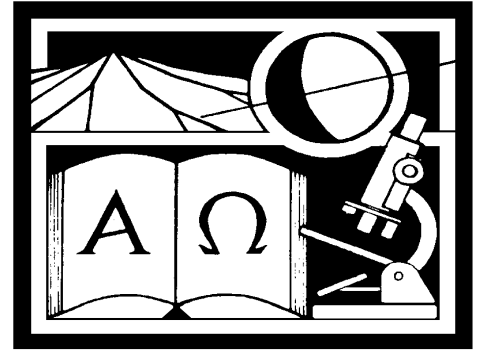


# Origins Insights

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE  
CREATION SCIENCE FELLOWSHIP



April 2000

## *The Myth of the Scopes Trial*

"I have had in mind writing a story on the article by Dr. Randy Moore from the American Biology Teacher for almost one year now, but other topics seemed more pressing. It seems that time is what is pressing at this time. I teach two classes that require much preparation each day and night and I am a busy track coach. [No, it is not true that school teachers have an easy job and work only 185 days a year!] John Clayton has been a fellow creationist friend for around thirty years and publishes a newsletter called "Does God Exist". John has graciously granted my permission to share these articles with our readers." **Bob Harsh**

From time to time in this journal, we have mentioned the fact that the Scopes trial of 1925 has been tremendously overblown. The trial was caused by the ACLU placing an ad in Tennessee newspapers offering to pay the expenses of any teacher willing to test the anti-evolution law that existed in Tennessee at that time. John Scopes was not a biology teacher, but a coach who substituted for two weeks for a science teacher named W. F. Ferguson. The whole trial was a publicity stunt concocted by a local businessman named George Rappleyea to attract people to Dayton, Tennessee. Local busi-

nessmen staged all kinds of stunts to keep the trial in the news. WGN, a radio station in Chicago, broadcast the entire trial—the first time a trial was broadcast on radio. Clarence Darrow asked for a guilty verdict for Scopes, prohibiting William Jennings Bryan from giving his closing statement and cross-examining Darrow. There was no "winner" of the trial. Like most debates, everyone seemed to feel their man won.

The problem with the Scopes trial has been and continues to be the play *Inherit the Wind*. This play was written in 1956 by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee as a reaction to the threat they saw to intel-

lectual freedom caused by the anti-Communist activity of the McCarthy era. By the playwright's own admission, the play has no real connection to what happened in the Scopes trial. They say:

*Inherit the Wind* is not history... Only a handful of phrases have been taken from the actual transcript of the famous Scopes Trial... *Inherit the Wind* does not pretend to be journalism. It is theater. It is not 1925.

In spite of this, we receive a constant flow of mail from students and teachers who believe it is history. A recent ad for the movie in

### MEETING INFORMATION

**HOST:** Dennis Wert

**TOPIC:** Living Things as Evidence for Creation

The living beings of the world around us show abundant evidence for design and purpose as well as the "curse" and the flood. Most biologists today look at the world around us and see only similarities as evidence for descent but creation biologists see in these living things evidence for design, degeneration, catastrophe and after their kind reproduction. These similarities and differences speak of the truth of the Genesis account of how and when the world was made.

**DATE:** Tuesday, April 18, 2000

**TIME:** 7:30 PM

**PLACE:** Mars CMA Church, 997 Route 228, Mars, PA, 16046.  
Church Phone: (724)776-9400

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video format that is all over the country says, "See the famous monkey trail that rocked America." The people who wrote "National Standards for United States History" recommend using the film as "a tool for understanding Bryan's thinking and fundamentalists' ideas." With all of this support, the problems of people correctly understanding what really happened in the Scopes trial are going to become worse and worse.

Dr. Randy Moore of the University of Louisville has done a great service in this matter by comparing the video of *Inherit the Wind* distributed by MGM Home Entertainment (copyright 1993) with the actual Scopes trial. We have taken Dr. Moore's analysis as printed in *The American Biology Teacher*, April, 1999, vol. 61, #4, pages 246-250 and rearranged it into a chart we hope will be useful to our readers.

## Movie = M Trial = T

**M:** The trial originates in Hillsboro (Dayton, Tennessee), a small southern town. The ACLU is not mentioned in the play or film.

**T:** The Scopes trial originated in New York City when the ACLU placed an ad in Tennessee's newspapers offering to pay the expenses of any teacher willing to test the Butler Law.

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**M:** A preacher, three business-men, and a photographer march through Hillsboro's deserted streets to Scopes' classroom, where Scopes is arrested.

**T:** No Clergy, or businessmen went to Scopes' classroom, and no one caught Scopes teaching that humans evolved from "a lower order of animals." Local citizens didn't know or care what Scopes taught. Scopes' indictment was a staged event. Although a local druggist (who

also chaired the school board) told a Chattanooga newspaper that Scopes had been arrested, he was never formally arrested. This is why, when writing about his experiences, Scopes always put arrested in quotation marks (Scopes & Presley 1997).

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** Scopes is a biology teacher who taught that humans evolved from a lower form of animals.

**T:** Scopes was not a biology teacher; he was a coach. Scopes substituted for two weeks when the regular science teacher (Mr. W. F. Ferguson) was ill.

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** The trial was driven by theological and intellectual issues. Initially, the potential economic benefits of the trial are dismissed [one businessman is asked when he last sold grits to a "smart aleck from New York," and another is asked when he last rented a room to a Frenchman]. Local businessmen realize the potential benefits of the trial only after learning that William Jennings Bryan will be involved in the case. ["The Lord has sent his right hand... [People] will come pouring out of the hills. This town will fill up like a rain barrel in a flood. This will put Hillsboro on the map."] Thereafter, economic benefits of the trial are occasionally mentioned but are not portrayed as being overly important.

**T:** The Scopes trial was a publicity stunt concocted to stimulate Dayton's economy; locals—most notably businessman George Rappleyea—wanted to use the trial to generate publicity that would attract business and industry to Dayton. Before the trial started, local businessmen staged various publicity stunts (e.g. fights at a local barbershop to keep the trial in the news).

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** Scopes' fiancée (Rachel Brown), a teacher who is the fundamentalist preacher's daughter, wants Scopes to recant. Scopes refuses.

**T:** Scopes had no fiancée, much less one wanting him to recant.

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** A newspaper reporter from the *Baltimore Herald* arranges Scopes to be defended by Darrow.

**T:** Darrow volunteered his services for Scopes' defense. This was the only time in his life that Darrow offered his services free of charge. Mencken was from the *Baltimore Sun*, not the *Baltimore Herald*.

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** Scopes is a central figure throughout the trial. He is referred to as a martyr.

**T:** Scopes was a relatively minor figure in the trial. On days that Scopes was late for the trial, the proceedings often started without him.

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**M:** Upon his arrival in Hillsboro (i.e., Dayton, Tennessee, "the buckle of the Bible belt"), Bryan is greeted by a parade and people singing "Give Me That Old Time Religion." Bryan gets a similar welcome at the courthouse on the first day of the trial. Darrow's arrival in Hillsboro is virtually unnoticed. When Darrow arrives at court, he is greeted by scowling, booing residents. People holding signs saying "Down with Darrow," "Atheists Go Back to Your Monkey," and "keep Satan Out of Hillsboro."

**T:** Darrow, like Bryan, was greeted warmly by Dayton's residents; both were given a welcoming dinner at Dayton's Progressive Club.

**M:** Local citizens are portrayed as fanatical, ignorant, mean, and threatening. Darrow insults the

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residents of Hillsboro.

**T:** The local citizens were pleasant to the defense. Darrow praised the people for having been "Treated better, kindlier," and more hospitably than I fancied would have been the case in the north." Journalist H. L. Mencken, not Darrow, offended the residents of Dayton.

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** Townspeople were led by Reverend Jeremiah Brown, a fanatical fundamentalist preacher. At the prayer meeting after the first day of the trial, Brown justifies his fanaticism by proclaiming that "Heaven has chosen us to show the way." Brown claims that Scopes offers nothing but sin, asks God to strike down Scopes and his sympathizers (including his daughter), and urges eternal damnation for Scopes. Bryan quotes Proverbs 11:29 as he intervenes to save Rachel from her fanatical father.

**T:** There was no such preacher leading the people against Scopes.

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**M:** Scopes' defense team consists only of Darrow, who is assisted by H. L. Mencken. The prosecutor's team consists of Bryan and a local attorney.

**T:** Both sides were represented by teams of attorneys. The counsel for the prosecution included Bryan, Bryan's son (William Jennings Bryan, Jr.), Ben McKenzie, J. Gordon McKenzie, A. T. Stewart, Wallace Haggard, and brothers Sue and Herbert Hicks. Counsel for the defense included Darrow, John R. Neal, Arthur Garfield Hays, Dudley Field Malone, W. O. Thompson, and F. B. McElwee, and was assisted by biblical authority Charles Potter. Mencken had no role in the defense team.

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**M:** Bryan condemns "godless sci-

ence" and claims that "scientism" is the "way of darkness."

**T:** Bryan enjoyed science, read about science, and was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He even supported the teaching of evolution, provided that humans were made exempt from the process.

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** Bryan betrays the confidence of Scopes' fiancée by forcing her to testify against Scopes, thereby making Scopes look like a nonbeliever. Bryan's fanatical examination of Rachel leaves her in tears.

**T:** No women participated in Scopes' trial. Bryan was courteous to witnesses; it was Darrow who was cited for contempt.

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**M:** A local farmer whose son had been condemned by Rev. Brown puts up his farm as guarantee to cover Darrow's citation for contempt of court.

**T:** The trial included no testimony about any deceased children of local residents. No local farmer offered to pay Darrow's fine. However, George Rappleyea, an architect of the trial, had decided to "show [the fundamentalist] up to the world" after hearing a fundamental preacher condemn a dead child because its parents hadn't had it baptized.

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** William Jennings Bryan and many of the citizens of Dayton are portrayed as stupid, fanatical, uncouth idiots, bigots, and villains. It is hard to watch *Inherit the Wind* without detesting Bryan's fanaticism.

**T:** Williams Jennings Bryan was a likable, generous, kind, and intelligent man. He was the greatest orator of his time and wanted to be friends with Scopes despite their different opinions about Tennessee's

Butler Law (I.e., the recently passed law under which Scopes was prosecuted). Bryan had served as Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson where he advocated progressive ideas such as an income tax, the free and unlimited coinage of silver, the creation of the Department of Labor, and women's suffrage.

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**M:** Expert witnesses are not allowed to testify.

**T:** Twelve scientists and theologians were allowed to make statements as part of the record presented by the defense. None of the expert witnesses was cross-examined.

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**M:** Darrow requests permission to withdraw from the case.

**T:** Darrow never requested permission to withdraw from the case.

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**M:** Local citizens burn Scopes and Darrow in effigy, shout at Scopes in jail, and threaten to lynch Scopes while "Glory, Glory Hallelujah" plays in the background.

**T:** Local citizens didn't burn Scopes and Darrow in effigy or threaten to lynch Scopes. In fact, citizens of Dayton liked Scopes, and Scopes greeted people coming into town for the trial. There was no morally outraged posse of citizens in Dayton. Scopes was never in jail.

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**M:** When called by Darrow as a witness, Bryan claims that he takes every word of the Bible literally.

**T:** Bryan volunteered to Darrow that he didn't believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible

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**M:** Bryan says he has not read (and would not read) Darwin's *Origin*.

**T:** Bryan read *Origin* in 1905; he was familiar with Darwin's

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work.

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**M:** Darrow asks Bryan about sex in the Bible. Bryan tells Darrow that all sex is sin.

**T:** There was no mention of sex or sin at Scopes' trial.

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** Bryan claims that creation occurred at 9:00 a.m. on 23 October 4004 BC as proposed by Bishop Ussher.

**T:** Bryan didn't claim to know the age of the earth. When cross-examined by Darrow, Bryan handled most of the questions well.

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**M:** Darrow vigorously defends Scopes.

**T:** Darrow asks for a guilty verdict.

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**M:** Bryan's wife questions Bryan and his actions.

**T:** Bryan and his wife were on good terms; she didn't question him. Bryan's wife was a semi-invalid for whom Bryan was protective.

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**M:** After his conviction, Scopes loses his teaching job.

**T:** Scopes' job remained open to him. He chose to leave Dayton for graduate school.

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**M:** When the verdict is announced, Bryan becomes vindictive and complains about the paltry \$100 fine levied against Scopes. Bryan wants a "More drastic punishment."

**T:** No one cared about the fine levied against Scopes; this lack of concern with the fine (and the technical violation of the law that resulted) was the basis for Scopes' conviction being later overturned by the Tennessee Supreme Court. Bryan offered to pay Scopes' fine.

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** Protesting Scopes' light punishment, Bryan throws a fit and tries to make a closing speech

in the courtroom to regain people's respect. However, he is blocked by the judge, who abruptly ends the trial. After the court is adjourned, Bryan screams his closing remarks.

**T:** Bryan wasn't driven to insanity or despair in the courtroom. Darrow's plea for guilty verdict prohibited Bryan from giving his closing statements and cross-examining Darrow. Bryan did not get to deliver his closing statement—a statement that he felt was his life's "mountain peak."

\*\*\*\*\*

**M:** Bryan dies in the courtroom.

**T:** Bryan died in Dayton five days after the trial a few blocks up the street from the courthouse. Although Bryan was an ardent pacifist, he was given a hero's burial in Arlington National Cemetery. (Bryan had served as a colonel in the U.S. Army during the Spanish-American War, but he never saw combat.)

### INTERESTING QUOTE FROM MARILYN VOSSAVANT.

*Parade* magazine has a regular column by this lady who is highly respected for her high I.Q. She made an interesting comment recently when asked about the evolution decision in Kansas. "I think it's a public-relations setback for the creationists, because it makes them look guilty of selective reasoning. That is, it doesn't make sense to believe in only those scientific conclusions that don't clash with one's personal faith and then to discourage the teaching of the rest. But before castigating creationists for trying to combine church and state, let's consider just how crazy some 'scientific' theories look.

"Evolution is easy for both scientists and nonscientists to support, but the Big Bang theory, for example, was also an important deletion in the Kansas decision. In essence, the theory holds that billions of years ago, everything in the uni-

verse was contained in an area smaller than the head of a pin (!) and that this minuscule speck of unbelievably dense and incredibly hot matter suddenly exploded violently. That sounds just plain nuts, right?

"But do you believe it? If so, how do you support your belief that the entire cosmos was once smaller than a polka dot? (With a strong line of reasoning. Some solid evidence? Anything at all?) If you cannot, welcome to the world of faith: You're accepting what you've been told by those you respect. And that's what creationists do. They just respect different folks."

—Reference: *Parade*, November 14, 1999, page 20

### MORE VERTEBRATES IN EARLIEST ROCKS.

One of the problems in the traditional Neo-Darwinistic model of amoeba to man is the fact that the fossil record does not support the theory of simple to complex. We have noted in past issues of this journal the fact that the trilobite, an index fossil for the Cambrian period (the period when life first became highly abundant on the earth) had a highly complex eye. We have also pointed out that there are a number of back-boned animals that appear very early in the fossil record.

In *Science News* (November 6, 1999, page 292) is an article about a fossil called *Mylokunmingia* and another called *Haikouichthys* which have all the properties of chordates but are in rocks that are 530 million years old. This article agrees with the point that we have made in the past that all life groups appear at the same time in the fossil record—a point also made in the biblical record. The article says that "...fossils of two fish...push the origin of the vertebrates back to the riotous bash when almost all other animal groups emerged in the geological record."

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## **Attention: Tape Orders**

For those who are unable to attend our monthly meetings. In response to requests, we are making available tapes and study notes from the following meetings for 1999. The tapes are 90 minutes long and include the very extensive set of overheads and notes used by the speakers for these presentations.

Prices are: \$6.00 for tape and notes + 1.00 shipping. Order by title given below by check, Visa, Mastercard or cash at the meeting.

**Jan 99:** "Developing the creation model for yourself" by Robert Walsh. A how-to-guide on doing Biblical creation studies at home and studying the Bible in general. Excellent resource and guide.

**Feb 99:** "The age of the earth. What does the Bible say?" by Robert Walsh and Don Schell. An in depth scripture study of two of the most popular compromise explanations for genesis account of origins given in the church. Learn about the day/age and gap theories.

**Mar 99:** "Rocks around the clock" - Chuck Danley. What does the Bible say about the original created geology of the world and do any of those features remain on the earth today?

**May 99:** "The pre-flood world" - Robert Walsh and

Henry Jackson. A close look at the Biblical descriptions of the pre-fall and pre-flood world in the areas of climate, geology, anthropology, and religion. A discussion of the zodiac and its relationship to the Bible is included in this lively presentation.

**Jun 99:** "Noah's Ark - Robert Walsh and Jeff Lawther. This presentation developed the Biblical framework regarding the Ark and Flood, examining the sequence and duration of Noah's Flood. The Biblical texts that discuss the sources of the Flood waters were examined along with the data provided for the Ark itself. Jeff and Bob examined some of the frequent questions that often arise when discussing Noah's Ark. These questions include (1) Was the Ark large enough to repopulate the world with all of the know extinct and extant creatures?; (2) How could fresh and salt water fish exist in the same ocean?; (3) Was Noah's Flood local or global in extent?; (4) If the Ark existed, could it be sea worthy? (5) How could Noah feed and care for all of the required animals while on the Ark?; and more...

### **ATTENTION:**

*We offer childcare service for ages 3-8 in an attempt to include Mom's and Dad's in the Creation Science Fellowship meetings. Come join us!*

**Aug 99:** "The Dead Speak" - Dennis E. Wert. This talk examined the effect of the flood on living things. In particular, what was the impact of the world wide flood of Noah on all the living creatures on the earth at the time of that flood. We looked at the questions of evidences for the flood in the fossil record and effect of the flood on the survival of the animals taken on the ark and those that were not taken. This lively talk had a number of good questions and answers at the end.

## **Email Preferences**

We are seeking input on ways of disseminating this newsletter. If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, let us know at [csf@trfn.clpgh.org](mailto:csf@trfn.clpgh.org). Please let us know what format you would like to receive this document—Word Perfect, MS Word, RTF, etc... Thank you!

## **AFTER EDEN**

by Dan Lietha



**A lot has changed since Eden- including opossums.**

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**Meeting Topics for the Calendar Year 2000**

**MAY 16:** Geological Evidences for Creation and the Flood—Chuck Danley

**JUNE 20:** Evidence for a Young Earth—Jeff Lawther

**JULY 18:** Anthropological Evidence for Creation and the Flood—Reid Moon

**AUGUST 15:** Fossil Evidence for the Flood—Robert Ivey

**SEPTEMBER 22:** SPECIAL SATURDAY FIELD TRIP MEETING; Empirical Evidence for the Flood: Tour of the Carnegie Museum—hosted by Dr. Kurt Wise (Proposed)

**OCTOBER 17:** Mankind Evidence for being Made In God's Image—Robert Walsh

**NOVEMBER 21, 2000:** Evidence for the Design of the Physical Man—Robert Harsh

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