

Creationism does not meet the requirements of a scientific theory

September 2000 - NMSR Rebuttal to CSFNM Essay

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This is Essay 2B (Response) in the NMSR/CSFNM Debate Series.

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Two hundred years ago the Creationist world-view predominated in the western world: The universe was roughly 10,000 years old and all species had been created simultaneously. The world was fixed, not evolving. As scientists looked at the world, however, physical evidence accumulated which indicated the prevailing worldview was incorrect. Earth was revealed to be much older than previously thought, and fossil evidence showed that various plant and animal species came into existence at different times, flourished, and then became extinct. In one hundred years the weight of physical evidence was sufficient to cause rejection of the Creationist view and adoption of the evolutionary view which now prevails, even though an absolute time scale wasn't achieved until the discovery of radioactivity.

To maintain a belief in the Creationist view, it's necessary to somehow discount the importance of physical evidence, precisely as Roger Lenard has done in his second essay where he tells us that "Creation scientists hold revealed Truth as supreme, other forms are subordinate." But there are more versions of revealed truth than can be counted. Abandoning physical evidence in favor of revelation is abandonment of Science. Not that there is any scientific objection to hypotheses drawn from religious sources, but there must be some criterion to accept or reject them.

In claiming that "Word" in the opening of John should be translated as "Information", Lenard also attacks the traditional interpretation of *Logos*, or *Word* ("In the beginning was the Word") as meaning the Universe was created with Wisdom and Rationality which were incarnated in Christ. That's a heavy price to pay simply to distinguish between information and inanimate matter.

If the universe were only 10,000 years old, as Lenard and CSFNM maintain, then some of Lenard's criticisms of scientific explanations would be valid. There wouldn't have been enough time for water to be created by nucleosynthesis or for evolutionary transitions to have occurred. But physical evidence clearly reveals the Creationist view to be incorrect. We can see enough water being created in the Orion Nebula to fill the Earth's oceans 60 times per day.⁽¹⁾ We can name over 500 species of mammal-like reptiles documenting the reptile to mammal transition. We can show that bacteria existed on Earth more than a billion years before more complex forms of life arose. There is a dried-up lake bed in Nevada that shows 110,000 layers of sediment, deposited one per year, documenting the adaptation of a marine stickleback fish to fresh water. That's a period of time equal to 10 times the Creationist age of the universe! In ignoring the evidence, Creationism is *anti* as well as *un* scientific.

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