

# What Everyone Should Know about Evolution and Creationism

- Science is a way of discovering the causes of physical processes - the best way yet conceived.
- Scientific theories are critically tested and well supported ideas about the causes of physical processes.
- Science depends upon intellectual honesty – putting aside preconceptions and evaluating the evidence on its merits
- Evolution is a scientific theory

- Evolution is an explanation of the similarities and differences of living things in terms of physical processes - genetics, biochemistry, development, physiology, ecology, mutation, natural selection.
- The idea that evolution has occurred has been compared with a vast amount of data from biology, paleontology, geology, chemistry, and physics - it has not been found wanting.
- Within the fields of science, the theory of evolution is accepted - it is not controversial.

# Scientific Organizations That have Issued Statements in Support of Evolution:

- Academy Of Science Of The Royal Society Of Canada
- Alabama Academy Of Science
- American Anthropological Association
- American Anthropological Association
- **American Association For The Advancement Of Science**
- American Association Of Physical Anthropologists
- American Astronomical Society
- American Geophysical Union
- American Institute Of Biological Sciences
- American Astronomical Society
- American Society Of Biological Chemists
- American Chemical Society
- American Geological Institute
- American Psychological Association
- American Physical Society
- American Society Of Parasitologists
- Association for Women Geoscientists
- Australian Academy of Science
- California Academy Of Sciences
- Ecological Society of America
- Genetics Society of America
- Geological Society Of America
- Geological Society of Australia
- Georgia Academy Of Science
- History of Science Society
- Iowa Academy Of Science
- Kentucky Academy Of Science
- Kentucky Paleontological Society
- **Louisiana Academy Of Sciences**
- **National Academy Of Sciences**
- North American Benthological Society
- North Carolina Academy Of Science
- **New Orleans Geological Society**
- New York Academy Of Sciences
- Ohio Academy Of Science
- Ohio Math and Science Coalition
- Oklahoma Academy Of Sciences
- **Sigma Xi, Louisiana State University Chapter**
- Society For Amateur Scientists
- Society For Integrative and Comparative Biology
- Society For The Study Of Evolution
- Society Of Systematic Biologists
- Society Of Vertebrate Paleontology
- Southern Anthropological Society
- Virginia Academy Of Science
- West Virginia Academy Of Science

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- Within the mainstream branches of religion, the theory of evolution is not controversial.

# Religious Organizations That Have Issued Statements in Support of the Scientific Theory of Evolution:

- American Jewish Congress
- Center For Theology And The Natural Sciences
- Central Conference Of American Rabbis
- Episcopal Bishop Of Atlanta
- **General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church**
- **The General Convention Of The Episcopal Church**
- Lexington Alliance Of Religious Leaders
- **The Lutheran World Federation**
- **Roman Catholic Church**
- Unitarian Universalist Association
- United Church Board For Homeland Ministries
- **United Methodist Church**
- **United Presbyterian Church In The U.S.A.**

Source: “Voices for Evolution” - National Center for Science Education  
<http://www.ncseweb.org/>

- The idea that evolution has produced biological diversity is opposed by fundamentalist and evangelical branches of Christianity - They insist that the Bible is literally correct or they insist man is a special case and could not have evolved.
  - A modern world was created in six days
  - Eve was created from Adam's rib
  - Noah saved one pair of each kind of animal
  - ...
- Most branches of Christianity allow interpretation of the Bible from a modern point of view.

## Pope John Paul II - Address to the Pontifical Academy Oct 22 1996

Today, almost half a century after the publication of the Encyclical, fresh knowledge has led to the recognition that evolution is more than a hypothesis. It is indeed remarkable that this theory has been progressively accepted by researchers, following a series of discoveries in various fields of knowledge. The convergence, neither sought nor fabricated, of the results of work that was conducted independently is in itself a significant argument in favour of this theory.

## Pope Benedict XVI – On evolution and creationism –

This clash (between evolution and creationism) is an absurdity because on the one hand there is much scientific proof in favor of evolution, which appears as a reality that we must see and which enriches our understanding of life and being as such.

- Opponents of the scientific theory of evolution are trying to remove evolution from, or insert creationism into, the curriculum of primary and secondary schools by making it a political issue.
  - Controlling or influencing school boards
  - Controlling or influencing state legislatures
  - Influencing public opinion

- Acceptance or rejection of scientific theories is not a political issue.
- Scientists do not vote on which theories to accept.
- Scientific ideas are accepted and become “theories” when they stand up to critical testing. They are rejected when contrary evidence is found.
- Scientists try to identify critical contrary evidence.
- If there was evidence against evolution, scientists of all religious persuasions, would be telling each other about it in their scientific journals. They are not.

- Those opposed to the theory of evolution have tried to invent a field called “creation science.”
- Creation science has been pushed as a “scientific” alternative to evolution that should be taught in science classes.
- State and Federal courts have evaluated the field of creation science, and have found that it is not science.
- Federal courts concluded that creation science advocated a particular branch of Christianity.
- Therefore, teaching creation as advocated by “creation science” in public schools violates the First Amendment of the US Constitution, which guarantees freedom of religion through a separation of church and state.

- The latest strategy to attempt to cast doubt on what is known about evolution is called “Intelligent Design Theory.”
  - Many structures are too complex to have evolved.
  - Therefore, they must have been designed - with an idea in mind.
  - Who designed them? Either God, or the designer can't be known.
- ID is a reworking of “creation science” and has been exposed as such in “Creationism’s Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design.”

- The latest court case involving ID (Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District) resulted in a ruling that clearly labeled ID as a religious ideology.
  - ID aspires to change the ground rules of science to make room for religion, specifically, beliefs consonant with a particular version of Christianity.
  - The overwhelming evidence at trial established that ID is a religious view, a mere re-labeling of creationism, and not a scientific theory.
  - ... ID cannot uncouple itself from its creationist, and thus religious, antecedents.

(Judge John E. Jones III – U.S. District Judge)

## Creationism is a dangerous ideology

- It is really an attack on all of science. Conclusions of geologists, astronomers, physicists, and anthropologists are not consistent with literal interpretations of the Bible.
- Creationists are threatening, harassing, and intimidating our public schools, universities, museums, and federal agencies.
- The attempts to undermine the teaching of science has contributed to the American public's scientific illiteracy.
- America has fallen behind other nations in technological and scientific supremacy, which threatens our economic future.
- Denial of evolution threatens our health and well-being.
- Allowing any ideology to suppress real science through political means is dangerous for society.