

Think Believe

Discover Creation...Worship the Creator

A Publication of Alpha Omega Institute

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March/April, 2015; Vol. 33, No.2

Ministering to Youth

by Dave Nutting

If you have been reading T&B for some time, I'm sure you are sensing our urgency to minister to more and more youth of all ages.

Problem: Churches find that an increasingly large proportion of youth from their church families who go to public schools no longer attend church. Consequently, they rarely, if ever, come to special events like our creation seminars. These are the ones who are getting blasted in their faith by mostly evolutionary philosophy – the ones that **need to come**. In fact, when we ask the young people who are in attendance what schools they go to, the majority of them indicate they are homeschooled. In three different locations on our Northwest speaking trip we had adults come up to us and let us know that their son or daughter used to go to church but have now drifted so far that they doubt most of this “Christianity stuff.” Unfortunately, this is rampant and it is maddening. Most reading this will personally know young people who have walked away from their faith because of evolutionary teaching.

This agonizing situation hits people from all walks including families of pastors and missionaries families. One missionary family we know sent their kids to a missionary boarding school where one of their daughters was bombed with evolution. Fortunately, creation teaching made a big difference for her. We also met a pastor's daughter at a university who threw out God and the Bible and

decided to be an atheist shortly after arriving at the university.

The sad thing is that the arguments which torpedoed these students' faith had very simple answers. Even worse is that the teachers and professors who poisoned these students' minds are often purposely out to sink students' faith and they are paid to do so by your tax and tuition dollars. The scenarios of young people having their faith torpedoed is repeated almost daily in thousands of schools and universities across this nation.

So, is there a solution? What can be done? Some people advocate abandoning the public schools and universities. Is that what should be done? Even if parents decide to homeschool, the vast majority of “church kids” will still attend public schools.

Some have advocated organizing watchdog groups who immediately complain to school administrations and boards whenever teachers attack a student's faith. Should this be done? Likely. Some parents might be tempted to wring those teacher's or professor's necks, but I don't think that is the solution.

One solution is to train up young people with real answers through our Discover Creation Training Institute. We plan to train our students to train others who will, in turn, train others, etc. These young people will be trained in

Creation and Biblical apologetics and encouraged to reach out in whatever community God places them in. That might be in a university they go to afterward, in their own church's youth groups, in school, or in a multitude of other possibilities. We feel it will only be through this type of multiplication that we can turn the tide of increasingly secular and even militantly anti-Christian triage in the public arena.

Since so many “church” youth aren't attending church seminars, we will have to be quite creative in reaching them. One-on-one ministry, social media, backyard science clubs, and dorm studies, are possibilities. Mary Jo recently wrote a blog regarding some creative and quite effective means that individuals and churches have utilized to reach out to public school students through school “release times.” Check out some of those ideas at DiscoverCreation.org/blog/2015/03/03/creative-ideas-for-childrens-ministry/. Also check out <http://www.discovercreation.org/TrainingInstitute.htm> for our specialized 1-year Discover Creation Training Institute.

If you have ideas for good solutions, send them to us so we can circulate them. Whatever you do, please get involved soon! **AOI**



Considering Logical Fallacies: Appealing to Illegitimate Authority

by Scott Mauser

As science becomes more and more specialized, we are forced to evaluate evidence with the aid of expert opinions. Consequently, we need to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate authorities. Although alluded to in our last newsletter, I will briefly cover several aspects here: Inappropriate Experts; Unnamed Experts; and Biased Experts.

Appealing to an “Inappropriate Expert” is fairly easy to spot. I probably won’t have my lawyer change the brakes on my car, but I may need him later when I’m sued for an accident. A mechanic might be the better choice. We tend to see this type of fallacy frequently in our fame-saturated culture (everyone has an opinion); an actress gives her “expertise” on politics, or a politician gives his “weighted” opinion on Global Warming. We must always evaluate the credentials of an authority, especially when outside of their field... but keep in mind

that the actress might have a PHD in Political Science. The expert should be one in the field in question or who has studied extensively in that field. This does not necessarily mean one needs a college degree or major in that discipline to be an expert.

The “Unnamed Expert” is used quite a bit in marketing and journalistic material. Examples include; “most experts agree,” or “a published expert stated,” and finally, “all or most reputable biologists.” These sources need to be dealt with skeptically as you have no idea who the experts are and where their expertise lays.

As for the “Biased Expert,” keep in mind that we all have to recognize our biases. However, I think the following example of significant (unreasonable) bias or prejudice shows adequately the difficulty of using the following “expert” in an argument against creation:

“Our willingness to accept scientific claims that are against common sense is the key.... We take the side of science [science?] in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, in spite of its

*failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism... Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.” **

We must always be careful when investigating areas with competing ideas and legitimate disagreements. If you have such a situation, as we do in science (especially evolution), the appeal to one single authority is a questionable appeal, since your opponent could point to another expert with a totally different opinion. We cannot simply pick the authorities that agree with us.

So as you evaluate experts, make sure they are truly knowledgeable and fair in rendering their opinions. Not everyone who sleeps at a Holiday Inn Express is an appropriate expert in science. **AOI**

* Richard Lewontin, Billions and billions of demons (review of The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark by Carl Sagan, 1997), The New York Review, p. 31, 9 January 1997. Bracket insertion mine.

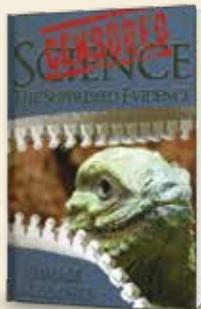
Censored Science, The Suppressed Evidence

by Dave Nutting

With a very busy schedule, it is very rare that I read a book in its entirety without setting it down only to come back to it much later (if at all). This time I did. Therefore it had to be a great book!

Censored Science, The Suppressed Evidence, by Bruce Malone managed to hold my attention even though I had several other pressing projects.

I liked the bite-sized format which enticed me to turn page after page. Each page flip revealed another



aspect of the creation vs. evolution debate using tremendous graphics and photos. It is similar to the style we use in **Think & Believe**. Busy people will enjoy reading the relevant details in a condensed form. Although whole books could be written about most of the “bites,” there is plenty of meat for even professors to sink their teeth into – while still being very readable for the average student and adult.

Topics include superb and fresh design features which evolution has a hard time explaining. The book also covers aspects of

geology, biology, the origin of life, astronomy, etc. that pose a real problem for evolutionary interpretations and which are not mentioned in ...or censored from, textbooks. Each topic has a “skeptics” corner which encapsulates the main issue. Most sections give the Biblical context which is shown, time after time, to explain the evidence much better than a naturalistic model.

Proofed by top creation scientists, it is technically accurate and good for inquisitive students through adults. Hardcover, 112 full-color pages. **\$20** includes shipping. **AOI**

Why Do We Have Thistles?

by Stephen B. Austin

Mention the word “thistle” and one word comes to mind – “Ugh!” This is often followed by, “I hate thistles!” The term “thistle” may be applied to a variety of plants which are characterized by their sharp prickly leaves.

Although botanists recognize several hundreds of species of thistles and thistle-like plants worldwide, there are few native thistles in North America. Most are immigrants from Europe and Asia, although the Russian thistle genus *Salsola* (one or more of its species commonly called tumbleweed) is known also in much of Africa. The immigrant species can be very invasive, and often plague property owners – especially farmers and ranchers. They produce a myriad of seeds and can spread rapidly. For example, *Onopordum acanthium*, cotton thistle or Scotch thistle, was first found in Utah in 1963. By 1981, according to Wikipedia, it covered 6070 hectares in 17 counties, and eight years later, it had spread to cover more than 22,540 hectares. (A hectare is defined as 10,000 square meters in area or 2.47 acres.) Scotch thistle is now found in nearly every state and also in much of Canada.

Thankfully, there are natural enemies to thistles (insects such as weevils and other biological controls), that are found in their native lands. However, these have sometimes been known to also attack desirable native plants, such as rare and endangered native thistles and even other non-thistle plants.

So this brings us to the question, “Why do we have thistles?” Evolutionists believe they evolved or adapted to protect themselves from herbivores, thus discouraging grazing animals from feeding on

them. If this were the case, we should have a lot more thistle-like plants.

However, this writer knows that some horses (perhaps many) love to feed on thistles. He has a friend whose property had an infestation of Canadian thistle, a genuine plague that spreads rhizomatously (with underground rootstocks that produce dense stands). His horses love Canadian thistles, and within a short time of purchasing the property, his horses had devoured every last thistle! And who hasn't seen goats feeding on thistles and other weedy plants?

The evolutionists can merely speculate on why we have thistles. However, those of us who relish the Holy Scriptures, can find a good answer to the problem in Genesis 3:17-19. Because Adam, the first man, disobeyed a simple loyalty test by eating a fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God said to him:

“Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it, All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.” (NKJV)

This plague remains upon us to this day, along with death, pain, and suffering. We are told in Romans 8:22, “. . . we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.” However, there is a promised restoration, a new heaven and a new earth, in which such plagues will no longer exist (Revelation 21:1).

Meanwhile, we must continue to deal with things like thorns and thistles.

We can also recognize that today each of us has a sin problem, and that God in His mercy has provided redemption for us in His Son Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:7 tells us,

“in Him we have redemption through His blood [shed on the cross], the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” (NKJV)

So, we might say that God, in His mercy, has provided thistles to remind us of our need for Jesus (for our sake!). **AOI**



Director's Column by Dave & Mary Jo Nutting



Do you value your faith? Do you value your relationship with God through Jesus? It's easy to say, "Oh, yes." But consider for a

moment, "What if?" . . .

- What if Jesus had never come to this earth?
- What if He had yielded to Satan's temptations?
- What if He had given in to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life?
- What if He had spent His time amassing fame and fortune for himself?
- What if He had wasted precious hours on TV, computer games, or meaningless entertainment?
- What if He had cared merely for His own personal interests, and not the needs of others?
- What if He had valued comfort and personal safety more than doing God's will?

- What if He had said, "Father, not Your will, but Mine!"
- What if He had not been willing to take up His cross and lay down His life? And...
- What if He had never risen from the dead? Where would we be?

We'd be lost and without hope in the world. Living a life of futility, toil, sweat, and pain inherited from our forefather, Adam. We'd be heading towards death and an eternity apart from the God who made us in His image. "For if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." (1 Cor. 15:17) "For the wages of sin is death . . ." (Romans 6:23)

But praise God – Jesus chose the hard way. Out of love, He humbly laid down His life, walked this earth as a man, and was obedient to the point of death. (see Philippians 2: 5-11) He did all of this to conquer sin and death and buy us back from cruel slavery. Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! Death is conquered! We are free! **AOI**

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