

Re: "Kansas and evolution" (Daily Press, Aug. 25)

In his article, Racinski attempts to point out that taking evolution out of mandated state curriculum and replacing it with "religious dogma" is not only unscientific, it is downright ludicrous. Interestingly enough, near the beginning of his article he establishes the intelligent design argument as being restricted to creationism and then goes on to explain away the "religious fundamentalist" view of intelligent design by making it out as "religious dogma." The mistake he makes is establishing the intelligent design argument as creationism. The intelligent design argument is not associated with any religion. It is merely another scientific theory explaining the origin of life backed with, as Racinski says for evolution, "countless observations, all integrated into a comprehensive explanation of virtually every fact in its field."

Racinski's view of the intelligent design argument is unfounded. The intelligence argument does not necessitate a "God" that created the universe, although it does set it up as a possible next step. Many scientists who are not creationists believe the intelligent design theory to be more accurate than the theory of evolution.

The idea that evolution has more validity than the intelligent design argument is unfounded as well. This can be seen by the evidences cited by Racinski. The fossil record by and large shows something that, according to evolution, should not be. It shows stability. The amount of possible "transitional forms" are few and very far between. His statement that "variations among members of a species, variations that change from one climate to another as species adapt" shows evolution in progress is completely inaccurate. The most commonly touted example of the previous statement is that of the English Peppered Moth. However, this example has long been shown to not exhibit actual "evolution," it has also been shown to be perjured (*Nature*, vol. 396, November 5, 1998, pp. 35,36). This example is still used in biology textbooks today. Because a species mutates slightly, does not signify evolution. In all recorded cases the mutation has been very slight and none have had "vertical" mutations (i.e., A cat mutating into a non-cat).

The very fact that the intelligent design argument is not discussed in biology books is somewhat disturbing. As Racinski states in his article, "The crucial role of education is to provide young people with the information and methods they need in order to learn how to think independently." How can such a goal be accomplished if students are shown only a portion of a multi-faceted argument? This brings up the question of why the intelligent design theory has not been added to biology textbooks. The common answer is that it is not "scientific." The obvious question is, "In what way is it not scientific?" When people refer to it not being scientific, what they actually mean is that it doesn't comply with evolutionary ideas. This should be expected. It is an alternative view to evolution that has as much evidence or more in its own favor. It has arguments at least as sophisticated as any evolutionary arguments available. It seems as though another of Racinski's comments regarding creationists are in order, "...in judging the truth of an idea, one can simply ignore rational evidence – if it clashes with one's desire to believe otherwise." Is this not what is occurring in biology classes today? Even if the intelligent design theory is never taught in biology classes, the biology textbooks fail to display any of the objective, scientific evidences that oppose evolution. Michael Behe, a biochemist at Lehigh University, has produced astounding evidence for what he calls "irreducible complexity." This information is not even mentioned in biology classes. In fact, none of the abundant controversy over evolutionary ideas ever shows up in class. Evolution is very often presented as fact. According to Racinski, this is a "...disastrous methodology to inculcate in our children...."

Racinski closes his commentary with the statement that, "If campaigns such as the one against teaching evolution succeed, the ultimate result will be the extinction of genuine education." What he fails to show is that there has been an ongoing campaign of this very type occurring within science classes. What other than a campaign against teaching intelligent design or evidences against evolution is occurring at this very moment in the large majority of schools across the United States?