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Some Very Troubling Trends in the Creation Movement

Is Answers in Genesis Going the Way of the International Conference on Creationism?

By Jerry Bergman, PhD

A number of creationists like me have recently become very concerned about the harm that certain persons in our circle are causing to both the creation and Intelligent Design (ID) movements. Quite a few creationists have collaborated with me on this brief review documenting some of our major concerns. Many of us want to remain anonymous. Together, we want to stress that several of those with whom we have concerns, including Todd Wood and Kurt Wise, have been valued reviewers and important supporters of the creation movement. This is especially true of their work for the Core Academy of Science and in various other publications, such as several chapters in Wood's book *The Quest*.¹ Many of my collaborators on this paper often read Wood's blog and other papers that he has written. Wood's insight has correctly shown that *Archaeopteryx* is not a transitional fossil between nonavian dinosaurs and modern birds, but merely a creature with a set of features that appear to be from a variety of different animals. The same is true of the duck-billed platypus, a semiaquatic, egg-laying, duck-billed, beaver-tailed, otter-footed mammal. Because of these examples of the valuable contributions of Wood and Wise in the creation movement, I and the others contributing to this paper wish to raise our concern over recent trends within the movement. I am also very aware of the many glowing comments about Wise's effective powerful presentations on creation.²

Introduction

Typical of the slide down to evolutionism is the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA), which has regressed from creationism to anticreationism. This case will be reviewed to illustrate a trend of concern. On January 1, 1947, the ASA published its first quarterly journal, which continues to be published to this day. All of those involved in ASA's formation were openly opposed to evolutionary naturalism, although the drift toward theistic evolution existed even then. In 1959, North Dakota State College Professor Frank Cassel observed "in fifteen years

¹ Wood TC (2018) *The Quest*, New Creation, Nashville, TN

² Helder M (2025) Uplifting creation weekend. *Dialogue* 52(1):1–3

[since the founding of ASA] we have seen develop within A.S.A. a spectrum of belief in evolution that would have shocked all of us at the inception of our organization” only a decade ago.³

Partly as a result of the steady drift towards evolutionism in the ASA, several active ASA members, including Walter Lammerts and geneticist William Tinkle, formed The Creation Research Society in 1963.⁴ The first issue of the *Creation Research Society Quarterly* (CRSQ) was published in July of 1964, and I (Bergman) became actively involved a short time later. I was also active in the ASA until very recently, attending their conventions and regularly publishing articles in the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, later renamed *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*.⁵ I was elected a Fellow of ASA in April of 1983. I knew many creationists who were also actively involved in ASA, such as Wayne Friar, PhD, and we used to associate with each other at ASA’s yearly conferences.

My most recent concern with ASA was an article I submitted for publication based on the peer-reviewed scientific literature refuting a common example of the “poor-design” claim made by some evolutionists. The then editor was very supportive of my paper, but the peer reviewers refused to approve it, essentially ignoring the clear evidence for the existing good, not poor, design. The “poor-design” claim was based squarely on evolutionary assumptions, not anatomical design flaws. The article was eventually published in my book documenting the fact that the “poor-design” claims were contrary to the evidence.⁶

It appeared to me that the ASA leadership now was not only aggressively anticreationist and anti-ID, but also very opposed even to ID arguments that are accepted by close to 90 percent of Americans. After ASA published a scathing and grossly ill-informed 1,691-word review of my book,⁷ *The Dark Side of Charles Darwin*,⁸ and refused to publish a rejoinder, I felt I could no longer be involved in an organization that had turned dogmatically anticreationist and anti-ID. The review was done by Professor Sara Joan Miles, a University of Chicago Ph.D., who taught at Wheaton College for 20 years.⁹ For example, she claimed that I made some mistakes in my book. Then, after she recognized that Darwin made some horrendous mistakes, apologized for her hero by stating, “But, so what? What if Darwin made mistakes. What if he held ideas we now know to be wrong?”

³ Cassel JF (1959) The evolution of evangelical thinking on evolution. *J Amer Scientific Affiliation* 11(4):26–27. <https://www.asa3.org/ASA/PSCF/1959/JASA12-59Complete.pdf> Accessed 2025 Mar 24

⁴ Morris HM (1984) *History of Modern Creationism*. Master Books, San Diego, CA

⁵ For the 27 articles that Bergman authored and published in the *ASA Journal*, see my publication list here: <https://bergman.creation-controversy.com/sites/default/files/media/doc/2024-05/publication-list.pdf>

⁶ Bergman J (2019b) *The “Poor Design” Argument Against Intelligent Design Falsified*, Bartlett Publishing, Tulsa, OK

⁷ Miles SJ (2012) Review of *The Dark Side of Charles Darwin: A Critical Analysis of an Icon of Science*. *Perspect Sci Christ Faith* 64(2):133–135 <https://www.asa3.org/ASA/PSCF/2012/PSCF6-12BookReviews.pdf> Accessed 2025 Mar 24

⁸ Bergman J (2015) *The Dark Side of Charles Darwin: A Critical Analysis of an Icon of Science*. New Leaf Press, Green Forest, AR; formerly published in 2011 by Master Books.

⁹ Miles elected to council. (1995) *AmSci Affil Newsl* 37(1):1 <https://www.asa3.org/ASA/topics/NewsLetter90s/JANFEB95.html> Accessed 2025 Mar 25

The fact is, Darwin's concept of life evolving from simple molecules to humans is demonstrably false, so much so that many evolutionists prefer the term Neo-Darwinism. As biology Professor Willem Ouweneel wrote:

Biologists are generally more willing to listen to and engage opposing arguments [to evolution] than are theologians. This is because biological generalists are often somewhat aware of the weaknesses in the theory of evolution, whereas theologians are not.¹⁰

He then documents that leading evolutionists cannot even agree on the most basic ideas theorized to explain what he calls "neo-Neo-Darwinism."

Professor Ouweneel quoted Stanford University Nobel laureate, Professor Robert Laughlin, who documented that evolution is not only not science, but is actually antiscience, a view Laughlin documents in detail in his writings.¹¹ Some excellent articles were at times published in the ASA journal, and my over three-decade-long involvement was one of my most life-rewarding experiences ever, especially the many friendships I made. Unfortunately, the leadership philosophy now appears to be hardcore evolutionism with, at best, a very thin coat of theism. This example of how originally orthodox creationist organizations can go astray introduces my concern and that of my collaborators on this paper about the existing creation movement.

Ramifications of the Controversy

In a book that Todd Wood and Nazarene College Professor Darrel Falk authored,¹² they had one major life-event in common. Both were reared in loving Christian families and both claim that they became born-again Christians at a very young age. Both also had to struggle with their faith as a result of their exposure to evolution in school. Both acknowledged, as Falk admitted, that the

unpleasant reality is that evolution itself is dangerous. It is not unusual for young people who have been taught creation in their churches to go off to a Christian college, become influenced by evolution, and ultimately abandon their faith [in Christianity]. Unfortunately, I have seen the same thing happen with students who left the Christian college where I used to teach. They went to a secular university to pursue a postgraduate degree, accepted evolution, and left their faith.¹³

As an example, Falk mentioned one of his students, a gifted young-Earth creationist woman who came to the college where he was teaching at then, Point Loma Nazarene College, on a near-full scholarship. An almost

¹⁰ Ouweneel WJ (2018) *Adam, Where Are You? and Why This Matters: A Theological Evaluation of the New Evolutionist Hermeneutic*, Paideia Press, Jordon Station, Ontario, Canada. (The author has a Ph.D. in biology from the University of Utrecht, graduating cum laude in genetics and embryology. He also holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the Free University of Amsterdam and a Ph.D. in theology from the University of Orange, Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa.)

¹¹ Laughlin RB (2010) *The Crime of Reason: And the Closing of the Scientific Mind*. Basic Books, New York, NY, 58–59

¹² Wood TC, Falk DR with Foreword by Rob Barrett (2019) *The Fool and the Heretic: How Two Scientists Moved Beyond Labels to a Christian Dialogue about Creation and Evolution*, Zondervan Academic (a division of Zondervan and HarperCollins Christian Publishing), Grand Rapids, MI

¹³ Ibid., 35

straight-A student, she went on to become a neurosurgeon and now is an evolutionist and an atheist.¹⁴ Also, unfortunately, the *vast majority* of evangelical Christian colleges believe in “evolutionary creation” as does Darrel Falk, whose career was at a Nazarene college. Wood and Falk both acknowledged that “the majority of evangelical Christian colleges teach evolutionary creation” as fact.¹⁵

A Ph.D. dissertation by Professor Tom Kaden concluded the reason people become creationist/ID supporters

is *not*, at least for most of the people I encounter [in doing my Ph.D. research], because of a commitment to the literal truth of Genesis or some other creation story. Rather, it is that people discover for themselves the beauty and complexity of the living world and conclude that it ‘obviously’ must have been designed.¹⁶

In other words, their support for creation science/ID arises from their personal observations of the awesomeness of the living world. As Michael Shermer found in his research on the same question,

The number one reason people give for why they believe in God is a variation of the classic cosmological or design argument. The good design, natural beauty, perfection, and complexity of the world or universe compels us to think that it could not have come about without an intelligent designer. In other words, people say they believe in God because the evidence of their senses tells them so.¹⁷

Consequently, as I documented in my book *Darwinism is the Doorway to Atheism*, the creation issue is of central importance for Christianity.¹⁸ One quote of Todd Wood that has been used against the creation movement hundreds of times is as follows:

Evolution is **not** a theory in crisis. It is not teetering on the verge of collapse. It has **not** failed as a scientific explanation. There **is** evidence for evolution, gobs and gobs of it. It is **not** just speculation or a faith choice or an assumption or a religion. It is a productive framework for lots of biological research, and it has amazing explanatory power. There is **no** conspiracy to hide the truth about the failure of evolution. There has really been **no** failure of evolution as a scientific theory. It works, and it works well. Don’t let anyone tell you otherwise.¹⁹

Similar claims by Todd Wood are reviewed in an article by former creationist turned atheist Edward Babinski titled “Creationist Admits ‘Problem’ — ‘The Chimpanzee Genome and the Problem of Biological Similarity’ by

¹⁴ Wood TC, Falk DR (2019) 142–143

¹⁵ Ibid., 20

¹⁶ Kaden T (2019) *Creationism and Anti-Creationism in the United States: A Sociology of Conflict*, Springer, New York, NY, 50

¹⁷ Shermer M (2000) *How We Believe: The Search for God in an Age of Science*, Freeman, New York, NY, xiv

¹⁸ Bergman J (2019a) *Darwinism is the Doorway to Atheism: Why Creationists Become Evolutionists*, Leafcutter Press, Southworth, WA

¹⁹ Wood TC (2009 Sep 30) The truth about evolution. <http://toddcwood.blogspot.com/2009/09/truth-about-evolution.html> Accessed 2025 Mar 28

Todd Charles Wood”.²⁰ Edward Babinski, author of *Leaving the Fold: Testimonies of Former Fundamentalists*, quotes Wood to defend evolution, defined as from “molecules-to-man,” due to natural selection selecting mutations. In fact, the evidence *against* evolution, as defined above, is overwhelming, and many of my creationist coworkers (and even some evolutionist coworkers) are dumbfounded that the claim that “gobs and gobs” of evidence exist for the molecules-to-man worldview could be made by a creationist. Answers in Genesis responded to the “gobs and gobs” claim on their website.²¹

The following quote is by one of the most active and aggressive opposers of both creation science and ID, Professor Dennis Venema, who wrote:

As a faculty member at an evangelical Christian university, I have the privilege of interacting with colleagues from all over North America. Shortly after becoming acquainted with one colleague, I realized that we have a lot in common. For starters, ... we both teach at Christian institutions. We also have very similar research backgrounds in biology. ... We have both written articles on human/chimpanzee comparative genomics intended to inform believers of the challenge this new field of study presents for traditional interpretations of Genesis, and both of us have been criticized by other believers for doing so [the “research,” actually debating, of both Venema and Wood has been carefully refuted]. Both of us feel that evolution is a robust scientific theory with a huge body of supporting evidence. Both of us have written critiques of folks in the Intelligent Design movement, as well as organizations like Reasons to Believe. In fact, I can think of only one major difference between us: my colleague is a Young Earth Creationist, whereas I am an Evolutionary Creationist.²² His name is Todd Wood, and he is a member [now an ex-faculty member I was told due to the new requirement that Bryan faculty sign a statement that the Biblical Adam was literal] at Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee.²³

Venema believes that there is legitimate evidence for evolution (including universal common ancestry).²⁴ Venema agrees with the following statement by Wood: “Evolution is an extremely successful scientific theory.”²⁵ One example of this success is: “When compared to the chimpanzee, the two species [human and chimp] differ by as little as 1–2%.”²⁰ In his book *The Quest*, Wood states: “Studies of the human and chimpanzee genomes since the early seventies have consistently shown a remarkable similarity between the two.”²⁶ The difference between the genomes is *not* as little as one to two percent, nor are the genomes

²⁰ Babinski ET (2008) Creationist admits “problem”...“The chimpanzee genome and the problem of biological similarity” by Todd Charles Wood <https://edwardtbabinski.us/scrivenings/2008/creationist-admits-problem-chimpanzee.html> Accessed 2025 Mar 25

²¹ Answers in Genesis (2023 Mar 24) How much evidence is there for evolution? Responding to Dr. Todd Wood’s claims of “gobs” of evidence for evolution? https://answersingenesis.org/young-earth-evolution/how-much-evidence-is-there-for-evolution/?srsId=AfmBOoohDPJgPW8moi4FRPef3zct8wZmJK6l9f0vMY_4GyZokbtyCw1j Accessed 2025 Apr 01

²² An “Evolutionary Creationist” can be described as one believing in Darwinism with a thin coat of theism.

²³ Venema DR, McKnight S (2017) *Adam and the Genome: Reading Scripture After Genetic*, Brazos Press, Ada, MI

²⁴ Venema D (2011 Jan 07) A tale of three creationists. <http://biologos.org/blogs/dennis-venema-letters-to-the-duchess/a-tale-of-three-creationists-part-1#sthash.QmUmXWaq.dpuf> Accessed 2025 Mar 25

²⁵ Wood TC (2006) The chimpanzee genome and the problem of biological similarity. *Occas. Papers of the BSG* 7:1–18

²⁶ Wood TC (2018) 76

remarkably similar; but instead, recent comparisons have documented that chimp DNA is at least 15 percent different from or only 85 percent similar to human DNA.²⁷ Thus, they are close to about 900,000,000 bases different. The importance of this claim is because no small number of Darwinists have used this false “1–2%” claim as major support for their worldview.

Wood states that “consilience is probably the number one reason that people accept evolution. It’s just hard to imagine how so many different sorts of evidence could all point to the same *wrong* conclusion.”²⁸ I have spent over a half a century examining the twenty most common general claims given to accept evolution, such as “poor design,” “vestigial organs,” the natural selection claim, mutations as the major source of genetic variety, and anatomical similarity (homology). I have concluded that these reasons are all very problematic, and most are demonstratively incorrect. More likely reasons include bias, cognitive dissonance, and in particular, confirmation bias.

In yet another case, Wood published an article attempting to refute the well-documented conclusion that many parts of Darwin’s theory were not original with Darwin. The article titled “There Is No Darwin Conspiracy” concluded:

With the impending Darwin anniversary year and the indubitable appeal of Davies’s claims to creationists (judging from past commentaries on Darwin plagiarism theories: for example, Bergman, 2002; Grigg, 2004; Hedtke, 1983; Humber, 1997), it is instructive to review and evaluate these claims. It will become apparent from this evaluation that there is no “Darwin conspiracy.”²⁹

In short, the Wood article attempts to refute the fact that Darwin’s theory of evolution by natural selection was borrowed from a variety of sources.³⁰ In other words, Wood argues that arguments to question Darwin’s integrity and originality are wrong. In fact, a wealth of scholarly literature exists to document the claim that Darwin’s integrity and originality were both problematic. His contribution to evolution was less to originate the theory than to popularize it. As David Menton writes:

Charles Darwin is often portrayed as one of the greatest original thinkers of science, on a par with the likes of Newton. While his book *On the Origin of Species* has probably had a greater impact on society than any other book—except the Bible—most of the evolutionary views he expressed in *On the Origin of Species* were neither original nor scientific. ... Even the more refined concept of “*natural selection*,” which is often viewed as a unique contribution of Darwin, was clearly expressed by many others as early as 100 years before the 1859 publication of *Origin of Species*. ... Charles Darwin’s ideas on evolution were anticipated in

²⁷ Tompkins JP (2016) Analysis of 101 chimpanzee trace read data sets: Assessment of their overall similarity to human and possible contamination with human DNA. *Answers Res J* 9:294–298

²⁸ Wood TC (2018) 70, emphasis Wood’s

²⁹ Wood TC (2009) There is no Darwin conspiracy. *Answers Res J* 2:11–20

³⁰ Darwin plagiarized the concept of “natural selection” from English zoologist (and creationist) Edward Blyth who published (in 1835) on it being strictly a conservation mechanism for Genesis’s created kinds. Darwin never gave Blyth credit and redefined “natural selection” as a creative cause.

nearly every essential detail by several of his predecessors, including his own grandfather, Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802).³¹

Some Limitations of Baraminology

Research on baraminology, which has been the passion of many creationists for several decades now, has also produced mixed results. One example was a baraminology approach which uses comparisons of select traits analyzed by Pearson correlation coefficient to estimate the relative similarity on the traits selected between, for example, birds and dinosaurs.³² Comparing 187 characters of 42 taxa found a positive correlation between all birds in his sample and deinonychosaurians, and no bird in the sample was found to share a positive distance correlation with any nondeinonychosaurian coelurosaur.³³

The major problem with this type of analysis is that one selects the traits to compare, and each trait is usually given equal weight.³⁴ This requires very subjective judgments that could produce either positive or negative correlations, depending on the animal taxa and the specific traits selected. Thus it is hardly an objective comparison; therefore it is not scientific and is problematic, as are all taxonomic attempts.³⁵ Wood admitted this when attempting to respond to an article that largely refuted his baraminology work, or at least part of it.³⁴ Wood acknowledged that using his set of “taxa and characters supports his conclusions of morphological continuity, but other sets with more characters do not.”³⁶ Wood even acknowledged that “any baraminology study can be disputed, and none can be considered truly definitive.”³⁷ Nonstatistical methods of baraminology research include morphology, cladistics, and especially hybridization studies.

Another example was a baraminology analysis published by Wood that concluded men are men and apes are apes, a conclusion that fits into the creation view.³⁸ Then Wood added that his baraminology analysis of *Australopithecus sediba* concluded *he was fully human*.³⁹

³¹ Menton D (1995) Darwin didn’t discover evolution or natural selection. *St. Louis MetroVoice* 5(7). Reprinted here: <https://answersingenesis.org/charles-darwin/darwin-didnt-discover-evolution-or-natural-selection/> Accessed 2025 Mar 25

³² Wood TC (2011) Using creation science to demonstrate evolution? Senter’s strategy revisited. *J Evol Biol* 24(4):914–918

³³ Wood TC (2011) 916

³⁴ Senter P (2010) Using creation science to demonstrate evolution: Application of a creationist method for visualizing gaps in the fossil record to a phylogenetic study of coelurosaurian dinosaurs. *J Evol Biol* 23(8):1732–1743

³⁵ Yoon CK (2009) *Naming Nature: The Clash Between Instinct and Science*, W.W Norton & Company, New York, NY

³⁶ Wood TC (2011) 914

³⁷ Ibid., 917

³⁸ Wood TC (2018) 21

³⁹ Wood TC (2010) Baraminological analysis places *Homo habilis*, *Homo rudolfensis*, and *Australopithecus sediba* in the human holobaramin, *Answers Res J* 3:71–90

One evaluation of this methodology by one of the most knowledgeable experts in this area, Peter Line, concluded that the most surprising claim about *Australopithecus sediba*

was the interpretation of the new fossil species by creationist Todd Wood. Wood applied statistical baraminological techniques (baraminic distance correlation and multidimensional scaling) to craniodental character states (postcranial information was not considered), with the datasets used for this selected from the literature. From his analysis, he found that “the present results indicate that *Homo habilis*, *Homo rudolfensis*, and—most surprisingly—*Australopithecus sediba* belong in the human holobaramin.”⁴⁰ Hence, they were all pronounced fully human (descendants of Adam and Eve), despite Wood admitting to “*sediba*’s extremely ape-like forearms.”⁴¹ As a result, he comes up with the farcical statement that “the dispersal of the human population from Babel would presumably have been led by *H. habilis* and *H. rudolfensis*, specimens of which appear stratigraphically lower than any other human species.”⁴² Moreover, his comment about “the significance of human-like australopiths and the ape-like humans”⁴³ appears almost to concede the issue to the evolutionists.⁴⁴

Line adds:

Wood never even discusses specific craniodental character states in his analysis, and one doubts if he has fared any better than evolutionists in finding a solution to the problem posed by the interrelationships of morphological characters—just one of many problems associated with these types of studies.⁴⁴

The fact is, as stated by Lieberman, “no one has come up with a satisfactory way to define or test the independence of morphological characters.”⁴⁵ Cladistic analysis using morphological character traits has been very unsuccessful in human evolutionary studies, as one would expect if evolution were false. As a result of their study, evolutionists Mark Collard and Bernard Wood concluded that

the type of craniodental characters that have hitherto been used in hominin phylogenetics *are probably not reliable* for reconstructing the phylogenetic relationships of higher primate species and genera, including those among the hominins.⁴⁶

Lieberman concludes that, although Wood’s analysis raises issues for further investigation, it clearly

does not warrant sweeping conclusions that effectively extend the range of human variation to apish creatures swinging in trees like Tarzan. Wood’s datasets of character states are the same as those used in

⁴⁰ Wood TC (2010) 71

⁴¹ Ibid., 81

⁴² Ibid., 86

⁴³ Ibid., 71

⁴⁴ Line P (2010 Jun 17) *Gautengensis* vs *sediba*: A battle for supremacy amongst ‘ape-men’ contenders, but neither descended from Adam, <https://creation.com/homo-gautengensis> Accessed 2025 Mar 26

⁴⁵ Lieberman DE (1999) Homology and hominid phylogeny: Problems and potential solutions. *Evol Anthropol* 7(4):142–151, 143

⁴⁶ Collard M, Wood B (2000) How reliable are human phylogenetic hypotheses? *Proc Nat Acad Sci USA* 97(9):5003–5006, 5005

evolutionary cladistics studies, and as such many of the same problems and pitfalls inherent in cladistic studies apply to his baraminological study. For example, one major issue is that the morphological characters used need to be independent units of information, otherwise intercorrelated characters can incorrectly bias the outcome of any analysis.⁴⁵

Dog-Like Creatures Evolved into Whales?

Another example of my concerns is the creationist-authored chapter titled “Mammal Kinds: How Many Were on the Ark?”⁴⁷ which includes the following claim:

Some of the animals which are aquatic or marine today may not have been aquatic at the time of the flood. ... Whales might turn out to be another example. Only when including the legged archaeocetes (and/or possibly the terrestrial suborder Acreodi) do the whales have a fossil record continuous with the Flood. Vestigial legs and hips in modern whales confirm legged ancestors of the whales existed only a short time ago. It is possible that the purely marine cetaceans of the present were derived from semi-aquatic or even terrestrial ancestors on the ark.⁴⁸

One immediate concern about this quotation is that whales do *not* have vestigial legs or hips that “confirm legged ancestors of the whales existed only a short time ago.”⁴⁹ Instead, they have copulatory organs that are critical for reproduction in their watery environment. Furthermore, a chasm exists between the alleged whale precursor and true whales.⁵⁰ Ironically, Woods has repeated this claim: “There are fossil whales with hind legs that sort of look like they could be the ancestors of modern whales.”⁵¹ Wood also makes similar claims about Lucy the fossil, such as “Lucy does have characteristics of both modern humans and modern apes *in one body*. Lucy is an intermediate.”⁵² Stating Lucy is an intermediate between man and some less human-like creature than Lucy seems to be an admission that human evolution is true. No, she (or he—paleoanthropologists are not sure of its sex) is *not* an intermediate, not even close.⁵³ One example is Wood’s claims about her feet, yet no feet or hands were found with this fossil. The evidence is clear: Lucy was an ape as Answers in Genesis correctly documents and which has been well-documented by secular anatomists and paleoanthropologists.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ Wise K (2009) Mammal Kinds: How Many Were on the Ark?, in *Genesis Kinds: Creationism and the Origin of Species*, ed. T.C. Wood and P.A. Garner, *Center for Origins Research Issues in Creation*, Book Number 5, Chapter 5, Wipf and Stock Publishers, Eugene, OR

⁴⁸ Wise K (2009) 143

⁴⁹ Bergman J (2019c) *Useless Organs: The Rise and Fall of a Central Claim of Evolution*, Bartlett Publishing, Tulsa, OK

⁵⁰ Bergman J (2020) *Whale Evolution: A Whale of a Tail*. Book manuscript submitted for publication.

⁵¹ Wood TC (2018) 26–27

⁵² Ibid., 26

⁵³ Biddle DA, Bisbee DA, Bergman J (2016) *Debunking Human Evolution Taught in Our Public Schools*. Bartlett Publishing, Tulsa, OK

⁵⁴ Menton D (2003) *Lucy, She’s No Lady!*, Answers in Genesis, Florence, KY

The Creation Model Controversy

Many of those supporting the baraminology group, including both Todd Wood and Kurt Wise, have published very little in the nonbaraminology journals in decades. They and others opine that they will not publish in the *Creation Research Society Quarterly (CRSQ)* due to their claim that the journal publishes poor research. Instead of working to improve the alleged poor quality of *CRSQ*, they have eschewed involvement, although both Wood and Wise have occasionally served as editors. One other example where they have adversely affected the creation cause is as follows:

During the 6th ICC [International Conference on Creationism] in 2008, Todd Wood and Kurt Wise served as Biology Editors and rejected some 80% or so of the biology papers submitted because they did not include material on “baraminology” or a “creation model” which was never defined. This caused no small uproar, and so Andrew Snelling stepped in to try to help, but from what I understand, many biologists did not resubmit their papers. One paper on the deterioration of the genome was rejected and when resubmitted was accepted. They rejected a geology paper on radiohaloes in diamonds, so Andrew Snelling co-authored the paper. A few others who resubmitted their papers were accepted.⁵⁵

The following is an example related to a paper I presented at the fourth ICC (1998) refuting endosymbiosis.^{56,57} After my talk, Todd Wood, displaying obvious open hostility, objected to my attempt to refute endosymbiosis. I have not experienced this before and only once after this event, so the encounter stands out in my mind, even today. Another example was when I presented a paper on magnetic monopoles at the third ICC (1994).⁵⁸ Kurt Wise came up on the platform and asked what does this have to do with the creation model? The answer is, a lot, as subsequent papers on this subject have shown.

This problem also existed at the 2018 ICC peer-reviewing process. Of at least four papers that were rejected, the main reason given was as follows:

1. As editors, we feel that papers need to build the creationist model, not just attack the evolutionary one. We feel that as proposed, your submissions do not accomplish that important goal of ICC.
2. This proposal in its current form is inadequate for the ICC. It does not build the creation model as per instructions.⁵⁹

Another reason given for their rejection is that certain reviewers did not approve of critiquing Darwinism, which they called “evolution bashing.” They would rather focus on building *the* creation model. The problem is they do

⁵⁵ This statement is from a participant in this project who wishes to remain anonymous.

⁵⁶ Bergman J (1998) The unbridgeable chasm between prokaryotes and eukaryotes, *Proc Internat Conf Creationism*, Vol. 4, Article 15

⁵⁷ My refutation of endosymbiosis was revised and published here:

Bergman J (2021) Research has overturned endosymbiosis: The unbridgeable gap between prokaryotes and eukaryotes remains. *J Creat* 35(1):38–47

⁵⁸ Bergman J (1994) Magnetic monopoles and Grand Unification Theory, Chapter 9, *Proc Internat Conf Creationism*, Vol. 3, Article 12

⁵⁹ This statement is from a participant in this project who wishes to remain anonymous.

not say *which one* of the many creation models that exist they would rather build. The creation model was never defined, as many contradictory creation models exist. Some common competing creation/flood models include the residual catastrophism model, Bretz's Missoula (Columbia River) flood model, the Catastrophic Plate Tectonics (CPT) model, Walter T. Brown's Hydroplate Theory, Larry Vardiman hypercane model, David Bassett's Scriptural Universe Model (S.U.M.), the biogeographic rafting (or floating mat) model, the Canopy model, the neo-Canopy model, and J.W. Smith's Noah's Upheaval flood theory, to name a few of the more popular models. The Trollingers effectively show that none of these models are empirical (operational) science but are technically historical (origin) science, which Ken Ham and others document is problematic.⁶⁰ Most of the recent ICC-rejected articles have now been peer-reviewed after very favorable feedback and have been published elsewhere.

Creation models rarely even cover the major issues, such as how mankind was created, nor even the origin of life in general. How the animals knew when and where to travel to the Ark's location has rarely been covered by a creation model. The development of models often amounts to attempting to remove the supernatural element from Creation. Some events require faith and, to some degree, creation models appear to be primarily an attempt to explain miracles by naturalism. This goal is what led to the complete replacement of supernaturalism by naturalism, as C.S. Lewis has eloquently warned.^{61,62}

Creation models cover primarily three areas: the age question, the details of the Ark of Noah, and the Genesis Flood, by taking the existing scripture skeleton and, using much speculation, embellish it. What is the creation model for the creation of the cell, the heart, the brain, and every other body part? What is the creation model for the creation of lightning, the Earth, the Solar System, the animals and plants? What about the creation of photons, protons, positrons, neutrinos, electrons, and all of the other subatomic particles? And the Sun and stars and just about everything else, including time, space, matter, and energy? All the scriptures say God created most things by fiat, nothing more. Both the Flood and the Ark are important topics that should be covered, but so should the rest of Creation as well as the problems with Darwinism in explaining Creation.

The Problem of Discrimination Against Creationists

A former editor of *CRSQ* stated that Wood recommended rejecting almost every single article sent to him to review. Even more disturbing is the letter Wood has penned opposing a bill written to protect teachers and others who dare to critique Darwinism using well documented science. One example, sent to Tennessee Governor Haslam in 2012, is as follows:

Dear Governor Haslam:

My name is Todd Charles Wood, and I am a biology professor at Bryan College in Dayton, TN. You might recognize Bryan College as the Christian school named for William Jennings Bryan and founded in the

⁶⁰ Trollinger SL, Trollinger WV (2016) *Righting America at the Creation Museum*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD

⁶¹ Bergman J (2017) *C.S. Lewis: Anti-Darwinist: A Careful Examination of the Development of His Views on Darwinism*, Wipf & Stock Publishers, Eugene, OR

⁶² Bergman J (2023) *C.S. Lewis' War Against Scientism and Naturalism*, Cantaro Press, Ontario, Canada

wake of the Scopes Trial. (Please note that the opinions expressed in this letter are my own and do not represent the opinions of Bryan College.)

I recently noted that the Tennessee state senate passed SB0893, the so-called “Monkey Bill” (ironically on William Jennings Bryan’s birthday of all days). I am sure that you’ve already received quite a number of heated letters and phone calls about this bill. As you certainly know, critics of the bill view it as a thinly-veiled attempt to inject creationism into the public science classrooms.

Because of my religious convictions, I am a committed creationist, but unlike many creationists, I have grown quite weary of the creation-evolution propaganda war. I believe this bill is an ideal example of what’s wrong with the creation-evolution war. For example, since the bill clearly states that religious discussions are not protected, it could not be used to permit “some Sunday school teachers to hijack biology class by proxy,” as the editorial in the March 21 edition of the *Tennessean* suggested. On the other hand, my own reading of the bill indicates that it provides no protection that teachers don’t already have. Teachers are already well within their rights to discuss any scientific evidence that pertains to the prescribed curriculum and to encourage critical thinking about it. ... The controversy surrounding the other issues mentioned by SB0893 (human cloning and climate change) are also permissible subjects to discuss in science classes already, and therefore do not need any additional protection. Thus, if critics are correct that this is an attempt to inject creationism into Tennessee science classes, the language is so vague and watered-down that it would be incapable of performing that task.

Legally then, it seems that this bill is simply unnecessary. It does not directly challenge *Kitzmiller v. Dover*, and it does not offer any protection that does not already exist. Because the bill is useless, I ask you to veto it. Please do not allow Tennessee to become a pawn in the creation-evolution propaganda war.

Respectfully yours,
Todd Charles Wood.⁶³

This letter is appallingly irresponsible. I have written five books^{64,65,66} and scores of articles documenting the fact that teachers are not protected and can be, and often are, fired for “mistakes” like passing out articles in their classes from highly respected peer-reviewed journals, such as *Nature* and *Science*, which question some aspect of Darwinism. Even some ID advocates were appalled by Wood’s letter. One, an attorney involved in cases involving their termination, John Calvert, wrote in response to this letter:

Todd is completely wrong that K–12 teachers have a legal right to teach different sides of controversial scientific issues. As the courts have made clear, K–12 teachers have very few enforceable rights in this area. The teacher who presents the information discussed by Wood is at the mercy of the school administration, which in turn is usually at the mercy of the Darwinist bullies. The point of this bill is to give a

⁶³ Rosenau J (tfk) (2012 Apr 12) Todd Wood, the disco. 'tute, and the monkey bill.

<https://scienceblogs.com/tfk/2012/04/13/todd-wood-the-disco-tute-and-t> Accessed 2025 Mar 27

⁶⁴ Bergman J (2008) *Slaughter of the Dissidents: The Shocking Truth About Killing the Careers of Darwin Doubters*, revised version, 2012, Leafcutter Press, Southworth, WA, revised 2nd edition published in 2013

⁶⁵ Bergman J (2016) *Silencing the Darwin Skeptics*, Leafcutter Press, Southworth, WA

⁶⁶ Bergman J (2018) *Censoring the Darwin Skeptics*, Leafcutter Press, Southworth, WA

statewide statutory right to protect teachers (and students) from abusive administrators doing the dirty work of the Darwin lobby. Again, what a stupid, stupid letter.⁶⁷

A prominent ID supporter wrote,

As far as I am aware, Todd Wood has often criticized and has never defended Intelligent Design or Creationism but seems to defend evolution at every turn. Nor has he ever spoken up for those ID supporters and creationists who lost their careers due to their conclusions based on the evidence. I have to wonder where his sympathies actually lie.⁶⁸

Wood Quotation Used by Others to Portray Darwin Critics as Ignorant Scholars

Todd Wood has provided hardline, theistic evolutionist Dennis Venema with support for the view that the evidence for evolution is very strong. If Venema wanted to exploit Wood, then he would need only to have quoted short excerpts from Wood where he says, “Evolution is an extremely successful scientific theory” and similar comments.

The goal of former young-Earth creationist Venema’s material in his book *Adam and the Genome* is very clear.²³ A major goal is to delegitimize Darwin-skeptic Christians as authorities in the eyes of their evangelical Christian readers. Consistent with his writings elsewhere, Venema doesn’t just want to critique Darwin-skeptic arguments. He wants to plant seeds of doubt in the minds of readers that the Christians they respect as critics of Darwinism don’t know what they are talking about. Venema wants readers to conclude that Christian “Darwin critics” are ignorant (at best), poor scholars, even dishonest:

Venema knows that he cannot openly express these thoughts or he’ll be judged as acting in an uncharitable way towards his Christian brothers and sisters. BioLogos, who[m] he works with, must maintain a veneer of civility if it wants to continue to be invited to churches. And to communicate this message, Venema knows that Todd Wood is the perfect stooge. Todd Wood is a young-Earth creationist with a Ph.D. who makes the very personal attacks against Darwin-skeptics that Venema wants his readers to believe!⁶⁸

In fact, Todd Wood gains wide respect from evolutionists for his attacks on fellow Darwin-skeptics and providing examples that evolutionists and atheists relish citing. In *Adam and the Genome* Venema calls Wood a “friend and colleague.”⁶⁹ Venema later cites Todd Wood’s writing, that he “is unique among the young-earth literature in that ... [he] does not misrepresent the data.” Other evolutionists have stated that Todd Wood is “one of the only self-critical, independent, and somewhat realistic voices within creationism.”⁷⁰ Another evolutionist endorsement opines, “Wood has been almost a single, lone voice in the wilderness and has not

⁶⁷ Calvert J Posted on the internet. Permission given by John Calvert to reproduce his quote. Slightly edited for clarity.

⁶⁸ This statement is from an ID supporter who requested anonymity.

⁶⁹ Venema DR, McKnight S (2017) 65

⁷⁰ Matzke N (2012 Mar 27) Who is turning the screws on Todd Wood, the creationist biologist who opposes Tennessee’s new monkey law? <https://pandasthumb.org/archives/2012/03/who-is-turning.html> Accessed 2025 Apr 04

been reticent about taking on fellow creationists for their sloppy science.”⁷¹ The contributors to this article are not claiming that Wood is a “closet evolutionist” but that he sometimes acts like the typical internet evolutionist. Wood seems to think, or claim, that molecules to man evolution is well documented science, ignoring the fact that evolution does have many scientific problems—the missing transitional fossils (admitted by evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould) and the “Genetic Entropy” pointed out by John Sanford, for instance.

Is Answers in Genesis Going the Way of ICC?

Answers Research Journal (ARJ) published by Answers in Genesis (AiG) has a new editor, Georgia Purdom. Purdom reportedly has rejected all articles on the major problems of the fossil record for evolution, the harm that Darwin has caused society, including eugenics, and the many lethal problems with evolution. These problems include the fact that evolution has no explanation for the origin of new biological information. The reason given was, “These papers do not fit the types of papers we desire for ARJ. ... Please do not send papers of this nature as they will be consistently rejected.” These subjects were accepted from the inception of AiG until very recently and are the types of papers accepted by *Journal of Creation* and the CRSQ (except under one earlier editor who did not last long). No indication was provided by Purdom of the types of subjects that were acceptable for ARJ. Do they only accept papers on the creation model as ICC or CRSQ did during one past editor? Todd Wood and Kurt Wise no longer serve as editors for ARJ; thus, why ARJ has taken this irresponsible position is unknown and unexplainable.

We, the contributors of this review, conclude that it appears that ARJ may not publish many articles in the future and will likely have much slimmer readership. The contributors of this review, and many people they work with, have no interest in reading about creation models except their own.

Conclusions

In conclusion, I want to thank the eight persons (three ID supporters and five creationists) who contributed most of the material, often quoted verbatim, in this paper. Some of the strong quotes were toned down, illustrating the harm and level of hostility that some persons have created in both the creation science and Intelligent Design movements.

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⁷¹ Kidder J (also posts online as jimipithecus) (2017 Jan 19) Science and religion: A view from an evolutionary creationist. <http://scienceandcreation.blogspot.com/2017/01/david-macmillan-on-homo-naledi-ken-ham.html>

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