

## Confusion: Mine

By Louis P. Solomon

I am trying to maintain my equilibrium in the current world, and finding it difficult. My emotional background and training lead me down the path of reason and carefully considered judgment. My academic training and subsequent career have caused me to consider emotionally based causes with skepticism. Let me quickly add that I am not opposed to emotions, my own or others. Emotion is what gives the passion and support for topics, generates support for causes, and makes us human. What confuses me is the current antipathy, even war between logical based thinkers and devoted emotional believers. I am, of course, referring to the current controversy surrounding the teaching of Intelligent Design in schools.



Let me tell you my confusion. Darwin's Theory of Evolution is based upon observations, study of specific cases of apparent evolution of particular species, and inspired understanding by people who consider things in detailed, logical order. In a thumbnail description, the Intelligent Design proponents say that things are so complex that only a superior being could have generated the species being studied. I listen to both sides and say: Where's the contradiction? Why isn't it possible that a Creator could have set the entire process in motion and allow for evolution? It is, of course, logically possible that the Creator provided everything exactly the way it is and there is no such thing as evolution, but that is at variance with several examples from the field of biology. So, how do the scientists who support the *Theory of Evolution* feel about this? As far as I can tell, they have no qualms about accepting the possibility that life started for reasons that are unknown, and certainly unclear.

There are some scientists who have shown in reproducible experiments that life started from reasonable combinations of chemicals and electricity which were postulated as prevailing for millions of years during the early years of Earth's existence. Even if you accept their results, and remember that they are reproducible, there is still no scientific reason why a particular combination of events and chemicals had to generate life. Could not a Creator have decided that the necessary ingredients would be made available in a little test case within the local universe (the Earth) and life would begin, changing over the millennia, etc.?

My point is that science, as expressed in the *Theory of Evolution*, can explain the chain of events with logic, reasonable precision, and make predictions how living strains may be altered due to constraints and boundary conditions. But, the fundamental reasons for these events can easily be attributed to a Creator, or for that matter, nothing else but random events. I don't want to get into that argument. You certainly will recall from statistics class that if you had an infinite (all right, a large number) of monkeys randomly typing on typewriters (in modern terms these would be computers) long enough they would reproduce the sonnets of Shakespeare.

My confusion is simply that I see no reason for the teaching of Intelligent Design as part of the science curriculum. Science has, as its most fundamental basis, the ability to predict the short term future. If you cannot do that, as a scientist, then you simply do not understand what you are observing and further work and effort is required. Consider the *Law of Gravity*: it is a law because we have never found any instance where two masses are NOT attracted to one another. No exceptions mean we call it a law. Furthermore, we can predict the amount of attraction between the two bodies and support that prediction by measurement. If we ever found a case where there was not attraction but rather repulsion, the Law of Gravity would become the Theory of Gravity.

The critical problem with placing Intelligent Design in the world of science is simply that it cannot make predictions. Postulates cannot be tested, and then based upon the results, accepted, modified, or rejected. I am not suggesting that Intelligent Design not be taught. It is a religious based concept and could be taught just like comparative religion is taught in universities, and possibly even in high schools. But there are

fundamentally no issues that cannot be easily dealt with using the point of view of the supporters of either the Intelligent Design proponents or the supports of the *Theory of Evolution*.

So, my confusion remains. I simply do not understand why the two organizations cannot live in peace and recognize that their respective points of view should be taught to interested students in different areas of focus. And this confusion is with an easy problem. I have many more that cause me considerably more confusion and even angst. But that is for another day.