

Shattering Icons

An interview with Jonathan Wells

In 2000, Jonathan Wells authored a landmark book called *Icons of Evolution*, in which he exposed the errors of the arguments evolutionists routinely use to support evolution. These icons are still commonly found in science textbooks. Given that these icons have been disproved, but are still being utilized today, we wanted to interview Jonathan Wells and allow him to share his comments with you.

FP: For folks who have not read *Icons of Evolution*, could you share what the basic premise is?

JW: The icons of evolution are images that have taken on a life of their own. That is, they go so far beyond the evidence or distort the evidence so seriously that they are no longer the evidence itself. These icons become objects of reference almost, and they appear in the textbooks recycled over and over. And in fact, most biologists, all they really know about evolution is the icons, because Darwin plays very little role in their work. So they are exposed to the icons in an introductory course, and that about all they really know. The icons misrepresent the evidence.

FP: What do you feel like is a reasonable solution for instance, a general biology class.

JW: I think a general biology course should teach students about Darwin, because it is so influential. But they should teach the truth about the evidence for and against it. There is a lot of evidence, of course, for microevolution, which is, changes within the existing species. No one has ever quarreled with that. But the Darwinists of course try to make that sound as though that explains macroevolution, the origin of new species and organs and body plans. For that there is virtually no evidence.

FP: If you were giving examples to a set of parents of some of the icons they can expect to see in their child's textbooks, what are two or three that come to mind?

JW: One they will certainly see, because you can teach Darwinism without it, is the evolutionary Tree of Life. That the branching trees diagram that supposedly shows how all living things are descended with modification from a common ancestor. That's the root of the tree. So, you see, in any biology textbook you will see a version of this, purportedly showing how all the animals descended from this organism or all the mammals descended from that or all the horses or something like that. These trees are without exception hypothetical. They are really just restatements of Darwin's theory in pictorial form. What you have is a series of fossils or living organisms so you draw lines between them to show how they are related to one another. That's where the hypothesis starts and the evidence ends.

FP: Why do you feel like the scientific community right now, they won't let - for instance - papers be published on intelligent design in peer-reviewed journals. They are very much

militant as far as the judicial system, as you know. In Dover, PA, we saw what happened when the school system tried to introduce intelligent design into the curriculum. Do you feel like the evolutionists' actions are justified?

JW: They defend Darwinism as their creation story with everything they've got, and that's what they're doing. I mentioned the tree of life icon, there are others. The second most common icon that I discussed that is still in the textbooks is the series of drawings by Ernst Haeckel, the embryo drawings. They are still in the textbooks even though they were known to be faked in the 1860s. I think they are there in the textbooks is because they are too good an illustration of Darwin's idea that you and I are related to fish.

FP: Do you feel like there is any chance that the abortion lobbyists are behind some of that?

JW: Absolutely. In fact, when abortion was first being promoted twenty, thirty, forty years ago, Haeckel's drawings were quite prominent in the abortionist literature. So they were used along with Darwinism to justify the idea that the human embryo is not really human, it's really just an evolved fish. So it's okay to kill it.

FP: I hear you are working on a new book. What can you tell us about it?

JW: Well, it's a book about genes. In fact, the tentative title is *The End of the Genetic Paradigm*. It's about the over-emphasis on DNA in modern biology and medicine and that over-emphasis comes from Darwinism, because in Darwinism, mutations in DNA are the raw materials for evolution. But in fact, modern biologists know that DNA is not as important as its often made out to be, and that there is a lot more going on in the cell, and that's what the book is about.

FP: I'm sure you saw the cover of *Time* about three weeks ago (October 9, 2006). It had a chimp on one side and an infant on the other, under the banner "How We Became Human." Evolutionists continue to toss out a figure of 99-98% genetic similarities between humans and chimps. What would be your response to this?

JW: First of all, the 99% figure is misleadingly quantitative. The figure is nowhere near that exact. [The latest real figure is 95%.] Second of all, since there are only four subunits in DNA, if you compare us to any living thing we are automatically 25% similar. So if you want to say that we are 99% chimpanzee, we are also 25% daffodil. So these numerical comparisons are kind of silly. We are in fact more similar to chimpanzees than any other animal that is alive right now, so you expect the DNA to be similar. But anyone who looks at a human and a chimpanzee can immediately tell that there are drastic differences between us, and the DNA doesn't explain this. So obviously there is more going on here. The Darwinists or materialists want to reduce everything to a molecule like DNA and the fail to realize that there's a lot more to the story.

FP: Do you feel like part of it is that they have stiffened their necks and they don't want to be obedient to a God?

JW: Well, I'm sure they have lots of reasons individual to individual, but I have had many individuals tell me privately that the reason they embrace Darwinism is because they do not want to be accountable to a higher power. That's their motivation in many cases. I can't speak for all of them, but that is certainly an element.

FP: Do you feel like this information challenges a student's faith and theological beliefs?

JW: Absolutely. In many biology courses, Darwinism is explicitly used to counter religious viewpoints. I have textbooks in which Darwinism is claimed to be the replacement for the classical explanation that we are created in the image of God. So the theology is right there in the textbooks. It shouldn't be, but it is.

FP: What would you tell a parent of a child who is in the public school system? Because let's face it, they're going to be indoctrinated by some of the icons you wrote about in *Icons of Evolution*. How can a parent protect their child and make sure that they get the truth?

JW: Well, I think that providing the child with supplementary materials is very important. I have children who went through the public school system. In fact, they're still in it. One is in a public university, one is in a public high school. They know how I feel. In fact, they each know more about Darwinism than their teachers. I tell them that they have to respect their teachers because of their position, even when they're wrong. They don't have to believe them - they have to be respectful. However, when their teachers tell them something they know is wrong, they come and discuss it with me. I have a range of books on the subject showing that the evidence on Darwinism is not what it's cut out to be. I would encourage parents that if their kids have to go to public schools just make sure they hear the rest of the story. Most of the content is not so objectionable; it's more nuts and bolts - what's going on in the cell and the organisms and so on. So, if students can survive the usually relatively brief indoctrination to Darwinism, then things won't be too bad.