

Are You Antiscience?

by Mark Bergemann, October 24, 2012

Do you believe abortion is murder? Then you are antiscience. Are you against fetal stem cell research? Do you reject the claim that life was shaped by evolution over millions of years? Any “yes” answer shows you are antiscience. You are guilty of science denialism.

Who declares you to be antiscience? A ten page featured article in the November 2012 Scientific American does. To be fair, the article does not specifically call you antiscience. It states politicians with the above views have an antiscience position.¹

A large number of major party contenders for political office this year took antiscience positions against evolution, human-induced climate change, vaccines, stem cell research, and more.

Such positions are surprising because the economy is such a big factor in this election, and half the economic growth since World War II can be traced to innovations in science and technology.

Partisans at both ends of the political spectrum have been guilty of science denialism. But the Republican version is particularly dangerous because it attacks the validity of science itself.

U.S. voters must push candidates and elected officials to express their views on the major science questions facing the nation or risk losing out to those countries with reality-based policies.²
[bold in original.]

This Scientific American article gives a glimpse into the thinking of many evolutionists. The above quote implies that if our politicians are antiscience, then the U.S. will “risk losing out to those countries with reality-based policies.” Government policies that are not antiscience are “reality-based policies.”

This is a political slant to a common claim by evolutionists. They claim creationists cannot be capable scientists or engineers, so belief in creation harms our country’s ability to advance in technology, and that will lead to a poor economy. A similar claim was made in a 2009 Scientific American article:

Students who are not given the chance to acquire a proper understanding of evolution will not achieve a basic level of scientific literacy. And scientific literacy will be indispensable for workers, consumers, and policy makers in a future dominated by medical, biotechnological and environmental concerns.³

A coauthor of the above 2009 article is Eugenie C. Scott, Executive Director of the National Center For Science Education. Dr. Scott stated it this way in 1996 for the New York Academy of Sciences:

Evolution is a basic component of science, and essential to biology and geology. One is not scientifically literate if one does not understand evolution. I would hope that scientists would do what they could to encourage individuals to accept evolution as science.⁴

The 2012 Scientific American article divides us into two camps: science and antiscience. Those on the correct side have science, facts, and knowledge. Those on the incorrect side have just opinions and anti-intellectual conformity.

¹ Shawn Lawrence Otto, “America’s Science Problem,” *Scientific American*, November 2012, 65.

“In Fact, candidates who began to lag in the GOP presidential primaries would often make antiscience statements. ...Newt Gingrich ...began describing stem cell research as ‘killing children in order to get research material.’”

² Otto, 64.

³ Glenn Branch and Eugenie C. Scott, “The Latest Face of Creationism,” *Scientific American*, January 2009, 99.

⁴ Eugenie C. Scott, “Creationism, Ideology, and Science,” National Center For Science Education, online posting 2009, <http://ncse.com/creationism/general/creationism-ideology-science> (accessed October 23, 2012).

Previously published in, *The Flight From Reason*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Vol. 775, June 24, 1996.

It is even claimed that this “science denialism” is greatly harming our democratic form of government.

Such positions could typically be dismissed as nothing more than election year posturing except that they reflect an anti-intellectual conformity that is gaining strength in the U.S. at precisely the moment that most of the important opportunities for economic growth, and serious threats to the well-being of the nation, require a better grasp of scientific issues. By turning public opinion away from the antiauthoritarian principles of the nation's founders, the new science denialism is creating an existential crisis like few the country has faced before.

By falsely equating knowledge with opinion, postmodernists and antiscience conservatives alike collapse our thinking back to a pre-Enlightenment era, leaving no common basis for public policy. Public discourse is reduced to endless warring opinions, none seen as more valid than another. Policy is determined by the loudest voices, reducing us to a world in which might makes right—the classic definition of authoritarianism.

When facts become opinions, the collective policymaking process of democracy begins to break down. Gone is the common denominator—knowledge—that can bring opposing sides together. Government becomes reactive, expensive and late at solving problems, and the national dialogue becomes mired in warring opinions.⁵

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Christians should become aware of this increasing hostility to Christian teachings on abortion and creation. This hostility is well entrenched in colleges and universities, and is gaining strength throughout society.

You may recall the Public TV children’s show “Bill Nye *the Science Guy*” (PBS, 1993-1998, 100 episodes). The show became popular as a teaching aid in schools. From 1998 – 2011 Mr. Nye appeared in many other TV shows including another PBS series (The Eyes of Nye), as host of a Science Channel series (100 Greatest Discoveries), as host of a Discovery Channel series (Greatest Inventions with Bill Nye), as host of a show on the Planet Green network (Stuff Happens), and appearances on CNN, Disney, VH1, the Weather Channel, and The Dr. Oz Show.⁶

Mr. Nye is a very famous and well respected voice for science in the eyes of children and adults. His words are taken as fact by many. He recently made a YouTube video entitled, “Creationism Is Not Appropriate For Children.” He is not wearing his Science Guy lab coat, but the video clearly displays his persona name (Bill Nye The Science Guy) from the PBS show and other venues. The video has been seen by 4,813,532 people and 223,711 have left a comment about it (as of Oct, 24, 2012). Mr. Nye ends the video by saying:

And I say to the grownups, if you want to deny evolution and live in your, in your world that's completely inconsistent with everything we observe in the universe, that's fine, but don't make your kids do it because we need them. We need scientifically literate voters and taxpayers for the future. We need people that can—we need engineers that can build stuff, solve problems. It's just really a hard thing, it's really a hard thing. You know, in another couple of centuries that world view, I'm sure, will be, it just won't exist. There's no evidence for it.⁷

⁵ Otto, 64, 71.

⁶ Wikipedia, “Bill Nye,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Nye (accessed Oct 24, 2012).

⁷ Bill Nye, *Creationism Is Not Appropriate For Children*, video with transcript, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHbYJfwFgOU> (accessed Oct 24, 2012).

They have targeted our children.

This video gives an additional glimpse into the thinking of evolutionists. They have targeted our children.

Pray that God will protect the faith of Christians, especially children, from the temptation of evolution. Evolution can be a very strong temptation. It is presented as fact nearly everywhere: TV, museums, internet, magazines, schools, zoos, and even in many or most Christian churches. Evolution has led many to abandon their faith in Jesus. Evolution attacks the very Gospel itself, the need for a Savior, and the doctrines of man, original sin, actual sin, the fall into sin, the law, and death.⁸ Evolution eliminates the “need” for God. As Richard Dawkins, a leading atheistic evolutionist, famously said, “Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.”⁹

Train yourself regarding creation and evolution, about how scientific observations fit creation better than they fit evolution. Reading a few of the more than 200 articles on The Lutheran Science Institute website would be of great help.¹⁰

Speak with your children about the danger evolution poses to their Christian faith.¹¹ Start when your children are very young. Do this regularly and repeatedly. Mention to your 3 year old that God made [whatever plant or animal you are talking about]. Talk to your 4 year old how Adam and Eve could watch dinosaurs running and eating plants, but now there are no more living dinosaurs. Discuss evolution on TV with your 5 year old. Evolution is presented as fact on many children’s TV shows. Read with your 10 year old, the dozens of Bible passages outside of Genesis that touch on creation and a world-wide flood.¹² Discuss the basic teachings of evolution with your 12 year old, and how evolutionists are not neutral as they claim.¹³ Have a heart to heart with your 11 year old on how we, through faith, believe that God created. Talk with your 13 year old about death as a result of sin. Evolution teaches death is the means used, over millions of years, to produce new animals. Talk with your 14 year old about the evolution statements in her Science textbooks.

⁸ Lyle W. Lange, *God So Loved the World –A study of Christian Doctrine* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2005), 158-161. This is an excellent resource which has 4 pages about evolution being completely incompatible with the Christian faith.

⁹ Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker: Why Evolution Reveals a Universe Without Design*, revised ed. (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 10.

¹⁰ www.LutheranScience.org

¹¹ Mark Bergemann, “The Place Of Reason In Defending The Christian Faith,” *LSI Journal* (2012). <http://www.lutheranscience.org/2012-ThePlaceofReason.pdf> (accessed Oct 24, 2012).

See “Part 4 – Ministry Considerations Regarding Creation,” 19-22.

¹² Bergemann, 20-21. “Do our people know that creation and Noah’s Flood are taught as true history throughout Scripture? That Jesus and the Apostles spoke about Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Enoch, Noah, the flood, Eden, creation, the fall into sin, and the curse, as real people and true events?” 35 Bible passages are listed.

¹³ Mark Bergemann, “Can Evolutionists Be Neutral?” *LSI Journal* (May-August, 2006).

<http://www.lutheranscience.org/2010-EvolutionistNeutral.html> (accessed January 19, 2012).