

LSI Journal

The Lutheran Science Institute

July-August, 2008



Survival of the Fakest

**Misconceptions About
Creationism**

Get Them While They're Young

LUTHERAN SCIENCE INSTITUTE, INC.

4130 Harvest Lane
Racine, Wisconsin 53402-9562
<http://www.lutheralscience.org>

The mission of the Lutheran Science Institute is to learn, share, and promote the glory of God as revealed in His holy Word and demonstrated in His created world, beginning with the pastors, teachers, and laity of the WELS (Wis. Ev. Lutheran Synod) and the ELS (Ev. Lutheran Synod).

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THE LSI Journal is published six times a year by the Lutheran Science Institute. Views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Institute.

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The Annual Meeting of the Institute is held the Saturday *after* Thanksgiving. At least three other meetings are held during the year at locations selected by the president. Meetings are open to the public and announced in the LSI JOURNAL and/or on our web site.

MEETING SCHEDULE*

- ◆ 4th Saturday in January, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday in June, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Last Saturday in October, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Saturday *after* Thanksgiving in November, 1:00 p.m.

*Dates, times, and locations subject to change.
Additional meetings may be scheduled. Check with the president, secretary, or editor or see our web site for verification.

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Review of *Darwin Day in America*, by John West and *Moral Darwinism* by Benjamin Wiker.

A review of two books that show how evolution has impacted our societies.

Survival of the Fakest



Part 1

SCIENCE NOW KNOWS THAT MANY OF THE PILLARS OF DARWINIAN THEORY ARE EITHER FALSE OR MISLEADING. YET BIOLOGY TEXTS CONTINUE TO PRESENT THEM AS FACTUAL EVIDENCE OF EVOLUTION. WHAT DOES THIS IMPLY ABOUT THEIR SCIENTIFIC STANDARDS?

— JONATHAN WELLS

If you had asked me during my years studying science at Berkeley whether or not I believed what I read in my science textbooks, I would have responded much as any of my fellow students: puzzled that such a question would be asked in the first place. One might find tiny errors, of course, typos and mis-

prints. And science is always discovering new things. But I believed — took it as a given — that my science textbooks represented the best scientific knowledge available at that time.

It was only when I was finishing my Ph.D. in cell and development biology, however, that I noticed what at first I took to be a strange anomaly. The textbook I was using prominently featured drawings of vertebrate embryos — fish, chickens, humans, etc. — where similarities were presented as evidence for descent from a

This article originally appeared in *The American Spectator* magazine. Permission to reprint the article has been given by the Discovery Institute with headquarters in Seattle, Washington. It was written by Jonathan Wells.

common ancestor. Indeed, the drawings did appear very similar. But I'd been studying embryos for some time, looking at them under a microscope. And I knew that the drawings were just plain wrong.

I re-checked all my other textbooks. They all had similar drawings, and they were all obviously wrong. Not only did they distort the embryos they pictured; they omitted earlier stages in which the embryos look very different from one another.

Like most other science students, like most scientists themselves, I let it pass. It didn't immediately affect my work, and I assumed that while the texts had somehow gotten this particular issue wrong, it was the exception to the rule. In 1997, however, my interest in the embryo drawings was revived when British embryologist Michael Richardson and his colleagues published the result of their study comparing the textbook drawings with actual embryos. As Richardson himself was quoted in the prestigious journal *Science*: "It looks like it's turning out to be one of the most famous fakes in biology."

Worse, this was no recent fraud. Nor was its discovery re-

cent. The embryo drawings that appear in most every high school and college textbook are either reproductions of, or based on, a famous series of drawings by the 19th century German biologist and fervent Darwinian, Ernst Haeckel, and they have been known to scholars of Darwin and evolutionary theory to be forgeries for over a hundred years. But none of them, apparently, have seen fit to correct this almost ubiquitous misinformation.



A copy of Haeckel's fake drawings showing three stages of embryos from fish, salamander, tortoise, chick, hog, calf, rabbit, and human.

Still thinking this an exceptional circumstance, I became curious to see if I could find other mistakes in the standard

biology texts dealing with evolution. My search revealed a startling fact however: Far from being exceptions, such blatant misrepresentations are more often the rule. In my recent book I call them “Icons of Evolution,” because so many of them are represented by classic off repeated illustrations which, like the Haeckel drawings, have served their pedagogical purpose only too well – fixing basic misinformation about evolutionary theory in the public’s mind.

We all remember them from biology class: the experiment that created the “building blocks of life” in a tube; the evolutionary “tree,” rooted in the primordial slime and branching out into animal and plant life. Then there were the similar bone structures of, say, a bird’s wing and a man’s hand, the peppered moths, and Darwin’s finches. And, of course, the Haeckel embryos.

As it happens, all of these examples, as well as many others purportedly standing as evidence of evolution, turn out to be incorrect. Not just slightly off. Not just slightly mistaken. On the subject of Darwinian evolution, the texts contained massive distortions and even some faked evidence. Nor are we only talking about high-school textbooks that some might excuse (but shouldn’t) for adhering to a lower standard. Also guilty are some of the

most prestigious and widely used college texts, such as Douglas Futuyma’s *Evolutionary Biology*, and the latest edition of the graduate-level textbook *Molecular Biology of the Cell*, coauthored by the president of the National Academy of Sciences, Bruce Alberts. In fact, when the false “evidence” is taken away, the case for Darwinian evolution, in the textbooks at least, is so thin it’s almost invisible.

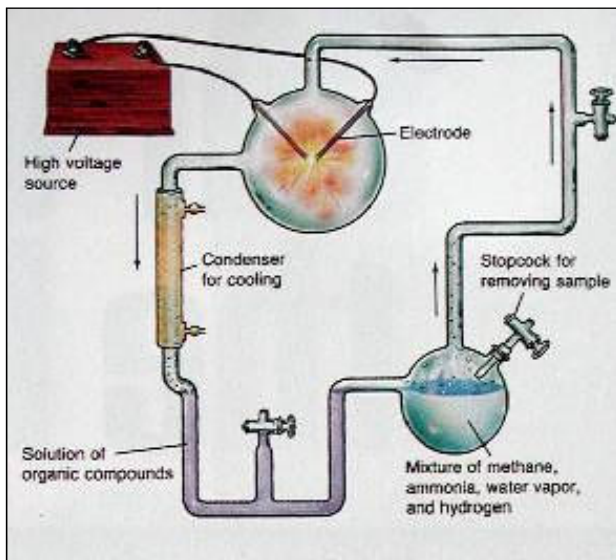
Life in a Bottle

Anyone old enough in 1953 to understand the import of the news remembers how shocking, and to many, exhilarating, it was. Scientists Stanley Miller and Harold Urey had succeeded in creating “the building blocks” of life in a flask. Mimicking what were believed to be the natural conditions of the early Earth’s atmosphere, and then sending an electric spark through it, Miller and Urey had formed simple amino acids. As amino acids are the “building blocks” of life, it was thought just a matter of time before scientists could themselves create living organisms.

At the time, it appeared a dramatic confirmation of evolutionary theory. Life wasn’t a “miracle.” No outside agency or divine intelligence was necessary. Put the right gasses together, add electricity, and life is

bound to happen. It's a common event. Carl Sagan could thus confidently predict on PBS that the planets orbiting those "billllllions and billllllions" of stars out there must be just teeming with life.

There were problems, however. Scientists were never able to get beyond the simplest amino acids in their simulated primordial environment, and the creation of proteins began to seem not a small step or couple of steps, but a great, perhaps impassable, divide.



Miller-Urey Experiment

The telling blow to the Miller-Urey experiment, however, came in the 1970's, when scientists began to conclude that the Earth's early atmosphere was nothing like the mixture of gasses

used by Miller and Urey. Instead of being what scientists call a "reducing," or hydrogen-rich environment, the Earth's early atmosphere probably consisted of gasses released by volcanoes. Today there is a near consensus among geochemists on this point. But put those volcanic gasses in the Miller-Urey apparatus, and the experiment doesn't work – in other words, no "building blocks" of life.

What do textbooks do with this inconvenient fact? By and

large, they ignore it and continue to use the Miller-Urey experiment to convince students that scientists have demonstrated an important first step in the origin of life. This includes the above-mentioned *Molecular Biology of the Cell*, co-authored by the National Academy of Sciences president, Bruce Alberts. Most textbooks also go on to

tell students that origin-of-life researchers have found a wealth of other evidence to explain how life originated spontaneously – but they don't tell students that the researchers themselves now acknowledge that the explanation still eludes them.

Faked Embryos

Darwin thought “by far the strongest single class of facts in favor of” his theory came from embryology. Darwin was not an embryologist, however, so he relied on the work of German biologist Ernst Haeckel, who produced drawings of embryos from various classes of vertebrates to show that they are virtually identical in their earliest stages, and become noticeably different only as they develop. It was this pattern that Darwin found so convincing.

This may be the most egregious of distortions, since biologists have known for over a century that vertebrate embryos never look as similar as Haeckel drew them. In some cases, Haeckel used the same woodcut to print embryos that were supposedly from different classes. In others, he doctored his drawings to make the embryos appear more alike than they really were. Haeckel’s contemporaries repeatedly criticized him for these misrepresentations, and charges of fraud abounded in his lifetime. In 1997, British embryologist Michael Richardson and an international team of experts compared Haeckel’s drawings with photographs of actual vertebrate embryos, demonstrating conclusively that the drawings misrep-

resent the truth.

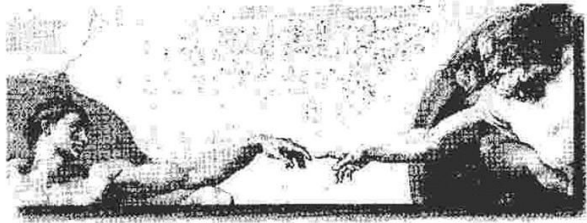
The drawings are misleading in another way. Darwin based his inference of common ancestry on the belief that the earliest stages of embryo development are the most similar. Haeckel’s drawings, however, entirely omit the earliest stages, which are much different, and start at a more similar midway point. Embryologist William Ballard wrote in 1976 that it is “only by semantic tricks and subjective selection of evidence,” by “bending the facts of nature,” that one can argue that the early stages of vertebrates “are more alike than their adults.”

Yet some version of Haeckel’s drawings can be found in most current biology textbooks. Stephen Jay Gould, one of evolutionary theory’s most vocal proponents, recently wrote that we should be “astonished and ashamed by the century of mindless recycling that has led to the persistence of these drawings in a large number, if not a majority, of modern textbooks.” (I will return below to the question of why it is only now that Mr. Gould, who has known of these forgeries for decades, has decided to bring them to widespread attention.) LSI

Next: Darwin’s Tree of Life; Peppered Moths; more

Misconceptions About Creationism

By Warren Krug



There are many misconceptions about creationism, some held by other Christians and some intentionally advanced by opponents of this movement. This article is an attempt to provide some clarification.

Misconception #1—that creationists are out to "prove the Bible." This argument is sometimes used by other Christians who don't understand creationism or who think creationists have a faith problem.

The fact is that most crea-

tionists (hopefully ALL LSI members) first and foremost accept Genesis as a literal account of the origin of life and the universe because it is the Word of God. Even a non-Lutheran like Ken Ham has written, "If we were to try to prove the Bible with science, we would be making science authoritative, whereas biblical theology is the 'queen of science'." ¹

However, what Christians have a right and even a duty to do is to "defend" the Bible when God's Word is under attack. This practice is known as

The author is editor of the *LSI Journal*.

“apologetics”, which has a long and honorable tradition within the Christian church.

Misconception #2—that creationist scientists reject the idea of natural selection or “survival of the fittest.”

Not only do creationist scientists *not* reject the concept of natural selection (also known as “survival of the fittest”), but it was a creationist scientist who may have invented the idea. At least creationist chemist/zoologist Edward Blyth (1810—1873) wrote about natural selection before Darwin did. Natural selection simply means that an animal or other organism may possess a trait that gives it a better chance to survive in a given environment and pass its genes on to its descendants. Natural selection is sometimes confused with what evolutionists call *microevolution* (as this writer has done), but technically there is no such thing as microevolution. For microevolution to occur in a creature, there would have to be at least minor **additions** of information to its genetic code, something that has never been observed. Obviously, to an even greater extent, that rules out molecules-to-man evolution or macroevolution.

Misconception #3—that creationists reject the idea of an Ice Age.



While evolutionist geologists often speak of several Ice Ages, creationist scientists now generally accept the idea that there was *one* Ice Age. This Ice Age they believe was caused by Noah’s Flood.

There is considerable evidence that ice once covered most of Canada, much of the northern and central United States, northern Europe, northwest Asia, and the mountain ranges of Eurasia. Ice sheets are not significantly melting or growing today, so what caused them to grow and melt in the past is a matter of conjecture.

There is also evidence of extensive volcanic activity in the past. These volcanoes, say creationists, were likely associated with the Flood. The volcanoes would have filled the atmosphere with ash and gases which would have reflected much of the sunlight back into space. The result would be considerable cooling, snow and glaciers over much of the earth. In time, as the volcanoes died down, the earth would achieve its current state.²

Misconception #4-that creationists are not qualified scientists.

This misconception, often used by anti-creationists who maybe know better, is an easy one to counter.

In the first place, most of the successful scientists from the past were creationists such as Louis Pasteur, Isaac Newton, Johann Kepler, Georges Cuvier, Michael Faraday, William Herschel, Gregor Mendel, Robert Boyle, Carolus Linnaeus, and Lord Kelvin, to name a few.

Today the Creation Research Society has hundreds of members with advanced degrees in the natural sciences. Both the Institute of Creation Research and Answers in Genesis have many associates who hold doctorates in the natural sciences.

Also, what can one say about the many former evolutionist scientists who have become creationists? Did they cease being qualified scientists the moment they converted?

What some evolutionists claim is that creationists do not use the scientific method and therefore by definition cannot be considered qualified scientists. Besides being untrue, that seems like a very arrogant thing to say.

Misconception #5-that creationists don't believe in

dinosaurs.

It's hard to say how many Christians still hold to this idea which was more common many years ago, but most likely some still do.

One cannot argue though with the numerous dinosaur fossils found all over the world unless entertaining the ridiculous notion that God for some reason buried fake dinosaur fossils in the ground.

Also, the dragon legends from all parts of the globe plus numerous ancient artifacts that appear to depict dinosaur-like creatures testify to the reality of dinosaurs.

Even the Bible seems to describe creatures that sound like dinosaurs or other prehistoric creatures. To many students of the Bible, the *behemoth* in Job, chapter 40, and the *leviathan* in Job, chapter 41, are impressive monsters that do not closely resemble any modern animals.



Misconception #6—that creationists are narrow-minded and unwilling to change their ideas in the face of new evidence.

True creationists will plead guilty to one belief on which they will not and cannot yield—that the Bible including the book of Genesis is literally true and that evolution cannot possibly be true. Otherwise they have shown a willingness to drop or change ideas when new evidence or thinking is presented.



For many years, the theory that a water vapor canopy covered the earth before the Flood was held in high regard. The collapse of this canopy along with the release of water stored underground (“springs of the great deep.” Gen. 7:11. NIV) could have explained where all the water for Noah’s Flood came from. However, more recently creationist scientists have pointed out that to be practical, such a canopy would have made conditions on the ground unbearably

hot, would have made it difficult to see the moon and stars, and lacks an explanation as to what kept the canopy from falling in the first place. Most creationists seem to have stopped talking about a water vapor canopy although some suggest there may have been a partial canopy.³

There are other ideas no longer used by many or most creationist scientists including the suggestion that the layer of moon dust is too thin for the universe to be billions of years old or that there are dinosaur and human footprints alongside each other at the Paluxy River in Texas. Creationists are just as likely to debate their own theories as are the evolutionists.

This then is a review of some misconceptions about creationism held by both friend and foe, as this writer sees it. It is important for Bible-based Christians especially to not knowingly use wrong or outdated arguments in discussing the creation-evolution controversy with others. LSI

1. <http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/feedback/2005/1028.asp>.

2. Oard, Michael. *Frozen in Time*, Master Books, 2004.

3. <http://www.lutheran-science.org/2003-Vapor-Canopy-Theory1.html>.

► LSI News



Begin LSI Blog

After several months of contemplation, we have established an LSI Blog. The blog's address is <http://lsiblog.blogspot.com/> and there is a link to it from our Web site. There is no cost to LSI in operating the blog.

We began the blog in early May and so far have been able to update it three times a week—Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

The purpose of the blog is to provide links to news and information on the Web along with our humble commentary. These stories are selected because we have decided they might be of special interest to Christians. There is a special emphasis on the creation/evolution controversy, but by no means do all of the articles chosen deal with this subject.

Some of the topics covered have included—a miracle baby who survived an abortion attempt and bad genes; evidence that lizards once lived in the Antarctica;

the approaching “celebration” of the 150th anniversary of Charles Darwin’s announcement of his theory; a “lost” Indian tribe found in the Amazon; the controversy over home schooling in California; and many more.

Ways of enhancing the blog are already being considered. Your suggestions are welcome.

► E-Mail

Jesus and Poverty

I continue to enjoy your periodical. I am receiving material from Answers in Genesis and ICR. In fact I had the opportunity to share the Alaskan Inside Cruise with Ken Ham and did meet him before he got sea-sick.

One comment on Page 7 right hand column—Jesus’ youth. (March-April Journal) Are we forgetting that the magi gave them some very precious and expensive gifts. I doubt if they went out and blew it on a pair of 8 cylinder camels. Jesus, as you said, had not to lay his head. On the other hand, Judas was ready (as some preachers of today) to take some of the proceeds for his own personal use.

Thank you again for your good service to the Lord and His holy Word

Bill Bein (55WLS)
Sun City, Arizona

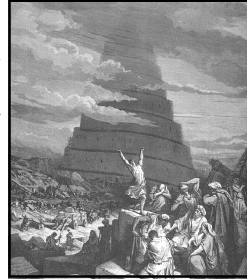


NUGGETS

Babel in Other Cultures

It is not surprising that hints of the Tower of Babel and the resulting confusion of languages, as a true, historical happening, would show up in the legends of other cultures. Here are some of them:

Southeast Asia: the Gaikho tribe of Burma has a legend that says the people wanted to build a pagoda to reach heaven. However, when it was half done, God came down and confused the language of the people so they couldn't understand one another. Then the people scattered.



Indians of Guatemala: the Quiches told of a time when tribes multiplied and left their homes for a place called Tulan. Here their language changed and, not being able to understand one another, they dispersed to other parts of the world.

Africa: a legend of the Wa-Sania tribe says that at one time all the tribes on earth knew only one language, but people went mad during a famine and began saying strange words which led to different languages.

Europe: a Greek legend says that mankind for many ages lived in peace without cities or laws and spoke but one language under the rule of Zeus. Then Hermes divided the people into separate nations with different languages.

Polynesia: Polynesians on the island of Hao believed Rata and three sons survived a great flood and began building a tower to reach the sky. But the creator god Vatea chased the builders away, broke down the building, and changed the language, causing a diversity of tongues.

—Answers magazine (April-June, 2008)

How Many Senses?

Columnist Marilyn von Savant thinks there are **ten**. Besides vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, she would add pressure, temperature, pain, balance, and motion—but not hunger.



Easter fell on March 23 this year. The next time it will be that early will not be until the year 2228.

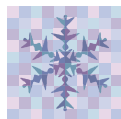
—(Racine) Journal Times

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW EVERYTHING?

- ☐ The sentence "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" uses every letter of the alphabet.
- ☐ There are only two English words which have all five vowels in order: abstemious" and "facetious."
- ☐ A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.
- ☐ A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.
- ☐ A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.
- ☐ A snail can sleep for three years.
- ☐ An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

"The alarmists are alarmed, the panic mongers are panicking, the scare mongers are scared; the Gores are gored. Why? Because global warming stopped ten years ago; it hasn't got warmer since 1998. And it fact in the last seven years, there has been a downturn in global temperatures equivalent on average to about [or] very close to one degree Fahrenheit per decade. We're actually in a period ... of global cooling."

—Lord Christopher Monckton,
Policy advisor to former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.



HOW DOES ONE STAY SAFE IN THE WORLD TODAY?

- 1) Avoid riding in cars because they are responsible for **20%** of fatal accidents.
- 2) Do not stay at home because **17%** of all accidents occur at home.
- 3) Avoid walking on streets and sidewalks—**14%** of all accidents happen to pedestrians.
- 4) Avoid traveling by air, rail or water, because **16%** of all accidents occur in these forms of transportation.
- 5) Of the remaining **33%** of deaths, **32%** occur in hospitals...so **avoid hospitals!**
- 6) Only **.001%** of all deaths occur in worship services. Therefore logic tells us that the **safest** place to be at any given time is at **church!** Attend church; it could save your life!
—from the Trinity Ties (Trinity Lutheran, Caledonia, WI)

Vatican Accepts E.T.

The Vatican's chief astronomer says it is okay for Catholics to believe both in God and in extraterrestrial aliens which are perhaps more evolved than humans. Rev. Jose Gabriel Funes based on his statement on his belief that there is a large number of galaxies with planets. "The extraterrestrial is my brother," he said.—*news.yahoo.com Reuters* (5/14/08)

Evolutionist Doubts E.T.

A British scientist is doubtful intelligent life has emerged anywhere else in space. Prof. Andrew Watson thinks humans evolved via a series of four "critical steps", and the likelihood of all these occurring elsewhere is less than 0.01%. The "habitable lifespan" of an Earth-like planet is rarely long enough for the occurrence of all four steps—the emergence of single-celled bacteria, complex cells, specialized cells allowing complex life forms, and intelligent life.—*news.bbc.co.uk* (4/17/08)

Einstein Bashed Religion

Albert Einstein bashed religion in a letter that sold for more than \$400,000 at an auction in London in May. He wrote that the idea of God was the product of human weakness and that the Bible was "pretty childish." The letter was written to philosopher Eric Gutkind in 1954, a year before Einstein's death. Still, Einstein often spoke of a spiritual force at work in the universe.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (5/17/08)

Rare Frog Has No Lungs

A rare frog living in remote Borneo has been found to have no lungs and apparently absorbs oxygen through its skin. The evolutionist scientists explain that this frog seems to have "evolved backwards" and acquired a primordial trait. Because of mining activity, the frog, named *Barbourula kalimantansensis*, may be endangered.—*news.yahoo.com Reuters* (4/9/08)

ICR Denied in Texas

The Institute of Creation Research Graduate School (ICRGS) has been denied the right to offer degrees by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) after the commissioner recommended rejection of ICR's application. This despite the fact that a THECB Site team and an advisory committee of the THECB had advocated approval. The ICRGS had the right to grant degrees in California before moving to Texas.—*ICR letter* (4/25/08)

Bill Would Ban Hybrids

A bill to ban the creation of part-human, part-animal hybrid beings was introduced April 24 in the U.S. House. The measure prohibits the creation, transfer or transportation of a human-animal hybrid. The legislation is designed to curb American researchers from using techniques actively developed by British scientists.—*Clearly Caring* (May/June, 2008)



Marriage Costly in U.S.

Four groups advocating government action to strengthen marriages say divorce and out-of-wedlock childbearing is costing the taxpayers \$112 billion a year. A study by a Georgia State U. economist assumed that households headed by a single female have relatively high poverty rates, leading to increased spending on welfare, health care, criminal justice and education. Critics aren't convinced that marriage-strengthening programs work. Some say job creation is more important.—*www.cnn.com* (4/15/08)

Mom Expects 18th Child

An Arkansas mother expecting another baby joined her husband for a Mother's Day celebration along with their children, all 17 of them. Michelle Duggar, 41, her husband, Jim Bob Duggar, and the children enjoyed a brunch at a Little Rock hotel. The 10 boys and seven girls range in age from 9 months to 20 years and includes two sets of twins. They live in a 7,000-square-foot home. The religious couple say they will continue to have children as long as God wills it.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (5/10/08)

Cancel Abortion Law

A Virginia law banning "partial-birth abortion" is unconstitutional, the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled in a 2-1 decision. The Virginia law is very similar to a federal statute upheld as constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. However, the appeals court majority agreed that doctors performing standard abortions could accidentally violate Virginia's law.—*www.cnn.com* (5/20/08)

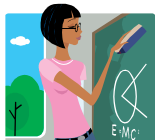


Movement Begun to Eliminate Human Race

A concept called the Voluntary Human Extinction Movement (VHEMT) has been established to prevent the extinction of millions of plant and animal species by encouraging people not to bear children. Founder Les U. Knight says he is not advocating abortion or other methods of terminating life, but he also said his ultimate goal is "that there are no humans on the planet", a goal he never expects to see. Since VHEMT is not a group one can join, there are no figures on how many people subscribe to the concept.—www.worldnetdaily.com (5/11/08)

Creationism Taught in Many Public Schools

One in eight public high school biology teachers presents creationism as a scientifically valid alternative to Darwinian evolution, according to a Penn State U. poll. The poll also showed one in six believe God created humans in their present form within the last 10,000 years. Those who favored creationism or intelligent design spent considerably less time teaching Darwinism than other biology teachers, and less than 1/3 of the teachers believe God had no part in evolution.—www.answersingenesis.org (5/23/08)



Many Young Gamblers

There are an estimated 750,000 problem gamblers among the nation's youth, ages 14 to 21, according to a U. of Buffalo study. Problem gambling is described as gambling with three or more negative consequences such as gambling more than what was intended or stealing money to gamble. Sixty-eight percent of youth interviewed said they gambled at least once in the past year. Youth were more likely to gamble if they were white, had a full-time job, or lived independently.—www.sciencedaily.com (5/7/08)

Weight Gain Bad For Blood Vessels

A weight gain of about 9 pounds in normal-weight healthy young adults may interfere with normal blood vessel function and lead to a disorder called endothelial dysfunction. This discovery was by Mayo Clinic researchers who say the disorder is a predictor of heart attack and stroke. On the other hand, getting rid of the extra weight will restore proper blood vessel function.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (April, 2008)

Saying No to Thinness

France is sending a message that glamorizing ultra-thinness in that country is not acceptable. A new bill passed by the lower house in Parliament cracks down on Web sites that inform anorexics on how to starve themselves. Offenders could face fines of up to \$71,000 and 3 years in jail. It could also be used against the fashion industry. Doctors and psychologists welcomed the bill, but it still must be approved by the Senate.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (4/16/08)

Laughter-Best Medicine

Laughter may be the best medicine, research is beginning to prove. Researchers at Loma Linda U. in California reported that in a study three stress chemicals dropped before, during, and after subjects watched a funny video. Cortisol decreased 67%, adrenaline 35%, and DOPAC 69%. Scientists were shocked that the stress chemicals dropped significantly even before the video was viewed, indicating that just anticipating a good laugh can have benefits.—www.nature.com (4/7/08)

Bionic Eye Could Help the Blind

People blinded by a hereditary disease have new hope—the invention of a "bionic eye." Scientists at London's Moorfields Eye Hospital are testing the artificial eye, which is connected to a camera on a pair of glasses, on two men in their fifties. Any success would likely only be in the form of light and dark outlines. The trial is aimed at people who have been blinded by retinitis pigmentosa, a group of inherited diseases that affect the retina.—bbc.co.uk (4/21/08)

Life Expectancy Falls For American Women

Many American women statistically are now facing a falling life expectancy, the first time since 1918 this has happened. A study released in April uncovered this trend in almost 1,000 counties. Diabetes, lung cancer, emphysema, and kidney failure rates are increasing in women. An increase in women smoking and obesity could mean this trend will continue.—(*Racine*) *Journal Times* (4/22/08)

Seniors Need Normal Blood Pressure Too

The notion that an increase in blood pressure as people age is acceptable is now being challenged by new research. A study of 3,845 people over the age of 80 showed dramatic decreases in strokes, heart failure and deaths from a variety of other causes when high blood pressure was treated. Patients who enjoyed a reduction in blood pressure to 150/80 or less had a 21% reduction in deaths from all causes including a 39% cut in stroke deaths and 64% in heart failures. The benefit was so obvious that the trial was ended early so that the placebo group could be treated.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (4/1/08)



Study Shows Need for Right Amount of Sleep

Not only too little sleep but too much sleep isn't good for you. A new government study linked less than six hours of sleep a night to obesity, higher smoking rates, less physical activity, and more alcohol use. The study did not prove cause-effect relationships such as whether smoking causes sleeplessness or if sleeplessness prompts smoking. Nearly half of those who slept nine hours or more a night were also more likely to be physically inactive in their leisure time.—(*Racine Journal Times* (5/8/08))

Tiny Voltmeter Invented

The world's smallest voltmeter, capable of detecting electric fields inside ordinary cells, has found that the fields are strong enough to cause a bolt of lightning. The voltmeter's inventor, a U. of Michigan biophysical chemist, used it on rat brain cells and detected fields as strong as 15 million volts per meter. The device, which uses a voltage-sensitive dye, is so small that thousands could fit inside a single cell.—*Discover* (March, 2008)

Drivers Begin Scooting

Upset about the high price of gas, many motorists are turning to fuel-slingy motor scooters and small motorcycles. Dealers across the nation report brisk sales, especially of models getting 75-120 miles per gallon. Scooters imported from China can sell for as little as \$800 while top-of-the-line bikes can cost as much as \$8,000.—www.cnn.com (5/15/08)

Polar Bears Now Listed as Threatened

With scientists predicting that 2/3 of the world's polar bears will disappear in the next 50 years, the animal will now be listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. There are presently an estimated 20,000 to 25,000 polar bears in the Arctic. The decision has caused some controversy because this is the first time a species has been listed specifically because its habitat is threatened by global warming. The Secretary of the Interior, however, has cautioned that this decision should not be used to regulate global climate change.—www.cnn.com (5/14/08)

Computer Virus Threat Increases

The volume and complexity of modern computer viruses has put the anti-virus industry on the defensive. About 5.5 million malicious software programs were unleashed on the Web last year, according to a German company, with anti-virus firms analyzing between 15,000 and 20,000 new viruses every day, more than 15 times as many as in 2005. Known as malware, the dangerous viruses are on the rise as criminals intent on stealing personal data are trying to overwhelm security companies.—washingtonpost.com (3/19/08)

Soviet Union Lives On

The Soviet Union lives on—in cyberspace that is. Sixteen years after the "socialist utopia" collapsed, more and more Web sites ending with the Soviet ".su" domain name are appearing. Reasons for adopting ".su" vary—nostalgia, business reasons, politics. Some people object to the use of the suffix since the Soviet Union no longer exists. They advocate using ".ru" for Russia.—www.msnbc.msn.com (4/18/08)

New Shopping Cart Adds Up Prices

A new Microsoft-powered device attached to a shopping cart automatically adds up the costs of items in the cart. Developed by Microsoft in association with MediaCart and the owner of ShopRite stores, the device also delivers coupons, helps shoppers find products, displays recipes and nutritional information, and even lets customers upload shopping lists from a home computer.—*Smart Computing* (April, 2008)

That Old-time Chocolate

An analysis of 3,000-year-old pottery in Honduras showed people then were already experimenting with cacao, the seed from which chocolate is made. Researchers, however, speculate that the locals were creating an alcoholic drink by fermenting the pulp that surrounds the cacao seeds. The analyzed vessel had a narrow spout. Dogfish Head Craft Brewery in Delaware is trying to recreate the recipe the ancient Hondurans may have used—*Discover* (April, 2008)

Stonehenge Solved

The mystery of Stonehenge may have been at least partly solved. Radiocarbon dating of cremated bodies there suggest it was a burial ground for what may have been the country's first royal dynasty. The burials apparently began at least 500 years before the arrival of the first of the massive stones, which are arranged in concentric circles. Stonehenge is still viewed as also being an astronomical observatory.—(Racine) *Journal Times* (5/30/08)

Grow Marigolds in Moon Rock

Scientists with the European Space Agency (ESA) have grown marigolds in crushed rock similar to that of the moon's surface without need for plant food. Some see being able to grow plants on the moon as a step towards human habitation. However, moon plants would need a system of water circulation and recovery as well as an artificial atmosphere. The U.S. has a goal of putting humans back on the moon by the year 2020.—*news.bbc.co.uk* (4/17/08)

Midwest All Shook Up

The 5.2 magnitude earthquake that was centered near West Salem, Illinois April 18 produced more than 2 dozen aftershocks. The earthquake did little damage but did shake skyscrapers in Chicago and could be felt as far away as Atlanta. It was believed to have involved an extension of the New Madrid fault, which produced a series of earthquakes estimated at 7.0 or greater in 1811 and 1812.—(Racine) *Journal Times* (4/10/08)

Can Animals Predict Earthquakes?

Some countries including China are investigating whether or not animals can be used to predict earthquakes. According to reports, prior to the China's recent horrific quake, thousands of toads appeared on streets in Mianzhu, and animals at a local zoo began acting strangely. Also, a pond in Enshi, Hubei province suddenly lost much of its water. Some people in China question why the government didn't act on these signs before the earthquake, but as of yet, there is no reliable way to predict this kind of event, seismologists claim.—*www.foxnews.com* (5/15/08)

Texas Canyon Created In Only Three Days

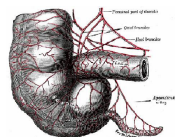
Tourists for the first time are now able to view the 1½ mile-long, 80-foot deep Lake Gorge, Texas canyon. The canyon was carved through multiple layers of rock in only three days by an overflowing spillway. An Associated Press report dismissed any comparison between this canyon and the formation of the Grand Canyon.—*Answers* (April-June, 2008)

Ancient Engineers Outdid Modern Ones

Some modern dams in China sustained so much damage during China's massive earthquake that they are under 24-hour watch for signs of collapse. Yet an ancient bamboo-based irrigation system nearby experienced only minor damage. UNESCO, the United Nations cultural organization, says the Dujiangyan irrigation system is "a major landmark in the development of water management and technology and is still discharging its functions perfectly." Built in 256 B.C. the irrigation system is only 32 miles from the epicenter of the May 12 quake.—*news.yahoo.com* AFP (5/22/08)

Discover Function For Human Appendix

Duke University doctors believe they have discovered the function of the human appendix. The appendix produces "good germs" needed for proper digestion in the intestines, they have said. Evolutionists have long thought of the appendix as a "vestigial organ", a useless leftover of evolution.—*Answers* (April-June, 2008)



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Swallows

“Are not five *sparrows* sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many *sparrows*.”
Luke 12:6-7 (NIV)

Sparrows may not seem very important to many people. Yet, according to Jesus, God has not forgotten the sparrows. Still, we are worth more to God than many sparrows. That should make us feel good and more willing to serve Him out of love.

What are sparrows?
Sparrows are fairly common birds. Usually they are small, plump brown-gray birds with short tails and short but powerful beaks. There are dozens of different species of sparrows. Scientists put all “true”

sparrows into the family of birds called Passeridae.

What names are given to some of the species?
Spanish, Swahili, Cinnamon, Dead Sea, Cape, Grey-headed, Parrot-billed, Desert, Tree, Arabian, and Rock are just some of the names given to different species.



House Sparrow

What are the two main groups of sparrows?
Sparrows have been divided into two groups: *Old World true sparrows* that can be found in Europe, Africa and Asia. This kind of sparrow is probably the one Jesus was talking about. The other type is the *American or New World* sparrows which look somewhat like the true sparrows but are not closely

related. New World sparrows belong to the family called Estrildid. Some Old World sparrows such as House Sparrows can be found in the New World (Americas) because they were brought here by settlers.



White-crowned Sparrow

What do sparrows eat?
 Their main food is seeds but they also eat small insects. A few species look for food around cities and will eat almost anything.

How big are sparrows?
 Sparrows range in size from

the 4.5-inch Chestnut Sparrow (about half an ounce in weight) to the 7 inch Parrot-billed Sparrow (about 1 and a half ounces).

Sparrows remind us that God cares for us. Indeed He loves us so much He sent His only Son, Jesus, to become our Savior. Have you thanked Him for that?

Activity. Use the code-breaker to figure out the secret message.

◆=A	♥=C	□=D	★=E
☺=G	↗=H	✈=O	☼=R
△=S	●=T	♣=U	🌐=V
!=W			

First Word—

☺____ ✈____ □____

Second Word—

!____ ◆____ ●____

♥____ ↗____ ★____

△____

Third Word—

✈____ 🌐____ ★____

☼____

Fourth Word—

♣____ △____

► My View



Get Them While They're Young

Several months ago we received a letter from the Answers in Genesis organization bemoaning the establishment of a certain camp in Kentucky, not many miles away from the very successful Creation Museum.

This camp for children, however, has objectives 180 degrees removed from what AiG is trying to accomplish. Campers here are being trained in atheism and secular humanism. The camp, called Camp Quest, began at the same time AiG was having its well-publicized zoning battle with local authorities.

A Web site run by one of the organizers says, "Camp Quest is the first residential summer camp in the history of the United States for the children of Atheists, Free-thinkers, Secular Humanists, Humanists, Brights, or whatever other terms might be applied to those who hold to a naturalistic, not supernatural, world view."

Unfortunately, this idea of camps for educating children in atheism is spreading to other

states, according to the AiG letter.

Not ones to sit on their haunches though, Ken Ham and his associates are adding events for children to the museum's program. According to the Cincinnati Enquirer, "Many features that will be introduced in the next year are focused on the museum's younger visitors, from kid-friendly kiosks that will bolster every area of the museum to an outdoor playground."

We understand that a petting zoo has also been created and special workshops for families are now being offered.

The Answers in Genesis group has gotten it right. Proverbs 22:6 tells us, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Certainly Jesus seemed to have had the time to spend with children, and this desire to spread the Word to children during their impressible years is what drove many Lutherans and other Christians to begin schools for their young ones.

The atheists have seen the need for "getting them while they are young." We Christians should be even more motivated to do the same because of the possible severe consequences for not doing so.

—Warren Krug

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