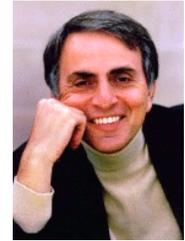




## Carl Sagan Becomes a Creationist Editorial Comment by Warren Krug (March-April, 1997)



Carl Sagan died December 20 of pneumonia. He was 62. For two years Sagan had been suffering from a bone marrow disease and recently had a bone-marrow transplant.

Having earned a physics degree from the U. of Chicago in 1954 and a doctorate in astronomy and astrophysics, Sagan became a lecturer and assistant professor of astronomy at Harvard in 1962.

But it was his "Cosmos" television series on PBS in 1980 that made Sagan famous. Co-written with his wife, the series portrayed "15 billion years" of "cosmic evolution." "Cosmos" became the most-watched limited series in the history of public television. Estimates are that the series has been seen by more than 500 million people in 60 countries.

It also won three Emmys and a Peabody Award, and a companion book was a best seller for more than a year.

Sagan also helped design robotic missions for NASA and assisted with the Mariner, Viking, and Voyager expeditions.

To be sure, Sagan made science entertaining, but critics complained that he sometimes oversimplified and made interpretive errors.

Although he referred to such things as UFOs and lost continents as pseudoscientific twaddle, Sagan was a firm believer in the existence of extraterrestrial intelligence.

And while he had little use for creation science, Sagan did marvel at the structure of the existing world.

Sagan had faith - in science. It appeared that his faith in science paid off for him when "science" extended his life briefly, but it obviously couldn't save it. He had expressed the desire to grow "really old" alongside Ann, his third wife.

Is there any reason to hope that this man could have become a believer before he died? Not much.

Sagan did write, "I would love to believe that when I die I will live again, that some thinking, feeling, remembering part of me will continue. But as much as I want to believe that, and despite the ancient and worldwide cultural traditions that assert an afterlife, I know of nothing to suggest that it is more than wishful thinking."

Sagan acknowledged the prayers spoken in his behalf during his illness, but he said it wasn't a problem for him to face death without the certainty of an afterlife.

One thing is certain. Even if he didn't experience a deathbed conversion, Carl Sagan now knows there is a Creator God. *LSI*