



THE NEWS!

Newsletter of the Affiliation of Christian Geologists

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The President's Column

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ACG LIVES!

Perhaps Pres. Grover Cleveland expected to be back in office after his first term and the time off. I never wanted to return as President of our precious little association. It isn't that I want any separation between it and me, and it certainly isn't a stressful, overworked position. It is that I hoped we could continue to bring along younger/newer members into leadership. I suppose something unlooked for could occur that will significantly increase our numbers and activities, however, I doubt it. It is best therefore to work with what we have and make advances where possible. For all of us, the ACG represents an add-on organization, of hobby-like status and of relatively low priority in terms of profession. We have the great benefits of an active listserve and a yearly opportunity to meet as part of the annual GSA conference. Those two functions are enough to keep the organism alive if not thriving. I also promise to get our web site updated and could sure use some help.

Allow me to go on with a brief state of the ACG description.

Who we are: With the aid of our original "constitution" and direct observations from the listserve plus GSA meetings, we can determine that active participation in the ACG is not restricted to dues-paying members (some of us are not very good at keeping dues up to date, *mea culpa*). Officers are also not restricted to those with active ASA (American Scientific Affiliation) memberships, even though that was one of the earlier guidelines. There are the "regulars", some from the inception and more that came on later. These folks may be read among the more frequent listserve postings. They may also be more frequent attendees during the ACG gatherings at GSA. Add to that very vague collection individuals who, only once were, for a while were, or newly are, and we might be near 250 total. Keith Miller as faithful Treasurer (and archivist?) might be able to provide a better approximation. Near the beginning, we even threw together a directory. Today, the mailing list and listserve membership are the best gauges of official participation.

It is quite difficult to apply demographic clarification to the raw numbers. Professional status among us includes undergrad and grad students, high school and college-level educators, government and industry scientists, consultants and those working for non-profit organizations. Men outnumber women but not at any extreme beyond the ratio in the all the fields of geoscience. A lot of us are probably among the broader middle-aged category, with younger colleagues in the minority. As for faith commitments, theologically "conservative" Protestants and Catholics are probably the main category (more on the implications of this below). At times, listserve postings describe authors who are agnostic. Most typically, specific faith affiliations are not mentioned, and we can only make inferences from the comments. A very few regulars or one-timers are from outside the US. Almost without exception, the postings and responses are sincere, showing respect for those of all opinions. It is very safe to say that we virtually all fit somewhere along the spectrum of "Old-Earthers" with respect to accepting the great antiquity of the Universe, our solar system and life. More disparate opinions would be found in relation to the meaning of biological evolution.

Because of the above sketchy profile, we ought to be able to make some form of position statement concerning the ACG approach to reconciling our geology with our faith. In the earliest ACG deliberations, it was decided that any statement of membership requirements should be more and not less inclusive. We desired to be a corresponding, fellowshiping group of Christians, leaving the door open to discussion of important issues. Without going into much historical detail, I can say that we have likely suffered a fair deal because of our lack of better definition. We do not want to eliminate fellowship and dialogue with "Young-Earthers", but we also seek to engage our non-Christian colleagues with hope of mutual respect. This

mutuality is greatly hindered by any association the ACG portrays with the likes of "Flood Geology", "Creation Science" and other forms of theological/scientific YEC (Young-Earth Creationism). At the last GSA gathering, we decided to finally move forward and draft an honest, more definitive statement. One such draft is currently in the hands of the officers and under consideration. I hope we can get some more ideas and interactions about this before we make anything policy. Please feel free to express your concerns (especially if prophetic and constructive) via the ACG listserve.

Those who frequent or lurk about the listserve probably know that I personally grow weary of all the attention paid the origins issues. Instead, I wish that we could be more focused on positive ways to make our profession influential in ministry/missions. Get beyond the preoccupation with ideas and see how the Science of the Earth can be applied to real problems. I joined the geological community a long time ago with interests in Precambrian tectonics and igneous petrology. The joy in these pursuits is still there. Research, publication and teaching in these areas are still good and needed. However, I find it increasingly hard to justify my small efforts contributing to the monster abundance of knowledge in purely academic fields. Teaching at a Christian institution has helped me make some appropriate changes (in other words, circumstances involuntarily moved me into new areas of activity and interest). It is generally very difficult if not impossible for people to alter their vocational direction. It may be that radical change for us as well as the entirety of the Church is what the Lord seeks for the Kingdom today. In geoscience we have some unique opportunities to do substantial kingdom work. Old shut doors between religion and science are opening. Note the most recent *Geotimes* with its cover story expressing surprise that the two realms have common ground. New opportunities to share our faith with colleagues are emerging. Reports from the recent ASA meeting in Edinburgh also demonstrate a growing engagement between diverse science and the needs of earth and cultures.

Irony of ironies; people continue not to recognize the sensational acceleration of geologically-based events/activities surrounding us these days. Our efforts to recruit students into geology as an undergrad major are as frustratingly fruitless as ever (maybe we are fishing off the wrong side of the boat). Global demand is at a thirty-year high for geologists to work in the extractive industries in addition to the enduring demand for expertise in environmental consultation. Salaries, even for first-degree graduates are outrageous (high). Our Career Development Office Director here is as bewildered as I am by the lack of student interest in our glorious discipline. Maybe there awaits a mystical key to open the barrier and allow us to pull in a net so heavily filled that it might burst (mixing illusions, I know). Regardless of any discouragements, we must press on and be optimistic about the future for Christians in Geology. Our time is already here.

Please feel inspired to share any thoughts and experiences you have with regard to my ramblings. We must be support for each other. I regret missing the GSA gathering this year. Each of you old regulars, rare one-timers and up-and-comers are much treasured as friends and fellow disciples.

The Editor's Corner

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After a brief diastem, the newsletter has resumed. I hope it will appear on a fairly uniformitarian schedule, though employment uncertainties and keeping up with an almost three year old do not produce the most regular of schedules. Timothy is generally excited about everything, including geology. Not surprising for a boy his age, volcanoes and earthquakes are his favorite geological phenomena. However, his interests are diverse, and he recently claimed to be finding different kinds of brachiopods in cinder block columns (he said the different kinds made different noises, which presumably indicates that they were articulate). One of our goals as geologists is to encourage and guide such fascination with God's creation.

This also highlights the fact that unless I hear from you, I have to find geology-related news myself to fill in the newsletter. Let me know what you are doing, writing, studying, *etc.*!

Member news

Kent Ratajeski is now a Lecturer at the University of Kentucky. Matt Stutz is now teaching earth science at Meredith College, Raleigh, NC.

Greg Neyman, an occasional poster on the ACG list, was interviewed for a column in the Cincinnati Post.
<<http://news.cincypost.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070510/LIFE/705100339>>

Student Geology Project in Northern Tanzania

Three Wheaton College Geology majors were supervised by Jeff Greenberg in a service-research project based at the YWAM (Youth With A Mission) center south of Mount Kilimanjaro. During two summer 2007 months, the students worked a) to help provide a new irrigation system for the ministry center, b) to create a GIS data base and maps for different properties belonging to the ministry, and c) to study an area just outside the existing Tanzanite gemstone mining district. This study involved fundamental mapping of metamorphic units and collecting samples for petrographic analysis. In part, the study

should contribute to the extended exploration of gemstone resources. It is also hoped that an unusual Precambrian weathering surface will yield some of its secrets to the young investigators.

REU (Research Experience for Undergraduates) grant proposal submitted to the National Science Foundation

Jeff Greenberg has plans to utilize Wheaton College's Science Station in the South Dakota Black Hills as a base to train students in appropriate technology for sustainable community development. The NSF grant would allow three years' funding for research and training in groundwater resource exploitation, waste-water sanitation, natural building materials, and village-scale energy systems. Students trained over ten weeks would "graduate" with a certification to go and train trainers for NGOs (Non-Government Organizations), both Christian and otherwise all over the globe. Your prayers for successful funding are greatly appreciated. Details concerning the program are available from Greenberg.

"I am going down to Antarctica this season to install a new network of Antarctic seismographs and GPS instruments (called POLENET). Will be out of what might be the highest and coldest Antarctic camp that NSF has supported (in East Antarctica about 500 km from pole). If there are any AGC members in McMurdo I will be glad to say hello as I pass through!" Doug Wiens, Washington University

Dear ACG friends,

I am delighted to be able to announce to you that my new book, "John Calvin and the Natural World," is now in print. It was released in late February by University Press of America. There are both paper and hardback editions. If you are interested, you can get it via Amazon.com or directly from UPA or from a bookstore, I'm sure. You may even be able to get a copy at reduced rate through the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship at Calvin College.

What I've tried to do is to focus on an aspect of Calvin's writing and thinking that has been largely neglected, namely, what were his views about the physical cosmos, animals, plants, rocks, human anatomy, etc. Some articles have been written about Calvin and the Copernican hypothesis but I'm not aware of any articles dealing with his ideas about animals, for example. Calvin provides a nice case study of a well educated sixteenth-century leader who was not in the field of natural philosophy, in effect, a well educated layman in regard to the "science" and "nature study" of his time. The book also probes the way in which Calvin interpreted biblical texts that have bearing on our understanding of the natural world and makes applications to the present situation in the evangelical world.

I won't be offended if anyone decides to buy the thing.

Dave Young

Current officers:

Jeff Greenberg – President

Charles Carrigan -- VP

David Campbell -- Newsletter Editor

Keith Miller -- Secretary/Treasurer

Ministry Opportunity

Phil Visser, originator of the VEGGIE TALES phenomenon of communicating biblical principles to kids (and kid-like adults), is working on a new project with great potential to reach Christian children about science. One caveat, Phil is very sensitive about potential offense to YEC or OEC zealots. He wants to avoid producing programs that generate controversy (good luck-eh?)

The new project will feature puppets, à la Muppets, that convey cool relationships between science and faith with humor and whimsical skits. Phil has proven his ability to do quality work and he knows the difficult obstacles in Christian-entertainment marketing. What he is looking for from us Christians in science, are ideas to create around. For example, he has two puppets (one a germanish-type archetypical scientist) discussing the wonder of gravity and its "fine tuning"; sort of anthropic principle stuff. He also has a fair bit about animals and their "design", without dealing with the sticky evolution connotations. Essentially, Phil is soft selling id (lower case) and other WOWs of nature to open the eyes of Christian kids in seeing that science is good and something that does tie well with our faith in the Creator. Phil realizes that id is good for teaching believers while ID is another concept he wants to avoid. His programs will not be specifically intended for anything evangelistic.

Like the Muppet Show of old and Sesame Street, the teaching will occur with humor at two levels; the one to keep the little critters' attention, and the other to make us old folks chuckle at some jokes, allusions, etc. Unfortunately, anything approaching complex scientific concepts won't work. That certainly narrows down much of the raw material I had to contribute. However, there should still be plenty of ideas that apply. So, if you have anything that might work, and you are not afraid of having your name in the program credits (could be bad for tenure and other measures of academic success, I suppose), please let me know. I am currently the official "science consultant" for project. That and \$3.75 will get me a nice mocha latte at Starbucks.

Jeff G.

Interesting Articles

The September Geotimes (www.geotimes.org) has a few science-faith articles, including:

Strange Bedfellows? Evangelicals and Scientists Join Forces on Climate -- This year, two seemingly disparate groups — scientists and evangelical Christians — joined together to sign a statement calling for the government to take urgent action to mitigate global warming.

Controversy in the Cradle of Humankind -- Some of Kenya's religious leaders are objecting to the display of human evolution in Kenya's national museums, much to the chagrin of scientists studying hominin fossils in the so-called cradle of human evolution.

The Annual ASA Meeting University of Edinburgh, August 2 – 5, 2007

David Campbell, amblema@bama.ua.edu

The 2007 ASA annual meeting was held jointly with CIS, the British equivalent, at the University of Edinburgh. The theme of "New Frontiers in Science and Faith" incorporated a wide range of topics. Simon Conway Morris, well-known for his work on Cambrian paleontology, gave one of the plenary talks, "Does Evolution have a deep structure, and if so what are the Theological Implications?" Several other plenary and submitted talks addressed issues of geological interest, including global change, environmental stewardship, water resources, and understandings of evolution. The talks should soon be available for downloading from the ASA and CIS websites (<http://www.asa3.org/> or <http://www.cis.org.uk/>)

Edinburgh is famous in the history of geology. Edinburgh Castle's strategic position is due to its location on one of several remnants of Carboniferous volcanoes in the area. A field trip to Arthur's Seat, a Carboniferous volcano in Holyrood Park, adjacent to the meeting venue, allowed many attendees to see some of James Hutton's original localities. The basalt from the volcano intruded into sandstone and mudstone, displacing and baking it. These outcrops provided key evidence of the igneous origin of basalt, in opposition to the then-prevailing neptunism of Werner, which claimed that basalt was sedimentary in origin. Hutton also successfully advocated the preservation of a sample of a hematite-rich vein as the world's first known geological preserve, rather than entirely mining out the deposit. Some of the field trip group continued along the base of the hill, viewing additional outcrops and getting good views of Holyrood Palace, while the rest made the steep and windy climb to the top, getting good views of the city and Firth as well as of poorly developed columnar basalt and well-developed volcaniclastics. A few days later, I walked over to the park and missed a bit of mass wasting by about half an hour. In Edinburgh itself, one can see a plaque commemorating Hugh Miller, "geologist and naturalist, writer and folklorist", not far from the John Knox house.

Next year's ASA meeting, held jointly with the Canadian Scientific Christian Affiliation, will be at George Fox University, Newberg, OR, August 1-4. It will be a good opportunity to meet people and hear talks relating to the whole range of interfaces between Christianity and science, as well as a visit to the active margin for those of us in relatively quiet portions of the continent.



left: View of Arthur's Seat-hill in the middle is one of the volcanic cones.



right: One of Hutton's key outcrops showing a basaltic sill (top and middle) affecting sedimentary rocks in the lower left.

Annual ACG Meeting at GSA Denver, October 28 – 31, 2007

The ACG will meet Sunday, October 28, 2007, 8:00 - 10:00 PM, at the Hyatt Regency at the Denver Convention Center. Room: Quartz AB.

The 2008 Geological Society of American Annual Meeting will be held in Houston on October 5 – 9. Anyone willing to help plan the ACG meeting should contact ACG Officers Jeff Greenberg (jeffrey.k.greenberg@wheaton.edu) or Keith Miller (kbmill@ksu.edu).

Science and Theology News

Keith Miller, kbmill@ksu.edu

The April 2002 issue of the journal *Australasian Science* has a number of excellent articles devoted to issues at the interface of science and theology. Our own Jonathan Clarke, from the Australian National University Department of Geology, has an essay entitled "Myth and Anti-Myth." In this essay he gives a brief overview of the history of the relationship of Christian faith and the study of the Earth with the objective of debunking the persistent myth of the warfare of science and Christianity. This myth continues to be perpetuated not only by popular culture, but also by scientists and Christians who should know better. At the end of his essay, Jonathan gives the web pages of both the ACG and the ASA as places to further investigate the interaction of faith and science.

Other essays in this issue include: "The Bible and the Rise of Science" by Peter Harrison, author of *The Bible: Protestantism and the Rise of Natural Science* (Cambridge University Press); "The Big Bang" by Mark Worthing, from Tabor College, Adelaide, and author of *God, Creation and Contemporary Physics* (Fortress Press); "The Evolution of Creationism" by David Young, from Melbourne University, and author of *The Discovery of Evolution* (Cambridge University Press); and "Evolution's Challenge to Theology" by Dennis Edwards, senior lecturer in theology at Flinders University and Adelaide College of Divinity's Centre for Theology, Science & Culture, and author of *The God of Evolution* (Paulist Press).

Book Review

SPECIES OF ORIGINS:

America's Search for a Creation Story

Karl W. Giberson and Donald A. Yerxa

Rowman & Littlefield, 276 pages

Review by Stephen O. Moshier, Wheaton College

Creation stories give people a sense of where they came from and meaning to their existence. The Judeo-Christian story of origins reveals God's role in the creation of all things, seen and unseen. Genesis outlines the proper relationships between God, nature, and humanity. The biblical account was radical in its time because it removed from the discussion mythical interactions between gods, beasts, humans, and fantastic hybrid beings.

While all Christians are devoted to this understanding of the meaning of Genesis, disagreements about exactly *how* God created go back farther than the days of St. Augustine. The Bible clearly uses anthropomorphic and metaphorical language in its descriptions of nature and God's role in it, such as God breathing life into Adam (as if God has breath) or heavenly storehouses for snow and hail (even Luther struggled with "biblical hydrology"). But, until about 150 years ago it seemed perfectly reasonable that the world was only thousands of years old, that God made each species in special acts of deliberate creation, and that the world was shaped in a catastrophic deluge.

The sciences have contributed chapters to a modern creation story, not from oral tradition or revelation, but from direct observation of nature and the development of unifying theories from big bang to evolution. The scientific creation story is radical in its time because it removes from discussion God's involvement in the origins of things. If scientific investigation of the physical world is, by its very nature, unable to perceive divine action, it may seem perfectly reasonable that God creates and sustains the world at some metaphysical level. However, most Americans believe they have to accept one story or the other, not some fantastic hybrid.

Modern people are faced with sorting through various competing origin theories, much like the entomologist's daunting task of identifying species of insects. Imagine rows of bugs pinned neatly on a specimen board. Karl Giberson and Donald Yerxa call these creation stories "species of origins." They attempt to classify and evaluate them in *Species of*

Origins: America's Search for a Creation Story. They point out that the typical dualistic approach to origins (creation vs. evolution) is easier to understand if Americans are looking to scientific or religious authorities for guidance. Clarity, they argue, is found in the extreme positions. The scientific elite embrace a worldview in which the cosmos is "all there is and all there ever will be." Understandably, Christians are uncomfortable with science as the basis for philosophical naturalism. Advocates of scientific creationism offer an alternative, anti-evolutionary science to preserve the authority of the Bible, interpreted literally, on matters of origins. Between the extremes are attempts to integrate mainstream science and Christian theology. Giberson and Yerxa call these species of origin *via media* positions. The scientific and theological sophistication required to master these highly nuanced positions render them obscure and unpopular. Species of origins are complex creatures. The questions they are created to answer beget other questions.

The stated task in *Species of Origins* is to describe the competing creation stories that dominate the cultural conversation. More effort is given to the philosophical underpinnings of these positions and their reception in the public square than to evaluation of their scientific or theological merits. The authors intend to provide a nonpolemical overview for both secular and religious readers. Such attempts at bridge-building are consistent with the mission of the John Templeton Foundation, which provided support to the authors through their participation in the Templeton Oxford Seminars on Science and Christianity. Physicist Giberson and historian Yerxa are professors at Eastern Nazarene College.

The problem for any creation story is how to relate discovered knowledge in the realm of science to revealed knowledge in the realm of theology. Useful schemes have been developed by Ian Barbour (*When Science Meets Religion*, Harper San Francisco, 2000) and Richard Bube (*Putting it all Together: Seven Patterns for Relating Science and Christian Faith*, University Press of America, 1995). Conflict patterns involve the supremacy of science over theology, or the reverse. Compartmentalization or independence places science and religion in separate spheres with no interaction, as in Stephen J. Gould's model of "non-overlapping magisteria." Convergence or harmonization seeks to show how revealed and discovered knowledge parallel each other in quality, contributing the same kinds of information to our understanding of origins questions. Integration or complementarity regards science and theology as contributing different kinds of information to our understanding of origins, giving us a fuller view of reality - things seen and unseen.

It is useful to read *Species of Origins* with these patterns in mind. However, it is understandable why Giberson and Yerxa don't even mention them. *Via media* species are particularly difficult to classify, because advocates of the various positions have different definitions of appropriate scientific and theological methods in their interpretation of discovered or revealed sources of information. For example, in order to harmonize science and scripture, the days of creation may be taken as geological ages or scientific data may be reinterpreted to fit a recent, six day-creation. Depending on one's point of view, these approaches involve convergence or conflict. Del Ratzsch exposed rhetorical and philosophical blunders, as well as misunderstandings, on all sides of the origins conversation in *Battle of Beginnings: Why Neither Side is Winning the Creation-Evolution Debate* (Intervarsity Press, 1996). This is probably the closest book to *Species of Origins* that has been previously written.

The introduction to *Species of Origins* includes a concise history of the battle between competing creation stories in 20th century America: the evangelical response to modernism with *The Fundamentals* (1910-15), the suppression of evolution in public education after the Scopes Trial (20s-40s) and its post-Sputnik resurgence (60s), the birth of scientific creationism and its growing influence on the church (70s), the ensuing cultural warfare over the place of evolution or creationism in public education (80s), and the introduction of intelligent design, a sophisticated new anti-evolutionary science (90s). *Species of Origins* includes important historical developments, intelligent design in particular, since the publication of Ronald Numbers' *The Creationists: The Evolution of Scientific Creationism* (U California Press, 1993). Giberson and Yerxa refer readers to that book for the definitive history of the creationist species.

The "modern creation story" is the first species pinned on the authors' specimen board. Compelling scientific evidence for the big bang, origin of elements, stars and planets, life and its diversity, humans, and human personality are summarized in a mere 15 pages. Compelling, but apparently not convincing to the majority of Americans. Giberson and Yerxa observe that creationism is consistently favored over evolution in opinion polls taken over the past 20 years. They argue that it is not a lack of education that drives Americans to reject scientific theories. Elite scientists who have written popular treatments of cosmology and evolution are members of what the authors call the "Council of Despair." Richard Dawkins and Peter Atkins are overtly hostile to religion. Steven Weinberg is indifferent. Edward O. Wilson and Stephen J. Gould accept religion as an important social construct (the product of evolutionary development, of course). Stephen Hawking seems the most preoccupied with God, if only as a concept for the ultimate theory of things. These men, who "explain away cherished beliefs as bogus intellectual baggage accumulated along the evolutionary path," according to the authors, do not appreciate the enduring power of religion in America. Why abandon a worldview that gives purpose, hope and salvation for one that offers the "exhilarating loneliness" of an impersonal cosmos? "On Main Street America, evolution is often interpreted as a creation story for atheists."

The second origin species under the microscope is scientific creationism, as represented by the collective works of Henry Morris, the undisputed champion of this movement. Morris claims that scientific evidence does not support modern theories of origin. Furthermore, good science proves the testimony in Genesis for a recent, six-day creation and global deluge of geological significance. Giberson and Yerxa devote three chapters to exploring the biblical, scientific and social dimensions of this species. Readers with geological training may be frustrated by the presentation, as so many disputable

claims are left unevaluated. The authors show how Morris has used the scientific literature to his advantage, especially in the use of quotes by scientists appearing to betray weaknesses in the fossil evidence for evolution. Critics of scientific creationism recognize a consistent pattern of misapplying data, quoting out-of-context, and blatant misquoting from the scientific literature to support claims. Indeed, the authors conclude that at the extreme ends of the creation-evolution spectrum, the high cost of clarity can be the truth.

Via media species are particularly important to Christians seeking harmonization or integration of faith and science. Gap and day-age theories, progressive creationism, theistic evolution, intelligent design- each species was created (or is evolving) to answer different questions or to fill perceived theological or scientific gaps in knowledge. Theistic evolution and intelligent design (ID) are hotly debated in evangelical circles, even on the pages of *Christianity Today*. The problem for theistic evolution is explaining exactly how God is involved in the law and chance of evolutionary process. It can lead to radical reformulations of theology that can illuminate related theological concepts or undermine orthodoxy. The problem for ID is identifying indisputable gaps (or God's fingerprints) in the evolutionary process. It demands radical reformulations of scientific methods that could usher in unimaginable discoveries or undermine the scientific enterprise. Giberson and Yerxa note that contemporary theologians have not provided much help. Serious consideration of science is absent in all the important modern systematic theological works.


The final two chapters of *Species of Origin* devoted to intelligent design are particularly important because ID is such a complex and even ambiguous species. While theistic evolution is essentially an approach to relating faith and science, ID is cast as a scientific program with theological implications. As a movement, ID is as much political as scientific and intentionally steered clear of specific theological associations. Giberson and Yerxa describe the movement as a broad coalition of philosophers and scientists holding disparate views on the age of creation, exactly how much evolution may have occurred in life's history, and even religion! Design theorists are inherently skeptical of the practical assumption in science that natural, gap-less processes are to be expected in the history of the universe and life. Methodological naturalism must go out the window with philosophical (or metaphysical) naturalism. The former is replaced by the assumption that design can be empirically detected by the systematic elimination of law or chance as an explanation for "specified complexity." Critics of ID point out that methodological naturalism has been extremely successful and should remain a practical requirement for the ultimate advance of scientific knowledge. Thus, the future of ID rests upon its ability to stimulate fruitful scientific discoveries (meaning explanations for the origins of things within the design paradigm). The theological downside of ID is placing false hopes in the apologetic value of gaps in natural history as evidence of God's handiwork.

Giberson and Yerxa note that the ID movement has not really articulated an alternative species of origin, a unifying origins theory in its own right. At best, ID focuses a spotlight on evolution's hardest questions and offers a critique of philosophical naturalism's troubling implications for culture. Yet, ID is almost always presented in popular Christian media as an alternative to evolution with significant apologetic value. Books by Philip Johnson and William Dembski are advertised to be "splitting the foundations of Darwinian evolution." School boards, encouraged by ID advocates, have taken measures to teach ID alongside evolution in science curricula, or at least demote evolution to the status of speculation ("Don't worry, it's just a theory"). Popular perceptions of ID are as diverse as dragonflies. American evangelicals are shifting loyalties from scientific creationism to intelligent design (or confusing the two), even without knowing much about what ID is or is not.

Species of Origins joins the library of helpful books about creation and evolution. It represents solid scholarship and accomplishes its goal of being even-handed. The authors do not reveal their preferences for any particular species, but they strongly maintain that the cultural conversation over creation stories is important. Starting with the title, witty use of scientific metaphors throughout the book lightens what could have been deep and dry expositions of historical, philosophical and scientific material. Readers will come to appreciate the complexity of these species, and perhaps even hold their own more loosely and humbly.

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*Have you paid
your dues lately?*

New ACG Officer
Nominations Enclosed

The News! Affiliation of Christian Geologists

Why not join ASA, the American Scientific Affiliation?

The Affiliation of Christian Geologists is an independent organization, but we are an “affiliated society” of the American Scientific Affiliation. ASA supports ACG in many of its endeavors, for example, keeping our financial records and letting us use their bulk rate permit. Personal membership in the ASA has the following benefits:

1. You will receive the quarterly journal, *Perspectives on Science & Christian Faith* and the bimonthly newsletter.
2. You will receive free copies of ASA books, such as *Teaching Science in a Climate of Controversy* and the Membership Directory.
3. You will find fellowship at local and annual meetings both spiritually and intellectually stimulating.
4. You will have opportunities for service to both the Christian community and the scientific community.
5. You may join special commissions that are charged with relating various issues in faith and science.

Perspectives on Science & Christian Faith is a premier journal with articles that are on the cutting edge of relating science and Christian faith. The views expressed by authors in *Perspectives* span a range of positions on these issues in

the context of evangelical faith. The bimonthly newsletter is filled with information on what Christian scientists are doing around North America. Most members of the ACG are qualified to join the ASA with full membership for annual dues of \$55.

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Dues Due?

Have a look at the mailing label on this newsletter. The date printed on it is when your membership with the ACG expires. If the date is getting close, or has passed, please renew by sending your annual dues of \$10 (“ACG” on your checks will suffice) to the ACG treasurer Keith Miller, Department of Geology, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506.

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