

"NATURAL SELECTION" IS UNSCIENTIFIC

Most Americans who are aware of the 1925 "Monkey Trial" think (1) it's over & (2) evolution won. Wrong twice: (1) evolution (Clarence Darrow) lost (to Wm. Jennings Bryan), & (2) the legal struggle is still on, & in the same case-venue, viz. American's public schools. ...so please don't say Darwin won & only troglodytes (I, for one) continue the attack on Darwin/ian/ism/evolution/ism. And please don't assume you've heard it all: the struggle for public-school freedom/fairness in "science" is just warming up.

1 My CAPE COD TIMES letter today challenges that paper's only editorial of day before yesterday--under the head "Monkey business," it was an attack on the inroads "creation science" is making in America's public schools. The attack was an unenlightened mere "no" to the six-day creationists, without the slightest inkling that there might be a third way, the way I hint at in my last sentence.

2 Uproar now in our town because children whose parents haven't paid the bus-fee aren't permitted in the schoolbus: the citizenry's so alienated from the unresponsive school-establishment that underfunding has forced the dropping of many programs & led to the bus-fee (now under court-challenge). One symptom of the alienation (though not at present in our town) is the sad, stupid, antiscientific, biblical-literalist "six-day" pressure, behind which is the not-stupid conviction that a **materialism-based humanism** has largely driven out the American cultural (spiritual, literary, political) heritage: the public schools are failing to Americanize both native-born & immigrant children (one result: the under-30s are little interested in voting).

On the left, the public-school establishment (administrators & teachers' unions) see no culture-crisis, but only the increasing irritation/interference from the radical religious right. On the right, the fundamentalists see less & less hope for public ed as we've known it, & push for replacements (private religious schools, homeschooling). Between the cries of obscurantism & multiculturalism, may reconciling middle soon emerge! It will need the diagnosis of a story telling how we came to the present impasse.

3 In this diagnosis, the least avoidable name is "Darwin," who more than any other led to the replacement of Christian ("**image-of-God**") humanism with materialism-based ("**monkey**") humanism, which uses the genetic fallacy (viz., that an emergent is not better than its origin, as water cannot rise about its source) to denigrate human life. The logic-twin is the nothing-but fallacy: "man," descended or ascended from the "monkey" (i.e., less-able hominids), is nothing but an animal. This reductionism (humanity "no longer the center" [though in biblical religion, humanity never was the center]) had relativism implicit within it: we are only relative to other forms of life, & "truth" is only relative to the particular social construct in which one lives (oneconstruct-society-culture among many). Absolutes & transcendancy disappear together; all is only Edwin Abbott's "flatland" (#3136).

4 Though in a pitifully ignorant, easy-target manner, the six-day creationists are would be **restorationists** of America's heritage of heart & mind (say, the DNA of the Bible & our Founding Fathers). A religion parallel is the UCC's Confessing Christ, which aims to restore awareness of our biblical-historical-theological roots as expressed in the Preamble of our denomination (as our American roots are in our nation's founding documents): we are to "make this faith our own" by updating, not impoverishing/replacing.

5 I'm gathering suggestions for the next play-reading in our church, & a deacon suggested one he'd played the hero in in highschool. The hero (understandably) was an atheist who laughed at the Bible, the anti-hero was a Bible-believer whom the playwrights played for a comic fool. (Among America's

Facts aren't exclusive to province of science

This is in response to the Oct. 14 Editorial, "Monkey business."

When I was in grade school in the 1920s, I was laughed at for denying the "scientific fact" that the universe is eternal. I believed the "biblical fact" that the universe had a beginning.

Now, science agrees with the Bible that the universe had a beginning.

Let's stop prejudicing against religion by assigning the word "fact" exclusively to science. I'm not a "six-days" creationist, but I am concerned that narrow-minded scientism has captured our public schools.

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elite, including the media & the publicschool establishment, the Bible is benighted, along with its religion.) The play? "Inherit the Wind," by Jerome Lawrence & Robt.E.Lee, 1950, 1st produced 1955. A McCarthy Era attack on anti-intellectualism, this drama reaches back $\frac{1}{4}$ century for a positive portrayal of atheist Clarence Darrow & a negative of Bible-believing Wm.Jennings Bryan. Of course neither had a view of evolution (in the Dayton, Tenn., 1925 trial) that would pass muster with today's biologists, but Bryan had superior foresight into the effects "natural selection" evolution would have on America & the world....

....foresight expressed in his pamphlet, "The Menace of Evolution," which I read today. Christians, he says, should "protest against the teaching of irreligion in the public schools under the guise of science and philosophy": he saw, as Darrow did not, that "natural selection" is pseudo-science & humanist philosophy, both excluding God (religion). Deism (as in the 1st edition of Darwin's ORIGIN OF SPECIES, last ¶) puts God far away in the past, with nothing to do after setting the universe in motion (though Darwin thanks God for the processes as well as the substance of the creation). Says Bryan, theistic evolution (=Darwinian deism) is "an anesthetic administered to young Christians to deaden the pain while their religion is being removed by the materialists."

6 For a child, the pain of touching a hot stove is a **short-term unintended consequence**, as eating green apples is a comparatively **long-term u.c.** Darwin intended neither the short-term (in his lifetime) politicization of his "natural selection" nor the long-term philosophical-materialistic erosion of spiritual, moral, & religious values which now has thrown the West into its culture-crisis. On a flight-plan, 2° of difference may result in only a mile deviation in a short distance, but (the angle remaining constant) 100 miles in a long distance. Again, a consequence (such as global warming) may seem at first inconsequential, but the long cumulative effect may be incontrovertible--as "The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceeding fine." The bad news is that the culture-degrading effects of atheist-or-deist evolution have steadily increased, & the good news is that public awareness of that fact presages corrective education-action against scientistic materialism. (After a '66 lecture of mine, NYTimes-science-editor Walter Sullivan came up to me to say that he agreed with denouncing of publicschool scientism--which, he said, is overimpressed with evolution's anabolism [up-building] & underimpressed with its catabolism [entropic devolution, biologically & culturally]. I spell this out in #2125, "Evoution/Entropy in 1987.") (Either/or: #2989.6, on Edmund O.Wilson's conversion to Jesus, then to Darwin.) (In our public schools, can science be taught without the arrogant benightedness of either scientism or six-day creationism? Yes, as I spell out in #2313, "The Public School's Hidden Persuaders Against God.")

7 The thetic clause in my letter today is this: "narrow-minded scientism has captured our public schools" (in periodic position, for maximum clarity & impact). The letter's last sentence says I'm not taking sides: it's first clause says I oppose six-day creationism, as the second clause sets me against scientism. Implied is that I'm for religion (so, against leaving God out) & science (so, against both scientism [which is pseudo-scientific philosophy] & creationism [which is both pseudo-science & crypto-religion]). The ground I occupy, here, is higher both intellectually (as I'm more fact-facing than either side) & morally (as I'm for peace, an end to unnecessary-unproductive conflict).

8 "Fact-facing"? You notice that the paper's letters-titler (mis)perceives my point to be that science isn't the exclusive realm of **fact**. A good point, re-educating those who've been miseducated by the pernicious facts/values split of Enlightenment thinking. Or perhaps, instead of misperceiving, she titled just to hook the reader, a worthy objective. To make my point, I do indeed shake "fact" loose from "science falsely so called" (1Ti.6.20 KJV). But if we remove "fact" from play, do we not forego truth claiming & fall into the pit of postmodernism? Not necessarily. We may, instead, humbly confess that religion & science are two mutually illumining ways of knowing. "Natural selection," as an oxymoron, would have to go: selection without a personal selector is poetry (a metaphor), not science; & its Darwinian modifier meant, for Darwin, something philosophical ("natural" as not "supernatural") --which is not science but metaphysics. IRONY: Both science & religion need to be **liberated** from both Darwinism & six-day creationism.