

## Untold story

### Both creationism and evolution have scientific basis



Boy, am I glad Donald Wise came to town.

Mr. Wise, a geologist at Franklin and Marshall College in Pennsylvania, delivered a lecture at Bessey Hall back in February exposing creationism for what it is: propaganda.

It's about time someone spoke out against this poison that has been forced down the throats of students in public learning institutions all over the United States for decades.

Right now my little sisters are being indoctrinated into the idea that there exists a loving creator who fashioned each species and to whom we belong, instead of the more realistic idea that our ancestors were apes. Evolution has been ignored for far too long.

That's why we need people like Donald Wise, to set us all straight. American students know all about creationism, but we have learned so very little about evolution.

Okay, time to cut the sarcasm. Frankly, I'm a bit irked that the department of geosciences brought in a speaker to bash and denounce a theory that few people know the first thing about. How can we make an educated decision about what to believe about the origins of man if we're only told one side of the story?

Well, today I'm here to give you a glimpse of the other side. According to Henry M. Morris's book "The Scientific Case for Creationism," creationist scientists are people who "have acquired all the standard credentials of the scientist, but who maintain that (biblical) creation explains the facts of science better than evolution."

To them it is not primarily a ques-

tion of religion, but of science. So we're not talking about a bunch of wackos with their eyes shut, their ears covered and their arms wrapped tightly around their Bibles. These people understand evolution and simply disagree.

Creationists believe in catastrophism, that disastrous events caused big changes in the earth's surface. One of these changes was a worldwide flood. In his book "The Great Brain Robbery," David Watson explains fossil evidence supports a worldwide flood. "The animal graveyards are what one would expect in a universal (flood): millions of fish were smothered by mud, and mammals of all kinds huddled together in caves to escape the rising waters."

A flood also explains the order of the deposition of fossils. At the bottom

would be shellfish, then fish with vertebrates, then amphibians, land reptiles, birds and mammals. The more mobile an animal was, the longer it could avoid being drowned. However, the restless ebbing and flowing of the currents would scour, uproot and overturn before finally subsiding. This accounts for the disorder sometimes found in the fossil record. A worldwide flood also would easily explain the extinction of the dinosaurs.

Creationists tend to hold one of two views about when the earth was created. Some believe in a literal six-day creation, as explained in Genesis 1. These scholars believe that God created the earth with apparent age. Their reasoning is that this jives with other ways God

created things in the Bible - Adam was created as a full-grown man, not a baby. Jesus was able to create well-aged wine instantly at the banquet (John 2).

According to the "Creation vs. Evolution Handbook" by Thomas Heinze, others believe that the six days were meant to be figurative. They point to the fact that Hebrew tends to be a more figurative language and to the fact that the earth looks old.

The creationist argument for God's being the earth's creator includes the laws of thermodynamics. The first law states that energy can be transferred, but not created or destroyed. The amount remains constant. According to creationists, this shows that the universe could not

start itself. The second law states that a system which feeds only on itself eventually will run down. In other words, everything decays. This shows that the universe had to have a beginning and will eventually end.

It's important to note that some creationists and evolutionists agree that the question of the origins of the earth is outside the realm of science. We can't test it, we can't observe it, therefore we can't prove it. Therefore, no particular explanation should be assumed in a science class.

The problem for society with evolution and creationism is that scientists have tons of knowledge, and we don't. Therefore, we either have to trust that one side or another is telling the truth or devote our lives to gaining that knowledge, as they have.

If we were talking about the chemical makeup of a banana it might not be so important, but where the earth came from is significant to how we live our lives.

If there is no God, and we evolved over millions of years out of nothingness, then we are responsible to no one, and the battle for the survival of the fittest is on. We can justify crushing our fellow man because he is weaker than we.

If there is a God who created us uniquely, as the Bible claims, then he has the right to tell us how to live our lives, demand that we acknowledge him and he probably has an interest in us. If there is a God who created evolution and guided it, it leaves us to determine what kind of God he is. It brings us to ask, "Are we humans, in our present form, what he was aiming for? Or are we merely a means to an end?"

Donald Wise pointed out in his lecture that many evolutionists believe in God. He never said what kind of a God. As college students, the best we can do is become as educated as time will allow.

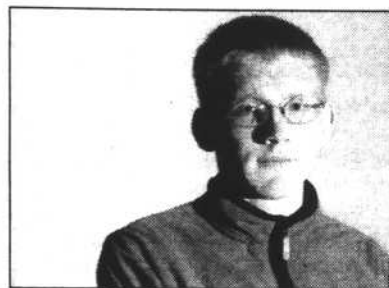
Ask questions of and challenge those claiming one viewpoint or another, especially if they happen to be your professors. The question is just too important to put off.



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## Gangs of Faith

### Activities of campus groups reflect a dangerous social trend



An insidious evil lurks on campus. It's nothing new; this evil has lurked on campus as long as free thought and independent living have existed. The members who constitute this evil organize and recruit in a way not unlike that of street gangs, forming friendships with vulnerable, lonely individuals with the ultimate purpose of introducing them to the rites and methods of their evil.

This is a subtle gang. The members generally look typical of most UNL students: white, slightly overweight, often wearing glasses. They're not hard to spot, though, if you're perceptive.

Look for shirts with the symbol of a crown of thorns, necklace crosses of varying size or "W.W.J.D.?" bracelets. They are, my friend, the Thumpers.

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I was walking casually from my room in Selleck one day when I

passed by a Thumper at work. Actually, there were two Thumpers, one I had earlier identified, the other untagged. They were talking to an Asian student. (His race is significant.) I could tell by their positioning - the two Thumpers were standing closer to one another, across from the other student - that the Thumpers didn't know him well.

One of the Thumpers motioned off in the direction of the Lutheran Chapel and Student Center. I knew, from prior experience and a misplaced flyer that I probably never was supposed to see, that the Lutheran Chapel and Student Center is a major meeting place for Christian-based exchange-student groups. These groups meet weekly, offering friendship, food and fun. The ultimate purpose, however, is more sinister.

I know one of the people who heads one of these non-official student groups. (There are many.) While she certainly was friendly and accommodating in every way, she was also a fundamentalist evangelical-type Christian - a Thumper.

The idea behind these groups is to target exchange students, displaced in a foreign culture and language, far away from both friends and family. Friendships are fostered. At some point, Christianity is included into the equation as a normal extension of

socialization. Finally, conversion is achieved.

I had to resist the urge to intervene when the Thumpers were bullying the unidentified exchange student. It wasn't my business, after all. While I find the behavior morally reprehensible, a person is free to associate with whomever he or she chooses, and I must respect that. I let the three be, hoping that someday the student would realize the trap the Thumpers set for him.

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Thumpers generally can't understand the nature of the evil they propagate. From their point of view, they're actually doing their victims a favor, saving them from eternal damnation.

And certainly, on the surface, they seem benevolent. What's so wrong with getting people together, fostering friendships and advocating a positive lifestyle? Nothing - indeed, by presenting students with a social and moral structure in a society that is increasingly individualistic and amoral, they offer the option of sanity for developing university students.

In assimilating new students into these organizations, however, Thumpers impose not just a morality on the students, but a religion. In other words, their morality is built upon a fundamental perception of reality. It is this fundamental perception - one

requiring faith and subjective belief - that is evil.

A side observation: It's interesting Thumpers object to sucking out the brains of fetuses ... but they willfully do so with grown students.

The perception is that morality extends from a set of principles of divine origin. People who believe this is the case have no problem advocating the teaching of abstinence-only sexual education courses. They move to be able to post copies of the Ten Commandments as "historical documents."

In other words, Thumpers hold the principle that what they believe to be right or wrong is right or wrong universally. But this principle is based not upon reason or even common agreement among people, but on faith. The problem with faith is that it is completely subjective and independent of observable reality.

That perception, in turn, leads them to moralize not only their own lives but those of the rest of us - the non-Thumpers. We feel this influence most strongly through government, e.g. through the religious right.

Thumpers and their victims are persuaded to change government in ways that affect all people. While anti-abortion and anti-gay marriage lobbies are the most blatant ways this happens today, there are many subtle

levels, such as taxes and local ordinances, upon which Thumpers' enact their views.

Thus, by spreading the faith, Thumpers are attempting to overwhelm the minority of non-believers by creating an environment which espouses a Thumper morality and subjugates those who would disagree. The religion of the founding fathers notwithstanding, this violates at least the spirit of the Constitution. All citizens should be free to do what they want, as long as they do not violate the rights of another citizen. No other laws except those which assure this freedom should exist.

Thumpers may not be able to understand the complexity/simplicity of a government based on a single social principle, because they live with a morality that is based on a text full of moral precepts subject to a myriad of interpretations. A government based on the preservation of freedom rather than the upholding of a tenuous, changing morality should be the ideal.

So when I see those Thumpers busy at their art, I see not friendly conversation, but a part of the trend toward irrationality in government. And if irrationality belongs anywhere, it belongs in the churches - not the government - where it doesn't have to hurt those of us who don't go.

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