



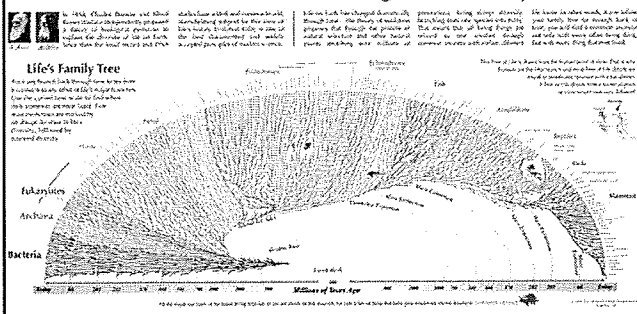
Evolution, Ecology & Faith: *The Catholic Difference*

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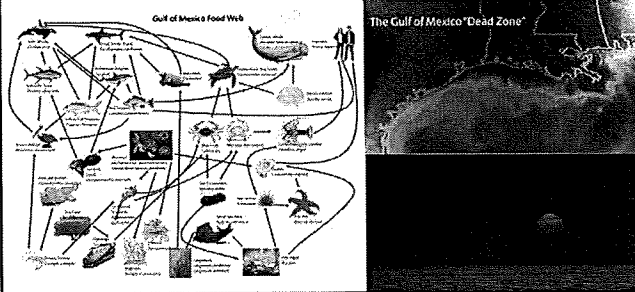
Evolution, Ecology & Faith: *The Catholic Difference*

1. What is Evolution? What is Ecology?
2. As Catholic educators, why should we be concerned about this?
3. Some Potential Pitfalls
4. The "Catholic Difference"
5. An Opportunity for Catholic Education

Evolution: life on Earth is one big extended family



What is Ecology?



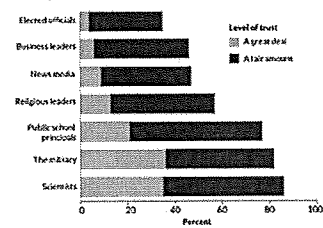
As Catholic Educators, Why Should We Be Concerned About This?

• Evolution vs. God film

Trust us
When it comes to overall confidence that professionals act in the public good, scientists scored the highest among respondents, followed closely by the military. Trust in the motivations of journalists and politicians trailed, by comparison.

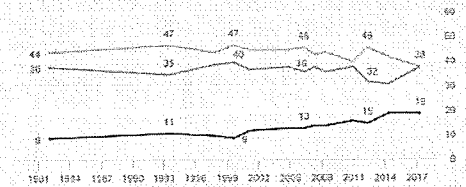
Science News, August 31, 2019, p. 5
Source: Pew Research Center Survey 2019

Which professionals do Americans trust most to act in the public interest?



Which of the following statements comes closest to your views on the origin and development of human beings?

- 1) Human beings developed over millions of years, but God guided this process. 2) Human beings developed over millions of years, but God had no part in this process. 3) God created man in present form. 4) Man's developed, with God guiding. 5) Man's developed, but God had no part in process. 6) God created man in present form.



GALLUP
<https://news.gallup.com/poll/210956/belief-creationist-view-humans-new-fossil.aspx>



The Ecological Indictment of Christian Anthropocentrism

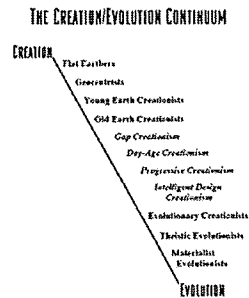
*On the subject of man-nature, the Biblical creation story of the **first chapter of Genesis**, the source of the most generally accepted description of man's roles and powers, . . . in its insistence upon domination and subjugation of nature, **encourages the most exploitative and destructive instincts in man rather than those that are deferential and creative.**"*

(Ian McHarg, *Design with Nature*, 1969, p. 26)

[illegible]

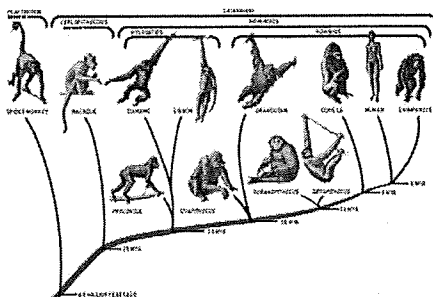
Seven Pitfalls

1. The Ideology of Material-ISM
2. The Question of Chance/Randomness
3. The Dual Problems of CreationISM and Intelligent Design-ISM
4. Evolution = the "Survival of the Fittest"

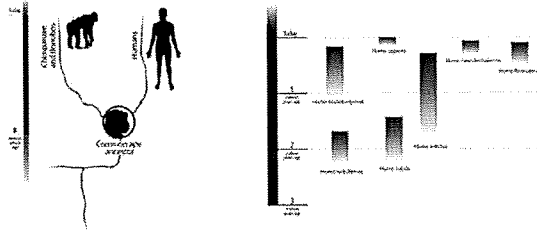


[http://www.elabz.com/van/Scott Continuum Creationism-Evolution.htm](http://www.elabz.com/van/Scott%20Continuum%20Creationism-Evolution.htm)

Pitfall 5: The Challenge of Hominization



Pitfall 5: The Challenge of Hominization



Smithsonian Institution, "What Does it Mean to Be Human,"
<http://humanorigins.si.edu/education/frequently-asked-questions>

Pitfall 6: "Difference in Degree" vs. "Difference in Kind"

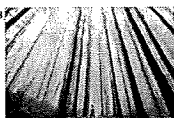
Charles Darwin



There is no fundamental difference between man and the higher mammals in their mental faculties...The difference in mind between man and the higher animals, great as it is, certainly is one of degree and not of kind.

Pitfall 7: Anthropocentrism vs. Biocentrism

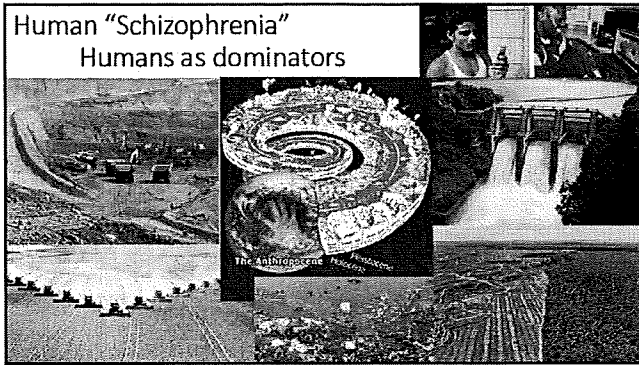
- False dilemma between the primacy of the person & the primacy of nature
- "This situation has led to a constant schizophrenia, wherein a technocracy which sees no intrinsic value in lesser beings coexists with the other extreme, which sees no special value in human beings." (US 118)

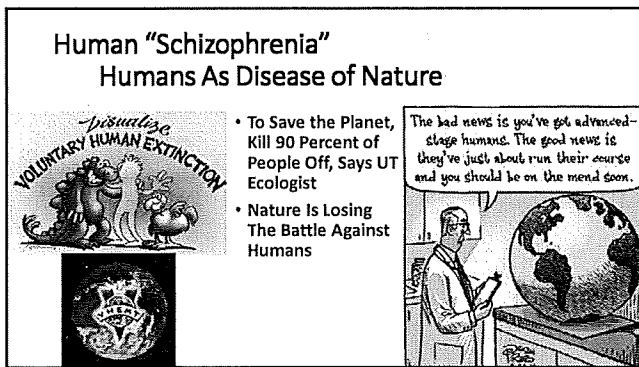


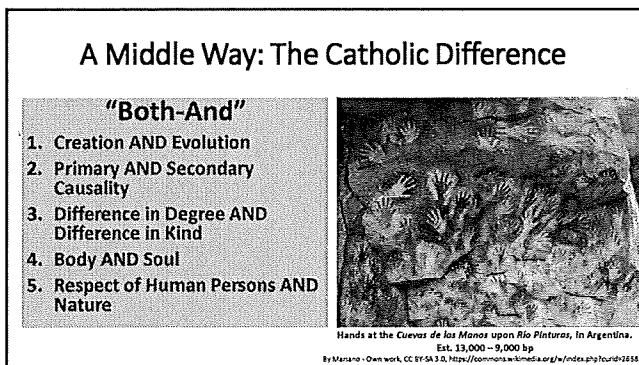
SUBDUE THE EARTH

Arday

You were designed to subdue the earth. God has provided you power to be victorious in all aspects of life. "God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'" Genesis 1:28

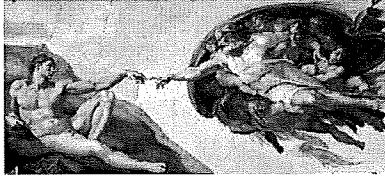






A Middle Way: The Catholic Difference #6

"There can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology." (LS 118)



The Awakening Slave, Michelangelo (1501)

"We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being."

Pope Francis, *Evangelium Gaudium* 88

A Middle Way: The Catholic Difference #7

**New Image for Humans:
Humans as Gardeners**




The Song of the Lark, Jules Adolphe Breton (1884)


An Opportunity for Catholic Education



- Teaching Evolution and Ecology as Instruments of the New Evangelization
- What does it mean to be a human person?
- What is my call and vocation in the created world?



An Opportunity for Catholic Education



Whenever nature, and human beings in particular, are seen merely as products of chance or an evolutionary determinism, our overall sense of responsibility wanes. On the other hand, seeing creation as God's gift to humanity helps us understand our vocation and worth as human beings.

With the Psalmist, we can exclaim with wonder: "When I look at your heavens, the work of your hands, the moon and the stars which you have established; what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?" (Ps 8:4-5).

(Pope Benedict XVI, World Day of Peace message: "If you want to cultivate peace, protect creation," January 1, 2010)

Helpful Resources

1. Christopher Baglow, *Faith, Science and Reason: Theology on the Cutting Edge* (2019, 2nd edition)
2. Sister Damien Marie Savino, FSE & John Hittinger, "Loss of Creation and Its Recovery Through Aquinas and Bonaventure," *New Blackfriars* (2015).
dms002@aquinas.edu
3. Sister Damien Marie Savino, FSE, "Atheistic Science: The Only Option?" *Logos: Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* (2009).
4. Nicanor Austriaco, O.P., et.al., *Thomistic Evolution: A Catholic Approach to Understanding Evolution in the Light of Faith* (2016).
5. Stacy Trasancos, *Particles of Faith: A Catholic Guide to Navigating Science* (2016)
6. Stephen Barr, *Modern Physics and Ancient Faith* (2003).
7. Smithsonian Institution, "What Does It Mean to Be Human,"
<http://humanorigins.si.edu/>.
8. University of California-Berkeley, "Understanding Evolution,"
<https://evolution.berkeley.edu/evolibrary/home.php>.
