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Is Critical Analysis of Evolution the Same as Teaching Intelligent Design

A favorite Darwinist conspiracy theory is to claim that education policies requiring critical analysis of evolution are simply a guise for teaching intelligent design (ID). For example, Professor Patricia Princehouse was quoted saying "critical analysis is intelligent design relabeled, just as intelligent design was creationism relabeled"[1] and "[c]ritical analysis is just another name for creationism."[2] Here are 5 simple reasons why teaching critical analysis of evolution is very different from teaching about intelligent design:

1) The Educational Approaches are Logically Distinct:

One can critique evolution without discussing "replacement theories" or alternative explanations such as intelligent design. For example, the Kansas Science Standards require students to learn about critiques of arguments for evolution from the fossil record, molecular data, and embryology, without any appeals to any alternative explanations. The standards also critique chemical origin of life scenarios without proposing any alternative hypothesis. ID is not based upon mere refutation of evolution: thus teaching ID requires some positive argument. Mere critical analysis of evolution does not logically lead to the conclusion of ID.

2) Explicit Statements of Intent to Not Require Teaching ID:

Many districts and states which have sanctioned critical analysis of evolution have also included in their policies explicit disclaimers to ensure that teachers, students, and the public understand that the critical analysis policy does not call for teaching ID. For example, Kansas's State Science Standards, which are presently the strongest standards in the country calling for critical analysis of evolution, state "While the testimony presented at the science hearings included many advocates of Intelligent Design, these standards *neither mandate nor prohibit teaching about this scientific disagreement.*"

3) Scientific Critique is a Separate Legal Category from Teaching about Alternative Theories:

In *Edwards v. Aguillard*, the U.S. Supreme Court clearly distinguished between scientific critiques of prevailing scientific theories, and teaching alternative viewpoints to evolution.[3] Other courts have followed.[4] Critical analysis thus exists as a separate and already-protected legal category.

4) Critics of Darwin that Don't Support ID:

Some critics of Neo-Darwinism, such as structuralists or self-organization proponents, have explicitly disaffirmed intelligent design. For example, in January, 2006, Dr. Richard Sternberg testified before the South Carolina Board of Education in favor of critical analysis of evolution, yet Sternberg himself is not an ID-proponent. Other prominent Darwin-critics who are not pro-ID include Dr. David Berlinski and Dr. Stuart Kauffman. If critical analysis equals ID then these people apparently do not exist.

5) Final Proof: The Pudding (the Darwinists' own behavior):

It took the Darwinists less than two months to file a lawsuit to ban ID from Dover, Pa, after their explicitly pro-ID policy was passed. If they really believed that policies calling for critical analysis of evolution during science instruction are the same as teaching ID, lawsuits would have arisen over the past few years over the many critical analysis of evolution policies around the United States. But they haven't filed such lawsuits, and they won't, because they know that critical analysis of evolution is different from teaching about ID.

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[1] "Ohio Expected to Rein In Class Linked to Intelligent Design," by Jodi Rudoren, *New York Times*, February 14, 2006.
[2] "Ohio Drops Demand That Evolution Be Challenged," by Stephanie Simon, *Los Angeles Times*, February 15, 2006.
[3] Edwards v. Aguillard, 482 U.S. 578, 593, 594 (1987).
[4] In *Selman v. Cobb County*, 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 432 (N.D. Ga., 2005), Judge Clarence Cooper explained in a lawsuit over a textbook disclaimer requiring that be "critically considered," that "the issue before the Court is not whether it is constitutionally permissible for public school teachers to teach intelligent design." *Id.* at *3