

## President Bush Takes 'Intelligent Design' Seriously

President Bush is the latest person to have been fooled by the disingenuous pseudo-scientific **claptrap** called '**Intelligent Design Theory**'. This purports to provide a scientific critique of the prevailing theory that the complex adaptations in living things came about through **Darwinian evolution**, i.e. through many rounds of random genetic variation and natural selection. Instead, it proposes that they were intelligently designed. The President has called for schoolchildren to be "**exposed**" to this "alternative".

It is sad that the President has an embarrassingly deficient grasp of science. But, let's face it, **so do most people** (see the Appendix and weep). Even though the vast majority of the population, including President Bush, are subjected to a dozen years of daily science lessons as children, including evolution lessons, very few of them could tell you what Darwin's theory of evolution is, let alone why it is preferable to any given crackpot alternative. There is no reason to assume that an Intelligent Design lesson would be any more effective than an algebra lesson or a French lesson.

So the issue is symbolic rather than practical, both for schoolchildren and for the President. Fortunately, like most people, the President does not work in a laboratory. His flawed understanding of scientific method makes little difference to anything important.

Fortunately too, unlike his political opponents, he does know the difference between **war** and other types of struggle. And between right and wrong. And between **liberty and tyranny**. And between **the West and its enemies**.

Thu, 08/04/2005 - 13:59 | [digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [permlink](#)

## Arrogance, ignorance, and stu

Arrogance, ignorance, and stupidity are evident in this little rant. Glad to see you have such a vast grasp of the universe that you "know" the truth. Can you show us your Noble Prize (for fiction)?

by a reader on Thu, 08/04/2005 - 22:25 | [reply](#)

## Re: Arrogance, ignorance, and stu

"are evident"

Are you absolutely sure you "know" that?

by [Editor](#) on Thu, 08/04/2005 - 22:56 | [reply](#)

## Learning about ID theory

Indeed, it's not a good idea to expose children to bad science or pseudoscience as a serious alternative to real science (though I favor freedom of education, and so do think **schools should be allowed to teach it**). However, I do think a discussion of Intelligent Design should be part of any course teaching evolution - not as a way of weakening the belief in evolution, but as a way of strengthening it. Thus, the critique by ID and others of evolution should be discussed so that it can be shown how the critique fails. Indeed, standing up to experiment and criticism is how scientific theories become firmly established. And understanding how the critique of a theory fails helps one understand that theory.

ID-type arguments against evolution were there from the beginning, in the 19th century (e.g. how can evolution explain complex things such as an eye?), and actually were quite sensible in the beginning, but evolution has succeeded quite well in countering those arguments.

### Henry Sturman

by [Henry Sturman](#) on Fri, 08/05/2005 - 05:58 | [reply](#)

## Hello stu

Nobel prize, not Noble prize. You don't have to believe me. You can look it up.

by a reader on Sat, 08/06/2005 - 14:29 | [reply](#)

## Re: Learning about ID theory

Agreed on all counts. And a further reason for explaining Intelligent Design Theory *to those who want to listen* would be that the fact that it is taken seriously by so many people is an important fact about current affairs.

But we should perhaps add that ID theory, as currently promoted, is more than just the venerable (and reasonably respectable) Argument From Design. It also includes, among other things, a slew of silly misrepresentations of perfectly ordinary disputes within evolution theory, as 'flaws' in the theory.

by [Editor](#) on Sat, 08/06/2005 - 15:49 | [reply](#)

## ID arguments

Henry Sturman,

You make some reasonable points. However, the driving thesis of

ID, that there are gaps in the modern theory of Darwinism, is one that the modern theory openly addresses. If you quickly examine public school earth sciences textbooks, you will find - over and over again - cautionary phrases used: such as "evidence suggests", "findings so far indicate", "astronomers believe". Scientists are not ramming their "gospel" down the throats of innocent kiddies. They acknowledge they do not have the key to the absolute answer - but their driving thesis is that we need to keep looking. Then, of course, there is the problem that ID predicts nothing, explains nothing, illuminates nothing - except the enduring and profound mystery of faith - which is why it belongs in philosophy/religion classes, not science.

by Jody Tresidder on Tue, 08/09/2005 - 13:47 | [reply](#)

## Intelligent Falling

This is quite funny. Have you seen it?  
[www.theonion.com/news/index.php?issue=4133&n=2](http://www.theonion.com/news/index.php?issue=4133&n=2)

by AIS on Sun, 08/21/2005 - 21:04 | [reply](#)

## INTELLIGENT DESIGNERS AND UNIFORM FIELDS

..Please bear with me..I always have much to say..

String theorists and mathematicians allude to the required extra dimensions as either too small to perceive or too large, and explore manifold theories and other constructs to model infinitesimal point notions. The information continuum and dimension stares me in the face each morning when I wake to the faces of my family and when I stare at myself in a mirror. The information dimension is certainly not invisible.

If one looks at a tree and believes as I do, that the philosophy of the tree is simply antigravity then the inevitable question arises: why is the tree a fractal geometric shape and not uniform and predictable like the gravitational field we imagine? Can a small part of the reason be that the model of the gravitational field is itself flawed in some respect?

The lure of physical realities being perfectly described by uniform equations and power laws is attractive but, much like the failure of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides to continue to perform effectively on factory farms as advertised, modeling reality and generalizing with uniform power laws representing uniform fields leads us inevitably to uncertainty and even breakdowns in the ability of a model to predict. Uncertainty is in part our lack of profound or integrated reflection and knowledge of a subject; uncertainty is itself introduced with physical models that gloss over "imperfection" in favor of ease of calculation without considering all of the facts associated with the subject. Scientific determinism and mechanism applied to life is friendlier, understandable and gracious

up until the un-thought of cataclysm or discontinuity occurs.

Discontinuity is at the essence of life form in this universe.

The mathematical methods of calculus were tools invented to extrapolate our imagination and ideology of uniform fields and geometry that we could see and touch to an imaginary, infinitesimal level. To project perfectly formed fields and surfaces onto our perfectly formed mathematical ideology we had to introduce infinity and imagine what sequential and reproducible pattern any given surface would follow should we progressively approximate it with slices approaching infinitely thin widths; an extension of Archimedes' method and brilliance. But with real life and real materials the slices describing the surface in fact do not follow our ideal model once they reach a certain scale but rather tend to follow a fractional progression or irregular and perhaps random sequence towards the infinitesimal yet, all the while, following the average shape we imagined at our narrow bandwidth of thinking and measurement and, of course, within our means of manufacturing. A real surface and shape is everywhere discontinuous and nowhere near as ideal as we like to think as we approach the infinitesimal where our models break down. In fact, many applied scientific methods use empiricism to model what happens after the discontinuity occurs in many descriptive models of physical phenomenon.

Even the most deeply entrenched quantum entities such as the charge of an electron are approximations and ideology. Cite the observation of fractional charges in 1998:

<http://nobelprize.org/physics/laureates/1998/press.html>

Perhaps this is yet another clue to the requirement for a more robust and integrated mathematical treatment or cataclysmic improvement in our model of reality and physical fields. There were many earlier clues such as the quandary of the equivalence principle and then perhaps again when we realized that there had to be a thing called dark matter to account for strange velocity anomalies observed in galactic structures. Grounded on earth perhaps puts us at the trunk of the afore-imagined fractal gravitational field and reveals to us the strange equivalence of feathers falling as quickly as lead weights that somehow goes against our intuitions.

My personal belief is that every decision, idea and action is both flawed yet reflective of the perfection and beauty that can be observed both in nature and fostered over time in the communication and creative exchange with others (the scientific method). The notion of an intelligent designer is both foreign and unnatural that rubs against a sense of personal freedom even though this sense can be hedonistic and ideal in itself. This is probably the same feeling that many who are grounded in the stability of the objective scientific method or other such pattern of describing or controlling environment would have when considering the paradigm constructs and physical laws or controls as fleeting. Yet there is a universal line of balance where personal hedonism is balanced by realities of personal tragedies that eventually happen to everyone. In this respect the notion and interjection of an

intelligent designer is possibly less frightening than accepting the disquietude and inevitable entropy resulting of free will of all things in the universe. Intelligent Design is a concept that extends the safety and comfortable protection of determinism and continues to gloss over the imperfection introduced by the free will of all things combined in the universe (the universal pull of entropy).

Determinism is ultimately balanced by free will in cataclysmic explosions where new emergences can replace and consume old. Determinism and perfect symmetry are broken by creation, are shattered by supernova and other life and death cycles of creation, are continuously expanding in depth, and are confounded by the connection we have to everything else each with purpose to survive the miraculous and perfect journey through life.

by [Peter J Slack](#) on Mon, 10/10/2005 - 03:09 | [reply](#)

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