biology Teachers

Do you want to improve your students' understanding of the nature of science and evolutionary biology? This institute conducted by Dr. Craig Nelson, Dr. Martin Nickles, and Dr. Jean Beard can provide you with both the information and teaching resources to do so. The institute at Indiana University in Bloomington will be held July 23 to August 11, 1989, with Friday and Saturday follow-up sessions in October 1989 and March 1990. Institute leaders will select up to 35 participants from within a 400-mile radius of Bloomington and provide a stipend, travel expenses, room and board, tuition, materials, and three optional graduate credits in biology. The institute faculty are members of the Teacher Training Task Force of the National Center for Science Education. The institute is funded by the National Science Foundation. For further information and an application contact Dr. Craig Nelson, Department of Biology, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405, or call (812) 335-1345.

#### Advances in the Scientific Understanding of Evolution: A Course for Biology Teachers

This course will be held in conjunction with the National Association of Biology Teachers' annual meeting, October 25 - 29, 1989, in San Diego, CA. Sponsored by NCSE, the course will be led by biologists Dr. Carl Bajema and Dr. William Thwaites, and physical anthropologist Dr. Eugenie C. Scott. Other participants include Phillip Kitcher, Frank Awbrey, Gail Kennedy, and David Archibald. The course will explore several topics in evolutionary biology including the

origin of life, transitional fossils, natural selection, diversification and extinction, speciation and variation, animal behavior and sociobiology, and human evolution. One semester of graduate biology credit is available for the two day course, at a cost of \$30, payable at registration. Credit is optional, and "auditors" may attend for no charge. For more information, write E.C. Scott, NCSE, Box 9477, Berkeley, CA 94709 or call (415) 843-3393.

### Textbook Task Force Chair Mayer Featured in Textbook Report

A somewhat cherubic-appearing Bill Mayer is featured in the Winter, 1988-89 *Summit Magazine* in Colorado. Mayer, the chair of the NCSE Textbook Task Force, and the Editor-in-Chief of *Bookwatch Reviews*, is featured in an article entitled "Bad Books". In the brief review of the state of textbooks today, Mayer laments, "Why not treat students as intelligent, future voting citizens who should understand something about energy, population, pollution, waste disposal, and water fluoridation? That's what's going to be on the ballot, not the details of mitosis." The article states that "many factors led to the sorry state of schoolbooks, including sales pressures on publishers, efforts by some religious lobbying groups, an emphasis on memorizing vocabulary, and more concern with appearance than substance."

The Textbook Task Force has a three-part program to improve textbooks: *Bookwatch Reviews*, which reviews published books; the Pre-Publication Review Project, which helps publishers find competent content reviewers for books in revision or in preparation; and the Textbook Selection Project, a wide-ranging project which tries to see that the best books get chosen at the local level.



## Without Darwin

Excerpts from a guest editorial in *BASE, A Journal of Science and Technology*

"One hundred years without Darwin is enough," said Nobel Prize winning geneticist Herman Mueller. "Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution," said renowned geneticist Theodosius Dobzhansky. The scientific community clearly recognizes that the basic principle of evolutionary thinking, the idea that change has taken place through time, is the foundation of modern biology, geology, astronomy, anthropology, and many other sciences. Yet numerous polls and surveys show that the general public remains unaware of the tremendous weight of evidence supporting evolutionary concepts.

Organic evolution is the idea that living forms are related through descent from common ancestors. Some find spiritual sustenance in the idea that we are one with nature, whereas others find the idea threatening. Pre-college teachers routinely downplay evolution, or delete it from the curriculum for fear of controversy. Some even go so far as to introduce a pseudoscience called "scientific" creationism into the classroom. The problem does not arise from the idea that God created, but from the claim that the Genesis account is the true and scientific history of the universe. Such a claim is ultimately religious, not scientific. Introducing "creationism" into the classroom endangers confusion about the nature of science at a time when increasing scientific literacy is a crucial task of public education.

Eugenie C. Scott  
Executive Director, NCSE

## A Question Creationists Can't Answer

Over the past year or so I have been asking creationist friends and acquaintances a simple question: What *scientific* statements can creationism make about why the natural world is as we find it? That is, why do humans, cattle, and birds share homologous structures? Why do they have similar biochemistry? Why does there appear to be a tree of descent, misinterpreted by early creationist naturalists as the Ladder of Life? Conventional science offers a simple answer. [evolution, or shared common ancestry from earlier forms] Creationism offers nothing but sectarian theological assertions. ...[Schadewald does not allow the usual, theological "We would expect a creator to...." argument, such as "God built them all on the same basic plan", but demands a *scientific* response.]

Not one has attempted a reply. ... The beauty of this little trap is that my question is so clear and so reasonable. If creation is science, then it presumably makes scientific statements about the natural world. If (as we claim) it is religious, then presumably it cannot. The qualification about theological statements is therefore obvious and entirely reasonable. What is the creation science alternative, please?

Robert J. Schadewald  
NCSE Board Member

## Padian Publishes Pterosaurs

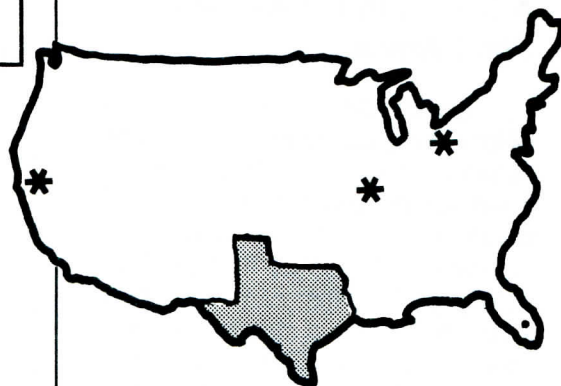
NCSE Board member Kevin Padian, Associate Professor of Paleontology at UC-Berkeley, wrote the cover story on flying reptiles in the December *Natural History*. The article discusses flight mechanics and anatomy and compares the flying reptiles to pelicans in their ability to glide.

## LETTERS





## CC UPDATE



### Good News, Bad News from Texas

Eugenie Scott

*Information from newspaper clippings and NCSE members Steven Schafersman, Bassett Maguire, Scott Faust, Steve Bratteng, James Barufaldi, and Ronnie Hastings. Thanks to all.*

A handful of "adoption" states, in which textbooks are chosen at the state level, have had a disproportionate effect on the textbook market. Of these states, none is more important than Texas. The Lone Star State is populous, it buys textbooks for all its children, and it buys them all at once, making a *large*, efficient sale for whatever publisher is lucky enough to swing the deal. To compete for Texas adoptions, publishers must pay close attention to a yearly document, the "Proclamation of the State Board of Education Advertising for Bids on Textbooks." Each year a different academic discipline is covered in a Proclamation. Books written for the Texas market are, of course, books sold in other states, so what Texas says a text has to contain is what a book contains in New York, Oregon, or Florida as well. In past years, Texas, under pressure from religious conservatives like Mel and Norma Gabler, had frightened publishers into deleting or "dumbing down" all references to evolution in texts, or qualifying and weakening them with "some scientists believe" weasel-words not used for any other scientific theory. Much of this was overturned during the past several

years due to the concerted effort of the Texas Council for Science Education (the Texas CC, led by Steven Schafersman) and People for the American Way. Recent events, however, show that the fight for evolution in textbooks is not over.

The years 1989 and 1990 are important ones for biology education, because the Proclamation for Biology I and II has been issued, and textbooks will be chosen. Major publishers are already revising or writing books to be considered for adoption.

The scientific and educational community rejoiced in January 1989, when the Texas Education Agency staff released the preliminary Proclamation. In a great break from the past, Texas would actually *require* the teaching of evolution in the curriculum. It was there for Introductory Biology, Biology I and II, and also for Science for grades 1-6. (Later, adoptions for Introductory Biology were postponed until next year.) The preliminary Proclamation said that textbooks should include information about the "scientific theory of evolution," and "scientific evidence of evolution." During public testimony on February 10, scientists Steve Schafersman, Bassett Maguire, and others praised the inclusions, and suggested ways to strengthen the coverage of evolution to make the Proclamation a document which truly represents modern science. Creationists became apoplectic at that meeting.

Citizens for Excellence in Education (a branch of NACE, the National Association of Christian Educators), led by David Muralt, complained that, "to force the theory of evolution on Christian students, who believe in creation, is discrimination and a grievous offense, as it destroys their faith in God." An Austin community college teacher, Daniel Harris, warned the Board that, "God is watching you. Please do not provoke His wrath." Other opponents warned that if the



Proclamation were not modified, it would "plunge our schoolchildren into scientific darkness and make them act like animals."

The next meeting of the Board of Education was in March, and revisions appeared. Some of them were good: under Process Skills, the section entitled "Classifying, ordering and sequencing data" told textbook authors to include content and laboratory activities on "classifying plants, animals, protist (sic), and viruses according to *evolutionary affinities as inferred from similarities and differences*" (italics added). Darwin's theory of evolution was added to a list of "important scientific discoveries and theories of the past," such as those of Hooke, Pasteur, Fleming, and Salk.

Not all the changes were good, however. A new section had been added under "Process Skills", section 6.3, which called for "examining existing evidence and ideas as well as new evidence and ideas to test, modify or refute scientific theories." Every time evolution, chemical origin of life, or genetics occurred in the Proclamation, so did 6.3 -- but not when any other theory was discussed. Treating evolution differently from all other scientific theories is an old story in textbooks, and Texas is prolonging this unfortunate tendency. Under "Content," there were also some undesirable modifications in a section called "Theories (sic) of Evolution." *Theories* of evolution? Evolution is the principle that living forms are related to other forms through common descent. To scientists, there is no plural to this principle. What are possible scientific alternatives to the principle of descent with modification? (see *Creeping Creationism*, p. 15 for further discussion of this) To creationists, the answer is simple: teach the misinformation they have been putting out for years regarding "evidence against evolution."

In section 9.2, calling for the teaching of evolution, textbooks were required to have "scientific evidence of evolution" but also *other reliable scientific theories to the contrary*." This is clearly a response to creationist pressure, and dangerous because of the conflicting message it would give textbook publishers. Should they include creationism or not?

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*In a great break from the past, Texas would actually require the teaching of evolution in the curriculum.*

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The State Board of Education (SBE) was swamped by creationist pressure between the public hearing in February and the March meeting. Mel and Norma Gabler had appeared on the nationwide Marlin Maddoux "Point of View" radio talk show to excoriate the proposed Proclamation and encourage the faithful to write letters of protest. You can imagine the number of letters generated and their impact on the SBE. An Austin radio station recommended that people call an "education hotline" to respond to an alleged Texas Education Agency survey. When called, the line played a recorded message giving details necessary to write to lobby the SBE. In addition, the ICR ran an article in *Acts and Facts* and Robert Simonds' monthly NACE letter attempted to turn out the faithful. The post office and Ma Bell must have made good profits from the creationists.

The pro-evolution side was certainly not silent, however: NCSE and TCSE members wrote letters of support; the recent NOVA video, "God, Darwin, and Dinosaurs" was shown repeatedly by pro-evolution University of Texas faculty; and a letter-writing campaign was organized among scientists and the science education community.

The March meeting of the SBE



was preceded on Friday, March 10, by a committee meeting during which revisions were to be considered. Schafersman and Maguire attended, as well as People for the American Way's Mike Hudson. When they saw the modifications, they went into action, lobbying school board members during breaks and after the meeting. By the time the full board met on Saturday, the salvage operation had had some success. Section 9.2 now read "scientific evidence of evolution and other reliable scientific theories, *if any*," (italics added) which was a big improvement over its predecessor. The section is still entitled "Theories [plural] of evolution" -- with a subsection on "mechanisms of evolution" to further confuse the situation. Section 6.3 under "Process skills" now reads "examining alternative scientific evidence and ideas to test, modify, verify, or refute scientific theories." The creationists had slipped in "alternative scientific" before "evidence," as a means to get their "science" in. And 6.3 is still required wherever Darwin, evolution, the chemical origin of life, and genetics are discussed.

So, what is the final assessment of the Texas Proclamation? It is a long way from its predecessors, but still not where we would like it to be. It *does* require that evolution be covered in the textbooks. It *does* require that classification be presented "according to evolutionary affinities as inferred from similarities and differences." On the other hand, the *May Acts and Facts* headlined their article on the Texas Proclamation, "Texas Creationists Win in Textbook Decision." The proof of this particular pudding will be what textbook manufacturers do with the somewhat confused signals sent by the SBE. We will see next spring, when the books are presented for public review and possible adoption. NCSE and TCSE will be there. And of course, so will the creationists.

## St. Louis Zoo's "Living Darwin" Distresses Creationists

Liaison Ranse Traxler of the St. Louis Association for the Teaching of Evolution (SLATE), the Southern Illinois-Missouri CC, writes that the St. Louis Zoo will soon have a life-size, "speaking" reproduction of Charles Darwin to introduce evolution in the new Living World display. We compliment the Zoo on its creativity, and encourage it to stand against the criticisms of the Missouri Association for Creation, an ICR affiliate. Indeed, "100 years without Darwin are enough!" The director of the Living World display is Dr. George B. Johnson, who would probably appreciate letters of support for this "controversial" decision to feature Darwin and evolution in a zoo display.

## NOVA Sex Education Show Has "Too Much Evolution"

California liaison and NCSE Executive Director Eugenie C. Scott reports that the Paradise Unified School District (near Chico, in northern California) deliberated a protest from parents against a NOVA film which is part of the district's new health curriculum. According to the *Chico Enterprise-Record*, at a school board meeting in February, trustee Charles Larson "suggested that the first half hour of *Miracle of Life* be skipped because it overemphasized the theory of evolution." Larson said, "this is a Christian community" and parents had called him saying "that equal time should be given to creation and evolution." "We don't have any proof that we evolved from some green slime -- there's no evidence of it." Cooler heads prevailed, however, and when the final vote was taken at the March meeting, the film remained intact in the curriculum.

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**Oops ...** The correct address for New Jersey liaison Joan Rogow is P.O. Box 496, Fleming, NJ 08822.



## Creationism Coming to Mansfield, OH?

In February, the president of the Mansfield, Ohio school board, Henry Akers, D.V.M., convened a "Biology Issues Committee" composed of seven teachers from the district. The purpose of the committee was to consider "points of tension in the concept of evolution." The "points of tension" included familiar ICR-type arguments such as that evolution contradicted the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Materials circulated to the committee were identical to those provided by Mel and Norma Gabler in Texas. They consisted of classically ignorant statements of science and evolution, creating an evolution straw-man and then destroying it with statements from "qualified scientists." For example, evolution was defined as "a change in net genetic complexity." This is neither necessary nor sufficient to define evolution. The usual errors about mutation, the Second Law of Thermodynamics, speciation, the fossil record, and so on, were dutifully listed, as well as now-it-can-be-told statements like "speciation and microevolution are not the same thing." The curriculum director was quoted in a newspaper article, stating that, "[Akers] believes the theory of evolution should be in the textbooks, but he believes that evolution is presented in such a way that it's infallible. He doesn't want this confused with any plan to bring creationism into the curriculum." In other words, this was the creationist strategy with which we have become familiar recently: teach the "evidence(s) against evolution" rather than creationism *per se*. Akers' goal was to rewrite the curriculum to include the "tension points."

NCSE members Tim Berra, David Nickey, Neil Wells, Lawrence A. Larson, Arthur F. Hess, James A. Sperl, Edward Teeters, Bradley T.

Lepper, Randall Breitwisch, and Gene Kritsky helped support the teachers by writing letters to the district to clarify the issues. Nickey brought Lutheran, Methodist and Episcopal ministers to the meeting at which the final decision was made, and these mainline clergy suggested that there was a "hidden agenda" operating in the dispute: creationism was lurking below the surface. They recommended that religion stay in the churches and science be taught in science classes. They also testified that one could be religious and accept evolution at the same time.

The committee of teachers voted not to alter the curriculum, and the *ad hoc* committee is thus disbanded -- but there is reason to believe that this will not be the end of the story. We will keep you informed of events. The combination of scientists, who can refute the "science" of scientific creationism, and clergy, who can refute the idea that evolution is inherently anti-religious, is a powerful one, and is recommended (among other suggestions) as an effective response to creationism at the school board level. A tape on this strategy is available through NCSE. The tape is "School Board Battles", from NCSE's 1987 Annual Meeting symposium (see p. 11).

### ICR Plugs NCSE

April's *Acts and Facts* said, "There is an increasingly influential organization formed for the specific purpose of opposing creation and propagandizing evolution in this nation. This organization calls itself the 'Committees of Correspondence,' associated closely with the atheistic American Humanist Association. An officer of this organization, Dr. Kevin Padian ... is a leading member of the committee now composing the [California] Science Framework.... Dr. Padian clearly has his own evolutionary agenda which plainly has influenced others on the committee, and thus the entire future of science education." Good work!

#### ICR: Please Note!

NCSE is religiously neutral, and is not "closely associated" with any "atheistic" organization, or theistic ones, either. Fred Edwards, Director of the AHA, is on the NCSE Board, but we have no formal affiliation with his organization.



## RESOURCES

### **Bookwatch Reviews Reviewed**

The American Federation of Teachers' publication *American Educator* published this note in its Spring, 1989 issue:

**"For Science Teachers:** We recommend *Bookwatch Reviews*, published by the National Center for Science Education, Inc. It calls its reviews 'candid appraisals,' and they are. Reviewers have detailed how textbooks provide misleading explanations of taxonomic classification, thus assuring that students of evolution will be totally baffled; noted the failure of most texts to teach anything at all about probability, greatly diminishing the chance that students will understand genetics; and exposed numerous errors (including a suggestion that unicorns once roamed the planet), shallow analyses, and confusing analogies."

Thanks for the recommendation! Twelve issues of *Bookwatch Reviews* are available for only \$15 per volume-year. Send subscription requests to NCSE, P.O. Box 9477, Berkeley, CA 94709. If you are a scientist or science educator and

would be willing to review a text, write the editor, Dr. Gordon Uno, Botany-Microbiology Department, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019.

### **Wheeler Responds to J.D. Kennedy**

"A Response to D. James Kennedy's Presentations on Creationism and Evolution on 'The John Ankerberg Show'."

Thomas J. Wheeler (Dept. of Biochemistry, University of Louisville),

This is a detailed refutation of arguments made by Kennedy in six televised programs in late 1987. In addition to providing answers to many typical creationist arguments, the article discusses Kennedy's misquotes; allegations for which he has failed to provide documentation; and use of arguments which he should have known were flawed. 86 pages, including summary, references, and index. Request copies from the author, 426 Deerfield Lane, Louisville, KY 40207. Please enclose \$3.50 to cover copying and mailing costs.

# BOOKWATCH REVIEWS

## CANDID APPRAISALS OF SCIENCE TEXTBOOKS

Subscriptions cost \$15 per 12-issue volume for both individuals and institutions. The 1988 volume (9 issues) is also available for \$15. Please note year desired below. Send requests for sample copies and subscription orders to:

*Bookwatch Reviews*, P.O. Box 9477, Berkeley, CA 94709-0477

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please circle: 1989    1988    sample



## Watch Out For This Film

Missouri liaison Ranse Traxler has previewed a film entitled *Dinosaurs*, produced by Outdoor Pictures, Anacortes, Washington, and distributed by Science and Mankind, Inc., Mt. Kisco, NY 10549. Ranse wrote, "Caution! The film does not mention evolution, but does mention the Paluxy River Dinosaur tracks!" Note the "equal time" tone in the transcript: "Scientists have never solved the problem of the extinction of the dinosaurs. One theory has it that the climate of the entire earth became so dry that these animals died from lack of water and suitable food. A layer of fine sediment on the bottom of the ocean, recently discovered, leads to this conclusion. Another theory is that some unknown disease swept through the dinosaur populations and destroyed them all. Evolutionists do not have an answer for this mystery. Creationists, on the other hand, have in the Bible the record of the universal flood in the time of Noah, about 2000 years after the creation of the earth. They believe this flood to have destroyed the dinosaurs, along with all other living things except those preserved in Noah's ark." This goes beyond "equal time," as the evolutionists "don't have an answer," but the creationists do. Great way to teach children science, isn't it? Keep an eye out for this film in your local schools. If it appears, let them know what you think about it.

## Australopithecine Reconstructions Available

Busts of two "robust" australopithecines, *A. robustus* and *A. boisei* are available in high quality Dura-stone reproductions, suitable for classroom use. They would also beat *National Geographic* on a coffee table.... Photos are available, and look quite good. The producer is a skilled sculptor who knows his anatomy. Write Steven A. Feinberg, 3815 Atlantic Avenue, Seagate, NY 11224. Cost is \$185 each, plus \$15 shipping and handling.

## Degrees of Folly

William Bennetta has written an extensive description of the decision of the state of California not to approve the ICR to grant graduate degrees. The three part series ran in *BASIS*, the Bay Area Skeptics Information Sheet, in February, March, and April, 1989. Copies are available from NCSE if you enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (\$.45 postage).

## Book of Note

*The River That Flows Uphill: A Journey From the Big Bang to the Big Brain*

William H. Calvin, Macmillan, November, 1986, 528 pages, \$25, ISBN 0-02-520920-5

"William H. Calvin here takes us on parallel journeys of mind-boggling proportions -- a 225-mile raft tour of the Grand Canyon with two-dozen river runners, and an expertly guided trip back through time to trace our origins....offers intriguing glimpses into the physical, natural and social sciences, as well as excursions into history, linguistics and philosophy.

"Mr. Calvin's style, which combines clarity with creativity, makes *The River Flows Uphill* a unique piece of science writing.

"The river trip and book culminate with an extensive look at the functioning of the human brain, particularly its incredible growth over the last two million years -- a fleeting second on the evolutionary clock. Mr. Calvin's discussion actually raises more questions than it answers. But that is the essence of good science writing. This book is an enjoyable and informative trip, in more ways than one."

Ricki Lewis

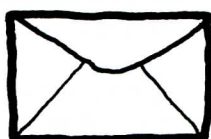
*The New York Times Book Review*, 14 December, 1986



## EXCHANGE

### Science Pen Pals Wanted

The Boston Museum of Science is looking for science and technology professionals to volunteer as pen pals in their Science-By-Mail™ program. Volunteers correspond regularly with students in grades 4-9 who are solving science challenges posed by a team of scientists, museum educators, parents, and teachers. Over 5000 children of diverse academic, socioeconomic and geographic backgrounds have participated in the program. To encourage these budding scientists, request a registration form from Stephen Brand, Science-By-Mail, Museum of Science, Science Park, Boston, MA 02114-1099; (617) 589-0437, FAX (617) 742-2246.



### NCSE Seeks Textbook Reviewers for Pre-Publication Review Project

One of the projects of the Textbook Task Force is the Pre-Publication Review Project. Textbook publishers contact NCSE during the writing and editing stages of textbook development, and are matched with scientists who are willing to review specific parts of books. The project is gaining popularity among publishers, some of whom are contacting us for reviewers for additional books. NCSE is now seeking more scientists who would be willing to review texts (reviewers receive a stipend, although NCSE does not). This is a great chance to help improve the textbooks your future students will be studying. For more information on this project, write or call NCSE.

### COMPLETE YOUR BACK-ISSUE COLLECTION OF CREATION/EVOLUTION JOURNAL

All issues of the Creation/Evolution Journal are still in print. Articles cover the major areas of controversy between creationists and scientists, creationists and educators, and creationists and mainline clergy. The Journal's goal is to create an encyclopedia of information useful in countering creationist efforts in the schools, courts, and legislatures.

Most new subscribers quickly order a complete set of back issues. We offer these sets at a considerable discount. To order all of the issues in this ad, send \$44. Individual back issues are \$3.00 each. Ten or more copies of the same issue are \$2.00 each. Send your check or money order in US funds, a list of the issues you desire, and your name, address, and zip code to:

Creation/Evolution Journal  
7 Harwood Drive  
P.O. Box 146  
Amherst, NY 14226-0146

### HIGHLIGHTS OF BACK ISSUES

#### ISSUE I:

- Why Creationism Should Not Be Taught as Science – The Legal Issues
- The Fatal Flaws of Flood Geology

#### ISSUE II:

- Common Creationist Attacks on Geology
- Evidence Supporting a Great Age of the Universe

#### ISSUE III:

- The Bombardier Beetle Myth Exploded
- The Educational Issues

#### ISSUE IV:

- Biological Evolution and the Second Law
- Do Gaps in the Fossil Record Disprove Descent with Modification?

#### ISSUE V:

- Defining "Kinds" – Do Creationists Apply a Double Standard?
- Why Creationism Fails to Meet the Criteria of Science

#### ISSUE VI:

- Archeology: A New Science in Support of

#### Creation?

- Paluxy Man – The Creationist Piltdown
- Misquoted Scientists Respond

#### ISSUE VII:

- Answers to Standard Creationist Arguments
- Victory in Arkansas

#### ISSUE VIII:

- Are There Human Fossils in the "Wrong Place" for Evolution?
- Carbon-14 Dating
- Creation-Evolution Debates

#### ISSUE IX:

- The Dilemma of the Horned Dinosaurs
- Old-Time Religion and the New Physics

#### ISSUE X:

- True Vestigial Structures
- Whales: Can Evolution Account for Them?

#### ISSUE XI:

- Special Issue: The Voyage of Noah's Ark

#### ISSUE XII:

- Genesis Knows

#### Nothing of Scientific Creationism

- Scientific Creationists are Not Catastrophists

#### ISSUE XIII:

- Design in Nature, A Debate
- Space Dust on the Moon's Surface and the Age of the Cosmos

#### ISSUE XIV:

- Creationists, Population Growth, Bunnies, and the Great Pyramid
- But Some of Them Are Scientists, Aren't They?

#### ISSUE XV:

- Special Issue: The Paluxy River Footprint Mystery – Solved

#### ISSUE XVI:

- The Fossil Record of Perissodactyls
- "Nebraska Man"

#### ISSUE XVII:

- "Scientific Creationism" and Error
- Man – A Contemporary of the Dinosaurs

#### ISSUE XVIII:

- Evolution and Testability
- What Did Karl Popper Really Say About Evolution?

#### ISSUE XIX:

- Creationists and the Australopithecines, Pithecanthropines, and Neanderthals
- Plagiarized Errors and Molecular Genetics

#### ISSUE XX:

- A Creationist Walk Through the Grand Canyon
- Fossil Insects: Pests of Creation

#### ISSUE XXI:

- Morality, Religious Symbolism, and the Creationist Movement
- An Astronomical Critique of a Creationist Biblical Chronology

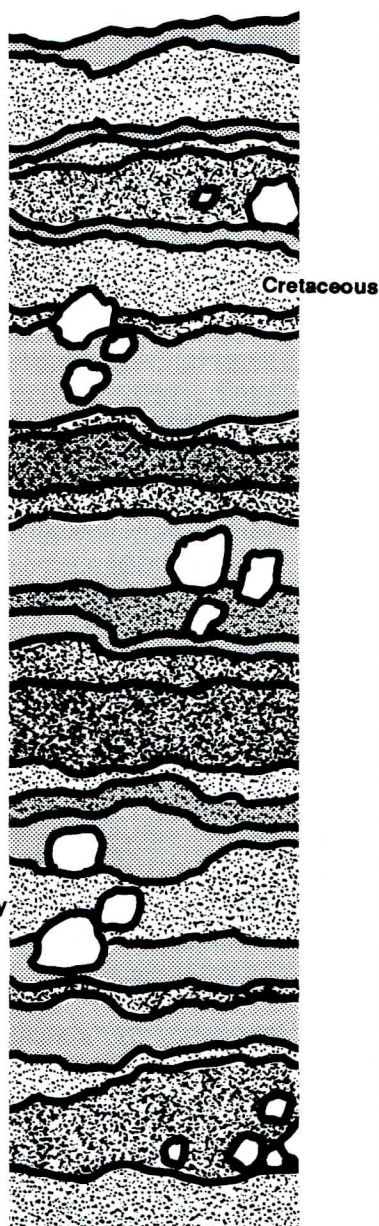
#### ISSUE XXII:

- Creationism and the New Right Agenda
- Gentry's Tiny Mystery – Unsupported by Geology



It is not equal time that  
creationists want; it is silence.

*Creation/Evolution Satiricon*



Alternate Theories

# T A P E S

## n e w t h i s i s s u e

### 1988 debate

Saladin/Gish

(2 tapes) \$8.00

## o t h e r t a p e s

### symposium tapes

1989 Annual Meeting, Full Symposium

*"Only a Theory": Presenting Evolution*

to the Public

(2 tapes) \$8.00

1988 Annual Meeting

*Meeting the Challenge of Creationism*

(2 tapes) \$8.00

*Teaching Evolutionary Theory*

(2 tapes) \$8.00

1987 Annual Meeting, Full Symposium

*Scientific Creationism: Facing Up to It!*

(3 tapes) \$12.00

1988 AAAS Pacific Division Symposium

*Communicating Evolution to the Public*

(3 tapes) \$12.00

1982 AAAS Pacific Division Symposium

*Evolutionists Confront Creationists*

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## for children

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### Prehistoric Animals

Daniel Cohen

Illustrated by Pamela Ford Johnson

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### Also for children

#### Hominids, A look back at our ancestors

Helen Roney Sattler

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#### Dinosaurs

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### Natural Acts

David Quammen

"Crows are bored. They suffer from being too intelligent for their station in life. Respectable evolutionary success is simply not, for these brainy and complex birds, enough. They are dissatisfied with the narrow goals and horizons of that tired old Darwinian struggle. On the lookout for a new challenge. See them there, lined up conspiratorially along a fence rail or a high wire, shoulder to shoulder, alert, self-contained, missing nothing. Feeling discretely thwarted. Waiting, like an ambitious understudy, for their break. Dolphins and whales and chimpanzees get all the fawning publicity, great fuss made over their near-human intelligence. But don't be fooled. Crows are not stupid. Far from it. They are merely underachievers. They are bored."

### Asimov's Biographical Encyclopedia of Science and Technology

Isaac Asimov

"Darwin showed no particular promise in his youth. At first he studied medicine but found that unlike his father he had no aptitude for it. The sight of operations on children (performed without anesthesia) horrified him beyond measure. He thought next that he would make a career in the church but found that he had no aptitude for that either. (His father angrily declared he would disgrace the family.) However, he had made natural history his hobby after reading Humboldt and had grown gradually more interested in the subject during his stay at Cambridge. This was his road to fame...."

### The Blind Watchmaker

Richard Dawkins

"The watchmaker of my title is borrowed from a famous treatise by the eighteenth-century theologian William Paley. His *Natural Theology - or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity Collected from the Appearances of Nature*, published in 1802, is the best-known exposition of the 'Argument from Design', always the most influential of the arguments for the existence of God. It is a book that I greatly admire, for in its own time its author succeeded in doing what I am struggling to do now. He had a point to make, he passionately believed in it, and he spared no effort to ram it home clearly. He had a proper reverence for the complexity of the living world, and he saw that it demands a very special kind of explanation. The only thing he got wrong - admittedly quite a big thing! - was the explanation itself."

### Creation/Evolution Satiricon: Creationism Bashed

Robert S. Dietz & John Holden

"I would believe the Bible was the word of God if it contained so much as one single natural law expressed mathematically. A single formula sometimes elucidates more about the universe than an encyclopedia, e.g.,  $E=mc^2$ ,  $F=\frac{1}{2}mv^2$ , etc. The Bible does mention the relationship between the diameter of a circle and its circumference but gets it wrong. The value for the font (the Molten Sea) at King Solomon's Temple is given as 30 cubits around and 10 cubits across. The value of pi would then be 3.0 and not the correct value of 3.1416. One might argue that this is quibbling but remember the Bible is claimed not to speak in an approximate manner but to be absolutely and literally true."



## know the enemy

We have acquired limited quantities of two books by "scientific" creationists. We can offer these close-out specials to members at an unusually good discount. Get your "classics" here (and help NCSE instead of the other guys).

### How to Teach Origins

John N. Moore

This book answers the question, "How do you teach creation in a public school?" It contains numerous diagrams and charts of basic principles of creationist and evolutionary interpretation of the "origins" of man and earth, as well as interesting definitions, strategy notes, and a final exam.

"Megaevolutionists feel quite confident that a *species* is a group of interbreeding organisms found in a particular geographic area which are reproductively isolated from other organisms. This is an arbitrary definition which is often applied with considerable difficulty."

Two paragraphs later, the operational (and allegedly less arbitrary) definition of the creationist term *kind* appears: "A kind is a distinct group of interbreeding organisms found in a particular geographic area which are genetically isolated from other recognizably different organisms." (p.203)

### The Twilight of Evolution

Henry M. Morris

Morris shows how evolutionary science contradicts not only divine revelation but also basic scientific law.

"But evolution is also in its twilight period chronologically speaking. This may not yet be obvious, but nevertheless its night is fast approaching."

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## NEWS

### What Did Justice Brennan Mean?

Last summer, the Alabama State Board of Education required in its "Course of Study" curriculum guide that evolution be taught by public school teachers (C/EN 8(5):9). Although the Board mandated evolution, it inserted an unfortunate qualifier:

"Consistent with the expressions of the US Supreme Court in *Edwards v. Aguillard*, teachers shall have the freedom and flexibility to supplement the curriculum with the presentation of various scientific theories about the origins of life, if done with the secular intent of enhancing the effectiveness of science instruction."

In the above-named decision, Justice Brennan wrote "...teaching a variety of scientific theories about the origins of humankind to school children might be validly done with the clear secular intent of enhancing the effectiveness of science instruction." He also wrote "The Act [referring to the Louisiana statute] does not grant teachers a flexibility they did not already possess to supplant the present science curriculum with the presentation of theories, besides evolution, about the origin of life."

There are many problems with Brennan's statement. Although only scientific theories can be taught, recall that creationists have said all along that "scientific" creationism is just another kind of science. Nobody here but us scientists. Teachers who are inclined towards the creationist message may now argue that they can "legally" include it. But the Justice was also clear -- as are a number of court cases -- that these should be *scientific* theories, not religious beliefs. Unfortunately, the Justice is not a scientist, and does not realize that among scientists, evolution is the

**only scientific** explanation of how the world and its creatures got here. It is the only one that should be taught in science classes.

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*Unfortunately, the Justice is not a scientist ...*

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There is additional confusion about the phrase "theories" of origin. In this context, it is clear that the word "theory" is being used in the scientific sense, not in a casual, layperson's sense of a "guess". If only scientific theories are to be discussed, this makes it easy: only evolution will be taught. There are many "theories" of how evolution works: natural selection, punctuated equilibrium, saltation, Lamarckism, etc., but it is doubtful that this is what the users of Brennan's decision had in mind when they call for "various scientific theories," and it is doubtful that this is how the statement will be interpreted. That the only "various scientific theories about the origin of life" are those having to do with evolution will doubtless be missed, and "scientific" creationism is highly likely to be taught.

Creationists around the country have seized upon this statement from *Aguillard* to try to introduce creationism and/or "evidences against evolution" into the curriculum. The Alabama resolution was specifically referred to in the deliberations of the Texas Education Agency during the recent controversy over the Proclamation (see article, p. 4). We know the Alabama resolution has been used effectively in Texas, Alabama, Ohio, and California, and we would like to hear whether it has appeared in other states as well. Alabama NCSE members are encouraged to observe carefully to see the effect of this policy in the state. And wherever you live, keep us informed of attempts to use the *Aguillard* decision to promote creationism.



## Creeping Creationism

In Texas, Ohio, and Alabama, creationist terminology has crept into public documents, unbeknownst to the politicians framing such documents. The words sound straightforward and fair, but mean considerably different things to creationists than to the rest of us, and can (we predict *will*) be used to promote creationism in the public schools. Some phrases to watch for are "theories of evolution" and "evidence against evolution." There are two considerations, one having to do with "origins" (a creationist term encompassing First Cause plus an explanation of how the present day universe came about to its present state), the other with how creationists use the terms "theory" and "fact."

First, "origins." Young Earth Creationists have taken the position that there are only two possible explanations for the universe: evolution, and Genesis-like special creation. Logically, therefore, evidence *against* evolution is evidence *for* creationism. If the courts will not allow the teaching of creationism, no problem. Just teach "evidence against evolution", and the same goal will be accomplished.

Because "origins" is not a scientific discipline, creationists have shifted to using the term "evolution" rather than "origins." Whereas they used to talk about "theories of origins" now they talk about "theories of evolution," but what they mean is evolution on the one side, and special creation on the other. Thus, in Texas, we have "theories [plural] of evolution" being advocated -- but what is meant is the teaching of creationist propaganda. "Theories of evolution" is also relevant to the Supreme Court *Aguillard* creationism case, where Justice Brennan picked up some of the creationist terminology in his decision (see p. 14).

At the same time, there is much confusion of the words "fact" and "theory." Theories are different from facts and observations. Scientists prefer to use the term "observation" rather than "fact" because "fact" connotes permanency, and science is open-ended. An observation is the first step in the scientific analysis, but not necessarily the most important. Observations ("facts") don't make sense without a theoretical framework in which to set them. What was once an important "fact" may change with a new theoretical framework. Theories are held in highest regard by scientists, even while they realize that theories will change with new observations -- or "facts".

Creationists use "fact" and "theory" differently, and see "facts" as the only important component of science. To paraphrase Norma Gabler, a theory will never do anyone as much good as a fact. Theories are ephemeral; they are changeable and untrustworthy. Facts, like the Revealed Word, are concrete and *real*. The "theory" of evolution to them, is made of gossamer, and so is anything else called a "theory". They do not realize that some theories are so well supported that they are treated as "fact".

For example, gravity is a theory explaining numerous observations, such as what happens to an unsupported ball or a planet in orbit. Gravity is so well documented that most people consider gravity to be a "fact," though technically, it is a theory. Evolution, meaning that living forms are related through common descent from earlier forms, is also a theory explaining numerous observations, such as the fossil record, biochemical similarities, biogeography, and so on. Evolution, like gravity, is so well documented that most educated people consider evolution to be a "fact." Evolution is a "fact" in this sense, but not in the sense that an unsupported ball

falling to the floor is a fact, or that *Archaeopteryx* had feathers is a fact. It makes no more sense to talk about "theories" of evolution than it does to speak of "theories" of gravity. However, many people refer correctly, if confusingly, to explanations or mechanisms of evolution -- how this descent with modification takes place -- as "theories" of evolution. Thus we have "theories" of Darwinian natural selection, Lamarckian inheritance of acquired characteristics, saltation, punctuated equilibrium, and so forth. This is not technically incorrect from a philosophy of science standpoint, but it confuses the lay public. When non-scientists hear "theory of evolution", they do not think of punctuated equilibrium. When they hear "theories of evolution", they think there is more than one (no one ever speaks of "theories of gravity"), and thus the confusion.

"Theories of evolution" is a term of art to creationists, which should not be misunderstood. Is one theory that living forms are related through descent with modification, and another theory that they are specially created? Of course. So when we have "theories of evolution" required in the Texas Proclamation, or "evidences [sic] against evolution" required in Alabama or Ohio, we are talking about good old-fashioned scientific creationism being taught. The *May Acts and Facts*, writing approvingly of the loopholes provided creationists in the Texas Proclamation (see p. 4 this issue), says, "...alternate theories of evolution (e.g., punctuated equilibrium) are to be included, as well as scientific evidence, pro and con, regarding evolution in general" (p. 2).

Watch out for "creeping creationism" in the wording of public documents. Though sounding fair, such wording as "Theories of evolution" and "Evidence against evolution" can be used to promote creationism. The issue needs to be explained to your public officials.

## Texas Republican Platform, 1988

The 1988 Platform of the Republican Party of Texas contained a plank in its Education section entitled *Balanced View of Origin of Life*. It states that, "The Republican Party of Texas supports the teaching of a balanced view of the origin of life in Texas Public Schools."

The version adopted by the Denton County Republican Convention reads:

WHEREAS the public school system curriculum guidelines have excluded to the point of outlawing the teaching a scientific model concerning origins by the direct act of God, and

WHEREAS the United States Supreme Court rulings have established the exclusive teaching of the evolutionary model of origins in the public schools, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Republican Party of the State of Texas urges that the curriculum guidelines include the teaching of the creation model of origins.

Thanks to Scott Faust for this information. Are there any other platforms, Republican or Democrat, that express similar statements? Please find out and write the *NCSE Reports* editor.

---

*KMOX Radio (St. Louis) talk show caller, protesting the teaching of evolution in schools:*

*"If they can teach evolution, why can't they teach creativity also?"*

---



## Attacks on the Freedom to Learn Evolution

### People for the American Way's 1987-1988 Report

People for the American Way, an organization dedicated to the protection of First Amendment rights, has released its sixth annual "Attack on the Freedom to Learn" survey of censorship and related attacks on public schools. The report is a representative survey of such incidents, rather than a comprehensive list. The majority of the listings are of censorship attempts on a variety of books for "offensive language" or references to "the occult." However, "attempts to teach the religious doctrine of creationism as science continue to be a major source of controversy." These attempts occurred in all regions of the country. NCSE and CC members had a hand in the resolution of many of these incidents, and some may be familiar to you from the pages of *C/EN*. Brief descriptions of evolution-related incidents follow, in alphabetical order by state.

#### ALABAMA

- A new state proposed course of study didn't mention evolution. The goal was to "try to teach about the diversity of life and leave it open to some discretion on the part of the teacher and local school system."

#### ALASKA

- A teacher taught evolution only at the urging of students, and also taught creationism; both were taught as "theories, not facts."

#### FLORIDA

- Parents and members of Accuracy in Textbooks Committee objected to the use of Carl Sagan's *Dragons*

of *Eden* because of its treatment of evolution and use of Scripture. Students were permitted to choose an alternative reading.

- An advanced biology teacher has been teaching creationism for four years, using terms such as "abrupt appearance", "grand omni designer", and "creator" rather than referring to God, or mentioning religion outright. He was reprimanded, and will be monitored.

#### IDAHO

- A Twin Falls teacher has taught "scientific" creationism in a seventh grade class for eight years. The board developed a somewhat permissive policy.

#### ILLINOIS

- A parent in Mahomet presented a lesson on creation "science" to a third grade class learning about evolution.
- In Fisher, a parent requested "equal time" for creationism in science classes. Legal counsel advised that this was permissible. The board placed books on creationism in the library, rather than adding it to the curriculum.

#### INDIANA

- A parent in Columbus wanted a reference to religious explanations of the origin of life in the freshman biology text. A statement that such explanations were "beyond the scope of his course" was placed in the book, and teachers, under protest, were required to read it.

#### IOWA

- In Dubuque, members of Citizens for Excellence in Education urged the teaching of creationism in public schools. The board adopted a curriculum that states it will not be taught.

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***"grand omni designer"***

*Is this choice of terms mere coincidence?*

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## OHIO

- A group of ministers in Trenton asked to be allowed to present an assembly on creationism to high school students. The request was eventually withdrawn.

## TEXAS

- Parents in Burleson requested alternative science lessons which included "evidence for creation science." The board voted to maintain a policy allowing this, but changed the policy when the ACLU threatened a lawsuit.
- Mel and Norman Gabler testified against environmental science and world geography textbooks, among other things dismissing as "editorial opinion" the statement that evolution is "the single greatest unifying theory in the biological sciences."

Copies of the People for the American Way report are, unfortunately, sold out. If you would like the complete text of a particular item, let us know and we will send a photocopy. If you'd like to see the whole report, you may borrow a copy from NCSE for \$2.00 (to cover postage). Write us at NCSE, P.O. Box 9477, Berkeley, CA 94709.

## The Garden of Eden in Omaha, You Say?

Eugenie C. Scott

Missouri CC Liaison Ransie Traxler last year called my attention to an advertisement running in *Discover* magazine for a "World History Chart." The text for the ad claimed the product provided "a clear, concise overview of our history, archaeology, theology and mythology...." Ransie had seen a copy, and assured me it was more mythology than anything else, and creationist mythology, at that.

Because it was recommended for purchase by schools, several people protested with letters or calls to the advertising director of *Discover*. *Discover* no longer carries the advertisement. Now the ad has been running in *Scientific American*, an even more prestigious popular science periodical. The eight-foot-long chart is a sectarian Mormon religious tract, and does not belong in the classroom. One might even question whether it should be advertised as "history and archaeology".

A side panel lists "Suggested Readings," among which are some books of good science, as well as the Book of Mormon, and two books by Velikovski. This illustrates the general problem with the chart: history and archaeology are hopelessly entangled with mythology and folklore, to the degree that a student would find it impossible to sort out the mythical characters from the historical ones. This is of course intentional; the authors want children to look at the statement "families of Japheth migrate northwest into Europe and occupy the cities of the Antediluvian Aegean" as expressing the same historical accuracy as the birth of Herodotus or JFK, or the establishment of the ancient city of Harappa.

If it weren't being promoted for sale to schools, it would be worth a chuckle or two. The chart is Eurocentrically divided into major geographical segments sounding like a freshman class in Western Civ: "Canada, United States and Mexico"; "Greece and Anatolia"; "Great Britain and Northern Europe" and so on. The rest of the world, where the majority of humanity lives, is lumped into lines labeled "Africa", "Japan", "China" and "Southeast Asia." Best of all, the chart begins at 4000 BC -- I wonder why? -- and initially, all the important action is in North America, as befits Mormon theology. Recall that according to the Mormons, American Indians are relics of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.



Adam and Eve being driven from the garden



You may be surprised to find that the "four great rivers" which meet in the Garden of Eden, the Eden, Hiddekel, Pison and Gihon, are really the North Platte, Ohio, Missouri, and Mississippi. The Garden itself is located at the juncture of the North Platte and the Missouri, or approximately in Omaha, Nebraska. Canada is really Ethiopia, there is a "legendary Chinese dynasty" in North America at 2850 B.C., and there is a land bridge in southern Florida, the site of "possible migration routes to Asia."

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*According to this "World History Chart", the Garden of Eden is located at the juncture of the Platte and the Missouri Rivers, or approximately in Omaha, Nebraska.*

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This is the kind of geography we want our children learning? The sons of Adam migrate from North America presumably through Miami, and populate the rest of the world. After the Flood (2350 B.C.) -- across all geographic bands, of course -- arrows of re-population spread out from "Mesopotamia and the Middle East," rather than Miami, after Noah and his family land on Ararat. All this Biblical literalism is presented with the same straight face as is the date of the Battle of Marathon or the reign of Solon. The founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus is considered "legendary," but not the slaying of Abel by Cain. How is a school child to know the difference?

Please let NCSE know if you see the ad for the World History Chart in other publications. They seem to be targeting science periodicals, but they may be targeting educational journals as well. It is worth protesting this advertisement on the grounds of "truth in advertising." This is *not* an "educational tool" we want to see inflicted upon our children.

## Australian Science Literacy Survey

In Canberra, Australia, surveys on science literacy and attitudes towards creationism and evolution were distributed to 100 people at the Australian National University, at an Assemblies of God Community Hall and in private homes; 83 surveys were returned. As reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 14, 1989, none of the creationists could answer correctly a quick science test, though 20% of the non-creationists could. (Not a ringing endorsement for science literacy in Australia, but better than US statistics.) Sixty-five percent of the creationists were immigrants to Australia and only 58% had finished secondary schooling. The researchers mused, "With less academic experience, no great intellectual confidence, no advantages in life and perhaps even starting out as a stranger in a strange land, what defences has such a person against creationist evangelism?" The full report is available from *The Skeptic*, an Australian publication.

## New Fossil Archaeopteryx Foxes Creationists

You may recall a few years back when Sir Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wikramasinghe, the latter of Arkansas trial fame, proclaimed the famous *Archaeopteryx* reptile-bird transitional fossil was a fake. They claimed the impressions of feathers were cleverly forged, but an investigation at the British Museum put that claim to rest. Creationists have played it according to Hoyle, however. They should note a recently discovered *Archaeopteryx* from Germany, which shows feather impressions *under* the wing bones: clearly impossible to forge. A discussion can be found in the January, 1989 *Discover* magazine.



## Disturbing Trends at the National Science Foundation

Eugenie C. Scott

The National Science Foundation is a federal governmental agency responsible for funding most of the non-medical science research conducted at colleges and universities in the US today. The staff itself consists of many eminent scientists, and the reviewers of research proposals are in the top echelons of American science. Imagine my surprise when I heard rumors about evolution being downplayed at the NSF! Surely, in this bastion of science, evolution would be recognized as the organizing principle of biology and many other sciences, and we would have no worries about the anti-evolutionism so prevalent in American society.

At a national scientific meeting, I spoke with one NSF director who bluntly told me that any research proposal abstract or title they receive that has the "e-word" in it is rewritten before it gets out of the office. All titles and abstracts are sent to Congress, and Senatorial and House aides skim them over, looking for "controversial" topics. Eliminate evolution, and at least one source of controversy is eliminated. I was also told that proposals having to do with evolution which were submitted to the NSF Directorate for Science and Engineering Education stood a much better chance if they downplayed evolution in their titles and abstracts.

An article published by Ohio CC liaison Michael Zimmerman in the *Newsletter of the Ohio Center for Science Education* related another NSF incident last December. Zimmerman had been invited to speak on the creationist threat to science education, and upon arriving was surprised to discover that his

talk was, most unusually, *not* a publicly advertised, open-to-the-public lecture. Again, NSF avoided controversy.

These tendencies to pussy-foot around evolution are deplorable. Surely, NSF will take the position that they are reacting to a situation over which they have no control: a generally anti-evolutionary public, which elects representatives who have great power over the funding of scientific research. All this is true, and I have sympathy for the employees of NSF. But the fact remains that the most prestigious funder of science in the nation is cowed by anti-evolutionism. Societal changes can be brought about by efforts from the top as well as from the grass-roots. We need both.

## Update on the Webster Case

The wheels of justice grind slowly. In *C/EN* 8(2) and 8(3) we reported on the case against New Lenox School District brought by Mr. Ray Webster, a school teacher in the district. Webster claims his right to free speech is being denied because he is prohibited from teaching "scientific" creationism. According to lawyers in the case, the motion to dismiss the case is still pending. Fear not: NCSE will keep you informed of the progress, however slow, of this case!

Would you please send us copies of news stories and magazine articles dealing with issues affecting the quality and integrity of science education? Please be sure to provide all relevant information for quotation. NCSE attempts to monitor what is going on in order to inform our readers of what is happening at the local level, recommend quality items to our readers, and commend authors and publishers.



## New Creationist Book On the Way

Eugenie C. Scott

The Texas-based Foundation for Thought and Ethics (FTE) has been looking for two years or so (to our knowledge) for a publisher for a supplemental textbook for public school science classes. FTE's goal is "to help restore freedom of choice to young people in the classroom, especially as it relates to matters of religion and conscience." Creationist-watchers will recognize this as a term of art for getting sectarian religious views into the classroom. Their supplementary book, originally entitled *Biology and Origins*, looks like it is going to finally get published.

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*The textbook has now been re-christened **Of Pandas and People**, which probably gives Stephen Jay Gould mixed feelings.*

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The book has had an interesting history. In the fall of 1986, "Austin Analytic Consulting" (same outfit, different name) conducted a national survey of biology teachers on attitudes about the teaching of creation and evolution in schools. The 300 teachers (note the small sample size) reported a certain amount of enthusiasm for having supplementary materials for "balancing" evolutionary teachings in class, a point that was highlighted in a letter sent to many publishers in early 1987. Apparently, FTE didn't want a Christian publisher, but a mainline publisher in order to crack the public school market. *Biology and Origins*, however, didn't attract sufficient (if any) interest among mainline publishers. FTE continued soliciting its membership for donations to keep the project afloat, and in December, we learned that a publisher had been found.

The textbook has now been re-christened *Of Pandas and People*, which probably gives Stephen Jay Gould mixed feelings, and is to be published by Haughton Publishing Company (not to be confused with textbook giant Houghton Mifflin). Haughton is in Dallas, and is not listed in *Literary Marketplace*, or the Publishers volume of *Books in Print*. We found Haughton in *Publishers, Distributors, and Wholesalers*, and called them. A pleasant fellow told me that they publish agricultural books, and that *Pandas* is their first foray into the textbook market. Because textbook marketing is a specialized field, we wonder how successful they will be.

The predicted date of publication is July-August, 1989, and as befits a supplement, will be 124 pages. They may be writing for the Christian school market, but the original goal was to go for the *public* schools. Be on the lookout for attempts to get it adopted in your local school district. It is a classic "equal time" tract, and the "fairness" of such an approach is insidious.

## Wendall Bird's New Anti-Darwin Book

### Notice of Publication

Philosophical Library is announcing the publication of *The Origin of Species Revisited; The Theories of Evolution and of Abrupt Appearance*. This book is written by none other than "W.R. Bird" (Wendall R. Bird), legal advisor to the ICR, and the creationists' lawyer in the *Aguillard* Louisiana Supreme Court case. The two-volume, extensively documented book covers both scientific and non-scientific (historical, educational, legal) aspects of the creation/evolution controversy, though apparently avoiding the term "scientific creationism." Instead, the creationist neologism, "abrupt appearance" is used, which creationist watchers will recognize

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as the current preferred term to contrast with evolution. "Abrupt appearance" does not imply any of the religious elements connoted by "creationism," scientific or otherwise. It is Bird's attempt to sanitize his movement of any evidence of religion, and thereby avoid the legal problems which have plagued the anti-evolutionists since *Epperson v. Arkansas*.

There are a number of books which criticize evolution, such as those by Denton, Hitchings, and Macbeth, which creationists like to cite to support their cause. The physician Denton comes as close to being a scientist as any of them; most are written by non-scientists. The books are not manifestly creationist in tone, which makes them more appealing to the general public. The books appear to be "strictly scientific", in the words of Duane Gish, and their religious neutrality makes them especially persuasive to a general public with little knowledge of evolution or of science as a way of knowing. Actually, the books are replete with errors of scientific methodology, and full of misstatements of principles and mechanisms of evolution. Most focus on the current debates concerning *how* evolution occurs (whether through Darwinian gradualism or other modes), and misstate this vigorous and acceptable scientific debate as support for evolution not having occurred at all! Denton's *Evolution, A Theory in Crisis* (reviewed in *C/E N* 6(5):21-22) has been particularly important to the creationist cause, being cited in California, Texas and elsewhere to support anti-evolution efforts. It *sounds* so scientific, though the science is faulty and essentially uninformed. Bird's book sounds like it is in the same mold, and, given Bird's intelligence, knowledge of the "terms of art" of the creation/evolution controversy, and skill at writing, is likely to be even more of a problem than Denton's. We will review it in a future issue.

## Creationist Seminar Draws 200 In Southern California

Kenneth H. Bonnell

A two day seminar on creationism was held on January 20-21 at the Canoga Park High School Auditorium. It was sponsored by Soultalk Ministries of Thousand Oaks and West Valley Christian Church in Canoga Park, and produced by the Institute for Creation Research. The main speakers were John Morris (see *C/EN* 8(5):15) and Kenneth Ham, an Australian recently added to the ICR staff (*C/EN* 8(6):16). There was a talk by Ham about the biblical book of Genesis, stressing that it undergirded the rest of the Bible. The "true Christian" must accept Genesis literally, not as "myths or analogies," but as the true history of the world as created by God, to be known by Christians for their faith to be firmly founded. It was a sermon for believers.

There followed a talk and slide-show by Morris about his explorations for Noah's Ark. He cited a number of reported sightings of what could have been the Ark, and showed slides of paintings and drawings supporting these sightings. Photos from his own expeditions and others revealed nothing except what he called an "Unidentified Object" and a "Mysterious Object" in quite separate locations, neither of which he was able to identify as the Ark. We non-believing skeptics were surprised at his candor in admitting a lack of success.

The next session promised more on Genesis and how it "underlies modern science," and an explanation of catastrophic petrification as discovered in the wake of the Mt. St. Helens eruption. Mr. Ham talked on the problems of evangelizing children and bringing up children in a "purely Christian" view of the world.

There were no question and answer periods, so there was no chance to ask embarrassing questions.



## "Christian Nation" Proposal Gets Supreme Boost

A faction of the Arizona Republican Party - "a bunch of kooks," in conservative Barry Goldwater's words - would like the U.S. to declare itself "a Christian nation ... based on the absolute laws of the Bible." Unfortunately, they have friends in high places. Like the Supreme Court.

According to legal scholar Alan Dershowitz, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor received a letter from an acquaintance involved in the campaign who noted that it would be "beneficial and interesting to have a letter" from her. She wrote in response, "You wrote me recently to inquire about any holdings of this Court to the effect that this is a Christian nation. There are statements to such effect in the following opinions: *Church of the Holy Trinity vs. United States*; *Zorach vs. Clauson*; *McGowan vs. Maryland*."

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*Justice O'Connor has expressed regret that her letter was used in a political debate. But much damage may have already been done.*

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Her letter was in violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct, which directs judges to refrain from political activity. It was also incorrect. The first case cited was decided in 1892, when "Christian" and "Protestant" were synonymous, and most voters were white Christian men. The statement that "this is a Christian nation" was a demographic - but not constitutional - truth. U.S. demographics have since changed. At any rate, *Church of the Holy Trinity vs. United States* was an immigration, not First Amendment, case.

Since 1892, Supreme Court decisions have recognized U.S. religious diversity, and do not refer to the nation as Christian or Protestant, but go out of their way to be inclusive. Contrary to what Justice O'Connor's statement implied, this is true of the latter two cases cited.

Nonetheless, this mis-citation of cases was relied upon in the resolution enacted by the Arizona Republican Party. The resolution begins, "Whereas the Supreme Court of the United States has three holdings to the effect that this is a Christian nation ..."

Justice O'Connor has expressed regret that her letter was used in a political debate. But much damage may have already been done: such erroneous citations have a habit of reproducing themselves, and acquiring a patina of respectability and truth through sheer repetition. This is something to watch for, since many of those who would have the U.S. declared a Christian nation would also like to see creation "science" in the schools (see Texas Republican Platform article, p. 16). Apparent support from the Supreme Court could be a powerful weapon if not promptly and effectively challenged.

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### Presented with No Comment

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*From the San Jose Metro, March 16-22, 1989:*

*"Jim C. Brady, one of Pensacola, Florida's best-known proponents of teaching creationism in the public schools, pleaded guilty in September to driving through a residential neighborhood and tossing nude photos of himself out the window to children."*

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