

THE CREATION / EVOLUTION WAR

This thinksheet addresses both the false clarities and the true confusions of Americans in the current dustup between our Puritan-theocentric heritage and our Enlightenment-anthropocentric heritage--the two strands of our civilization, rooted as they are in, respectively, Hebrew spirituality and Greek intellectuality. While nonChristians may enlist in this warfare, for Christians it's inescapable, as this Hebrew-Greek dialog is the primary cultural dynamism in the NT and Christianity.... This thinksheet maps out, as simply as I can, the terms and territories. In the process, it makes bold to tell you where to enlist in the war.

At Level I, no conflict need occur. The religious doctrine of "creation" and the scientific paradigm of "evolution" are as compatible as bacon and eggs when you don't call bacon "eggs" or eggs "bacon." As Dylan Thomas put it, through science we hope to "learn everything about the wasp except why": religion deals with telic sense-making ("why"), science with processive sense-making ("how"). In a famous theater-bromide, PLOT is "The king died and then the queen died"; STORY is "The king died and the queen died of a broken heart." Science is like plot in that the connection is SOUGHT: religion is like story in that the connection is GIVEN. Science and religion differ further, without disagreeing, in that their modes of knowing, manners of thinking, and means of effectuating their visions are in different dimensions or realms.

	religion	science
authentic	CREATION	EVOLUTION
I	A	B
II	C	D
pseudo-	-ISM	-ISM

But at Level II, both science and religion have committed hubris, have fallen into overclaiming on each other. "A" has degenerated into "C," the pseudo-science here called "creationism" (aka "Bible science," "creation science," "scientific creationism," "creation research," "origins research"). Largely in reaction against "B"'s degenerating into "D," the pseudo-religion here called "evolutionism," which falsely calls itself "evolution" and is taught in most public schools as authentic science though it includes such patent, question-begging, pseudo-religious fictions as "natural selection" and "spontaneous generation" and arrogates to itself metaphysical projections ruling out theism (God as "Creator of heaven and earth").

Please enlist in "AB" against all the other possibilities. Note these current BATTLES:

A AGAINST D: Authentic Biblical religion attacks implicit as well as explicit atheism.
 D AGAINST A: Since our general public is made up largely of public-school gradutes who've been taught evolutionism as though it were evolution, the media assume that--at least when it comes to matters of "science"--the citizenry is atheist, poetically put as "believing in Mother Nature." #1952 is an instance: an editorial attacking Genesis, and my subsequently printed response.

A AGAINST B and B AGAINST A: Possible only when one is ignorant of the other.
 A AGAINST C: "C" is a bastard hybrid of well-intentioned theism (which the Bible's creation stories promote against contemporary theogonies and cosmogonies & idolatries) and science's rightful fascination with space and time. "C" (1) diverts attention from God in the stories (while claiming to be fighting for God!), (2) secularizes the stories to make them yield space-time revelations (while claiming to be fighting modernism and secularism!), and (3) deepens the public's and the scientific community's delusion that the Bible and science are incompatible ("C" pushing such nonsense as 6 24-hour "days of creation," "young-earth" geology-paleontology, and Noah's flood as worldwide).

AB AGAINST D: "D" is a religion; it's pseudo-science only when claiming to be science. Call it "scientific naturalism" or "scientism," it suffers mighty blows in Conrad Hyers' THE MEANING OF CREATION: GENESIS AND MODERN SCIENCE (Jn.Knox/84--summarized on pp.411-415, 24Apr 85 CHRISTIAN CENTURY).

B AGAINST CD: Some competent, theologically literate scientists are beginning to attack on these two fronts, thank God.

C AGAINST ABD, and D AGAINST ABC.