

Darwin Believers Hide Fears of Intelligent Design Behind a Wall of Denial and Ridicule

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Most Darwinists involved in the public debate today have one, and only one goal: To stifle free debate on this subject and thereby discourage you, the public, from scrutinizing the scientific evidence for yourself.

Over the years, Darwinists have evolved a variety of strategies to accomplish these goals. We see each of these strategies in play in the op-eds and comments by Darwinists in this present forum on U.S. News and World Report. I'll discuss how my opponents on this forum use the strategies of (1) Ridicule, Demonization, and Character Assassination; (2) Equating Darwin-Skeptics with Religion; (3) Persecute Darwin-Skeptics; and (4) Pretend There Is No Scientific Controversy Over Evolution in order to try to dissuade you, the reader, from thinking for yourself on this subject.

Strategy 1: Ridicule, Demonization, and Character Assassination

Darwinists have adopted a discourse of demonization where they try to attack their opponents as dishonest, deceitful, or even worse—uncool and medieval! We should be suspicious of this tactic because Darwinists practice character assassination against nearly every single leading member of the ID movement, and I am no exception to that rule.

The comments on this forum have characterized my work as "pathetic," saying I work for the "Deception Institute," calling me an "IDiot," charging that I "display a total disregard for the truth," and claiming that my arguments that "sound good to the ignorant." (So if you believe anything I say, then don't worry, you're in good company for you too must be "ignorant.") One commenter said the following about me:

"Another ID wack-job trying to discredit evolution! You are out of touch with reality. Eventually, nut-jobs like you and your enablers will be weeded out by natural selection. Good Riddance!"

Another person replied by saying, "You have the freedom to remain ignorant and superstitious (and are doin' a nice job)."

One person even suggested that my viewpoint does not deserve to be printed, and wrote that: "it's surprising that even the editors of USN&WR did no background check on" me. This provides a nice buttress for my argument that Darwinists are trying to stifle debate on evolution. But at least these Darwinists are showing U.S. News & World Report readers exactly happens to you when you stand up and simply support academic freedom for scientists to support intelligent design.

Clearly, people with the evidence on their side do not feel the need to demonize their opponents in order to prevent the public from listening to the other viewpoint. So let me make myself clear: I'm not complaining about the treatment I've received, I'm just trying to show readers how Darwinists behave. The goal of such Darwinist namecalling, of course is to convince you that Darwin-skeptics shouldn't be listened to because we're evil, and to intimidate you from speaking out in support of ID, lest you become subject to the same ridicule. In the end, their tactic of demonization and character assassination is just another way they stifle free speech in this debate.

Unfortunately, this namecalling is not limited to the commenters, and in fact it is encouraged and modeled by my respectable opponents Richard Katskee and Robert Pennock.

Richard Katskee is well-practiced at the art of character assassination against ID proponents. In an article in the American Bar Association's journal after the *Kitzmiller* ruling was released in 2005, he was quoted saying that it is only "the lunatic fringe" of scientists who challenge neo-Darwinian evolution. The message sent, of course, is that if you are a scientist who doubts Darwin, you better not express your views or you'll be regarded as a member of the "lunatic fringe."

In an article published in *First Amendment Law Review* in 2007, Katskee went even further, charging that those who do not oppose intelligent design "have been deceived" and are "succumbing to the basic deceit at the heart of intelligent design." He uses language to ridicule ID as uncool and evil, calling it a "Humpty-Dumptyesque linguistic project" which is "creationism in a cheap tuxedo" and "disingenuou[s]." Mr. Katskee engages in complex ridicule, asserting that "viewed from a sufficient distance, and with eyelids half closing in technospeak-induced slumber, even a cheap tuxedo can look almost elegant—at least to those of us without the training or discernment to distinguish cashmere from polyester blend."

We should ignore this type of empty rhetoric that is patently designed to intimidate dissenters.

In his latest article here at *U.S. News & World Report*, Katskee makes the *don't do it because it isn't what the popular kids are doing* argument that if we allow students to question evolution or learn about ID, then we'll be ridiculed as an "international laughingstock." I'm sure that he'd be more than happy to fling much of that mud to incite the "international laughingstock" to ridicule himself.

Again, the message is clear: If you support ID you're evil, and if you decide to speak out in support of ID, you'll be called all kinds of nasty names. These are intimidation tactics, pure and simple.

Robert Pennock behaves in much the same fashion. In 2006, I observed that the University of California at San Diego ("UCSD," my alma mater) was requiring all freshman students to attend a lecture by Pennock attacking ID. I had no particular problem with that, apart from the fact that this was an imbalanced lecture series and no pro-ID speaker was invited for a similarly mandatory lecture. Pennock responded to my protests by writing a UCSD dean, attacking me as deceptive:

"The article on the Discovery Institute website about my talk (actually prior to my talk) is standard propaganda from these guys and filled with their usual deceptions and factual mistakes." (emphasis added)

In his recent op-ed here with *U.S. News & World Report*, Pennock likewise attempts to equate ID with creationism (more on this below) and tries to demonize ID proponents by stating that "Creationism, in whatever guise it has taken to get into the schools, has proven itself to be fundamentally deceptive."

Again, we see the use of demonization and character assassination to prevent people from scrutinizing the evidence for themselves.

Clearly, Mr. Katskee, Mr. Pennock, and many other Darwinists feel that the use of namecalling and ridicule should play a central role in their case against intelligent design. The poison pen is a powerful weapon, and Katskee and Pennock know how to use it. Without commenting upon the propriety of Mr. Katskee's and Mr. Pennock's behavior and without discussing their ability to treat their opponents with civility, let's simply ask: what kind of a climate is produced in academia when people treat their opponents in this fashion?

For example, imagine that you are a biology researcher who holds doubts about Darwinism, and you hear your department head telling people that only "the lunatic fringe" would question modern evolutionary biology. Would that make you feel free to discuss your views in the classroom or conduct research that challenges evolution? Not if you value your career.

Or imagine that this department head says that those who support ID "have been deceived." Would you want to promote a theory which your supervisor believes has "basic deceit at the heart" or is "fundamentally deceptive"? Would you want to subject yourself to ridicule of being "deceptive" by promoting these views?

Statements like those of Mr. Katskee and Mr. Pennock serve to create a climate of intimidation of teachers, educators, and researchers who support intelligent design. This is why civility is so important in a functional democracy: People should treat their opponents in a civil fashion in public marketplace of ideas so that the best arguments can win the day based on their merits, not based upon pressure from namecalling and demonization.

Apparently these Darwinists don't feel like the merits are enough for their arguments, so they have to resort to all kinds of personal attacks. People should be able to espouse viewpoints free from fear of demonization or ridicule from Darwinists like Mr. Katskee and Mr. Pennock and the myriad other Darwinist namecallers they represent. But their strategy of character assassination only further bolsters my points that Darwinists are desperate to stifle free and open debate on evolution.

Strategy 2: Equating Darwin-Skeptics with Religion

In his op-ed, Richard Katskee writes, "Every time creationism has been brought into public schools, the courts have found it unconstitutional." That may be true. But intelligent design is not creationism, and allowing mere critique of evolution is also not creationism. In fact, the U.S. Supreme Court effectively legalized scientific critique of evolution in the 1987 *Edwards v. Aguillard* case where it stated that it is possible to "require that scientific critiques of prevailing scientific theories be taught." The U.S. Supreme Court has never addressed the teaching of intelligent design. If Katskee claims that teaching intelligent design or simply critiquing evolution are the equivalent of teaching creationism, then he is basing his views on thin or highly questionable legal precedent.

In order to make his statement true, Katskee tries to equate intelligent design with religion, stating that ID and creationism "are cut from the same unconstitutional cloth." His evidence bolstering this assertion was to cite to a 2005 court case from the lowest level of the federal courts in Pennsylvania as proof that ID is creationism. I anticipated this tactic in my op-ed and thus wrote:

"In 2005, such Darwinists even managed to convince one federal judge to ban ID from a school district and rule that ID is not science. Darwinists today continue to cite this wildly inaccurate and activist judicial ruling as if one federal judge can settle this entire scientific debate."

Any good lawyer knows that judges get things wrong all the time, and that one federal cannot settle complex social and scientific questions. In fact, the Kitzmiller ruling had many problems, not the least of which were the facts that the judge:

- Employed a false definition of ID that presumed that ID requires "supernatural creation"—a position that ID proponents who testified in court refuted during the trial;

- Ignored the positive case for ID and falsely claiming that ID proponents make their case solely by arguing against evolution;
- Overstepped the bounds of the judiciary and engaged in judicial activism by declaring that ID had been refuted when in fact the judge was presented with credible scientific witnesses and publications on both sides showing evidence of a scientific debate;
- Used poor philosophy of science by presuming that being wrong precludes being scientific;
- Dangerously stifled scientific advance by taking the level of support for a theory as a measure of whether an idea is scientific;
- Blatantly ignored and wrongly denied the existence of pro-ID peer-reviewed scientific publications that were in fact testified about in his own courtroom;
- Blatantly ignored and wrongly denied the existence of pro-ID scientific research and data that was in fact testified about in his own courtroom;
- Adopted an unfair double-standard of legal analysis where religious implications, beliefs, and motives count against ID but never against Darwinism;
- Violated a fundamental cardinal rule of constitutional law by declaring a religious belief to be false from the bench of a U.S. government court;
- Engaged in clear judicial activism by presuming that it is permissible for a federal judge to define science, settle controversial social questions, settle controversial scientific questions, settle issues for parties outside of the case at hand so that his ruling would be "a primer" for people "someplace else," and declare certain religious beliefs to be false.

When I raised these points in a different forum on OpposingViews.com, Katskee's organization's response was to say "You Lost the Case—Get Over It," further refusing to defend his organization's demonstrably false claims against ID. His nondefense of Judge Jones's demonstrably inaccurate claims in the Kitzmiller ruling showed that there is no good defense for this ruling. Instead, Katskee elects to model the "Judge Jones Said It, I Believe It, That Settles It" approach to ID, by simply referencing this judge, expecting the ruling to end debate. This is no way to seek truth, but it's a great way to discourage you, the public, from investigating the issue for yourselves.

Richard Katskee wants you to think that ID proponents "want the Bible to be treated like a science book." There's a major problem with this argument: ID proponents make their case using the scientific evidence, not the Bible, which is why even some non-religious scholars support ID. For example, what would Katskee say to the atheist philosopher Antony Flew, the atheist legal scholar Thomas Nagel, the atheist philosopher of science Bradley Monton, or the secular humanist sociologist of science Steve Fuller, all of whom support ID? If ID is just about proselytizing people into Christianity or Biblical creationism, I'm fairly sure that these atheists and agnostics would not support ID.

The atheist University of Colorado professor of philosophy Bradley Monton is worth discussing further. He has offered a compelling annihilation of Robert Pennock's arguments during the Dover Trial that ID is not science. In this regard, I recommend that readers read Professor Monton's article, which states:

Now, I will turn to the issue of whether there is a consensus by philosophers of science that methodological naturalism is a constraint of science. During Pennock 's cross-examination, he was asked the following question:

"Q: Dr. Pennock, isn ' t it true that there ' s not agreement among philosophers of science concerning the validity of methodological naturalism?"

Pennock implies that only philosophers of science who are sympathetic to ID reject methodological naturalism:

"A: The term methodological naturalism is fairly straightforward in the literature. There have been criticisms of it from people like Del Ratzsch from discussions specifically of this debate. So there ' s some who have taken up a sympathetic position to the intelligent design folks and tried to argue that we could dispense with this. (Pennock 2005b, 84)"

Larry Laudan (1983) is a good counterexample to this: he is not sympathetic to ID, yet he rejects methodological naturalism as a demarcation criterion for science. (This follows from the sentence from Laudan ' s paper I quoted in Section 1, as well as from the rest of Laudan ' s paper.) Later in cross-examination, the defense asks Pennock about Laudan.

After Pennock says that he is familiar with Laudan, he is asked:

"Q: And Larry Laudan said he believes that creationism is science, it ' s just bad science, correct?"

Pennock ' s response to this question takes up three pages of the trial transcript. In my opinion, Pennock misleadingly implies that Laudan would endorse methodological naturalism. Pennock says that if creationism is understood as a

naturalistic hypothesis (focus ing on its naturalistic implications about the age of the Earth, for example), then it is bad science, but if it is understood supernaturalistically, then it is not science at all. Pennock doesn ' t explicitly attribute this view to Laudan, but someone who hadn ' t read Laudan would probably come away thinking that this is Laudan ' s view. For example, Pennock says:

"If you seriously take the supernatural possibility, then you can ' t disconfirm it. So that ' s the sense in which it ' s important to say under the assumption of methodological naturalism, we have disconfirmed it, it ' s bad science, that ' s what Laudan is talking about, but if you were to take seriously the non-natural part, that ' s to say rejecting scientific method, then it ' s just not science ... " (Pennock 2005b, 104-5)

Now, what the defense should have done here is pushed Pennock to clarify, to make clear to Jones that Laudan does not endorse methodological naturalism. But in fact the defense responds to Pennock ' s three-page answer with the following:

"Thank you, Your Honor. I have no further questions. (Pennock 2005b, 105)"

The defense dropped the ball: it would be reasonable for Jones to conclude on the basis of this cross-examination that (except for a few supporters of ID) philosophers of science agree that that methodological naturalism is a constraint of science.

Of course, Laudan is not the only philosopher of science who rejects methodological naturalism. I ' ll cite just one more example, that of anti-ID philosopher Niall Shanks. Shanks says that he endorses methodological naturalism, but he gives a nonstandard account of methodological naturalism, an account proponents of ID would be pretty happy with:

"The methodological naturalist will not simply rule hypotheses about supernatural causes out of court ... But the methodological naturalist will insist on examining the evidence presented to support the existence of supernatural causes carefully methodological naturalists do not rule out the supernatural absolutely. They have critical minds, not closed minds." (Shanks 2004, 141-2)

I conclude that it ' s not the case that there ' s a clear consensus in favor of methodological naturalism (when understood to rule out appeals to the supernatural) in the scientific or philosophical communities.

In his most recent op-ed here at *U.S. News & World Report*, Pennock further hedges by claiming that "Disguising a religious view as science doesn't make it one. Following the Supreme Court decision in 1987, creationists regrouped and rebranded their views as 'Intelligent Design (ID) Theory.'" Pennock tries to pretend that intelligent design was concocted in 1987 to dodge a Supreme Court ruling, but he has misdated the origin of intelligent design by about 2500 years: intelligent design began with the ancient Greek philosophers, hundreds of years before the advent of Christianity.

The Greek philosophers Heraclitus, Empedocles, Democritus, and Anaximander believed that life could originate without any intelligent guidance. Plato and Aristotle, both advocated that a mind was required to explain life's existence. In more modern times, Isaac Newton asked in his treatise *Opticks*, "Was the Eye contrived without Skill in *Opticks*, and the Ear without Knowledge of Sounds? [...] And these things being rightly dispatch'd, does it not appear from *Phænomena* that there is a Being incorporeal, living, intelligent, omnipresent..."

The debate over design continued vigorously among scientists and philosophers—not just theologians—at the time of Darwin in the 19th century. Zoologist and geologist Louis Agassiz, a critic of Darwin, invoked an "intellectual power" to explain the diversity of living organisms in his "Essay on Classification," published in the late 1850's, near the time that Darwin published *Origin of Species*. The term "intelligent design" was invoked as a plausible alternative to blind Darwinian evolution in 1897 by Oxford scholar F.C.S. Schiller, who wrote that "it will not be possible to rule out the supposition that the process of Evolution may be guided by an intelligent design." Even the independent co-discoverer of the theory of evolution by natural selection, Alfred Russel Wallace, concluded that it was possible—and appropriate—to detect design in nature.

The research and ideas that ultimately inspired ID proponents were conceived in the decades and years prior to the Edwards ruling. Highly influential behind ID arguments was the discovery that life depended upon information, whose structure was not only independent of its physical or chemical form, but whose ordering was not amenable to explanation by physical or chemical laws. As the chemist Michael Polanyi wrote in an article titled, "Life's Irreducible Structure," published in the journal *Science* in 1968:

"Suppose that the actual structure of a DNA molecule were due to the fact that the bindings of its bases were much stronger than the bindings would be for any other distribution of bases, then such a DNA molecule would have no information content. Its code-like character would be effaced by an overwhelming redundancy. [...] Whatever may be the origin of a DNA configuration, it can function as a code only if its order is not due to the forces of potential energy. It must be as physically indeterminate as the sequence of words is on a printed page."

The term "intelligent design" appears to have been coined in its contemporary scientific usage by the atheist cosmologist Dr. Fred Hoyle, who in 1982 argued that "if one proceeds directly and straightforwardly in this matter, without being deflected by a fear of incurring the wrath of scientific opinion, one arrives at the conclusion that biomaterials with their amazing measure of order must be the outcome of intelligent design." The term "intelligent design" was also used by non-scientist James E. Horigan in his 1979 book *Chance or Design?* where Horigan used the term "intelligent design" and framed his argument as an empirical one, "without resort to biblical or other religious references," and without investigating questions about "ultimate purpose."

Horigan and Hoyle, however, did not become part of the later ID movement. But in 1984—three years before the Edwards ruling—three scientists who did help found the ID movement published a book titled *The Mystery of Life's Origin* that made arguments for an "intelligent cause" in the origin of the information in DNA:

"We have observational evidence in the present that intelligent investigators can (and do) build contrivances to channel energy down nonrandom chemical pathways to bring about some complex chemical synthesis, even gene building. May not the principle of uniformity then be used in a broader frame of consideration to suggest that DNA had an intelligent cause at the beginning?"

Those three scientists were Charles Thaxton, Walter Bradley, and Roger Olsen. Soon thereafter, Thaxton, a chemist and academic editor for the *Of Pandas and People* textbook ("Pandas"), adopted the term "intelligent design" after hearing it mentioned by a NASA engineer. Thaxton's adoption of the term "intelligent design" took place pre-Edwards and therefore could not have been an attempt to "evade" a court decision. Rather, his adoption of this terminology was done to distinguish ID from creationism, because, in contrast to creationism, ID sought to stay solely within the empirical domain. As Thaxton testified during his deposition in the Kitzmiller case:

"I wasn't comfortable with the typical vocabulary that for the most part creationists were using because it didn't express what I was trying to do. They were wanting to bring God into the discussion, and I was wanting to stay within the empirical domain and do what you can do legitimately there."

Thaxton, who is a scientist and not a lawyer, adopted "intelligent design" terminology out of a desire to respect the limits of scientific inquiry, not as some conspiracy to avoid a Supreme Court ruling. When recounting the history of why he adopted "intelligent design" terminology, Thaxton explains that his goal was not to avoid any court decisions but to help people understand that their argument was "trying to operate entirely within the empirical domain":

"Unfortunately for Westerners ... anytime you use the word creation it automatically conjures up any of a number of religious discussions. We knew from the beginning of our project, that turned out to be the making of *Of Pandas and People*, that we wanted to avoid this automatically concluding that what you're talking about was religion because in fact we were dealing with a biological discussion. So we were trying to operate entirely within the empirical domain. And my thought was, how to arrive at a set of terms that would allow us to traffic the literature and the discussion and build an argument without having to use terminology that would automatically bring one into the religious realm?"

Thaxton continues, saying "we did what we could do to stay within the empirical domain and make legitimate inferences." He then explains the terminology that was originally in the early pre-publication drafts of *Pandas*:

"I realize that the charge was that we were trying to just use a substitute word for creation, but that isn't the case at all. In the early days of writing the *Pandas* book for example, although we understood what we were doing, most other people who we were talking to didn't know our objectives really. And if you have a whole culture that knows about creation as a term ... So we used that word early on, not for deception so we could later switch on them but because we wanted the materials to be understood that we were focused on. It was always clearly within the empirical domain, even the things that we wrote early on."

Thaxton completes his account by recounting that after speaking widely on the subject of origins that "gradually it became clear that there was a real good way that there was a case we wanted—completely within the empirical domain—and we looked for a term that would do this and reading the literature and ah, 'intelligent design,' is the most appropriate term. And that's why we did it."

In conclusion, the term "intelligent design" not only long pre-dates the Edwards ruling, but the basic arguments for design pre-date Christianity. Moreover, modern members of the ID movement started using the term "intelligent design" not to evade a court ruling, but because they sought terminology that would accurately communicate their project's original intent to remain entirely within the empirical domain and avoid investigating religious questions about the supernatural. Since the U.S. Supreme Court declared creationism to be a religious viewpoint because it postulated a "supernatural creator," it seems that regardless of what wording was used early on, the ID project has always been substantively distinct from creationism. Any arguments that ID is creationism because early pre-publication drafts of the *Pandas* textbook used "creation" terminology are false conspiracy theories based not upon substance, but semantics and revisionist history. The very fact that Darwinists must resort to such arguments shows just how weak is their case that ID is creationism.

Any readers interested in learning about the true history of the origin of intelligent design might benefit from listening to two podcast interviews with Charles Thaxton on this topic at:

Pennock tries to ignore the long history of intelligent design arguments and instead cites measly evidence that early pre-publication drafts of one single book about intelligent design used the word "creation" rather than "intelligent design," but then the published version said "intelligent design." He alleges the terminology was switched merely in an effort to evade the Edwards ruling, which found "creation science"

unconstitutional.

Conceptually, early drafts of the *Pandas*, although they used the word "creation," did not advocate "creationism" as that term has been defined by the Supreme Court and most scholars in this debate.

Before the Edwards ruling, pre-publication drafts of *Pandas* specifically rejected the view that science could determine whether an intelligent cause identified through the scientific method was supernatural. A pre-Edwards draft argued that "observable instances of information cannot tell us if the intellect behind them is natural or supernatural.

This is not a question that science can answer." The same draft explicitly rejected William Paley's 18th century design arguments because they unscientifically "extrapolate to the supernatural" from the empirical data. The draft stated that Paley was wrong because "there was no basis in uniform experience for going from nature to the supernatural, for inferring an unobserved supernatural cause from an observed effect." Another pre-publication draft made similar arguments:

"[W]e cannot learn [about the supernatural] through uniform sensory experience ... and so to teach it in science classes would be out of place ... [S]cience can identify an intellect, but is powerless to tell us if that intellect is within the universe or beyond it."

By unequivocally affirming that the empirical evidence of science "cannot tell us if the intellect behind [the information in life] is natural or supernatural," it is evident that these pre-publication drafts of *Pandas* meant something very different by "creation" than did the Supreme Court in *Edwards v. Aguillard*, in which the Court defined creationism as religion because it postulated a "supernatural creator."

Unfortunately, in his *Kitzmiller v. Dover* ruling, Judge Jones bought into the revisionist history of ID that claims ID is just repackaged creationism, and the Judge presented a sharply truncated and inaccurate view of the intellectual history of design. A correct history will make it clear that "intelligent design" was not a term invented to avoid the Edwards ruling, but a project that has always been distinct from the core claims of creationism.

Likewise Pennock tries to trace the origin of "irreducible complexity" to the arguments of a famous creationist named Henry Morris, but ignores the fact that this concept of irreducible complexity has been made in mainstream scientific venues long before Michael Behe's book. In 1986, Michael J. Katz, in his *Templets and the explanation of complex patterns* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) wrote:

"In the natural world, there are many pattern-assembly systems for which there is no simple explanation. There are useful scientific explanations for these complex systems, but the final patterns that they produce are so heterogeneous that they cannot effectively be reduced to smaller or less intricate predecessor components. As I will argue ... these patterns are, in a fundamental sense, irreducibly complex..."

Katz then applies this concept to what he finds in biology:

"Cells and organisms are quite complex by all pattern criteria. They are built of heterogeneous elements arranged in heterogeneous configurations, and they do not self-assemble. One cannot stir together the parts of a cell or of an organism and spontaneously assemble a neuron or a walrus: to create a cell or an organisms one needs a preexisting cell or a preexisting organism, with its attendant complex templets. A fundamental characteristic of the biological realm is that organisms are complex patterns, and, for its creation, life requires extensive, and essentially maximal, templets."

Likewise, leading ID theorist William Dembski's concept of specified complexity can be traced back to leading origin of life researcher, the late Leslie Orgel, who in 1973 wrote:

"[L]iving organisms are distinguished by their specified complexity. Crystals are usually taken as the prototypes of simple, well-specified structures, because they consist of a very large number of identical molecules packed together in a uniform way. Lumps of granite or random mixtures of polymers are examples of structures which are complex but not specified. The crystals fail to qualify as living because they lack complexity; the mixtures of polymers fail to qualify because they lack specificity."

If you actually read the works of Dembski and Behe, you'll see that they rely not on the arguments of creationists, but on the arguments of mainstream science.

Pennock is trying to argue that if creationists use some ID arguments, then ID is the same as creationism. As a philosopher, he should know that this argument employs a logical fallacy called the fallacy of the undistributed middle. This fallacy is committed when someone argues like this: "Your dog is red, therefore all dogs are red." Obviously, the fact that I observe that one dog is red, or even that many dogs are red, does not mean that all dogs are red. Yet Pennock wants you to believe that if creationists have also made some arguments that ID proponents make, then ID and creationism are the same. He forgets that there might also be key differences between ID and creationism.

ID as a scientific theory limits its scientific claims to what can be learned from the empirical data and does not attempt to address religious questions about the identity or metaphysical nature of the designer. This makes ID distinct from creationism and shows that ID respects the limits of scientific inquiry.

The theory of intelligent design is simply an effort to empirically detect whether the "apparent design" in nature acknowledged by virtually all

biologists is genuine design (the product of an intelligent cause) or is simply the product of an undirected process such as natural selection acting on random variations. Creationism typically starts with a religious text and tries to see how the findings of science can be reconciled to it. ID starts with the empirical evidence of nature and seeks to ascertain what scientific inferences can be drawn from that evidence. Unlike creationism, the scientific theory of intelligent design does not claim that modern biology can identify whether the intelligent cause detected through science is supernatural. The charge that ID is "creationism" is a rhetorical strategy on the part of Darwinists who wish to delegitimize ID without actually addressing the merits of its case. And that scientific case for ID is exactly what Pennock failed to address in his op-ed.

One can disagree with the conclusions of ID, but one cannot reasonably claim that it is an argument based upon religion, faith, or divine revelation. Nothing critics can say—whether appealing to politically motivated condemnations of ID issued by pro-Darwin scientific authorities, or harping upon the religious beliefs of ID proponents—will change the fact that intelligent design is not a "faith-based" argument. Intelligent design has scientific merit because it is an empirically based argument that uses well-accepted scientific methods of historical sciences in order to detect in nature the types of complexity which we understand, from present-day observations, are derived from intelligent causes.

As a final rebuttal to Pennock, he states: "Discovery Institute Fellow Ralph Seelke was brought in to testify in favor" of a bill in Michigan. Mr. Pennock is incorrect: Ralph Seelke is not and never has been a Discovery Institute fellow.

Pennock also tries to pretend that academic freedom legislation brings creationism or religion into the classroom but he fails to tell readers that the bills only protect the teaching of science, and have an express provision that says that the bills "shall not be construed to promote any religious or non-religious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against a particular set of religious beliefs or non-beliefs, or promote discrimination for or against religion or non-religion." In other words, it would be impossible for creationism or religion to be taught under this bill.

We should have no misconceptions about what is really happening here: For the Darwin-skeptics, these academic freedom bills are about upholding the important value of academic freedom and the freedom to pursue legitimate scientific inquiry. For the Darwinists who oppose these bills, this battle is about falsely appealing to people's emotions and fears in order to suppress and censor from students scientific information that challenges evolution.

Strategy 3: Persecute Darwin-Skeptics

Katskee completely validates my op-ed's point that there is intolerance toward ID in the academy, stating that: "The reason that their ideas have been expelled from the classroom is not a vast conspiracy or rampant hostility toward religion; it's that those ideas lack scientific value." Of course, I didn't say that it was hostility towards religion or a "conspiracy" but I did document hostility among academics toward ID.

This is where academic freedom comes in. Academic freedom doesn't just give you freedom to agree with the majority viewpoint. If that's all it did, then academic freedom would be virtually meaningless. Academic freedom protects the rights of teachers and scientists to discuss both majority and minority scientific viewpoints. Given that scientists have published their doubts about Darwin in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and support for such views comes from hundreds of well-credentialed scientists, such dissenting views deserve the protections of academic freedom.

I'm pleased to see that Katskee at least admits that Darwinists are intolerant of views they disagree with.

As for Pennock, let's return to Bradley Monton. In a podcast, [Monton reports](#) that Pennock threatened Monton with a lawsuit after Monton published his article critiquing Pennock. According to Monton, "Pennock sent me an E-mail, calling my paper defamatory and telling me that I had to pull it off the internet," and made the "legalistic threat" demanding that Monton remove the paper from the scholarly internet archive. Monton called Pennock's bluff and refused to pull the paper. His feeling about the episode was as follows: "it really disturbed me that a fellow academic would behave that way." This is just another example of Darwinists scheming to use the force of the courts and persecution to stifle debate over intelligent design and evolution.

Strategy 4: Pretend There Is No Scientific Controversy Over Evolution

Richard Katskee says that "Unlike creationists, real scientists aren't afraid to change their hypothesis if the facts don't support it," but Katskee himself preaches the dogmatic viewpoint that "the debate is over." Moreover, who seems unwilling to change their viewpoint? Last year, the staunchly pro-Darwin U.S. National Academy of Sciences published a booklet, *Science, Evolution, and Creationism*, proclaiming that "[t]here is no scientific controversy about the basic facts of evolution" because "no new evidence is likely to alter" it. They sure sound like they are unwilling to change their minds. In fact, it's only the Darwin-skeptics in this forum—myself and Candi Cushman—who wrote op-eds supporting teaching multiple scientific views on evolution. So who here is on the side of freedom and allowing people to change their minds?

Katskee further tries to stifle debate, saying that we "pretend that there are controversies in science, when in fact there aren't." I anticipated this argument, stating in my op-ed that:

"Darwinists today seek to stifle scientific dissent from their viewpoint by asserting that there are no serious scientific weaknesses in modern evolutionary theory (called neo-Darwinism).. The real losers here are students and scientific progress."

Again, Katskee's goal is to prevent you, the reader, from investigating the evidence for yourself. Yet my op-ed discussed a number of scientific challenges to neo-Darwinian evolution. Instead of discussing the science, Mr. Katskee appeals to authority: he wants you to accept evolution simply because many scientists do, so he asserts that, "Evolution is accepted by the overwhelming majority of biologists in this nation."

Katskee wants to turn science into a voting contest. In science, votes don't matter, only the evidence matters, which is why I noted, there are significant, well-credentialed scientists who dissent from neo-Darwinism. We have an obligation to ourselves to investigate the evidence and make up our own minds. Based upon the types of arguments he makes, that's the last thing Katskee wants you to do.

Katskee does discuss a little science, asserting that "Major advances in medicine, biology, and the study of human origins hinge on evolution. Understanding evolution is thus becoming more important than ever as we look to biotech industries and medical breakthroughs to combat disease and improve our quality of life."

Of course he's right that evolution does accomplish small-scale changes in microorganisms that create problems when we try to fight diseases. But no one in the ID movement says that we should stop teaching the evidence for evolution. In contrast, it's Katskee who wants to censor the views of those scientists who dissent from neo-Darwinian evolution.

Moreover, Katskee isn't telling the whole story about how evolution relates to the fight against disease. When trying to fight anti-biotic resistant bugs, Darwinism provides little guidance beyond the truism that bacteria that are insensitive to a drug will produce more offspring, while those that are susceptible to a drug will die off. It is probably for this reason that evolutionary biologist Jerry Coyne admitted in *Nature* that "if truth be told, evolution hasn't yielded many practical or commercial benefits. Yes, bacteria evolve drug resistance, and yes, we must take countermeasures, but beyond that there is not much to say." What Katskee doesn't tell his readers is that to actually outsmart superbugs, biomedical researchers must intelligently design drug cocktails that rely upon the fact that there are limits to how much microorganisms can evolve.

So what Katskee means when he says "teach evolution properly" is really that we should teach evolution like a dogma that can't be questioned. This will hamper the ability of students to understand science accurately.

Who now is behaving dogmatically and trying to squelch debates?

Conclusion

The arguments from my distinguished adversaries in this forum, and the commenters on this forum have only served to bolster and confirm my op-ed's central argument:

"People who have the evidence on their side don't behave like this. Science and education are suffering because Darwinists are using bluffs about the evidence, fear-mongering about religion, and discrimination against minority viewpoints to stifle the debate over evolution."

Darwinist debate tactics are all part of a complicated strategy to distract you, the public, from looking at the evidence for yourself. So whatever conclusion you come to—whether you accept neo-Darwinian evolution, intelligent design, or something else—you owe it to yourself to look past the distracting and dogmatic rhetoric of the Darwinists and investigate this issue for yourself.

If you do that, it doesn't really matter whether you ultimately agree with me on intelligent design, because you'll agree with me on something more important: academic freedom and freedom of speech in the debate over evolution.

<http://www.usnews.com/blogs/room-for-debate/2009/02/12/darwin-believers-hide-fears-of-intelligent-design-behind-a-wall-of-denial-and-ridicule.html>