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Public School Science Standards: Political or Pure?

By Calvin Beisner, Ph.D.

*For generations America’s public schools have indoctrinated our children with the dogma of Darwinism: life arose and developed by chance, no Creator involved.*

Calvin, you need to look up the words 'indoctrinate' and 'dogma'. If you do, you will learn that they don't apply to provable science, but rather, to *your* religious beliefs.

*Now they’re poised to indoctrinate them with another dogma: catastrophic anthropogenic global warming—and with it a whole catalog of other exaggerated and sometimes completely fictitious environmental concerns, all of them used as rationales for strangling restrictions on personal liberty, property, and the free market, and for instituting socialist, redistributionist policies domestically and internationally.*

Calvin, you should also look up 'run-on sentence'. Try stopping once in a while to catch your breath. Stick a period in there occasionally. You're at a keyboard for Christ's sake - it's not like anyone is going to interrupt you.

*Never mind that in both cases thousands of scientists reject the dogma.*

Calvin, actually, in both cases, evolution and global warming, there is an overwhelming scientific consensus. So for you, relying on an appeal to popularity is a losing hand.

*Never mind that in both cases the theories fail to account for large numbers of empirical facts.*

Calvin, theories don't have to explain everything, they only need to explain observations in such a way as to avoid strong contradictory evidence. Evolution and Global Warming are accepted by scientific consensus precisely because there is no evidence to falsify them and their explanations fit the observable facts.

*Never mind that in both cases there is strong Biblical ground to question or reject the dogmas.*

Calvin, your fairy tales are not even considered in scientific discussions ... only in Sunday School.

*Never mind that the economic policies pursued in their name would trap billions in poverty, impoverish millions more, and undermine God-given rights to life, liberty, and property.*

Calvin, sorry that our attempts to save the planet cut into your bottom line, but rational people place human life above the size of your bank account. Obviously ... you don't.

As for God-given rights, first prove your invisible ghost is real, then we can argue about whether or not He has granted us any rights.

*The educational bureaucracies that dominate our public schools are in advanced stages of developing the “Next Generation Science Standards,” which, though not legally mandated, will be awfully hard for states to buck—and indeed many states already have taken steps to implement them.*

*The standards explicitly endorse a naturalistic worldview. Next Generation Science Standards flagship product, A Framework for K–12 Science Education, published by the National Research Council of the National Academies of Science, states it not as one worldview option among many but as simple fact that (not God but) “Evolution … explains both the similarities of genetic material across all species and the multitude of species existing in diverse conditions on Earth.”*

*These are related to the National Science Education Standards, all produced by the National Academies of Science, 93 percent of whose members are atheists or sympathetic to an atheist, Secular Humanist religious worldview.*

Calvin, what I wonder about is the 7% of members who still believe in invisible ghosts despite all that scientific training. It shows that even education is no guarantee that one will necessarily develop critical thinking skills.

*But despite the standards’ insisting that humans are simply part of nature, their general perspective sets people off against the rest of nature. A section discussing “Human Impacts on Earth Systems” says, “Human activities now cause land erosion and soil movement … and air and water pollution … with damaging effects on other species and on human health.”*

Calvin, now they're two for two. Finally, after 2,000 years of darkness, enforced by religious horror, science is beginning to let humans see the light from the tree of knowledge. No wonder the Bible warned against it. It represents the demise of ghost worship.

*A later section, on biodiversity and humans, asserts, “Human activity is also having adverse impacts on biodiversity through overpopulation, overexploitation, habitat destruction, pollution, introduction of invasive species, and climate change.”*

Calvin, that isn't an assertion. It is scientifically proven fact. Assertion is what your position has been reduced to.

*The assumption that what people do is bad is clear in a draft of performance expectations, which requires students to “Provide evidence that humans’ uses of natural resources can affect the world around them, and share solutions that reduce human impact”—as if human impact should always be smaller, not greater.*

*In short, the National Science Education Standards reflect the environmentalist assumption that humans can’t improve on the natural state*

Calvin, you either don't understand their position or you are purposely trying to misrepresent it. Personally, I would go with the second one.

*exactly contrary to the assumption of Genesis 1:28’s revelation of the mission of man: to fill and rule the Earth, not abusively but, reflecting God’s own actions, in a godly way that enhances its fruitfulness, beauty, and safety, to the glory of God and the benefit of our neighbors.*

Calvin, the verse you just referred to, refutes your position. Scientists are in nearly 100% agreement that our activities are damaging the Earth. Your position violates what your God told you to do. You are supporting those who are destroying His creation, not enhancing it.

*The underlying naturalistic worldview and the politically charged positions on Darwinism and climate change in the National Science Education Standards show that this will be one more step in capturing the minds of America’s children—including those Christian children who attend public schools.*

Calvin, have you ever asked yourself why your invisible ghost is allowing this to happen?

Have you ever considered that this generation may be His way of saving the planet from the disastrous effects of past practices?

*The threat comes not only from the National Science Education Standards but also from growing state environmental education requirements around the country, e.g., with Maryland in 2011 becoming the first state to require “environmental literacy” for high school graduation, and other states (California, Florida, New York, Wisconsin, and many more) taking similar steps.*

Calvin, that damn literacy and education nonsense is ruining the Middle Ages isn't it?

*(It would be nice if they required basic literacy but I suppose that would equip citizens to read a lot and think for themselves!)*

Calvin, reading and thinking - the worst enemies any religion has ever known ... especially yours.

*And one thread running through almost all environmental studies curriculum is that business and industry are largely to blame for the world’s ecological crises,*

Calvin, who else could it possibly be? The New York Yankees?

*and consequently that we must embrace a “small is better,” “limits to growth,” “simple lifestyle” mentality at the personal level and an anti-business, anti-free market, anti-growth mentality at the societal and governmental level.*

Calvin, quick question: how much stock do you own in oil companies?

*It would be bad enough if the public schools were the only front on which people face these deceptive influences, and if youth were the only ones targeted, but of course they’re not. Today’s entertainment media, mainstream news media, and Green advocacy groups are filled with environmental propaganda.*

Calvin, you've got it backwards ... as always. They are filling the airwaves with scientific facts. It is the religious freaks and power companies who invest seemingly limitless funds in propaganda efforts.

*A newly formed organization with nationwide participation, Citizens for Objective Public Education, has done extensive analysis of the National Science Education Standards and the Framework for K–12 Science Education and submitted formal comments on them. Citizens for Objective Public Education excellent work informs my thought on three problems in the science standards. First, they are religiously non-neutral.*

*Judicial decisions have set forth three ways the state can meet its First Amendment obligations: It can exclude religion entirely from public school curriculum, include it if it treats it objectively and neutrally with respect to students’, parents’, and taxpayers’ Constitutional rights, or objectively consider the strengths and weaknesses of explanations that support various religious viewpoints.*

Calvin, what strengths support religious viewpoints? No scholar has ever been able to produce a single shred of evidence supporting any religious viewpoint.

*The science standards, however, address religious questions, but they fail to do so objectively. Many people wouldn’t recognize this, because they think of secularism as non-religious.*

Well Calvin, according to Mr. Webster, that's exactly what secular means.

*But the Supreme Court in McGowan v Maryland (1961) defined religion as any “activity that profoundly relates the life of man to the world in which he lives”—and that is an explicit goal of the science standards.*

Calvin, that last little nugget at the end was your misinterpretation, not the Supreme Court's.

*The specific religion promoted by the science standards is Secular Humanism.*

Calvin, look up the word antonym. Read it. Study it. Feel it. Let it flow through your veins until you understand it almost as much as your own desire to constantly masturbate.

Then read it again - an antonym is a word that means the exact opposite. Religion and Secular Humanism are antonyms.

*The Humanist Manifestoes define “Religious Humanism” as “an organized set of atheistic beliefs that (1) deny the supernatural, (2) claim that life arises via unguided evolutionary processes rather than as a creation made for a purpose, and (3) claim that life should be guided by naturalistic/materialistic science and reason rather than traditional theistic religious beliefs.”*

Calvin, sounds like quite an improvement over the Middle Ages. Too bad you're still trapped there, while watching everyone else pass you by.

*The science standards affirm each of these positions—not surprisingly, granted their authors, most of whom are members of the National Academy of Sciences, 93 percent of whom, according to a survey, deny or question the existence of God.*

*Key to every aspect of the science standards is their insistence that all scientific questions must be addressed and resolved solely in terms of Methodological Naturalism, “the idea that science is not permitted to explain the cause of events within the natural world with anything other than a materialistic explanation through the use of ‘material’ or ‘natural’ causes (that is a cause resulting from the unguided interactions of matter, energy and the forces).” Such a methodological principle excludes appeal to God or any other intelligence as the explanation for anything found in nature.*

Calvin, finally. After 2,000 years of darkness, there is light ahead.

*Yet the standards assert it as if it were religiously neutral, exploiting children’s lack of mental preparation to recognize and question such bias.*

Calvin, it is religiously neutral. They favor no other ghost above yours.

*As Citizens for Objective Public Education puts it, “The assumption of materialism is incompatible with science education that must respect the religious rights of children, parents and taxpayers.”*

Calvin, respecting religious rights doesn't include teaching their nonsense as fact.

*Second, the standards fail to distinguish historical from experimental science. While Methodological Naturalism might be appropriate for experimental science, the assumption of no intelligent agency as a cause of historical events is unwarranted,*

Calvin, they don't assume no intelligent agency - they only assume those things that have evidence to support belief in them. That is not the same thing.

*and many of the world’s finest scientists, past and present, reject it.*

Calvin, define 'many'. As you yourself quoted "93%" reject your invisible ghost.

As for those great scientists in the past, they can be forgiven for their ignorance because they didn't have access to the knowledge that is now available to modern humans.

*Nonetheless, the standards present unguided macroevolution as the sole explanation of all past cosmic, geologic, and biological events, never offering students an alternative, thus again foisting an atheistic religious worldview on them.*

Calvin, that's because there are no other alternatives. It is the only theory that explains the facts. Creationism, your theory, explains nothing and is contradicted by the observable evidence.

*While they require presenting to students, through the 12 years of science curriculum, many purported evidences for naturalistic macroevolution, the standards—in contravention of the Constitutional requirement of objectivity in handling alternative religious views—fail to mention any of the evidences of purposive design in the universe, such as:*

*•that the discrete values of the material and energetic forces of the universe appear to be “fine tuned” to permit life—even slight alterations to any of them entailing the impossibility of life;*

Really Calvin? The Fine-Tuning argument? Even little kids can debunk that nonsense.

*•the information content of the genetic code;*

Calvin, that is explained in exquisite detail by evolution. How do you figure that supports your invisible ghost?

*•the incapacity of natural causes to explain the sequencing of the four bases in DNA, which provides the intangible information content without which life would be impossible. This recognition caused renowned scientist Jacques Monod to describe this as “the ultimate mystery of life.”*

Calvin, we skipped our biology classes, didn't we?

*•the absence of materialistic explanations for the origin of life;*

Calvin, you've been avoiding the scientific literature. It abounds with materialistic explanations for the origin of life. But the one theory you never find in any serious scientific text ... is yours.

*•the incapacity of materialistic processes to explain “major increases in biocomplexity,” which “require numerous additions to the information content of DNA before selectable function can arise, thereby casting doubt on the plausibility of non-deterministic processes to explain all of those increases.”*

Calvin, your lack of scientific training is embarrassing. The best thing to do when you are ignorant on a subject, is ... STFU.

That way, you're still a stupid shit, but at least not everybody knows it.

*Third, the standards also fail to distinguish for students the various definitions of evolution, leading them to assume that the word always denotes the same thing. Yet the most basic definition of evolution as “change over time” is uncontroversial, while there is great controversy over macroevolution in distinction from microevolution.*

Completely wrong Calvin. Macroevolution and microevolution are terms dreamed up by Creationists who have been forced to accept change because they can see it in dog and plant breeding. So they have retreated to the position that only limited evolution can occur, and they call it microevolution. But macroevolution is nothing more than microevolution over longer periods of time.

The important thing is that there is no controversy whatsoever among scientists on this issue. Creationists are trying to give the false impression that there is a controversy because it conflicts with their ancient holy scriptures.

The same is true of Global Warming. There is no controversy; only religious morons who refuse to accept science and try to claim that their refusal to accept the facts constitutes a controversy ... it does not.

*The standards allow students to be deceived into thinking that if microevolution occurs, macroevolution must as well*

Calvin, already asked and answered, counselor.

*indeed, that macroevolution is nothing more than prolonged and sequential microevolution, when instead the two are not only quantitatively but qualitatively different.*

Calvin, I already explained that they are not. You need them to be because you cannot refute what you call microevolution, so you people have simply moved the goalposts back and are trying to defend an imaginary concept.

Hey, you guys are already pretty experienced at that, aren't you?

*Although the standards speak of respecting “equity and diversity” along other lines, they never consider respecting “equity and diversity” along religious lines*

Well Calvin, since all religions (yours especially) are as opposed to equity and diversity as one could get, we might call that one even.

*thus prejudicially excluding religion from the requirement of objective, impartial treatment.*

Calvin, religion wasn't excluded out of prejudice but out of lack of evidence. If you want it taught in history class, fine. But you people want it taught in science because you know that science has exposed your ancient book of horrors as nothing more than a collection of gruesome fairy tales. That's why you are desperately trying to get it accepted into the science curriculum.

*This is unsurprising, since the standards were written largely by members of the National Academy of Sciences, 93 percent of whose members, as already mentioned, reject (72%) or doubt (21%) the existence of God.*

Actually Calvin, you've mentioned that 3 times now. That figure seems to really be chaffing your butt.

*“Indeed, one of the major contributors to the Framework, Eugenie Scott, who is the CEO of the National Center for Science Education, is a signatory to [Humanist] Manifesto III and has been listed among the top 50 Atheists in the country.”*

Calvin, an outstanding woman? Why that's almost ... sacrilegious.

*There are other evils in the science standards, but I will conclude with one that ought to be condemned by every scientist no matter his religious persuasion. The standards frequently present science as “an enterprise promoted by consensus.” On the contrary, consensus is not a scientific but a political value, as should be clear to anyone familiar with the history of science, which chronicles scores or even hundreds of great reversals of once reigning paradigms—as documented, e.g., in Thomas Kuhn’s The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Science does not seek to attain truth by popular—or expert—vote, but by logical reasoning from premises provided by observations of the surrounding world.*

Calvin, Calvin, Calvin. Science seeks to attain truth through the use of the scientific method. Observations provide the first data which are then exposed to the scientific method. Hypotheses are tested and results analyzed. The premises are not provided by the observations as you asserted, the hypotheses develop as the data undergo testing and evaluation. Should the hypothesis survive the scientific method it will be elevated to the status of a theory ... until a better one comes along.

And scientists do not logically reason from a premise: they test their hypotheses and gather evidence. It is during the analyzation of the evidence when logic and reason come into play.

*I consider this one of the most serious errors in the standards both because it undermines true science and because it plays into the hands of those who intentionally politicize science—the proponents and practitioners of post-normal science.*

Calvin, you have no interest in true science. You do everything in your power to fight against it. You are interested in only one thing: promoting your religious beliefs; and the proof ... is in your own words.

*My first encounter with post-normal science came in connection with my studies of arguments pro and con about global warming—or, to be more precise, catastrophic, anthropogenic global warming. That precise wording is necessary because proponents regularly accuse those who deny catastrophic, anthropogenic global warming of denying global warming per se. On the contrary, those who deny catastrophic, anthropogenic global warming affirm that natural global warming occurs, cyclically with global cooling, and most also affirm that human activities may contribute somewhat to warming. They deny, however, that recent or foreseeable warming has been or will be catastrophic, that it is primarily anthropogenic, that efforts to mitigate it can succeed at all, and particularly that they can succeed with benefits outweighing harms.*

Calvin, nearly 100% of the experts (the climatologists) disagree with you. You know where that leaves you Calvin? In the small room off the main auditorium, reserved for bigfoot and ufo believers.

*For post-normal science, scientific procedures—observation, hypothesis, experimentation, testing, computer modeling, even peer review for publication—are undertaken not to discover truth about the world but to project power, to further an agenda.*

Calvin, you just did a great job of describing yourself and your cronies. If you ever find yourself near a book on mental illnesses, be sure to read about 'projection'. Unfortunately, 'you people' are always the last to see yourselves for what you really are.

*Consequently, post-normal scientists go through the motions of what we all think of as science, but only for show. Their conclusions are already determined.*

Calvin, see what I mean about projection? You just described Ghost Worshippers, like yourself. Your conclusions have already been determined by the Bible. You simply accept what doesn't conflict or threaten your beliefs, and reject anything that does.

*How serious a problem is post-normal science? In the case of the global warming controversy, post-normal science plays an absolutely crucial role. And catastrophic, anthropogenic global warming has become the chief rationale for gross restrictions on liberty and property, coerced limits on procreation, and the replacement of local, accountable government with global, unaccountable government.*

Calvin, usually I prefer to make my replies logical and factual. But after reading that last paragraph, the only thing that comes to mind is ... that you are full of crap.

There wasn't one thing you said that you can back up with facts.

The remainder of your essay is just a collection of personal attacks against those with whom you disagree, so I deleted it. I've already given you far more time and effort than you deserve.

The sad thing is ... that people actually listen to nutballs like you.

Oh yeah, one last thing Calvin. As I deleted all your nonsense down to the end, guess what I found?

The same thing you find on every Ghost Worshipper's web site: a plea for money. You people are so damn predictable.

Hey here's an idea for you Calvin. Get one of those little icons of a preacher holding out his hat for money, and program it so that every time a visitor scrolls down ... it follows him. You know that'll work. They'll donate something just to get rid of the annoying little man. I'm surprised you people don't already use them.

That's okay. Don't thank me. Just trying to even the playing field by helping you out a little.

And finally Calvin, thanks again for showing us that people who can't resist putting their degrees after their name, are often ... the biggest fools of all.

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

THIS IS WHAT A FISH THOUGHT LOOKS LIKE

For the first time, researchers have been able to see a thought "swim" through the brain of a living fish. The new technology is a useful tool for studies of perception. It might even find use in psychiatric drug discovery.

Their work is the first to show brain activities in real time in an intact animal during that animal's natural behavior.

The technical breakthrough included the development of a very sensitive fluorescent probe to detect neuronal activity. Researchers also devised a genetic method for inserting that probe right into the neurons of interest. The two-part approach allowed the researchers to detect neuronal activity at single-cell resolution in the zebrafish brain.

They used the new tool to map what happens when a zebrafish sees something good to eat, in this case a swimming paramecium. The researchers were also able to correlate brain activity with that prey's capture.

The new tool now makes it possible to ask which brain circuits are involved in complex behaviors, from perception to movement to decision making. The basic design and function of a zebrafish brain is very much like that of humans.

In the future, scientists can interpret an animal's behavior, including learning and memory, fear, joy, or anger, based on the activity of particular combinations of neurons. By monitoring neuronal activity in the zebrafish brain, researchers think that they may also be able to screen chemicals that affect neuronal activity in the brain. This has the potential to shorten the long processes for the development of new psychiatric medications.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

BERTRAND RUSSELL (No bio - previously quoted)

"Science does not aim at establishing immutable truths and eternal dogmas;

its aim is to approach the truth by successive approximations,

without claiming that at any stage

final and complete accuracy has been achieved."