

Contact Information

Dave Thomas

Email: nmsrdaveATswcp.com (Replace AT with @)

Phone: 505 869-9250

Mailing Address: PO Box 1017

Peralta, NM 87042

M. Kim Johnson

Email: kimberATcomcast.net (Replace AT with @)

Phone: 505 897-3364

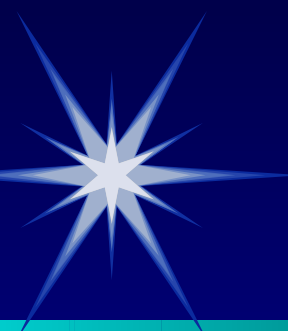
Mailing Address: 9906 Loretta NW

Albuquerque, NM 87114

Briefing Can be found at: <http://www.nmsr.org/noma.pdf>

Dr. Tim Moy Interview: <http://www.nmsr.org/podcast.htm>

<http://www.nmsr.org/noma.pdf>http://web.mac.com/nmsrorg/scienceWatch/Best_of_Science_Watch/Best_of_Science_Watch.html



NOMA – Non-Overlapping Realms of Magisteria

The Real Question:
Are Science and
Religion Mutually
Exclusive?

David E. Thomas

Peralta, New Mexico

Kim Johnson

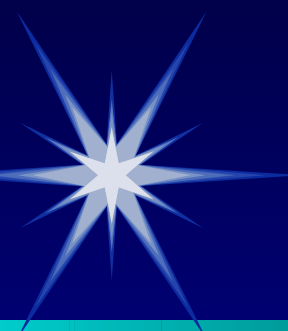
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Presented at

University of New
Mexico

March 22nd, 2010

<http://www.nmsr.org>



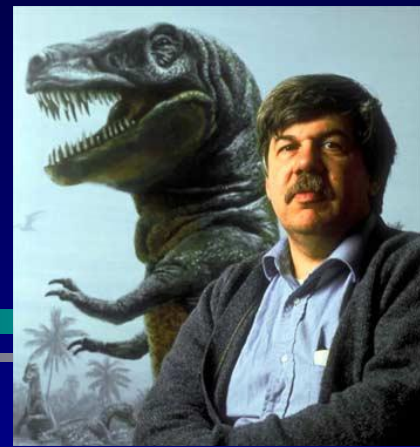
NOMA – A Simple Concept – But First Simple Definitions

Science is the study of “How” based
on Natural Causality

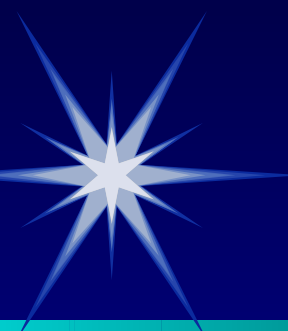
Religion is the study of “Why” based
on Supernatural Causality

Do these conflict? Or not?

NOMA – Gould's Definition



“The text of *Humani Generis* focuses on the *magisterium* (or teaching authority) of the Church—a word derived not from any concept of majesty or awe but from the different notion of teaching, for *magister* is Latin for 'teacher.' We may, I think, adopt this word and concept to express the central point of this essay and the principled resolution of supposed 'conflict' or 'warfare' between science and religion. No such conflict should exist because each subject has a legitimate magisterium, or domain of teaching authority—and these magisteria do not overlap (the principle that I would like to designate as NOMA, or 'nonoverlapping magisteria').”



NOMA – Non-Overlapping Realms of Magisteria

We see NOMA as a tenuous cease-fire between science and religion, with religion not making claims against or misrepresenting science, and with science refraining from putting religion under the microscope, or claiming that it can prove God doesn't exist.

**In *some* religions,
no accommodation with science is possible.**

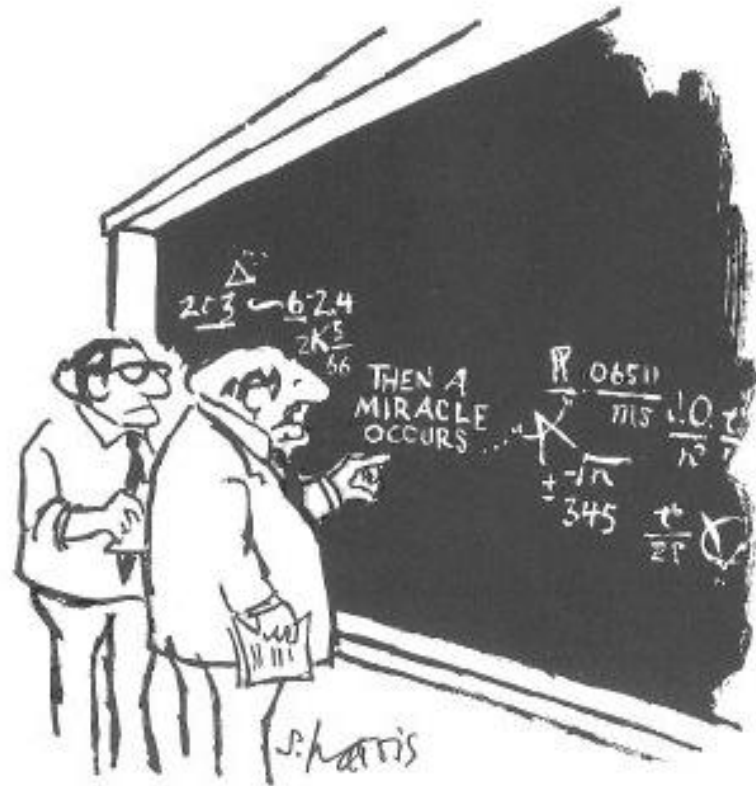


So, What Is “Science”?

In a nutshell:

- Science is — learning about natural phenomena that occur from natural causes.
- No supernatural causes allowed or it isn't science; must be Predictive and Falsifiable
- It's a *methodology* of learning about the natural world, not an *Ideology*
- Requires Mainstream Peer review

So, What Is "Science"?



"I THINK YOU SHOULD BE MORE EXPLICIT HERE IN STEP TWO."



Does Science = Atheism?

Is Science “*basically an assumption that there is no God.*”?

No.

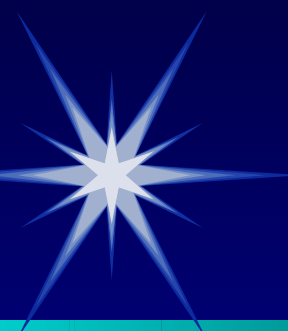
From an Abq. Tribune op-ed on ID I (Dave) wrote on 3-13-2007: “*Science is not ‘atheism’ just because it cannot invoke supernatural causality.*”



NOMA – The Rest of the Story

The rest of the presentation by Kim and me will be demonstrative, using the more common examples from current US society to peer into the NOMA concept.

Let's start with everybody's favorite –Evolution!



NOMA – Where the ceasefire is holding

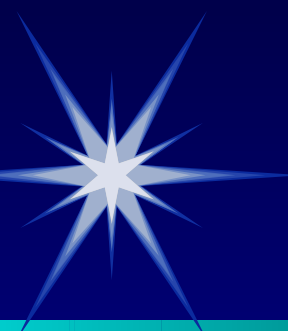
Many mainstream religions accept modern science, and also accept God as working in mysterious ways beyond human ken. (Catholic, Methodist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Jewish, More - see NCSE's *Voices for Evolution*).

Isaiah 55:8, 9 “For my thoughts [are] not your thoughts, neither [are] your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

NOMA – Where the ceasefire is holding



Pope John Paul II, October 22, 1996: “Pius XII added . . . that this opinion [evolution] should not be adopted as though it were a certain, proven doctrine. . . . Today, almost half a century after the publication of the encyclical, new knowledge has led to the recognition of more than one hypothesis in the theory of evolution. It is indeed remarkable that this theory has been progressively accepted by researchers, following a series of discoveries in various fields of knowledge. The convergence, neither sought nor fabricated, of the results of work that was conducted independently is in itself a significant argument in favor of the theory.”



NOMA – Where the Ceasefire is Failing

Some modern religions reject modern science, and demand that God works only as described in the Bible. (Young-earth Creationists, Islamic fundamentalists, etc.).

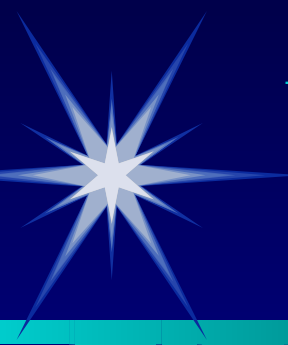
**Such religions reject evolution as
Something God might use,
and they equate evolution with Atheism.**



Does Evolution = Atheism?

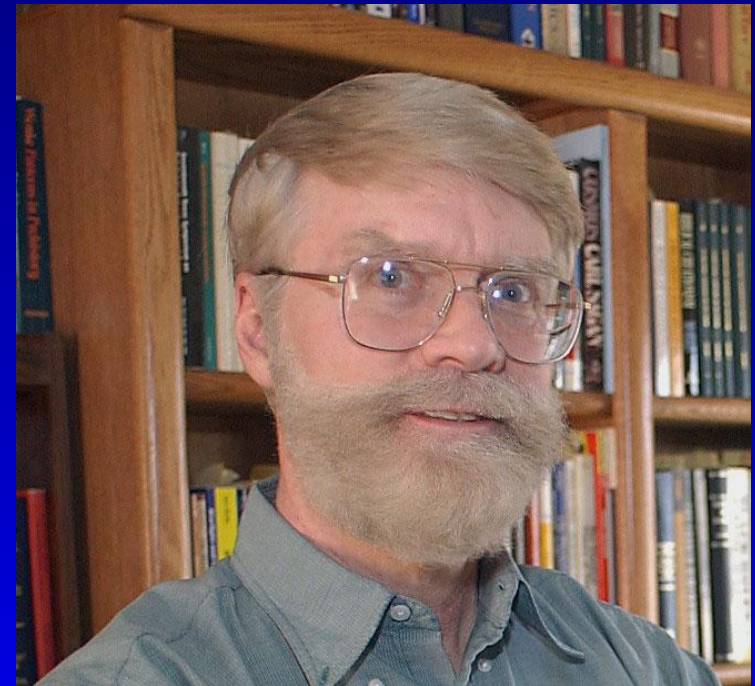
Haddam, Connecticut school board member
Chester Harris, March 15th, 2010:

In meeting with high school science teachers and school administrators: "I sort of got stuck on one thing with them, which was basically the teaching of evolution in the schools and how it tends to ride roughshod over the fact that various religions — Christian, Hebrew, Muslim — hold a theistic world view... *Evolution is basically an assumption that there is no God.*"



NOMA – Where the ceasefire is failing

Russell Humphreys:
Believes Bible where it
says “Six Days”, thinks
radio-decay products
accumulated in a short
time with Godly-increased
rates; God took care of the
excess Heat as well.

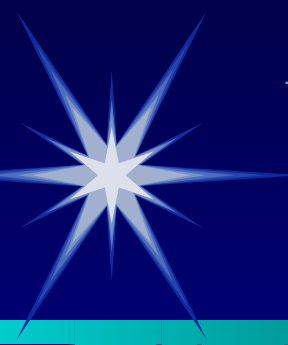


NOMA – Where the ceasefire is failing

Joe Renick of IDnet-NM:

“In this strange marriage of Genesis and Darwin, the logical possibilities are quite limited. Both may be wrong but both cannot be right. The theistic evolutionist assumes that both are right. ...

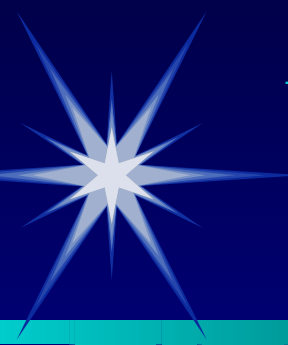




NOMA – Where the ceasefire is failing

Joe Renick of IDnet-NM:

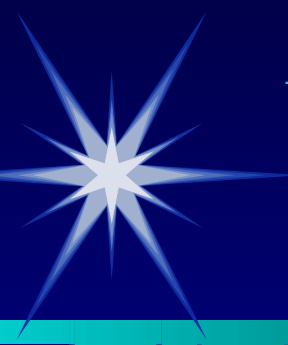
This reconciliation can only be achieved by stripping much, if not all, essential meaning from the first few chapters of Genesis and ignoring what naturalistic scientists say about evolution. ... Does theistic evolution make sense? No.”



NOMA – Where the ceasefire is failing

William Dembski, Discovery Institute+
“Evolution is the mainstay of an atheistic
worldview — is it a coincidence that the
day-job of the world’s most prominent
atheist (Richard Dawkins) is evolutionary
biology? ID, by challenging this
mainstay, fundamentally undermines an
atheistic worldview. ...”





NOMA – Where the ceasefire is failing

William Dembski, continued:

“It’s therefore ironic that theistic evolutionists fall all over themselves to support evolution, even arguing that it is more compatible with Christian theism than ID.”

Uncommon Descent Blog, March 2010



Taking Back the Enlightenment?

“From the sixth century up to the Enlightenment it is safe to say that the West was thoroughly imbued with Christian ideals and that Western intellectual elites were overwhelmingly Christian. False ideas that undermined the very foundations of the Christian faith (e.g., denying the resurrection or the Trinity) were swiftly challenged and uprooted. Since the enlightenment, however, we have not so much lacked the means to combat false ideas as the will and clarity.” [William A. Dembski and Jay Wesley Richards, *Unapologetic Apologetics*, Intervarsity Press, 2001, p. 20]

Dover 2005 ID Ruling

Judge John E. Jones III



“ID is not a new scientific argument, but is rather an old religious argument for the existence of God. He

[theologian John Haught] traced this argument back to at least Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century, who framed the argument as a syllogism: Wherever complex design exists, there must have been a designer; nature is complex; therefore nature must have had an intelligent designer. ...



Dover 2005 ID Ruling

Dr. Haught testified that Aquinas was explicit that this intelligent designer 'everyone understands to be God.' ... The syllogism described by Dr. Haught is essentially the same argument for ID as presented by defense expert witnesses Professors Behe and Minnich who employ the phrase 'purposeful arrangement of parts.'



Dover 2005 ID Ruling

“...anyone familiar with Western religious thought would immediately make the association that the tactically unnamed designer is God, as the description of the designer in *Of Pandas and People* (hereinafter 'Pandas') is a 'master intellect,' strongly suggesting a supernatural deity as opposed to any intelligent actor known to exist in the natural world.”



The Dividing Line...

“The diversity of Life
is due to a
purposeful process...”

Too Much *Religion*...

“The diversity of Life
is due to an *apparently*
purposeless process...”

“The diversity of Life
is due to a
purposeless process...”

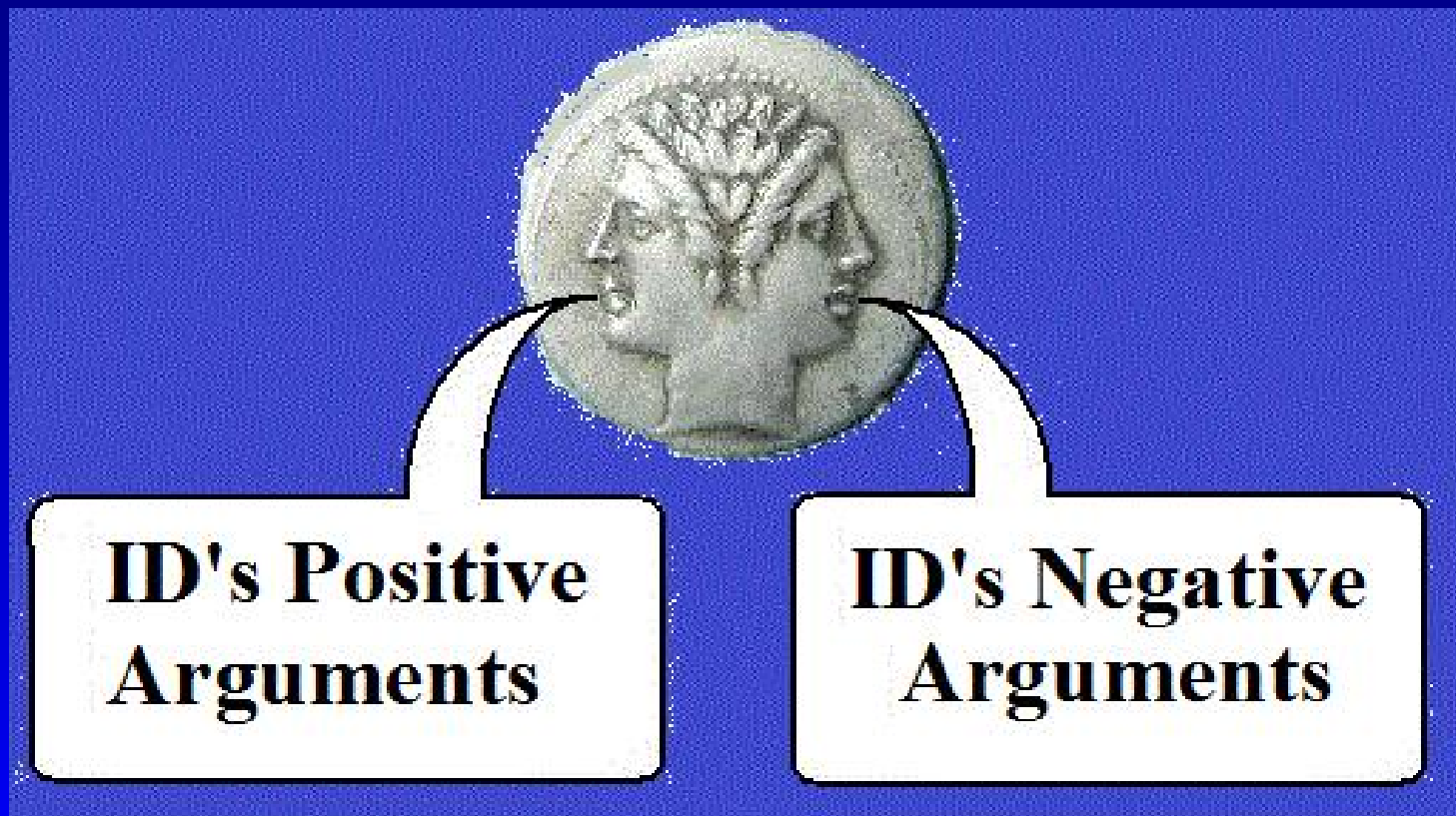
Too Much *Atheism*...

Scientifically Honest;
Leaves Room for
Religion (NOMA)...



But isn't ID “Science”?

There are TWO sides of ID...





The Two Sides of ID...

There are no *positive* statements in ID: *Who* the Designer is, *How* designs are downloaded, etc. In this sense, ID is NOT “science” at all. No matter how anything turns out, it can always be written off as “Designer's {*Mysterious*} Will.”

In this sense, ID is NOT “scientific.”



The Two Sides of ID...

The Negative side of ID - “*Evolution is wrong because...*” - CAN be tested, and is found wanting.

In this sense, ID *IS* “scientific.”

But not *logical* – it commits the Logical Fallacy of the “False Dilemma” : “If Evolution is demonstrated False, then Design must therefore be True.”



Any Particular Arguments?

Do you (class) have questions on any specific arguments against evolution? We've got examples of mutations/information, gaps in the fossil record, radiometric dating methods, genetic algorithms producing “Irreducible Complexity” and “Complex Specified Information”, and more...



A Little More on Definitions

Methodological Naturalism (or scientific naturalism) focuses on epistemology: This stance is concerned with knowledge: what are methods for gaining trustworthy knowledge of the natural world? It is an epistemological view that is specifically concerned with practical methods for acquiring knowledge, irrespective of one's metaphysical or religious views. It requires that hypotheses be explained and tested only by reference to natural causes and events. Explanations of observable effects are considered to be practical and useful only when they hypothesize natural causes (i.e., specific mechanisms, not indeterminate miracles). Methodological naturalism is the principle underlying all of modern science.

Philosophical Naturalism focuses on ontology: This stance is concerned with existence: what does exist and what does not exist? Naturalism is the metaphysical position that nature is all there is, and all basic truths are truths of nature.

ONE OF THE ABOVE IS WHAT WE ARE SPEAKING OF AS “SCIENCE” AND THE OTHER IS AN IDEOLOGY.



NOMA – A Wee Bit of History

The NOMA concept is not new. Is anyone surprised?

- Pre-Socratician Greeks expressed the essence of NOMA
- St. Augustine understood and endorsed the concept
- A famous Bishop of the Roman Catholic church (Oresme – 1320 – 1382) influenced the church to separate the understanding of nature from the faith of the church.



Steering to the More Modern, Western World and Science

St. Augustine: “It not infrequently happens that something about the earth, about the sky, about other elements of this world, about the motion and rotation or even the magnitude and distances of the stars, about definite eclipses of the sun and moon, about the passage of years and seasons, about the nature of animals, of fruits, of stones, and of other such things, may be known with the greatest certainty by reasoning or by experience, even by one who is not a Christian. It is too disgraceful and ruinous, though, and greatly to be avoided, that he [the non-Christian] should hear a Christian speaking so idiotically on these matters, and as if in accord with Christian writings, that he might say that he could scarcely keep from laughing when he saw how totally in error they are. In view of this and in keeping it in mind constantly while dealing with the book of Genesis, I have, insofar as I was able, explained in detail and set forth for consideration the meanings of obscure passages, taking care not to affirm rashly some one meaning to the prejudice of another and perhaps better explanation.”

– *De Genesi ad literam 1:19–20, Chapt. 19 [408]*



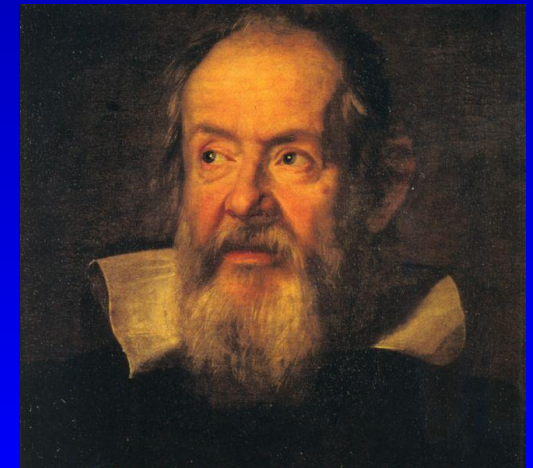
And Later in the Roman Catholic Church ...

Bishop Nicole Oresme: “There is no reason to take recourse to the heavens, the last refuge of the weak, or demons, or to our glorious God as if He would produce these effects directly, more so than those effects whose causes we believe are well known to us.”

[– *Livre du Ciel et du Monde* [ca 1370’s]

And then We Have the “Galileo Incident”

This was recorded on 6 May, 2005. Professor Tim Moy of the UNM History Department (History of Science specialist) was being interviewed by Dave Thomas and me (Kim Johnson) on the NMSR radio show, Science Watch, which we just ended on 6 March, 2010. The topic was Galileo. Tim was one of those rare individuals who can put together a decent picture by taking data from many different sources. A true synthesizer. He tragically drowned in July, 2007.

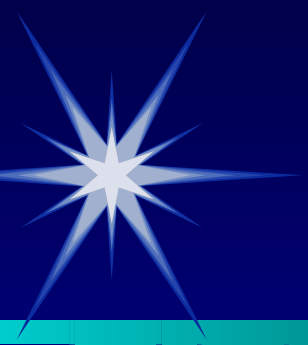




Conclusions (but not the end)

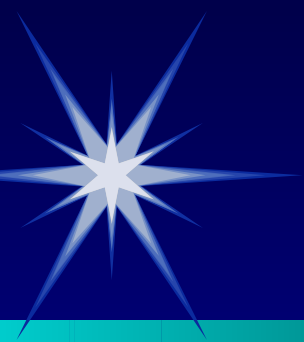
NOMA simply does not work with those religions (including eastern ones) as long as the religions' ideological dictates insist that the results of methodological naturalism are wrong, because these results are in conflict with the religion's "beliefs."

NOMA does work with those religions that do not insist on the above, but rather accept secular findings, as is. There are not many such religions, but there are a few.



Deep Questions

1. Is the NOMA concept compatible with the current western embodiment of ID creationism?
2. When a scientist says “science,” the meaning is almost always in the methodological naturalistic sense. What does a non-scientist (including most engineers, evangelical ministers, etc.) mean when they use the term “science?”
3. Very carefully – was the “Galileo Incident” with the church and the Inquisition a clear case of NOMA not being observed?
Or not?



Contact Information

Dave Thomas Email: nmsrdaveATswcp.com (Replace AT with @)
Phone: 505 869-9250
Mailing Address: PO Box 1017
Peralta, NM 87042

M. Kim Johnson Email: kimberATcomcast.net (Replace AT with @)
Phone: 505 897-3364
Mailing Address: 9906 Loretta NW
Albuquerque, NM 87114

Briefing Can be found at: <http://www.nmsr.org/noma.pdf>

Dr. Tim Moy Interview: <http://www.nmsr.org/podcast.htm>