

From Deering's Legacy Stuff located in the *interface* between the 2nd and 3rd Millennium—including a little bit of overlap from each.

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OPION PAGES
St. Paul Pioneer Press
Fax: 651-228-5564
email: letters@pioneerpress.com
Faxed & emailed: July 31, 2003

VIEWPOINT

Dunno, maybe

It is interesting to observe religious minds at work.

They respect the law of identity (Aristotle's A is A or Ayn Rand's contradictions do not exist) when it suits their purposes to do so, but they deny it when it doesn't.

Case in point is the current battle between creationists or intelligent design advocates (as they are currently redefining themselves) and the evolutionists.

The intelligent design advocates say there is a contradiction in evolutionary theory because the theory's reliance on random chance to be the creator of such a complex thing as life is contradictory. It is contradictory, they say, because such a random-change mechanism requires a length of time to create life that is longer than the age of our universe as same is given by the Big Bang Theory of the Stephen Hawkings type cosmologists.

That is, the intelligent design advocates want to argue, evolutionary theory is wrong because it leads to a contradiction and since (in this instance, contradictions do not exist) the theory is faulty and should be challenged and changed (to allow intelligent design to be a viable alternative explanation).

As an admirer of reason and science I think the Intelligent Design Advocates (or Ida's for short) have a point: contradictions do not exist (anywhere at any time, be it past, present or future here on earth or anywhere in the Universe) and when we do observe one we should take note and work to understand things more deeply so that we can generate a new theory that effectively handles the contradiction and gives us a new, better explanation.

But to posit a god or some intelligent consciousness as the "explanation" is primitive. It is the lazy man's solution to "science". When primitive man couldn't explain something he always posited a god or animal as the explanation. What's lightning? Dunno, guess it's the work of Thor. What's holding the earth up? Dunno, guess it's resting on the back of a big turtle. What created life as we know it? Dunno, guess some intelligent being did.

Since science, at its best, always looks first and foremost to reality and observable facts and basis its conclusions on its (earned) confidence to integrate those facts into a non-contradictory whole, it is usually science that wins the day in education debates about what is true and what isn't.

The religionists and other Ida's are usually told to go back to their drawing board and get their own house in order first, before they try to screw up the minds of reason worshippers (that is, of the best scientists).

That is to say, resolve your own contradictions first. Contradictions like, if god is all powerful (omnipotent) can he (or she or it) build a tower so tall that he (or she or it) can't tear it down? If god is all knowing (omniscient) and all good why did he create evil? (and to "answer" god works in mysterious ways is not an answer; it's an evasion). And if everything was created, who created god? (The devil?) If so, who created the devil? God? If so ... and the religious mind collapses in on itself and is forced to conclude: who can really know anything anyway, god works in mysterious ways and if he wants to have a contradictory Universe that's his prerogative.

But then if his is a contradictory Universe, contradictions exist and the one the religionists are trying to highlight in evolutionary theory is just one of god's contradictions.

Does that mean god will strike them down for challenging one of his contradictions?

Dunno, maybe.

Gary Deering
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