

We are here—creationist and evolutionist debate arrival

By Mike Sweeney

Two professors debating the theories of evolution and divine creation Friday night at the Nebraska Union agreed that fossils tell the story of the origin of life, but interpreted the fossil story differently.

Dr. Duane T. Gish, author of *The Fossils Say No*, and associate director of the Institute for Creation Research, said gaps in the fossil record and the lack of fossil evidence of transitional life forms refute the theory of evolution.

Disagreeing, Dr. Michael Voorhies, associate curator of vertebrate paleontology at the UNL museum, said the progression of vertebrate fossils in stratified rock layers make evolution obvious.

"Gish wrote a book saying the fossils say no, but I listen quite carefully to my fossils and I hear them saying something else," Voorhies said as he flashed a color slide of an animal skull with "yes" drawn next to its jaws.

Cheering favorites

The debate prompted some of the 950 listeners to cheer for their favorite theory like convention delegates cheer for their favorite candidate.

Sponsored by Creation Coalition, a newly-formed campus group, the debate preceded a special creation seminar Saturday.

Gish argued that there are no transitional fossils bridging the gap between microscopic forms of life and the invertebrates, and between the invertebrates and the vertebrates.

Instead of a steady progression of life,

he said fossils indicate an explosion of complex creatures in the Cambrian period, "which is what you would expect on the basis of creation."

"Evolution requires intermediate forms between species, and paleontologists do not provide them," Gish said.

Voorhies said transitional forms of life do exist, and pointed to the fossil remains of the archaeopteryx, a small feathered reptile, as a transition between dinosaurs and birds. But Gish said the archaeopteryx was clearly birdlike.

Fossil records

Voorhies also said the fossil record shows how the horse changed from a small multi-toed animal to a large single-toed animal.

Gish said Voorhies was "dwelling in the branches of the evolutionary tree."

"You can dwell in the branches, but you can't have a tree without a trunk," Gish said.

The theory of evolution falls through because of the gaps between the lower forms of life, he said.

In response, Voorhies said, "Creationists say we just don't have all the gaps filled. When I demonstrate the evolution of the horse, it makes no sense to say the horse evolved but the other animals were created."

Voorhies said the modern horse carries within its body traces of its multi-toed ancestry. The horse has an extra bone which was once used to carry an extra toe, he said.

Check yourself

"You can check this yourself if you've

got an old dead horse lying around the barn," he said.

Gish said the horse has not evolved. He agreed that different types and sizes of horses existed, but said they were different species, created separately.

He said the theory of creation is just as valid as the theory of evolution, since evolutionists can't prove events that occurred before humans were around to witness them.

Neither evolution nor creation is science, he said.

"No theory of origins can be science," he said. "The theory may be correct, but it can't be proven," because there were no witnesses to the origin of life.

Belief in the unproven theory of evolution is parallel to the belief in creation, Gish argued, and therefore the two should be given equal treatment by public schools.

Evolution as religion

"Evolution is just as religious as creation," Gish said.

But Voorhies said there were fundamental differences between the theories.

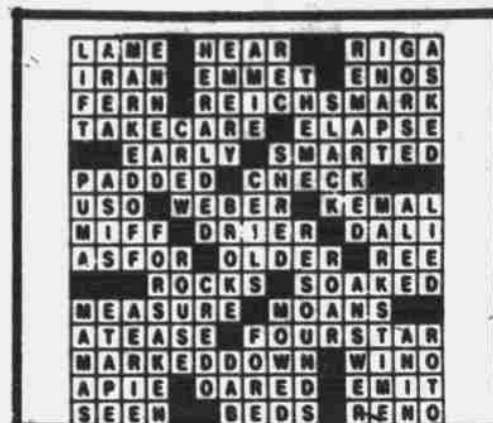
Creation is a static concept, he said, and cannot be studied, while evolution is an ac-

tive way of understanding nature.

Giving creation equal time with evolution in public schools would be "like giving equal time to the flat earth theory," Voorhies said.

"Creation in biology is as unscound as the flat earth theory is to geology," he said, "and I'd like to suggest that it is an insult to intelligence that such nonsense should be taught as science in public schools."

Gish countered that not a single member of the creationist society is a member of the Flat Earth Society.



Water use to be discussed

A soil and water specialist with the cooperative extension service of the University of California, will speak Wednesday at 3 p.m. in the Nebraska East Union.

Falih Aljibury will speak at a water resources seminar sponsored by the Nebraska Water Resources Center. The topic for the seminar is "Water Conservation Facts and Fantasy."

Aljibury is a recognized expert on water

conservation and was recently appointed as water commissioner for the state of California.

He will discuss the various ways that California is dealing with water conservation, including ideas which might be applicable to Nebraska.

For further information contact the Water Resources Center, 310 Ag Hall, East Campus.

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