

Insufficient Design

by Henry M. Morris*

The modern Intelligent Design movement (ID) has been making substantial progress in recent years, at least in terms of public interest. As one evolutionist recently warned his colleagues:

The success of the ID movement to date is terrifying. In at least 40 states, ID is being considered as an addition to the required science curriculum in public schools.¹

The "terrified" author of this observation is Professor of Anthropology at Pennsylvania State University. He says he is being stalked by ID advocates!

Now I know that I and my colleagues are being stalked with careful and deadly deliberation. I fear my days are numbered unless I act soon and effectively. If you are reading this, the chances are that you are in the same position.²

The editor of the prestigious magazine *Science*, in his lead editorial in a recent issue, expressed his alarm thus:

Alternatives to the teaching of biological evolution are now being debated in no fewer than 40 states. Worse, evolution is not the only science under such challenge. In several school districts, geology materials are being rewritten because

their dates for Earth's age are inconsistent with scripture (too old).³

The editor even entitled his diatribe "Twilight for the Enlightenment?"

Similar alarmist articles have been published in numerous other science journals and also in many popular magazines (such as *Newsweek*) and local papers. Our own *San Diego Union Tribune* in a lengthy lead editorial for November 21, 2005, called Intelligent Design "Voodoo Science" in the editorial title. The language seems inflammatory just about everywhere.

One writer becomes unreasonably virulent in his latest editorial.

The "Intelligent Design" movement is the most pernicious pseudoscience of our time. It seeks to undermine the teaching of evolution, at a minimum, but at its root is a broad attack on the nature of science itself. . . .⁴

He then calls ID "an ancient and long-discredited faith-based idea with zero scientific evidence."⁵

Is ID Really Intelligent?

The reason for calling attention to this almost universally negative reaction to the ID movement among leaders in science, education, law, journalism, and other fields is to note the unrealistic hope

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that ID leaders have about their movement. Christians have been pointing out for a very long time that the ubiquitous evidences for design in nature constitute strong evidences for God and creation. But atheists and other unbelievers have long hailed Darwinism as their deliverance from this constraint.

Now the ID people think that by distancing their movement from creationism and the Biblical God as the obvious Designer, they can make ID acceptable. They are learning, however, that opposition to ID is even stronger among scientists, if anything, than the opposition to straightforward creationism.

Many evolutionists now regard ID as a hypocritical form of creationism and thus really a religion rather than science.

Another skeptic has pointed out what he thinks is a very different reason for rejecting the main ID contention.

According to Behe and Dembski, the more complex a system, the more likely it was designed—this is the essence of Point A in Behe’s concept.

Point B (irreducibility) in Behe’s concept asserts that an IC system loses its function if even a single part is missing.⁶

That is, a system is irreducibly complex (IC) if it could no longer function if even one part is missing. That, according to these two leaders of the ID movement (Michael Behe and William Dembski) means it must have been intelligently designed.

But this particular writer opines that this would be proof that it was *not* designed by any kind of intelligence! Thus, it must have been assembled somehow by impersonal time and chance.

The simple fact is, though, that if an IC system has been designed, it is a case of *bad design*. If the loss of a single part destroys the system’s

function, such a system is unreliable, and therefore, if it is designed, the designer is inept.⁷

This is a clear example of specious reasoning, but Perakh belabors it at some length. It does lead, however, to an important conclusion. That is, mere complexity is not proof of design.

For example, a perfectly cubical object found in a pile of rocks, say, would certainly have been designed for some kind of purpose—say, as a toy block for a child to play with or as one of a pair of dice for a gambler to throw. An irregular rock in that same pile, on the other hand, would be much more complex and therefore more difficult to specify than the cube but it clearly would have been formed randomly by a hodgepodge of forces over a long period of time.

In other words, complexity in itself is not evidence of design. But if it is organized and purposive complexity, then it would surely seem to have been designed. Therefore, instead of wasting time and talent on evolutionary speculation as to how natural selection might have generated a particular animal, say, creationists believe that the scientist would more profitably have tried to determine *why* the Designer created such an animal.

In any case, evolutionists almost universally conclude that: “As currently promoted, ID theory is neither new nor good science.”⁸

Creation and/or Design

The most serious deficiency in the ID movement, however, is its neglect of the most important of the alleged evidences for evolution—that is, the problem of the fossils. These are the remains of billions and billions of once-living plants and animals now preserved in the sedimentary crust of the earth. These all give abundant evidence of suffering and death

during all the supposed geological ages which they are supposed to depict.

Did the Designer do *that*? If so, just how and why? The only adequate answer is in the Bible, in its record of man's sin, the resulting global Curse and eventual Deluge. But the very purpose of the ID movement is to argue for intelligent design without reference to the Bible and the God of the Bible. Without those factors, however, it would seem that the only alternative would be to assume the Designer to be a sadistic producer of global evil as well as the intelligent producer of irreducible complexity.

We so-called "Young-Earth Creationists" also have always believed and taught what seem to us to be irrefutable evidences of intelligent design in nature, but that is not enough. We simply have to take the Biblical record as God's Word, in which He has taught the real and total truth about origins, as well as about sin and death, then providing also the wonderful solution to all such problems in the glorious Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Whether these facts are considered scientific or not, they are *historical facts* which should be considered if *Truth* is the ultimate goal.

We appreciate the tremendous contribution the ID leaders have made to the origins question, but we feel we must urge them to believe the whole counsel of God and return to the true Biblical record of recent Special Creation, the Fall and Curse, the worldwide Flood, and the promised return of God in Christ to consummate His purposes in Creation.


Although it is unlikely that full-fledged creation will ever be accepted in public schools, it can be argued that Intelligent Design will not be accepted there either. Even if an occasional school board decides to insist on it, it would be a travesty to make teachers who don't believe it try to teach it.

But remember that government schools are unscriptural in the first place. The home is, Biblically speaking, ultimately responsible for the teaching of its youth. The original schools and colleges of our country were always either homeschools or sponsored by Christians, with government schools "evolving" later.

If the options of homeschooling or religious schooling are not available (as was true for my own six children), then the parents should monitor what their offspring are being taught in the public schools and colleges and help them get it all back in Biblical perspective.

Two key Bible texts are appropriate in this connection. "*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, . . . rightly dividing the word of truth*" (II Timothy 2:15). Then, "*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear*" (I Peter 3:15).

Endnotes

1. Pat Shipman, "Being Stalked by Intelligent Design," *American Scientist* (vol. 93, November/December 2005), p. 502.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 501.
3. Donald Kennedy, "Twilight for the Enlightenment?" *Science* (vol. 308, April 8, 2005), p. 165.
4. Kendrick Frazier, "Evolution and the ID Wars," *Skeptical Inquirer* (vol. 29, November/December 2005), p. 4. Frazier is Editor of this magazine.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Mark Perakh, "Does Irreducible Complexity Imply Intelligent Design?" *Skeptical Inquirer* (vol. 29, November/December, 2005), p. 34.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
8. Michael F. Antolin and Joan M. Herbers, "Evolution's Struggle for Existence in America's Public Schools," *Evolution* (vol. 55, December 2001), p. 2383. 



Is Earth Really Round?

by John D. Morris, Ph.D.

Without a doubt, Earth is round, or nearly so. Using careful measurements from the ground and observations from space we can be certain it is essentially a sphere, with only minor bulging near the equator. If reduced to the size of a billiard ball, it would be perfectly smooth, and we wouldn't even be able to feel the highest mountains or deepest oceans. The erosive action of rainfall, glaciers and wind couple with gravity to relocate material from higher elevations to lower ones, rounding the globe. We actually observe these familiar mechanisms at work in the present.


By the way, the Bible has always taught a spherical Earth. There are, of course, instances of phenomenological language, where the author refers to what the viewer can see, just as we do today when communicating. We talk about "flat" terrain or a "flat" ocean even though we know they follow Earth's curvature. It is flat to our eyes and to our listener's eyes. But when the issue of Earth's shape is addressed in Scripture, the Hebrew wording implies sphericity (see Isaiah 40:22, etc.).

This may seem unimportant, but evolutionists often belittle creation thinking by comparing it to belief in a flat Earth. Certainly most who do so are merely repeating catchy insults from others, even though there are many who make the claim maliciously and purposively. While this may make them feel superior it belies a great misunderstanding (or misrepresentation) of creation and of the nature of science itself!

Of course creationists and evolutionists agree fully on Earth's shape. It involves observational science. Earth can be observed to be round. This is not a matter of interpretation. This is simply an observational fact. To deny it is to deny observation, and no one does.

Compare this with macroevolution, the theory that basic plant and animal types have changed into others. This is not and has never been observed. Instead, we observe *stasis*, that things "stay" the same, with only minor adaptations to the basic types. Evolutionists recognize this fact of the present too, but they claim things underwent major changes in the unobserved past when no one was present to observe it, and that all of life experienced these major changes. Indeed, their claim is that all of life came from a common ancestor. They argue about the mechanism by which this happened, but not the truth of the claim.

Thus evolution must deny the ubiquitous observation of stasis, relying on an unobserved mechanism to accomplish great changes. Evolution must confuse facts about the present operation of the universe based on observations in the present with speculation about its history which ignore present observations.

So in reality, evolution claims bear more resemblance to flat Earth claims than does creation thinking. Based as it is on a rather unsupported view of the past, and a denial of present observations, its supporters really shouldn't be throwing stones at those who are doing better science. 



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