

PBS AND “EVOLUTION”

TAX DOLLARS DIVERTED FOR RELIGIOUS TEACHING

by John D. Morris, Ph.D.

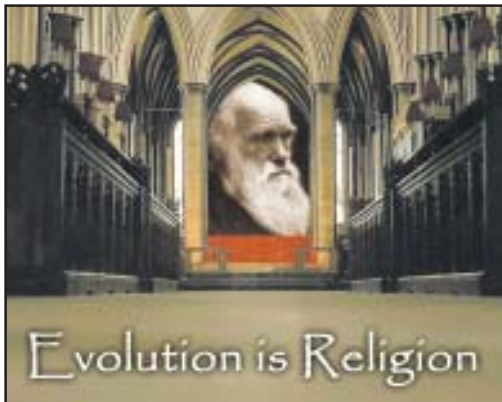
Dr. Michael Ruse, a leading authority on the philosophy of science, wrote: “Evolution is promoted by its practitioners as more than mere science. Evolution is promulgated as an ideology, a secular religion—a full-fledged alternative to Christianity, with meaning and morality. . . . Evolution is a religion. This was true of evolution in the beginning, and is true of evolution still today” (*National Post*, May 13, 2000). Being the unobservable, untestable, unrepeatable process that it is, at best, a way of thinking, a way to select research topics, and interpret results. In reality, it is a religion, a worldview, a dogma forced on society as well as on research.

Evolution, it has been noted, can't truly be tested, and certainly not repeated, thus it falls outside of empirical science and into the realm of a philosophy, or history, or as Ruse suggests, “religion.” But what if there is an alternative philosophy or history with

stronger scientific support? Should not objective scientists search all possibilities with an open mind and should not educators expose their students to them?

As logical as this seems, it has escaped the group of avowed atheists and “theistic” evolutionists gathered to promote evolutionary naturalism on the winsomely done PBS special “Evolution,” an eight-hour documentary which aired nationally on September 24–27, 2001. Funded primarily by Microsoft billionaire Paul Allen, it paraded the same evolution advocates we see on most evolution programs, from Stephen J. Gould to Richard Dawkins, to Ken Miller to Eugenie Scott, and they paraded a hopeless set of evidences for variation and

adaptation as if they proved evolution of basic categories of life. They and others included in their arguments various “truisms,” like fruit flies mutate, bacteria become resistant to antibiotics, finch beaks vary, insects become



resistant to insecticides, mutations produce misfits, apes are similar in some ways to humans, animals compete, etc. Creationists insist all these things are true and fully supportive of creation. How can they be proof for evolution? Knowledgeable viewers would be disappointed to find no real evidence for large-scale evolution. Stories and unsupported theories everywhere substitute for evidence.

Could it be that the religious underpinning of evolution is the reason? Often the point surfaces in a variety of ways that evolution is science while creation is religion. "Only outdated fundamentalists still believe in creation, but all scientists believe in evolution." "It's okay if you believe in creation, but don't confuse it with truth." Thinking people recognize that a lie like this merely underscores the religious nature of the program and its intended use as an evangelistic piece for the naturalistic religion.

To back this up, Richard Lewontin, leading evolutionist from Harvard, admits in a recent article that evolutionists "take the side of science (i.e., naturalism, ed.) in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, . . . in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated commitment to materialism, . . . we are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material (i.e., natural, ed.) causes to create an apparatus of investigation and set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counterintuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door." (Richard Lewontin, in *New York Review of Books*, January 9, 1997.)

Thus he claims that belief in and propagation of evolution, as held by the producers of the video series, justifies even "absurd concepts, unsubstantiated commitment to materialism, and counterintuitive explanations," and this is the stuff of the series! Nowhere is there

any evidence for true evolution, only evolutionary interpretations of evidence. Nowhere is there admission of the possible existence of another interpretation, for there is none if you are religiously locked in naturalism.

The condescending nod to those non-naturalists who hold that belief in both God and evolution is legitimate if you assign them to different spheres, rings hollow in the face of Will Provine's (Cornell University) admission that: "belief in modern evolution makes atheists of people. One can have a religious view that is compatible with evolution only if the religious view is indistinguishable from atheism." (Will Provine, "No Free Will," in *Catching Up with the Vision*, ed. by Margaret W. Rossiter, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999, p. S123.)

"Evolution" has a well-planned marketing strategy to get the videos and accompanying documents into the public schools of the land. But evolution and "Evolution" are religious and do not belong in the schools. The people of America have a First Amendment right to expect that federal monies (i.e., PBS) should not be used to favor one religion over another. I say keep the religion of naturalism as preached in these videos, out of our public schools. They contain beautiful pictures, but bad science. In reality they present a deceitful evangelistic onslaught against Christianity and should be soundly rejected. ☸

Acts & Facts

PUBLISHED BY

INSTITUTE FOR CREATION RESEARCH
P.O. Box 2667, EL CAJON, CA 92021



To disseminate articles and information of current interest dealing with creation, evolution, and related topics. Sent free upon request.

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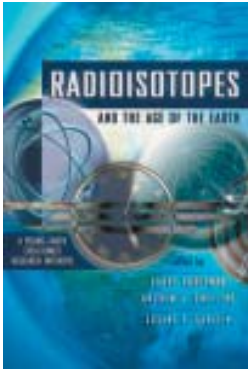
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GIVE A SCIENTIST FRIEND A RATE BOOK

The RATE book (*Radioisotopes and the Age of The Earth*) reporting on the first phase of the research project has been well received by the creationist community. Over a thousand copies have been sold since its release in December of 2000. Good reviews have been written about the book and even our critics are recognizing the significance of this work. However, the book has not had as wide a distribution in the conventional scientific community as we would like.



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Florida

Speakers Dr. John Morris and Doug Phillips presented a "Back to Genesis" seminar October 5-6 at the Seminole Presbyterian Church (Pastor Mike Van Arsdale) in Tampa, Florida. Both speakers addressed an overflowing K-12 school assembly of 1,100. Chairperson, Kim Reyher, and his superb volunteer



A packed auditorium.

staff provided an excellent venue, including a well-provisioned snack stand, lunch, and a sixty-foot long mastodon fossil display provided by Tom DeRosa.

Some in the church had been unconvinced of the importance of creation before the seminar, but the scientific insights of Dr. Morris coupled with exhortation and motivational messages of Dr. Phillips had great effect.

Canada

Late September saw ICR zoologist Frank Sherwin traveling and speaking throughout beautiful British Columbia, from Terrace to Kamloops. He spoke in a variety of settings, including secular college auditoriums, a Christian school, and a number of churches.

Several evolutionists voiced their objections to points made during ICR talks, including mispronunciation of a word, supposed improper use of an analogy involving parts of a jet engine and the tiny rotary flagella of a bacterium, no evidence for creation, and a host of “strawman” arguments. One Ph.D. microbiologist said that whatever evidence there was for creation was due to nothing more than chemistry! “It’s all chemistry” she stated flatly, ignoring the evidence of His designed world that is “clearly seen.” ☞



The Defender’s Study Bible, annotated by Henry M. Morris, cloth, World Publishing, 1995, 6400 annotations, 18 appendices.

A well-produced King James Bible. . . . Subtitled “Defending the faith from a literal creationist viewpoint, this has generous and excellent annotations on just the right verses. This will be highly appreciated for its defense of the word against cynical criticism, and its flow of spiritual insight. Good for devotional use.

Tabernacle Bookshop (England) ☞



RESTORATION ECOLOGY

Every field of science we turn to supports the creation model. One fascinating field of biology is called restoration ecology. After the violent eruption (both magmatic and phreatic) of Mount St. Helens in May of 1980, the features surrounding the mountain looked eerily like a lunar landscape—nothing had survived. Most evolutionary biologists predicted it would take many, many years for the land to repair itself through the laborious reestablishment of both animals and plants.

Amazingly, within just a few years we found a bountiful supply of plants and animals where there was just hot, cracked mud and rock before. There are insects everywhere, trees and wild flowers on the pumice plain, fish in the lake, birds nesting, a huge elk herd, and innumerable gophers churning the soil.

As creationists, we can see restoration of the post-Flood world would not have to take the enormous amounts of time that skeptics posit. Plants would have survived as seeds, spores, and sprigs. Insect larvae would have survived on floating debris. Land animals would have migrated from the Ark to fill the unfilled ecological niches.

Indeed, evolutionists Starr and Taggart state in their 1998 college biology text something that Noah may very well have said as he and his family filed off the Ark with the animals in tow:

“. . . deliberate ecological restoration [Genesis 6:18–21] can often repair a damaged climax community [the pre-Flood world], provided that suitable species [pairs of animals and plants and insects] are available [on the Ark] to reinstate the original biodiversity.” ☞

PANEL DISCUSSION WITH DISPARATE VIEWS

A panel discussion on creation and evolution was held at the First Baptist Church of Santa Clara, California (Rev. Richard Reaves, Pastor), on September 29. The panelists included Dr. Eugenie Scott, an anthropologist and Director of the National Center for Science Education. She professes the position of philosophical materialism, held by atheists. A second panelist was Dr. Hugh Ross, an astronomer who professes to be a Bible-believing creationist who nevertheless accepts the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe, the view held by most evolutionary cosmologists. Dr. Ross' views include a local flood, an age of about 15 billion years for the universe, an age of about 4.5 billion years for the earth, and days of creation of hundreds of millions of years which overlap. The third panelist was Dr. Duane Gish, a young earth, strictly Biblical, scientific creationist. The discussion had been arranged by Bob Smithson, a member of the church.

The first speaker was Dr. Scott. She stated she wished to discuss the relationship of science, religion, and materialism. She defined science as an attempt to explain the natural world using natural methods. It is assumed the universe operates according to natural processes that can be discovered. Supernatural explanations are excluded. Scientific theories must be accepted tentatively. She defined religion as a set of beliefs about a non-material universe in which truth is revealed from a sacred source. She defined philosophical materialism as the belief that the physical universe is all there is and thus there is no God. Her main point was to place the theory of evolution within the domain of science while relegating the theory of creation to no more than a religious belief that must be excluded from science and thus excluded from any discussion of origins, including public school science courses.

Dr. Duane Gish was the second speaker. After stating that he agreed with Dr. Scott's definition of science, Gish asserted that neither creation nor evolution is a scientific theory, since there were no human observers to the origin of the universe, life, or a single living thing. These events occurred in the unobservable past and none are observable today. Creation and evolution are theories about history, and such theories are not scientific theories. Both can be discussed in scientific terms and compared to circumstantial evidence such as the fossil record, natural laws, and evidence based on design and purpose, and, of course, one or the other must be true. Furthermore, Gish stated, evolution is just as religious as creation, quoting a definition of religion from a dictionary. Gish asserted that evolutionists do not object to religion in the public schools as long as it is their religious humanism with evolution as the basic dogma. Gish, using slides, then illustrated unquestionable evidence from the fossil record that is incompatible with evolutionary theory and provides much positive evidence for creation.

Dr. Hugh Ross began his presentation by asserting that during the past few years, Einstein's theory of general relativity has been established as the best-proven theory, although the causative agent is beyond the natural realm. He described the anthropic principle as being based on a considerable number of physical constants that are extremely finely tuned—they could not even be a little bit more or a little bit less or the universe and life could not exist. The probability of this occurring by natural processes is so infinitesimally low that they had to be created supernaturally. He pointed out that not one new phylum [completely different forms of life] has appeared. In fact, no one has seen a new animal species appear in nature. Since Ross believes the earth is nearly five billion years old and Adam and Eve were

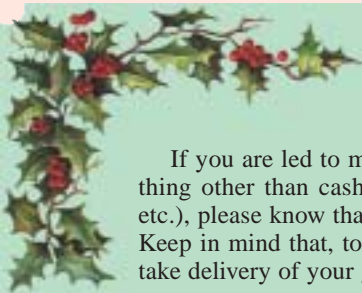
Stewardship & Trust Services

In the aftermath of September 11, numerous and conflicting thoughts clamor for our attention at Christmas. But, praise God, this is also a time when the quiet and calming voice of our Creator and Savior reassures us, urging us to consider His priorities . . . urging us to a life of holiness that will both restore His church and impact our nation and world. In this regard, it would be good to remind ourselves of the following:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:3,4). “. . . (He) made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:7–11). “Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). “. . . serv(ing) Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life” (Luke 1:74–75).

All of us here at ICR thank God for each of you who make it possible for us to proclaim this message. The love expressed through your prayers, gifts, and encouraging words are a sweet aroma to the Lord even as they are His provision for our every need (Philippians 4:18).

May each of us be encouraged unto good works in godliness until He comes!



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

If you are led to make a year-end gift to ICR of something other than cash (stocks/bonds/real estate/a vehicle, etc.), please know that I will be in the office to assist you. Keep in mind that, to qualify for a 2001 receipt, we must take delivery of your gift by December 31.

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