

## Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion

Pennsylvania

Intelligent Design Theory Has No Scientific or Biblical Basis

**By Bob Enick**  
**Letter to the Editors**  
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As a conservative Christian who worships God as Creator and believes that the Bible is the word of God, I found it odd to be cheering the American Civil Liberties Union recently. Its efforts to fight the Dover school board's insertion of intelligent design into biology class are well justified ("Evolutionary Challenge," Dec. 15; "Teaching of 'Intelligent Design' Delayed," Dec. 23).

Dover school board member William Buckingham uses the classic creationist strategy of claiming that evolution is just a theory, just as intelligent design is a theory. Nonsense! What Buckingham doesn't know or won't tell you is that evolution by natural selection is a scientific theory that provides a comprehensive explanation of how life has changed as evidenced by the findings of anthropologists, archaeologists, biochemists, biologists, geneticists, zoologists, chemists and geologists. Like the atomic theory, plate tectonic theory and the theory of relativity, the theory of evolution is a powerful scientific model that makes sense of real data.

It has been scrutinized for more than a century and has emerged as the premier scientific explanation of how life has changed for the past 3 1/2 billion years. Intelligent design is a theory all right, but not a scientific theory. Intelligent design is a theory in the loosest sense of the word; it is a gut feeling, a guess, a hunch, a feeling, a conviction or a belief. Intelligent design simply states that if something is really complicated, there's a good chance that God did it supernaturally. It lacks the basic requirements of any scientific theory; it cannot be demonstrated, it cannot be falsified and it is not supported by evidence. Intelligent design may be fodder for a theology class, but it has no place in a biology class.

Nonetheless, I know why school boards may be tempted to adopt intelligent design. There are many famous evolutionists, such as Richard Dawkins, who have made no secret that they think that Christians are nitwits and the Bible is baloney. So what! Scientific advances are assessed by how well they correlate the data, regardless of political or religious leanings of the scientists involved in the discovery. That is why scientists of all faiths and scientists with no faith have recognized that evolution is indeed a great scientific theory. I find it very easy to sift the atheistic barbs from the sound science of scientists like Dawkins. If the Dover school board wants to protect the district's kids from such biases, however, that's perfectly understandable. They would be better off selecting sound evolution textbooks that contain no derogatory

remarks about God, faith or the Bible rather than polluting the classroom with pseudo-science.

Finally, the Dover school board and Dover alumni, such as Steve Farrell, may be surprised to find that intelligent design has no biblical basis. Read the 38th and 39th chapters of Job; you'll discover that God declares that He has given us absolutely no spiritual insight into how He created anything. Who are we to dictate to God that He could not have let life evolve naturally on this planet if that was His will? That's why I'm perfectly content to let scientists -- even the left-wing, liberal, atheistic ones -- tell me how God's universe unfolded for the past 14 billion years. Their scientific findings are a testament to His glory, even if some of them deny His very existence.

**BOB ENICK**

MacLeod Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering  
University of Pittsburgh  
Oakland