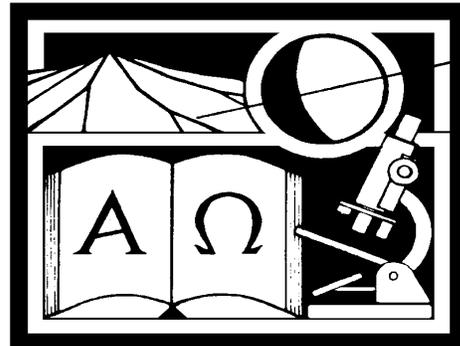


# Origins Insights

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE  
CREATION SCIENCE FELLOWSHIP



November 1999

## Kansas School Board Controversy: Great For Biblical Naturalism!

By Bob Harsh

Last month we rejoiced in the opportunity to actually be able to present the side of biblical naturalism to the forum of public debate. This has been made possible, in part, due to the courageous efforts of our colleagues in the great state of Kansas, where, it seems like, a new experiment is being suggested for Kansas's public school students. They will, if their teachers and local school board allows them to, be able to receive the ground-breaking **knowledge** that Darwinian evolution may not be scientific fact, but merely a hypothesis that may not even be scientifically valid! As a public school teacher, I welcome Kansas' experiment. During my thirty-two years of teaching I have been required to incorporate many changes, the latest being "outcome based education"; oh excuse my political incorrectness, "**strategic planning**"! I stand by my hope that this controversy will stir up public debate. But more important to the **manner** of teaching the *validity* of evolution, is debate among educational and scientific professionals in the fields of biology, geology and astronomy that I hope will happen.

Most public school teachers are very unimpassioned with teaching much about evolution because they don't agree that it is "the great overriding theme" that helps us too

properly understand all of biology. It is true that they teach evolution as it comes up as a unit in the course they are teaching. But it is not something most teachers dwell on week in and week out. Most teachers have not given the idea *that evo-*

*lution should be questioned* because they have never been exposed to any alternative during their public school and professional training. The debate that can occur from the present controversy may afford this teacher their first opportunity to see

### MEETING INFORMATION

**HOST:** Robert Walsh

**TOPIC:** Doctrine of Creation

Creation: What's All the FUSS???

Since the Kansas State Science Curriculum Board's decision, the creation/evolution debate has been "hot and heavy" and the media is now once again quite interested in the topic - so the topic still rages on like a tempest over the open sea of American culture. Nevertheless, there are still many among conservative Christendom that have not "seen the forest for the trees" and remain either ambivalent or even in opposition to the "orthodox" doctrine of creation. In this presentation, Mr. Robert Walsh will examine what has been given up by those who have abandoned the doctrine of creation. Bob will examine biblical areas that are effected by abandoning the doctrine of creation. Some of these topics are (1) the concept of Freedom, (2) developing a proper view of biblical prophecy (eschatology), (3) beginning a proper understanding of the great doctrines of election and predestination, (4) understanding Christ's atonement, (5) the veracity of scripture, (6) the need for the historicity of the Fall, and a host of other fascinating topics.

If you have low blood pressure and need a "shot in the arm" this is the presentation is for you! There are many people running about claiming to be both "Christian" and "creationist" when in fact they deny both the creation and its Creator. You definitely will want to attend this exciting presentation.

**Don't forget the meeting date has been changed to November 23rd so mark your calendars.**

**DATE:** Tuesday, November 23, 1999

**TIME:** 7:30 PM

**PLACE:** Mars CMA Church - Phone: (724) 776-9400

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our side of the question! I hope and pray that the evolutionary naturalism establishment doesn't catch on and allow the controversy to die. As we have opportunity, we need to stir the fire. An indirect offshoot of the controversy has been the opportunity for CSF member, Dr. Steve Rodabaugh to address a national conference of newspaper opinion editors in Pittsburgh on the *scientific validity* of creationism. Another member, Bob Walsh addressed the Jefferson Forum with on the question of whether creationist ideas should be taught in public schools. Wayne Frair tried to promote the dialog by way of a letter to the editor of *Nature*. Dr. Frair's letter is included for your enlightenment. I think you will find his plea is for the evolutionary establishment to allow the people of Kansas to exercise reason rather than dogma in the science education of their children.

"For your interest here is the message I sent to "Nature" and forwarded to the governor of Kansas.

Dear Editor,

Recently both the scientific and popular presses have presented a lot of flap regarding the "Kansas Science Education Standards of 11 August 1999. We have read statements saying that what Kansas did was like cutting off a person's leg and asking him to run a race, or that now education in Kansas will be like teaching English without any verbs. So I obtained a copy of the Kansas standards, and I find that they refer to evolution more than one dozen times with very good definitions of microevolution and macroevolution. Regarding life science in grades 9-12 it is stated that all students should develop an understanding of the cell, "molecular basis of heredity, biological evolution, interdependence of organisms, matter, energy, and organization in living systems, and the behavior of

organisms." For earth and space science "in grades 9-12, students should develop an understanding of energy in the Earth system, geochemical cycles, the origin and evolution of the Earth system, and the origin and evolution of the universe."

*"We want to teach good biology. In order to do that, we have to teach evolution."*

So it seems to me that we have been witnessing a sensationalizing (and even politicizing) of what is a basically sober and sensible document. I hope that the scientific community will back off and allow the people of Kansas peacefully to carry on their science programs. Sincerely yours, Wayne Frair, Ph.D., Professor of Biology, The King's College, 350 Fifth Avenue, 15th Fl. New York, NY, 10118."

I would like to next present information I received from David Nusbickel, who is a CSF member who lives in the state of Iowa. The first article should give you an idea of the freedom Kansas's public school teachers have to teach evolution as a very important concept.

THE BALTIMORE SUN, September 20, 1999, Monday, P.4A

HEADLINE: Teachers in Kan. vow to keep study of evolution; State's school board decided to omit subject from science standards.

SOURCE: KNIGHT RIDDER/ TRIBUNE

HAYS, Kan. With the roar of a life-size animatronic Tyrannosaurus rex echoing in the background, Kansas biology teachers issued a loud statement of their own Saturday: They vowed to continue teaching evolution in the classroom, despite its omission from new state science standards. "We want to teach good science," Topeka West High School teacher Lisa Volland told nearly 40 instructors at the Kansas Association of Biology Teachers' fall conference in the Sternberg Museum of Natural History. "We want to teach good biology. In order to do that, we have to teach evolution."

The state board of education's decision Aug. 11 drew national and international attention to Kansas. Saturday, TV crews from "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" and a CBS "Sunday Morning" hovered around the museum. Several teachers said the new standards are likely to persuade teachers to become more effective at teaching evolution. That was no surprise to state board member Mary Douglass Brown, who said she doesn't expect districts to change their curricula or stop teaching evolution.

Before the vote, teachers took for granted that students and the public knew that evolution was a scientific theory based on physical evidence, said Ken Bingman of Shawnee Mission West High School in Mission, Kan. But the debates ignited by the board's discussion and approval of the science standards demonstrated that at least some people view evolution more as a belief system placing it on the same plane as religious teachings.

*[Allow me to interrupt this article. Bingman and the author of this newspaper account are exactly right on two counts! Both evolution and creation are based primarily on the belief systems of their proponents. Secondly, both evolution and creation seek to use physical evidence to*

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*support their conclusions. We need to remind ourselves that both are forced to use forensic evidence. Bob Harsh]*

By infusing the new science standards with language that describes the nature of science as finding a "logical explanation" for how things came to be, "you change that sentence from being about science to being about philosophy," said Steve Case, chairman of Citizens for Science, a grassroots organization created to promote the teaching of evolution in Kansas schools.

"We've got some damage control to do," acknowledged Richard Schrock, a professor of biology education at Emporia State University. Schrock said the association wanted to send a strong message to young biology teachers who aren't sure how to respond to the state board's decision.

*[Another interruption. This kind of pressure should help you to understand how the inertia of the evolutionary establishment is maintained and why young biology teachers grow into old biology teachers, having taught evolution as fact throughout their teaching careers. Bob Harsh]*

The state board's action leaves the decision on teaching evolution up to local school boards. Speakers at the conference said some districts may face pressure from parents to include creationism in the local curriculum, and teachers will have to help protect the soundness of the curriculum.

The approved document "doesn't demand equal time for creationism," Schrock said.

I think you will enjoy another article, from a different point of view.

THE SATURDAY OKLAHOMAN,  
September 18, 1999, Saturday

## POINT OF VIEW

### HEADLINE:

Biologists eager to publish

BYLINE: Philip E. Isett

THE recent news surge over a controversial decision by the Kansas Board of Education reflects just one difficulty now facing advocates of

*"Evolution is  
the single  
most impor-  
tant concept  
in biology."*

the theory of evolution.

The emergence of the argument that there is no actual scientific proof of evolution really seems to have set evolutionists back on their heels. The argument has been around for many years, and is based in part on the admissions of a tiny band of honest evolutionists. But it has not been played up adequately by creationists until the last few years.

One mark of the power of this argument has been the emergence of the plaintive counter argument, "Evolution is the single most important concept in biology." Therefore, we are told, to deprive schoolchildren of being propagandized for evolution is to deprive them of learning biology.

The weakness of this claim should be clear: Evolution is the single most important concept because it is biology's unifying theory. But why? Because biologists, eager to get into print in scholarly journals, shape their articles to conform to evolutionary theory or at least to mention it. If every article is written to include the theory of evolution,

then of course evolution will become the unifying theory of 20th Century biology. That only means that evolution is agreed upon, not that it is true. Only the nonexistent experimental or observational proof could demonstrate that.

A result of the devastating creationist attack on lack of proof is a return to the use of an old defense, the non sequitur of micro (or horizontal) evolution as a supposed proof of macro (or vertical) evolution.

A recent news story by Robert S. Boyd of Knight Ridder newspapers shows how a gullible journalist can be used by an evolutionist ideologue to present this false defense as unquestioned truth. Boyd writes of experiments by Richard Lenski and Santiago Elena at Michigan State University and by Michael Travisano at the University of Houston. All are real experiments that demonstrate adaptation within species of bacteria, but they no more prove the evolution of life from non-life or of more complex organisms from simpler ones than does the development of both Chihuahuas and Great Danes by human breeders. Both are dogs, but obviously different, and examples of adaptation within their species.

Nonetheless, Boyd presents all this with the usual disdain journalists display for creationists: "While evolutionists and creationists battle in the headlines, scientists are watching evolution actually take place under their microscopes. They are demonstrating in their laboratories that evolution is real and not just a 'theory' unsupported by factual evidence." Lenski, who was interviewed for the story, caps his statement by saying, "Biological evolution hasn't stopped and it will never stop, even if some people want to put their heads in the sand and pretend it doesn't exist."

He would have done better to  
*(Continued on page 4)*

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have kept on with his bacteriological experiments and stayed out of the world of propaganda. Perhaps eventually his bacteria would turn into elephants. Now there would be a proof of evolution! Isett, who occasionally writes on this issue, is an editor at The Oklahoman.

As you can see, the hornets' nest has been stirred. Let's keep pestering the hornets. Even as I was writing this article I received some more excellent information on this topic, so I hope you will bear with me as I devote one more issue to this topic in December.

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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...

**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.

[Note from the editor—the following article was pulled from the Answers In Genesis Webpage at the following url:  
<http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs/4159.asp>]

## " . . . sensationalistic, unsubstantiated, tabloid journalism."

Smithsonian critiques National Geographic Society's claims about dinosaur to bird evolution in an open letter

**DISCLAIMER:** We are publishing this article for your information only. Answers in Genesis is not affiliated with and does not necessarily endorse the views of any individual or organization mentioned in this letter.

1 November 1999

OPEN LETTER TO:

Dr. Peter Raven, Secretary

PRaven@nas.org  
Committee for Research and Exploration  
National Geographic Society  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Peter,

I thought that I should address to you

the concerns expressed below because your committee is at least partly involved and because you are certainly now the most prominent scientist at the National Geographic Society.

With the publication of "Feathers for T. rex?" by Christopher P. Sloan in its November issue, National Geographic

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(Continued from page 4)

has reached an all-time low for engaging in sensationalistic, unsubstantiated, tabloid journalism. But at the same time the magazine may now claim to have taken its place in formal taxonomic literature.

Although it is possible that Mr. Czerkas "will later name" the specimen identified on page 100 as *Archaeoraptor liaoningensis*, there is no longer any need for him to do so.

Because this Latinized binomial has apparently not been published previously and has now appeared with a full-spread photograph of the specimen "accompanied by a description or definition that states in words characters that are purported to differentiate the taxon," the name *Archaeoraptor liaoningensis* Sloan is now available for purposes of zoological nomenclature as of its appearance in National Geographic (International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, Article 13a, i). This is the worst nightmare of many zoologists---that their chance to name a new organism will be inadvertently scooped by some witless journalist. Clearly, National Geographic is not receiving competent consultation in certain scientific matters.

Sloan's article explicitly states that the specimen in question is known to have been illegally exported and that "the Czerkases now plan to return it to China." In Washington, in June of 1996, more than forty participants at the 4th International Meeting of the Society of Avian Paleontology and Evolution, held at the Smithsonian Institution, were signatories to a letter to the Director of the Chinese Academy of Sciences that deplored the illegal trade in fossils from China and encouraged the Chinese government to take further action to curb this exploitation.

There were a few fossil dealers at that meeting and they certainly got the message. Thus, at least since mid-1996 it can hardly have been a secret to anyone in the scientific community or the commercial fossil business that fossils from Liaoning offered for sale outside

of China are contraband.

Most, if not all, major natural history museums in the United States have policies in effect that prohibit their staff from accepting any specimens that were not legally collected and exported from the country of origin. The National Geographic Society has not only supported research on such material, but has sensationalized, and is now exhibiting, an admittedly illicit specimen that would have been morally, administratively, and perhaps legally, off-limits to researchers in reputable scientific institutions.

Prior to the publication of the article "Dinosaurs Take Wing" in the July 1998 National Geographic, Lou Mazatenta, the photographer for Sloan's article, invited me to the National Geographic Society to review his photographs of Chinese fossils and to comment on the slant being given to the story. At that time, I tried to interject the fact that strongly supported alternative viewpoints existed to what National Geographic intended to present, but it eventually became clear to me that National Geographic was not interested in anything other than the prevailing dogma that birds evolved from dinosaurs.

Sloan's article takes the prejudice to an entirely new level and consists in large part of unverifiable or undocumented information that "makes" the news rather than reporting it. His bald statement that "we can now say that birds are theropods just as confidently as we say that humans are mammals" is not even suggested as reflecting the views of a particular scientist or group of scientists, so that it figures as little more than editorial propagandizing. This melodramatic assertion had already been disproven by recent studies of embryology and comparative morphology, which, of course, are never mentioned.

More importantly, however, none of the structures illustrated in Sloan's article that are claimed to be feathers have actually been proven to be feathers. Saying that they are is little more than wishful thinking that has been

presented as fact. The statement on page 103 that "hollow, hairlike structures characterize protofeathers" is nonsense considering that protofeathers exist only as a theoretical construct, so that the internal structure of one is even more hypothetical.

The hype about feathered dinosaurs in the exhibit currently on display at the National Geographic Society is even worse, and makes the spurious claim that there is strong evidence that a wide variety of carnivorous dinosaurs had feathers. A model of the undisputed dinosaur *Deinonychus* and illustrations of baby tyrannosaurs are shown clad in feathers, all of which is simply imaginary and has no place outside of science fiction.

The idea of feathered dinosaurs and the theropod origin of birds is being actively promulgated by a cadre of zealous scientists acting in concert with certain editors at Nature and National Geographic who themselves have become outspoken and highly biased proselytizers of the faith. Truth and careful scientific weighing of evidence have been among the first casualties in their program, which is now fast becoming one of the grander scientific hoaxes of our age---the paleontological equivalent of cold fusion. If Sloan's article is not the crescendo of this fantasia, it is difficult to imagine to what heights it can next be taken. But it is certain that when the folly has run its course and has been fully exposed, National Geographic will unfortunately play a prominent but unenviable role in the book that summarizes the whole sorry episode.

Sincerely,

Storrs L. Olson  
Curator of Birds  
National Museum of Natural History  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, DC 20560

Ph. 202-357-33212  
FAX 1-202-633-8084  
email: olson.storrs@nmnh.si.edu

**WINTER WEATHER  
SCHEDULE CHANGES:**

If the monthly meeting will be cancelled - or still go on as scheduled – due to any weather related problem, please call the CSF phone number at **412-341-4908** after 12 noon on the day of the monthly meeting and there will be a message on our answering machine indicating any cancellation or a confirmation of the meeting as scheduled. If the weather looks bad and you have a question about the meeting, please call after 12 PM to confirm. Thanks.

The Answers In Genesis Conference was held at the St John Arena in Steubenville, OH. on November 12th and 13th.

**[www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org)**

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**ATTENTION**

**FREE** childcare is provided at every CSF meeting.



**Creation Science Fellowship, Inc.** newsletter is published monthly.

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