



# Think & Believe

A Publication of Alpha Omega Institute

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## Scientific Objectivity?

by Dave and Mary Jo Nutting

Scientists are careful, objective researchers who are able to separate their emotions from their scientific theories and investigations — right? Ideally this might so, **but the truth is, scientists are human too**, and as such are susceptible to their biases just like anyone else. In the area of creation and evolution, these biases can often be very strong and can significantly affect a scientist's view of the evidence.

History has proven over and over again the intolerance frequently exhibited by people with strongly held biases. This has been re-enacted in recent years with creationist scientists as victims. For example, scientist Robert Gentry has been carefully investigating radioactive decay in rocks for over 30 years. For thirteen years he worked as a guest scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and published numerous articles in well-known scientific journals. He was respected by colleagues as a careful scientist and regarded as an authority in his specific field of research. However, all that changed when he became convinced that his research pointed to a young age for the earth and published his ideas.

As the implications of his findings became known, Gentry and his research began to come under attack. His findings were brushed off as a "tiny mystery," while he himself was shunned by former colleagues. Eventually, he lost his position at Oak Ridge and his National Science Foundation funding. Evolutionary bias had claimed another victim.

We run into this kind of intolerance frequently. For example, we have recently had the opportunity to lecture at several public high schools. We usually stress the topic of bias, and warn students of how bias can affect the interpretation of scientific data. We encourage them to carefully search out underlying assumptions and try to separate facts from inferences before drawing conclusions. **At one high school, the students had a live exhibition of bias in action.**

One of the teachers asked why creationists never publish in "reputable" scientific journals, so Dave used Gentry as an example. He explained how Gentry had lost his position, his research funding, and the ability to get his research published because his findings had contradicted the accepted norm. At this point the teacher exclaimed, "Serves him right!" Amazed, Dave replied, "They practically burned him at the stake," **to which the teacher retorted, "Yeah, burn the guy!"** Scientific objectivity? Hardly! Academic freedom? No way! **Hopefully the students got the message!**

(See Spotlight on Science for more information on Gentry's work. For a fascinating account of his story, see *Creation's Tiny Mystery*, Robert V. Gentry, 1986, Earth Science Associates, Knoxville, TN.)



Evolutionary Leftovers?  
(See Spotlight on Science)

# NOTES & QUOTES

■ In this month's "Notes and Quotes" we are spotlighting a book you definitely need to get — Paul Taylor's new book, *The Illustrated Origins Answer Book* (1989, Films for Christ Association). All of the following quotes from evolutionists are from his excellent reference section (Page numbers refer to Taylor's book. For complete documentation, refer to it.)

■ In the first chapter, Taylor discusses the two models and the scientific method in general. He then discusses the Origin of the Universe in greater depth, giving many references like the following:

- *I have little hesitation in saying that a sickly pall now hangs over the big bang theory. When a pattern of facts become set against a theory, experience shows that the theory rarely recovers.* (Fred Hoyle, emphasis added by Taylor, p. 54)
- There is no mechanism known as yet that would allow the Universe to begin in an arbitrary state and then evolve to its present highly-ordered state. (Don A. Page, p. 54)

■ Who says dating methods are accurate? How about these quotes referenced to Taylor's second chapter, "The Earth, A Young Planet?"

- The Carbon-14 contents of the shells of the snails of *Melanooides tuberculatus* living today in artesian springs in southern Nevada indicate an apparent age of 27,000 years. (Alan C. Riggs, p. 59)
- It should be noted that dates [absolute dates] obtained by different methods [radioactive dating methods] *commonly show some discrepancies*. . . . As the Committee on the Measurement of Geological Time said in 1950, "*These figures (i.e. dates) are, as railway timetables say, subject to change without notice.*" (D.G.A. Whitten and J.R.V. Brooks, emphasis added by Taylor, p. 61)

■ Listen to just a couple of the goodies Taylor has dug up regarding the origin and complexity of life, his topic for the third chapter:

- But let us have no illusions — our research would still leave us quite unable to grasp the extreme complexity of the simplest of organisms. (Ilya Prigogine, p. 80)
- Although bacteria are tiny, they display biochemical, structural and behavioral complexities that outstrip scientific description. In keeping with the current microelectronics revolution, it may make more sense to equate their size with sophistication rather than with simplicity. . . . (James A. Shapiro, p. 80)

• Considering the way the *pre-biotic soup* is referred to in so many discussions of the origin of life as an already established reality, it comes as something of a shock to realize that *there is absolutely no positive evidence for its existence.* (Michael Denton, emphasis added by Taylor, p. 75)

■ Taylor deals with the Origin of Species in his fourth chapter, and again includes numerous insightful references like the following:

- *From the claims that are made for neo-Darwinism one could easily get the impression that it has made great progress towards explaining evolution, mostly leaving the details to be cleared up. In fact, quite the reverse is true. Neo-Darwinism can account for some of the details, but the major problems remain unsolved.* (Peter T. Saunders and Mae-Wan Ho, emphasis added by Taylor, p. 83)
- No one has ever produced a species by mechanisms of natural selection. No one has gotten *near* it. (Colin Patterson, emphasis added by Taylor, p. 88)

■ The wealth of great material and quotes goes on and on! In chapter 5, The Origin of Mankind, we find:

- The fossil record pertaining to man is still so sparsely known that those who insist on positive declarations can do nothing more than *jump from one hazardous surmise to another and hope that the next dramatic discovery does not make them utter fools.* (William R. Fix, emphasis added by Taylor, p. 97)
- The fossils that decorate our family tree are so scarce that there are still more scientists than specimens. The remarkable fact is that all the physical evidence we have for human evolution can still be placed, with room to spare, inside a single coffin. (Lyal Watson, p. 97)

■ Finally, in Chapter 6, Taylor reveals some well kept secrets about fossils, traditionally called the "best" evidence for evolution:

- The family trees which adorn our text books are based on inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils. (Stephen J. Gould, p. 106)
- The known fossil record *fails* to document a *single* example of phyletic (E)volution accomplishing a major morphologic transition." (Steven Stanley, emphasis added by Taylor, p. 106)

**Get this book today!** It is a very well-done and valuable reference and **is a must for every student 5th grade on up!** (\$10.00 includes shipping.)

# SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

## Earth's "Tiny Mysteries"

Locked deep within the "oldest" granite rocks of our planet are some "tiny mysteries." Under a microscope these oddities look like miniature targets, concentric circles of varying sizes and colors. They have become the subject of intense interest by certain scientists studying the age of planet Earth.

These rings were formed as radioactive elements decayed, giving off high-energy alpha particles which discolor the rock surrounding the radioactive core. Three of these rings have been identified with various isotopes of the element Polonium, and these were what caught the attention of researcher Robert Gentry.

Gentry noticed that some of the "radio-halos" contained a pattern different from the familiar Uranium halos. They had only the 3 rings associated with Polonium. Where were the other rings? It was thought up to this time that the Polonium must have come from Uranium decay, but these strange halos seemed to indicate otherwise.

Gentry also noticed another piece of the puzzle — the "half-lives" of the elements involved. Uranium-238 has a half-life of 4.5 billion years. That means that half of it will be gone through the decay process after 4.5 billion years. Polonium-218, on the other hand, has a half-life of only 3 minutes!

Now here is the mystery. The evidence seems to indicate that the Polonium-218 came from a source other than Uranium. No means of transport is visible. If the earth was in a molten state for millions of years as the standard evolutionary model proposes, Polonium could be transported, but, by the time the rock solidified, the Polonium would have already decayed and no rings would be left as evidence. Hence, the mystery.

It was Gentry's heretical solution to this mystery that cost him his lab, his funding and his reputation. What was his heresy? He suggested that his findings prove it took no more than 3 minutes for Earth's primeval rocks to solidify from a molten state. If he is right, these "tiny mysteries" become powerful evidence for an instantaneous creation — another testimony to the truth of God's Word. "In the beginning, God created

...."

## Evolutionary Leftovers?

One of the classic evidences used for evolution is the supposed presence of "vestigial organs." These features are thought by evolutionists to be "left-overs" from the past — organs which once had a function but no longer have.

At one time almost 200 structures in the human body were said to be vestigial. This list included the tonsils, thymus and thyroid glands, coccyx, and appendix. All of these are now known to have very important functions. The tonsils and thymus gland are important in immunity. The thyroid is one of the chief regulators of metabolism. The coccyx is an important point for muscle attachment needed for upright stance. Even the appendix is now thought to function in immunity and other biochemical ways.

Certain structures in the developing embryo have also been regarded as vestigial, including so-called "gill slits," "yolk sac," and "tail." However, these too are now known to have very important functions in human development. The "gill slits" are not even slits, but pouches that develop into the structures of the neck and jaw area of humans. The "yolk sac" produces the embryo's first blood, but no yolk. The "tail" is not a tail at all, but is the structure that develops into the coccyx (our "tail-bone"! ). (See *Think and Believe*, July/Aug. 1987.)

As time goes by, evolutionists in general are becoming more careful about labelling structures as vestigial. The record from the past hasn't been so good. Instead of being useless, degenerating leftovers from evolution, these structures have been found to be extremely important. Just because we are ignorant of a structure's function doesn't mean it doesn't have one. At this point it seems the creationist is a better scientist — predicting that functions will be found for structures that we don't understand and pursuing active research to find such functions. It could even be said that evolutionary thinking has led to medical malpractice in the past, when perfectly healthy organs such as the tonsils or the appendix were removed as a "precaution" since they were thought to have no function anyway.

Even if structures are found that truly have no function, it would not "disprove" creation and "prove" evolution. Such degenerative changes represent *lost* information, not new information. The problem for evolution still remains — to explain the origin of *new* genetic information. "Vestigial organs" are certainly no help in this area. Our bodies are amazingly complex and fantastically coordinated. They are indeed a tribute to our wonderful Creator.

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## Upcoming Events

- Jan. 21: **Crossroads Community Church**, Delta, Colorado, (303) 249-7344.  
Feb. 4: **Grace Bible Church**, Parachute, Colorado, (303) 625-2317.  
Feb. 8-9: **KJOL Seminar**, First Assembly, Grand Junction, Colorado, (303) 243-4361.  
Feb. 13: **Museum Tour**, Cornerstone Christian School, Grand Junction, Colorado.  
Feb. 20-21: **Maranatha Chapel**, San Diego, California, (619) 586-1334.  
Feb. 25-27: **Galilee Baptist**, Riverside, California. contact Don Smyth, (714) 686-2455.  
Feb. 28 - Mar. 1; **Coast Christian High School**, Redondo Beach, California, (213) 370-5847.  
Mar. 6: **Alpha-Omega Science Fair**, New Horizons Church, Grand Junction, Colorado. Contact Dorothy Hahn, (303) 464-5181.  
Mar. 18: **Molina Baptist**, Molina, Colorado. Contact Steve Millar, (303) 268-5810.  
Mar. 29-31: **Mesa Hill Bible Church**, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Contact Chelly Gring, (719) 471-1233.  
Apr. 3: **Fort Lewis College**, Durango, Colorado.

## Ongoing Through Spring

- Sunday School Class: Science and the Christian Faith**, Redlands Community Church, Grand Junction, Colorado, (303) 245-9020. Team taught with Dave Roper.  
**KJOL/Colorado Christian College Class**, Grand Junction, Colorado, (303) 243-4361.

## Outdoor Adventures

- Apr. 28 - May 6: **ICR Grand Canyon Adventure**, Grand Canyon, Arizona, (619) 448-0900.  
Jun. 25-29: **Paluxy Dinosaur Adventure**, Glenn Rose, TX, (916) 626-4447.  
Jul. 27-29: **Lake Shetek Baptist Family Camp**, Slayton, Minnesota, (507) 376-9735.  
Aug. 12-17: **Twin Peaks Family Science Adventure**, Collbran, Colorado, (303) 245-5906.  
Aug. 19-24: **Camp Redcloud Family Mountain Adventure**, Lake City, Colorado, (303) 245-5906.

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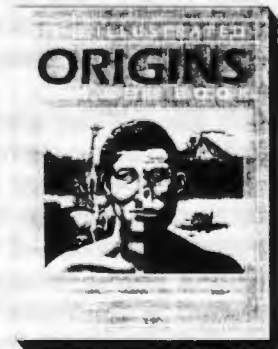
## Great New Book

We recently received a book we're really excited about. It's so good we wish we'd written it! In fact, we were planning to, but Paul Taylor saved us a lot of time and effort! (Thanks, Paul!) *The Illustrated Origins Answer Book* (1989, Films for Christ Association) is a fantastic reference for beginners and experts alike.

The first half is a well-organized, easy-reading coverage of the main topics involved in the creation-evolution debate. It includes lots of facts and good illustrations, and is readily usable by students from 5th grade on up.

The back half (this is what we really like) contains hundreds of relevant fully-referenced quotes keyed to the main text. There are many quotes even we had never run across before! (See "Notes and Quotes" to whet your appetite.)

This is a very reliable and usable book. It's the book we have been waiting for. Don't miss it!!! (Available from us for \$10.00 including shipping)



Get this book!  
(See Notes and Quotes)

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