



The Newsletter of The North Texas Skeptics

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Impact

by John Blanton

Actually, evolution is religion, not science. You might not know this unless you read *Impact*, a collection of "Articles contained in the ICR monthly *Acts & Facts* that have an 'Impact' on Science, Creation, and the Bible" from the Web site of the Institution for Creation Research (ICR) at www.icr.org.

You also might not know about

- The Scientific Case Against Evolution, 1 and 2 (*Impact* 330 and 331)
- Basic Chemistry: A Testament of Creation
- Neanderthals Are Still Human!
- Archaeoraptor: Feathered Dinosaur from National Geographic Doesn't Fly
- Evolution Is Biologically Impossible
- The Myth of Chemical Evolution
- An Australian Fossil Insect Bed Resulting from Cataclysmic Destruction

All these highly educational topics and more are covered in detail by world class creation scientists in this delightful series of pamphlets. *Impact* is now up to number 332, which, as I mentioned earlier, explains why evolution is not science.

Impact No. 1 is copyrighted 1973 and has ICR founder Henry M. Morris, Ph.D., telling about "Evolution, Creation and the Public Schools." It's significant to note that the topic is as pertinent today as it was 28 years ago. Then, Morris told us:

One of the most amazing phenomena in the history of education is that a speculative philosophy based on no true scientific evidence could have been universally adopted and taught as scientific fact, in all the public schools. This philosophy has been made the very framework of modern education and the underlying premise in all textbooks. It constitutes the present world-view of liberal intellectuals in every field.

This is the philosophy of evolution. Although widely promoted as a scientific fact, evolution has never been proved scientifically. Some writers still call it the theory of evolution, but even this is too generous. A scientific hypothesis should be capable of being tested in some way, to determine whether or not it is true, but evolution cannot be tested. No laboratory experiment can either confirm or falsify a process which, by its very nature, requires millions of years to accomplish significant results.

Comparing this with contemporary creationists' arguments I find little changed in all these years. More recently the theme has been picked up by the *Intelligent Design* creationists, those who concede the common origin of species. It's an idea that will not go away. It's more enduring than Bill Clinton.

In *Impact No. 332*, copyrighted 2001, Henry Morris is back explaining why evolution is religion.

The writer has documented in two recent *Impact* 1, 2 articles from admissions by evolutionists that the idea of particles-to-people evolution does not meet the criteria of a scientific theory. There are no evolutionary transitions that have ever been observed, either during human history or in the fossil record of the past; and the universal law of entropy seems to make it impossible on any significant scale.

Evolutionists claim that evolution is a scientific fact, but they almost always lose scientific debates with creationist scientists. Accordingly, most evolutionists now decline opportunities for scientific debates, preferring instead to make unilateral attacks on creationists.

The *Impact* articles Morris cites are the two scientific cases against evolution I previously mentioned. Morris also cites Eugenie C. Scott, Director of The National Center for Science Education (NCSE), who was saying "Scientists should refuse formal debates because they do more harm than good, but scientists still need to counter the creationist message."

Morris wants to know why there is a need to counter creationism. "Why are they so adamantly committed to anti-creationism?"

He goes on to explain that "...evolutionist believe in evolution because they want to. It is their desire at all costs to explain the origin of everything without a Creator. Evolutionism is thus intrinsically an atheistic religion." He goes on to put belief in evolution in the same camp with New Age religion, a charge I am sure many will find highly objectionable.

Morris proceeds with a series of quotes from notable non creationists to bolster his case. He closes with

In closing this summary of the scientific case against evolution (and, therefore, for creation), the reader is reminded again that all quotations in the article are from doctrinaire evolutionists. No Bible references are included, and no statements by creationists. The evolutionists themselves, to all intents and purposes, have shown that evolutionism is not science, but religious faith in atheism.

In *The Scientific Case Against Evolution: A Summary Part I, Impact No. 330*, copyright 2000, Morris takes up the case against evolution in the first of a two part series. He points out that

Evolution Is Not Happening Now

Evolution Never Happened in the Past

Morris makes his point that evolution is not *real* science. "The scientific method traditionally has required experimental observation and replication. The fact that macroevolution (as distinct from microevolution) has never been observed would seem to exclude it from the domain of true science. Even Ernst Mayr, the dean of living evolutionists, longtime professor of biology at Harvard, who has alleged that evolution is a 'simple fact,' nevertheless agrees that it is an 'historical science' for which 'laws and experiments are inappropriate techniques' by which to explain it. One can never actually see evolution in action." He is quoting from "Darwin's Influence on Modern Thought" in *Scientific American* for July 2000. Mayr in his essay explained that

Darwin introduced historicity into science. Evolutionary biology, in contrast with physics and chemistry, is a historical science — the evolutionist attempts to explain events and processes that have already taken place. Laws and experiments are inappropriate techniques for the explication of such events and processes. Instead one constructs a historical narrative, consisting of a tentative reconstruction of the particular scenario that led to the events one is trying to explain.

That loses a little in Morris' narrative, but *Impact* is a pamphlet publication, so abbreviated quotes may occasionally be expected.

Again, Morris quotes heavily from mainstream scientists to demonstrate that it's not just the creationists who are saying evolution is knock-kneed.

A very bitter opponent of creation science, paleontologist Niles Eldredge, has acknowledged that there is little, if any, evidence of evolutionary transitions in the fossil record. Instead, things remain the same!

He has Eldredge saying "It is a simple ineluctable truth that virtually all members of a biota remain basically stable, with minor fluctuations, throughout their durations..." Of course Morris gives the quote a little extra punch by omitting the continuing text from *The Pattern of Evolution*, (W. H. Freeman and Co.), page 157. Eldredge explained

(Remember, by "biota" we mean the commonly preserved plants and animals of a particular geological interval, which occupy regions often as large as Roger Tory Peterson's "eastern" region of North American birds.)...

It is not clear whether Morris intended readers to think Eldredge was talking about species instead of just extended populations.

Impact No. 331, copyright 2001, is part 2 of *The Scientific Case Against Evolution: A Summary*. Here Morris states

We have noted from the statements of leading evolutionary scientists that no true vertical evolution from one kind of organism to a more complex kind has ever been observed in all human history.

Again he notes that reputable scientists often seem to speak of problems with evolution theory, though some of this is hard to follow. For example in a section titled "The Equivocal Evidence from Genetics" he turns the discussion to the use of DNA evidence to point out the common origin of species. He says that some scientists have expressed doubt concerning the usefulness of DNA analysis.

Nevertheless, evolutionists, having largely become disenchanted with the fossil record as a witness for evolution because of the ubiquitous gaps where there should be transitions, recently have been promoting DNA and other genetic evidence as proof of evolution. However, this is often inconsistent with, not only the fossil record, but also with the comparative morphology of the creatures. Commenting on a few of the numerous anomalous results in the genetic story, Dr. Roger Lewin summarizes the situation thus, as noted in Part I of this series:

Roger Lewin is quoted from "Family Feud," *New Scientist* (vol. 157, January 24, 1998), p. 39.

The overall effect is that molecular phylogenetics is by no means as straightforward as its pioneers believed. . . . The Byzantine dynamics of genome change has many other consequences for molecular phylogenetics, including the fact that different genes tell different stories.

Continuing, page 36 of the same issue:

The elephant shrew, consigned by traditional analysis to the order insectivores . . . is in fact more closely related to . . . the true elephant. Cows are more closely related to dolphins than they are to horses. The duckbilled platypus . . . is on equal evolutionary footing with . . . kangaroos and koalas.

I don't have the missing text associated with the ellipses in the above quotes, but I am sure Dr. Morris did not distort Dr. Lewin's meaning by omitting critical

wording.

The first quote is hard to fit into Morris' argument, but what Lewin is saying in the second is that DNA evidence often surprises us and reveals evolutionary relationships that are not readily apparent from body types. Despite what Morris seems to be implying, scientists today are using DNA analysis as a tool to work out the evolutionary relationship of disparate species. An excellent recount of this (particularly with respect to the cow/dolphin relationship) is provided by Carl Zimmer's [At the Water's Edge](#) published by The Free Press and available for sale through the NTS Web site.

Once again, Morris has the last word:

From the statements of evolutionists themselves, therefore, we have learned that there is no real scientific evidence for real evolution. The only observable evidence is that of very limited horizontal (or downward) changes within strict limits. Evolution never occurred in the past, is not occurring at present, and could never happen at all.

In *Impact No. 324*, copyrighted 2000, Edward A. Boudreaux, Ph.D. explains "Basic Chemistry: A Testament of Creation." We previously met Dr. Boudreaux ten years ago when he presented a talk at the local MIOS (Metroplex Institute of Origin Science) meeting.

In his talk he proposed a physical chemistry argument that the sun could not produce its energy by nuclear fusion. It must be living off residual energy from its gravitational collapse (or from chemical processes), so it can't be billions of years old, as evolutionists claim. Dr. Boudreaux was then a Professor of Physical Chemistry at the University of New Orleans. He has since retired and is now an Adjunct Professor of Chemistry at ICR. He notes:

Most of the chemical arguments in support of creation over evolution have stressed the biochemical perspective as it relates to the origin of life. While it is not suggested that these biochemical arguments should be minimized in any way, basic inorganic chemical roles of specific elements have been somewhat overlooked as worthy providing equally strong testaments of creation.

Dr. Boudreaux goes on to demonstrate conclusively that life as we know it could not exist if the chemical properties of the elements were even slightly different from what they are. An obvious example of Intelligent Design he decides.

Gotcha! *Impact No. 321* is by Steven A. Austin, Ph.D., and is titled *Archaeoraptor: Feathered Dinosaur from National Geographic Doesn't Fly*. Of course it's about the famous case from two years ago. The prestigious magazine got caught seriously off base when it bought into a fake fossil from China. Of course the ICR goes for the mileage:

Recent scientific research funded by *National Geographic* concerns what have been called "feathered dinosaurs" from lower Cretaceous strata of the Liaoning province in China. This new research program appears to be directed specifically at changing what the world believes about dinosaurs and their relationship to birds. A recent episode concerns the discovery and promotion of a particular Chinese fossil appearing to be a combination of bird and theropod dinosaur. Is it actually evolution's missing link between dinosaurs and birds? The episode concerning the fossil provides an extraordinary peek into the peculiar ideology and journalistic slant of a cadre of zealous scientists and the National Geographic Society that promotes them.

Steven Austin is one of the more reputable scientists working for the ICR, and his outlay of the events relating to the premature publication and later retraction, while highly critical, avoids the overblown sensationalism we've seen before. He concludes:

The events surrounding Archaeoraptor provide a rare peek into the ideological and journalistic slant that can be placed upon public promotion of a missing link...

Mainstream science will never find a more diligent watchdog than the creationists, Old Earth (OEC) or Young Earth (YEC). Piltdown Man, Nebraska Man, Archaeoraptor; the creationists are glad to point out whenever scientists screw up.

I will wrap up with a review of Andrew Snelling's *Impact No. 329*, "An Australian Fossil Insect Bed Resulting from Cataclysmic Destruction" copyright 2000.

Because of the apparent frailty of their bodies, and the ability of many of them to fly, insects are thought of being rarely found as fossils. Any mention of insect fossils though, and most people think of insects spectacularly fossilized in amber. However, insect fossils have also been found preserved in fine-grained sedimentary strata, including those associated with sequences of coal beds.

Dr. Snelling discusses a remarkable insect fossil field in the Belmont-Warner's Bay area of Newcastle, north of Sydney, Australia. After discussing the vast diversity of fossils that have been discovered at this site and the nature of the fossilization process he concludes that these insects were done in by a very sudden and violent event. He cites wings ripped from insect bodies and even pieces of insect bodies prevalent among the fossils. No gradual, uniformitarian mechanism produced these fossils, he reminds us.

Thus these swarms of insects, whose original ancestors had been created and then diversified as they had reproduced after their "kinds," were catastrophically destroyed and entombed by a volcanic blast during a watery cataclysm. This Australian fossil insect bed, therefore, bears eloquent testimony to the devastation during the Genesis Flood.

The creationists expend a lot of effort pointing out controversy among mainstream scientists, and they particularly delight when scientists just get it wrong the first time. Tearing down conventional science can only help their case, they figure. Here, in a rare instance of positive campaigning, Snelling is claiming he has evidence in support of Genesis. What he has, of course, is evidence of a catastrophe of the kind we see from time to time. Nice try, though.

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Energized MIOS

By John Blanton

MIOS is the Metroplex Institute of Origin Science, a young Earth creationism (YEC) group that meets monthly in Dallas. The group is more or less headed up by

the notable young Earth creationist Don Patton and has become famous for its support of the Paluxy River mantrack claims by Carl Baugh, another prominent YEC from this area.

The February meeting program promised a talk by David Basset on the evidence part of Baugh's Creation Evidence Museum. This Mr. Basset delivered, and more.

We have previously met David Basset in the February 1997 issue of *The Skeptic* (previous title for the publication you are now reading). At the time, David headed up the science department at the Ovilla Christian School south of Dallas. February four years ago he was talking about modern dinosaurs, and his explanations of commonly understood scientific principles were so extraordinary that they merited mention in a follow-up piece in the July 1998 issue of *The Skeptic* titled "Creation Science Education." That particular item speculated on what science education in the US would look like if left up to the creationists.

I am content to note the prognosis has not changed in the intervening years, effectively disproving Darwin's idea of survival of the fittest. I guess the creationists have been right all this time.

David is now the director of the Creation Evidence Museum, which is a few miles north of Glen Rose, Texas. This month he recapitulated the prominent exhibits at the Museum. We have previously mentioned the now famous "finger" fossil, the "hammer in the rock," the remarkable cowboy boot with fossilized foot inside, and the "Burdick print," and the hyperbaric biochamber. Readers interested in following up on these amazing exhibits can get more information by logging onto the NTS Web site at <http://ntskeptics.org> and using the search utility. Another excellent reference is the talk.origins archive at <http://www.talkorigins.org>.

But, wait. Something is new this year. It's as though a New Age is dawning for young Earth creationism. Be not the first to call the YECs stodgy throwbacks from the Twentieth Century. These guys synch with the trend and roll with the flow.

Toward the end of his talk David got around to mentioning Carl Baugh's studies with snake venom. Baugh has two copperheads (local venomous snakes) in his hyperbaric biochamber, and the unique environment of the chamber has changed the structure of the snake venom. The chamber has a two times atmospheric pressure and a five-Gauss magnetic field, plus it is shielded from ultra-violet radiation to mimic conditions prior to Noah's flood.

Baugh previously discussed his extraordinary findings in a radio interview in 1999. This interview was the feature of an article titled "New age creationism" that appeared in the January 2000 (mislabelled January 1900) issue of *The North Texas Skeptic*. In that interview, Baugh told how his experiments changed snakes' venom from a gnarled (poisonous) structure to a completely regular (and non-poisonous) structure. At that time he also introduced us to his beliefs concerning energized water.

This month I find these astounding scientific discoveries have migrated to the impressionable minds at MIOS. I am reminded of the expression "What goes around, comes around."

David recounted Carl Baugh's description of the "pacu piranhas" that live in an aquarium adjacent to the biochamber. The magnetic field of the biochamber energizes the water in the aquarium, and the magical effect of this energized water is reflected in the growth of these two fish. They are large, David recalled. One is over 20 pounds.

I didn't know anything about piranhas, but I did a quick reference and confirmed that the pacu (*Myleus pacu*) is a close relative to the piranha and both are in the tetra family and kin to neons. The pacu is vegetarian and grows to over 20 pounds.

Not wanting to nip this fertile bud of scientific curiosity at the meeting I resisted wading in with my outworn textbook science. Instead I pressed David for amplification on his discussion of energized water.

David was not completely up to speed on Baugh's advanced ideas about energized water, but he did confirm what Baugh had previously disclosed: Water falling from the sky becomes energized as the hydrogen bonds flex while the water is falling as rain. Water will retain this vital energy as long as it is not constrained to run in straight pipes.

Lest I be deceived that all this was beyond the grasp of the MIOS members, I interviewed some of them after David's talk. We could not stay late, since the meeting room had to be vacated early that night, but two of the members took time to discuss it and assured me this seemed like sound science to them.

Origin science is the theme of MIOS, and the talks there tend to concentrate on science and to shy away from purely religious dogma. They see themselves being on the forefront of real science, rediscovering what the authors of the Bible knew long ago but "evolution" scientists these days are attempting to ignore.

These creationists are certainly not reluctant to take up fresh and challenging scientific concepts. A typical pre-meeting discussion might involve the modern practice of chiropractic (which seems to be very fashionable with the attendees) and other *avant-garde* concepts. We may worry about the challenge creationism poses to public education today, but these concerns are surely unfounded. The creationists have developed science far beyond what the public school system has to offer. I am sure there is nothing the public school system could teach them.

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by **John Blanton**

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The North Texas Skeptics Web site is there to serve you, so use it a lot.

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Clustered Water – Correction and Update

Danny Barnett's "Clustered Water" article in the January 2001 issue of the *North Texas Skeptic* stated that biochemist Keith McCall had authored a short article published in the *Journal of Chemistry and Engineering*. The article in question was actually an excerpt from a letter that Werner Zimmt had sent to the journal. Barnett apologizes for the error.

McCall has stated that traffic to his *Water Stupidity* site has increased since the Clustered Water item was published. One of his newer visitors took him to task for his observations and directed McCall to an article dealing with homeopathy and the alleged phenomenon of "water memory" popularized by Jacques Benveniste. McCall's analysis of this essay can be found on his *Beyond Credible* page at the following address:

<http://www.duke.edu/~km13/NotCredible.html>

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What's new

[Robert Park publishes the What's New column at <http://www.aps.org/WN/>. Following are some clippings of interest.]

Cell phones: No damage to Danes' brains.

A study of more than 420,000 Danes, from 1982 through 1995, that was reported in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, found no link between cell phone use and brain cancer. That should settle the issue, but it won't. As one famous Dane said four hundred years ago: "Methinks it is like a weasel." Dire EMF warnings continue to be issued. A local TV station just alerted people to beware of the metro — some subway cars have fields as high as a Gauss! That's no where near as deadly as the bubble gum stuck to the seat.

Science and math education: Big talk, little substance.

Education has been the talk of Washington this week, but with the focus on a "reading first" agenda, science learning may suffer. Announcing his education reform plan on Tuesday, Bush followed the lead of his CEO advisors (WN 5 Jan 01) declaring science and mathematics "the very subjects most likely to affect our future competitiveness." Unfortunately, his proposals don't quite reflect this. They eliminate dedicated funds for math and science teacher professional development at the local district level, block granting the funds for general education purposes instead. And although the Bush plan calls on states to "set challenging standards in history and science," it does not require science testing. A recent Washington State study shows that state testing in reading and math has reduced the priority for teaching science. An alternative education package introduced by Senator Joe Lieberman (D-CT) also absorbs science and math funds into block grants, but does include science in required testing programs. Other legislation in play includes the science and math education bills of Vern Ehlers (R-MI) and Rush Holt (D-NJ).

Climate change: IPCC says it's getting even hotter.

Just five years after warning that the Earth will warm six degrees over the next century, the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that the rise is human-induced and added four more degrees to the prediction. WN prediction: conservative groups will open fire on the IPCC. But, so long as both sides stick to the scientific process, the debate serves as a powerful motivation for better climate research.

Cell phones and cancer: The eyes have it.

Although two recent studies found no link between cell phone use and brain cancer (WN 22 Dec 00), a relatively weak German study now says regular users are more likely to develop eye cancer. By itself, evidence of a statistical association is not enough — a plausible mechanism must also be identified. No mechanism is known by which microwaves can induce cancer. It's not like they haven't been looking for one. In 1977, long before Paul Brodeur set off the false alarm over power lines and cancer, he almost destroyed the budding market in microwave ovens by claiming that "leakage" from ovens causes cataracts. Microwaves do heat tissue, and might cause cataracts at high enough power levels, but they cannot create mutant strands of DNA. Soon to be released studies should end the

controversy but they won't.

DOE labs: Lie detector tests linked to low lab morale.

At his Senate confirmation hearing yesterday, Energy Secretary-Designate Spencer Abraham expressed great concern about the morale of scientists at DOE's Weapons Labs. In response, Senator Pete V. Domenici (R-NM), a congressional heavyweight, suggested that Abraham have DOE review its plan to conduct "10 to 20 thousand lie-detector tests" of lab employees. Domenici called the plan "borderline ludicrous" and damaging to the atmosphere at the labs. Meanwhile, following a seven-month FBI investigation, Bill Richardson said that no criminal charges would be filed against any Los Alamos employee in connection with the missing hard drives. And speaking of criminal charges, former CIA director John Deutch is negotiating a misdemeanor plea to avoid a year of hard time for his mishandling of classified information.

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Election of officers

Annual elections were held at our January meeting of The North Texas Skeptics. We present here the results of those elections —

Officers:

Curtis Severns, President
Danny Barnett, Vice President
John Blanton, Secretary
Mark Meyer, Treasurer

The Board of Directors:

Greg Aicklen
Laura Ainsworth
Danny Barnett
Virginia Barnett
John Blanton
Steven Graf
Pat Reeder
Mike Selby
Curtis Severns

The staff of the North Texas Skeptics consists of:

Keith Blanton, Newsletter Editor
Mike Selby, Webmaster
Danny Barnett, Meeting Coordinator

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Skeptical ink

By Prasad Golla and John Blanton

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Golla & Alarson

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