

The merit of unopposed evolution theory in schools

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“ Galileo should have been burned at the stake for advocating ‘ we should believe our eyes instead of the Bible!’” (Anonymous commenter “ Is creationism important...?”).

As represented by this statement, some Christians feel creationism is necessary for upholding the truth of the Bible. A challenge to the Bible in our nation’s public schools represents a challenge to the very fundamentals of their supposed “ truth”. In response to this challenge, creationist-Christians are advocating around the globe for the incorporation of creationism into schools’ curricula, perhaps even to supersede the teaching of evolution. This cannot be tolerated. Teaching creationism alongside or opposed to an evolution curriculum is a handicap to our next generation, “ attacking the very core of the knowledge that we have patiently built up and found correct in nature, evolution, our origins, and our place in the universe.” (“ Dangers of Creationism” Council of Europe Draft Resolution).

Evolution science in classrooms should not be viewed as a violation of the Right to Freedom of Belief, nor should creationism be taught as an opposing, undermining theory. Teaching creationism is dangerous to current scientific progress and future scientists. Evolution is an essential component of all biology and medicine. Without national education on evolution, advances in medical research in infectious diseases such as AIDS and H1N1 are impossible (Zimmer 211). “ There are a host of applications of evolution-agriculture and the overuse of pesticides, forensics, animal sciences and selective breeding, bioengineering and the over-prescription of antibiotics, etc.” (Newton, Steve).

If we teach creationism to future scientists as an opposing theory, there will be serious confusion between beliefs, ideals, and scientifically testable fact. This would cripple further development in our societies. Creationism is a violation of individual Right to Freedom of Belief. Creationism, in any form, is not based on facts but a literal interpretation of the Bible (Genesis 1. 1-2. 3 and 2.

4-3. 24) that is pathetically inadequate for schools' science curricula.

Creationism also originates from religious antecedents and is therefore unconstitutional according to the U. S Supreme Court Rulings of Epperson v.

Arkansas (1968) and Edwards v. Aguillard (1987). These rulings stated that "The Court held the statute [on creationism curriculums] unconstitutional on the grounds that the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution does not permit a state to require that teaching and learning must be tailored to the principles or prohibitions of any particular religious sect or doctrine." (Epperson v.

Arkansas, 1968) and the Edwards v. Aguillard (1987) stated that "The Court found that, by advancing the religious belief that a supernatural being created humankind, which is embraced by the term creation science, the act impermissibly endorses religion. In addition, the Court found that the provision of a comprehensive science education is undermined when it is forbidden to teach evolution except when creation science is also taught." A creationism viewpoint requires a belief founded on faith, that is neither falsifiable or verifiable, and therefore is not relevant to a school's curriculum.

Evolution is a proven scientific theory. This theory relies on “ evidence to construct testable explanations and predictions of natural phenomena.

” (National Academy of Science, Evolution, and Creationism). Although the most commonly used definition of the word “ theory” means “ contemplation or speculation, a supposition” (Dorset and Baber 1893), in science, a theory is a “ coherent group of general propositions used as principles of explanation for a class of phenomena” (Dorset and Baber 1893). A common misconception is that theories become facts when they are well supported and/or proven. The facts that the sun revolves around the earth and that the earth is round are considered “ theories” though they have been proven by abundant scientific data and witness reports. Evolution has been tried and proven for over 140 years, and has not been disproved once by verified evidence.

Evolution fact is the observations that have been made in nature. The term “ theory” is only applicable when scientists try to explain why it occurs. But the “ why” has nothing to do with the fact that evolution does occur, and therefore much more beneficial to students than creationism. Because it is based on fact, evolution education is a much more valid candidate than creationism for science. The teaching of evolution is also not a violation of the Right to Freedom of Belief because it is not a religion and does not claim religious antecedents. Creationism is not falsifiable, scientifically testable, or observed, and is solely based on dogma.

Such a notoriously shaky basis could undermine democracy, research, and our society by sowing doubt and confusion against scientific facts that are

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applicable to all modern medicine, agriculture, and engineering. One cannot be fully aware of the risks involved in climate change and biodiversity extinction if the processes of evolution are not understood. The fundamental, unifying evolution theory that underlies all life sciences should be taught in science classrooms, alone and unchallenged by dogmatic assertions.