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# Perspective

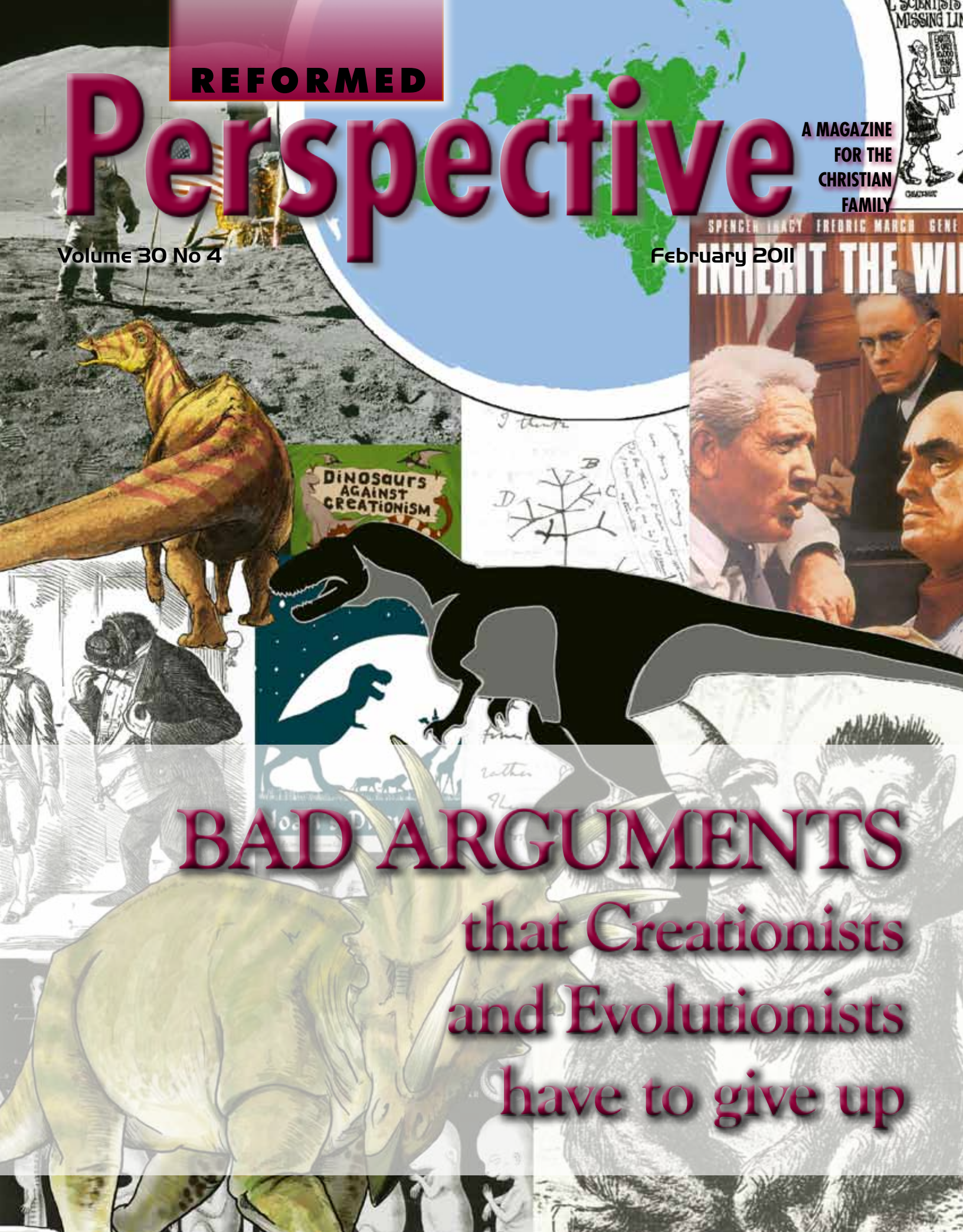
A MAGAZINE  
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INHERIT THE WIND



DINOSAURS  
AGAINST  
CREATIONISM



**BAD ARGUMENTS**  
that Creationists  
and Evolutionists  
have to give up

# Let's be civil dummy!

## The real need for civility in politics

Editorial

Jon Dykstra

Is civility a matter of life and death?

On January 8 US Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was shot by a lone gunman who approached her at a “meet and greet” political rally. Mere hours after the attack, when no information was available about the shooter, *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman placed the blame for the shooting on the “rhetoric” of rightwing radio show hosts Glenn Beck and Rush Limbaugh. Other reporters and news outlets soon followed, like the *Chicago Sun-Times*, which linked the attack to “. . .the fear-mongering and demonizing flow from the right.” The mainstream media was claiming it was the incivility of the right that had pushed this man to kill.<sup>1</sup>

That was quite a claim, so exactly what sort of incivility did they think would motivate murder? The most commonly cited example was a target graphic found on the website of Republican, and former vice presidential candidate, Sarah Palin. In the run-up to the 2010 federal election she had displayed a map on her website that used crosshairs to show which congressmen were being specially targeted for defeat. One of the Democrats so targeted was Congresswoman Giffords, which prompted a *New York Daily News* columnist to conclude, “. . . blood is on Sarah Palin’s hands.”

### Hypocrisy

The conservative blogosphere soon highlighted the irony of the media’s accusations showing that “mean metaphors” were hardly an exclusively rightwing phenomenon. For every mean thing for which a rightwing pundit was now being accused of murder, it was easy to find something similar or much worse said by a left-wing commentator or politician.<sup>2</sup>

When this became plain, rather than apologizing for their accusations some in the media started apologizing for their metaphors. Despite a complete lack of evidence, the mainstream media had convinced themselves that gun and war metaphors were deadly, so terms like “in the trenches” “reloading” “hand-to-hand combat” and of course “target this district” were now forbidden. When a guest on CNN used the term “in the crosshairs” to describe what was going on in the Chicago mayoral race, anchor John King apologized on the man’s behalf:

“We’re trying, we’re trying to get away from that language. Andy is a good friend. He’s covered politics for a long time. But we’re trying to get away from using that kind of language.”

This was particularly ironic considering CNN had, for thirteen years, hosted a political debate show called *Crossfire*.



### No need for Christian confusion

So on the one hand the media’s crusade attack campaign war position<sup>3</sup> against tough talk and gun metaphors was clearly silly. And on the other hand, because the media kept repeating their violent-metaphors-are-deadly claim so often it was hard not to be impacted, and hard not to wonder if there might just be something to the claim.

But Christians need not have been confused – we could be certain that the media’s anti-crosshairs crusade was ridiculous. Why so sure? Because we can find tough talk and a similar sort of “violent” metaphor in the Bible. None of the biblical metaphors involve guns, of course, but there are more than a few involving swords: “. . . I did not come to bring peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34); “Take. . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17); “These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword” (Revelations 2:12); “. . . I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth” (Revelations 2:16).

Metaphors are not murderous, and putting “crosshairs” on a map, or saying it, isn’t something anyone needs to apologize for. It’s neither dangerous, nor uncivil.

### What is civility?

The left said this shooting highlighted the need for a return to civility in politics. They were almost right. It wasn’t the shooting, but the base-

less, and politically-motivated accusations that the left threw out afterwards that highlighted the need for civility.

But what exactly would a return to civility look like in the political realm? Well, at the heart of civility is the golden rule, to treat others as you would like to be treated (Matthew 7:12). In politics there are several ways this rule could be applied:

### 1. No name calling

We don't like being called names, so we shouldn't call other people names – that's clear.

But what if a politician really is a liar? Can't we call him a liar then? Well, sort of. We will call him a liar, but in a very different way than a grade-schooler might do it. We need to be specific; rather than simply calling our opponent a liar, we'll point them to the actual event: "You lied, sir, when you told voters that there would be no new taxes."

This specificity gives our opponents something tangible to respond to. They may choose to evade the charge, or rebut it, or maybe even acknowledge it and apologize. Those are all options created by being specific that don't exist when we're simply name calling.

### 2. Respond to the speech, not the speaker

This is closely related to the first point. In some occasions the character of the speaker is relevant, but most often it is *what* has been said, rather than *who* has said it that matters. Politics should be about debating ideas, rather than exchanging insults.

### 3. Don't respond in kind

Proverbs 15:1 notes, "A gentle answer turns away wrath..." Imagine what might happen if, when a politician was insulted, instead of responding in kind, he tried to figure out what was getting his opponent so very upset. Imagine if, instead of a witty putdown he tried to address any legitimate points they made. It might look a little like this:

*"I believe the Congressman has misunderstood the issue being debated. It is not my character, or lack thereof that we are going to vote on, but rather a bill to raise the debt ceiling. It's to that issue that I will direct my own comments. . . ."*

Or with a touch of humor:

*"I could spend some time responding to the various insults the honorable member of the opposition has leveled at me, but as we are here for a very different purpose, I will spend my time debating the merits of the legislation. But I will warn you sir, that if you keep this up, you should expect to receive a very stern letter from my mother."*

### 4. Be quick to apologize

In politics, like elsewhere, taking responsibility for a mistake and apologizing is a rarity. But if we want to let our light shine, this would be one way to stand out like a beacon on a hill.

## Conclusion

There is a pressing need for civility in politics, not because incivility kills, but because incivility prevents discussion and debate, which are vital in a functioning democracy. Democracy is about making choices, but we can't make informed choices when our politicians are insulting each other, rather than articulating and arguing their positions. When politicians are uncivil, we all lose.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> It turns out the gunman could better be characterized as leftwing, rather than right, and he didn't listen to talk radio.

<sup>2</sup> Just a few selections of leftwing uncivil rhetoric – *Hardball's* Chris Matthews on Rush Limbaugh: "Somebody's going to jam a CO2 pellet into his head and he's going to explode like a giant blimp."

– Ed Schultz on his radio show about Vice-President Dick Cheney: "he is an enemy of the country. . . Lord, take him to the Promised Land, will you?"

– Former Air America radio host Montel Williams to Congresswoman Michele Bachmann: "Slit your wrist! Go ahead! I mean, you know, why not? I mean, if you want to – or, you know, do us all a better thing. Move that knife up about two feet. I mean, start right at the collarbone."

<sup>3</sup> This is the bland writing we get when we ban metaphors from the English language.



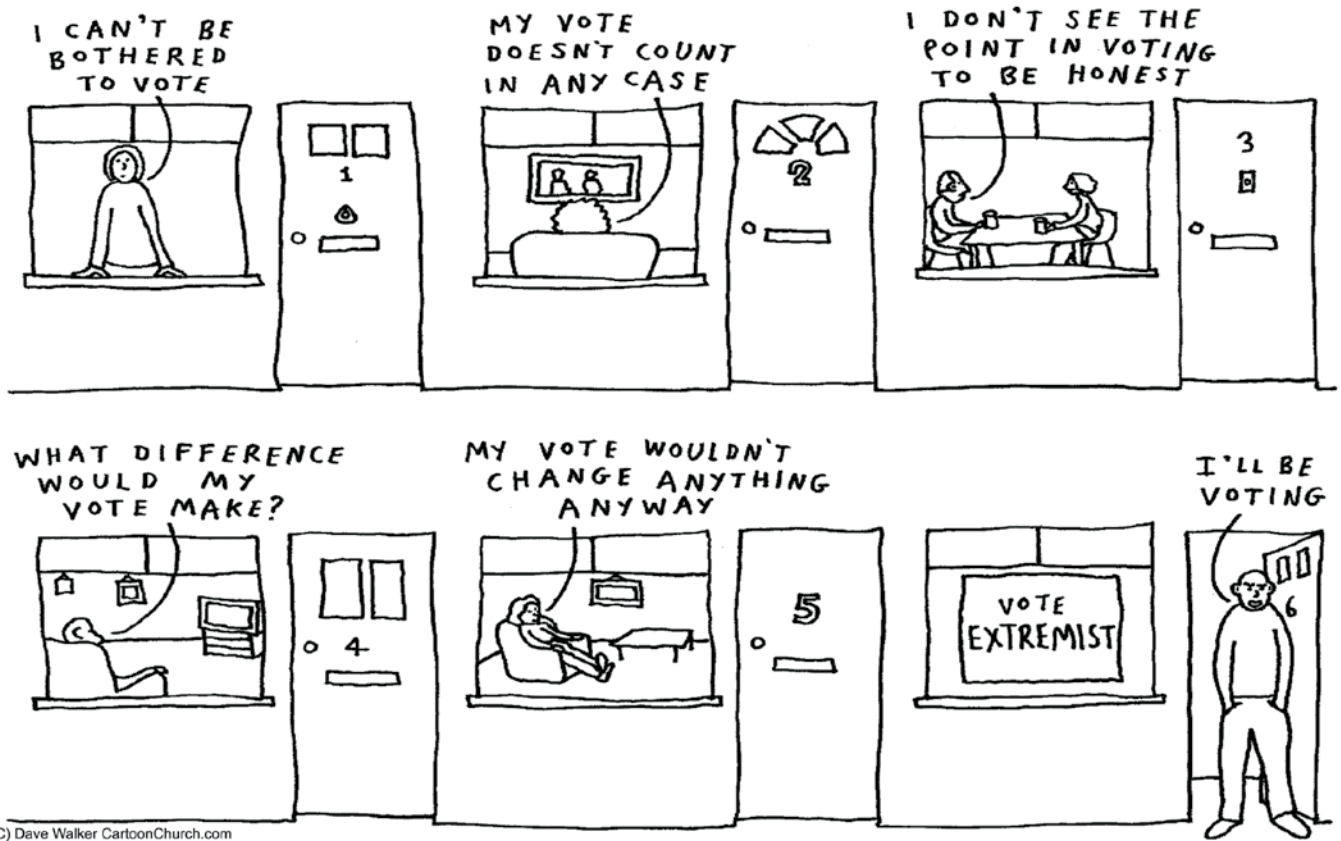
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# THE ELECTION



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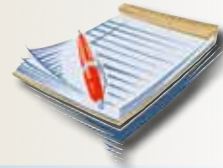
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# READERS' RESPONSE



## Dear Editor

After reading the article in your December 2010 issue entitled "Civilization and self-control: Christianity and Islam have very different ideas about modesty and men's self control," I found myself wondering both (a) whether the author is confusing current Western norms with the way Christians have always done things, and (b) whether the author has spent any time interacting with Muslims.

Who might have praised women "who cover not only the head, but the face also, so entirely, that they are content, with one eye free, to enjoy rather half the light than to prostitute the entire face"? Was the author Muslim? Nope. That comes from Tertullian, one of the more prominent early church fathers. As Philip Jenkins noted in his book *The Lost History of Christianity*, head coverings (sometimes including veils) and tight restrictions on women appearing in public weren't atypical amongst the Christian population of Byzantium prior to the arrival of Islam.

There are certainly Muslim-majority regions of the planet in which the veiling of women's faces (etc.) is mandated, and this might be justified from the Qur'an based on an ayah which is in one translation worded that Muslim women "shall not reveal any parts of their bodies, except that which is necessary" (24:31). However, facial veiling is extremely uncommon amongst Muslim women in the West – the French government estimated 0.13% of Muslim women wore facial veils. Similarly, in both of the Muslim majority countries that I've visited this practice was also rare.

The author paints with an very broad brush – assuming that all Muslims believe the same thing. He says that "in the Sharia legislation, a woman is guilty of adultery even when raped. It must be her fault." In the first place, Sharia law is based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah with different groups having differing understandings (based on, e.g., which hadiths they accept, how they interpret them, whether they're Shia or Sunni, etc.). Some use a hadith (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 38, #4366) and/or the forgiving of a woman by an early Caliph to require no additional witnesses in cases of rape. In situations like this which involve a certain amount of he-said-she-said and which rape, adultery, a misidentification, or a simple lie (in which there may have been no sex involved) may all be possibilities in a given instance, it's difficult to judge things in a just manner. Rape in the Western World has a relatively high false accusation rate, and rape shield laws limit men on trial from introducing any evidence relating to the woman making the accusation.



Is the author's claim that Islam views a man as a "an animal whose sexual urges has no brakes or limits" consistent with the Qur'an's command to "tell the believing men that they shall subdue their eyes (and not stare at the women), and to maintain their chastity" (24:30)? [Translations, of course, vary somewhat.]

The only case in which the author appears to acknowledge the sins of those in "Christendom" is in claiming that it's somehow superior that men have hidden mistresses than Islamic societies in which men may have multiple wives. However, there's certainly an argument in Islam for a maximum of four wives per man under certain conditions (4:3) although not all Muslims agree with it. As Mohammad was granted special dispensation in the Qur'an to have additional wives (30:50) I'd guess that this would then be used by prominent individuals to justify having more than four wives (although I'd imagine that very few Muslims would accept such reasoning). Hypocrisy, on the other hand, I believe Jesus had a few things to say about.

How much time did the author spend conducting research for his article, or did he simply turn on CNN for a few minutes before starting ranting? Does the author accept views held by early Christians such as Tertullian and those in Byzantium? If not, will he extend that same grace to others who may claim that others misrepresent their faith? Has he confused Christianity and culture [or Islam and culture]? Has he confused Christianity and moralism?

*David Aikema*

## Editor's Response:

Many millions of Muslim women around the world have to wear burqas, in large part because many millions of Muslim men think they should. You note that in the distant past some Christians and one church father, Tertullian, had similar thoughts on how women should dress.

The comparison is a telling one: these massively messed up ideas on modesty are, for Christians, only prevalent in our far and distant past; for many millions of Muslims, they are a part of their everyday today.



# Nota Bene

## News worth noting



### Study says saving sex for marriage results in better relationships

by Jon Dykstra

File this under “Science discovers what God told us long ago.” A study published Dec. 28 in the *Journal of Family Psychology* found that delaying sex made for better, more stable, more empathetic relationships, with those who waited until marriage faring the very best. One researcher, Dean Busby noted:

“Curiously, almost 40 percent of couples are essentially sexual within the first or second time they go out, but we suspect that if you asked these same couples at this early stage of their relationship – ‘Do you trust this person to watch your pet for a weekend many could not answer this in the affirmative’

– meaning they are more comfortable letting people into their bodies than they are with them watching their cat.”

He added that those who waited to have sex had time to figure out how trustworthy, how good a communicator, and how closely their values meshed with a suitor “before the powerful sexual bonding short-circuits their decision-making abilities.”

This thought is worth pondering for our young people who, while intent on saving sex for marriage, may want their relationship to get “physical” quickly. Kissing too, can cause some serious short-circuiting so dating without physical expectations, at least early on, seems a sensible approach.

SOURCE: LiveScience.com “Delaying Sex Makes Better Relationships, Study Finds” by Jeanna Bryner, posted Dec. 28, 2010

### No anti-abortion opinions ok, even in private?

by Anna Nienhuis

In Britain it seems even private conversations are no longer any place for expressing anti-abortion views, as a Christian mental health worker found out the hard way.

After discussing privately with colleagues her concerns about the mental

health problems faced by women after they’ve had an abortion, she was reported to her superiors, suspended from working and put under disciplinary action. She was asked to, but has refused to promise never to talk about these things with colleagues again, as post-abortion syndrome is a genuine concern, recognized by the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2008.

### Human Rights Tribunal: anti-church, pro-cult

by Anna Nienhuis

As 2010 concluded the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal again fueled the fires of controversy. They ruled against the conservative view in a dispute between the Catholic school board and the Raelian cult, a group that believes humans were planted on earth by benevolent extraterrestrials and paradise can be achieved through cloning, which will allow people to live forever.

The dispute arose when the Catholic school board ended a contract with 3 siblings after discovering that the three, who were hired to train teachers in specialized pedagogy workshops, were members of the cult.

The school board was ordered to pay the siblings an undisclosed amount based on the “religious discrimination” they showed. This Raelian group has filed dozens of human rights complaints over the past 17 years, but the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal is the first body to ever recognize and support their complaints. The school board has chosen not to appeal.

The tribunals have again given Christians cause for worry, as it seems our view is always the last to be heard in these discussions of “freedom” of religion. It is wrong to discriminate arbitrarily, but it is hardly arbitrary for a school whose mission is to teach from a Catholic perspective, to decline to have their teachers taught how to teach by members of a cult.

SOURCE: Patrick Craine’s “Catholic school board found guilty of religious discrimination against UFO cult,” *lifesitenews.com*; Jan 3, 2011



## “Canadian content” a requirement on new porn channel

by Anna Nienhuis

Vanessa TV, an “adult-entertainment” channel produced by Quebec’s Anne Marie Losique, is required by the Canadian Radio-Television & Telecommunications Commission to air at least 20% Canadian content. This is essentially an arm of the government mandating the making of Canadian pornography, as the channel, which began broadcasting in October 2010, airs sexualized daytime TV with a shift to hardcore porn at night.

Already popular in France, Losique believes there is plenty of room for her shows in Canada with a growing soft-core pornography scene in Toronto and Vancouver. Requiring Canadian-made pornography seems like a stretch for any group to justify, but sadly there is a great deal of money involved, and once again it seems that those who make the money also make the deals.

SOURCE: Thaddeus Balinski’s “New cross-Canada porn channel to launch”, *lifesitenews.com*; Jan. 11, 2011



## The CHP on Sharia law and Muslim immigration

by Jon Dykstra

Canada’s Christian Heritage Party recently announced a new, and sure to be controversial immigration policy that calls on the federal government to “institute a moratorium on all immigration from Muslim nations governed by Sharia law. . . .”

In the party’s November 30 *Communiqué* Party Leader Jim Hnatiuk explains the reasons for the new position. He notes that in the UK, the Netherlands and other Western nations Muslim immigrants have led the push for Islamic, or Sharia law, and that simply isn’t acceptable. He writes:

“Sharia law, which endorses such things as the denial of equal rights

## Stand up for Freedom Canada!

by Anna Nienhuis

A campaign is underway in Canada to protect our freedoms from an unlikely but dangerous threat – human rights commissions and tribunals set up by the government.

Neil Dykstra, a member of the Langley Canadian Reformed Church, is the spokesperson for the “Stand up for Freedom Canada” campaign. Its goal is to protect our freedoms of speech, religion, conscience, and assembly – freedoms treasured but often taken for granted by Christians in Canada. It seems hard to believe that these long-standing freedoms could be on the way out for us, but that is exactly the direction these human rights commissions are heading. The commissions are being used to target the free speech rights of conservative citizens and organizations, especially when they speak out in opposition to the “homosexualist agenda.”

Stand up for Freedom Canada has already garnered a lot of publicity, being featured in the *Toronto Sun*, *Ottawa Sun*, *London FreePress*, *Canoe*.

for women under the law, female genital mutilation, honour killings, polygamy, violence against homosexuals, jihad, dhimmitude, and the death of infidels, will be strenuously opposed under a CHP immigration programme.

“. . . Therefore, as a prerequisite to entry into Canada, immigrants, as part of their application process, must sign a formally binding pledge whereby they:

1. Agree to abide by Canadian law.
2. Agree to forego or abandon practices and traditions that are contrary to Canadian law and tradition such as:
  - A. Sharia Law – which includes but is not limited to “honour” killings, polygamy, and the



ca, *Sudbury Star*, *Winnipeg Sun*, *Calgary Sun*, and *Edmonton Sun*. This has been due in part to their excellent website, [humanrightscommissions.ca](http://humanrightscommissions.ca), where more information on the campaign can be found, along with actions to take and ways to get involved and let the government know that you notice what the commissions have been up to.

SOURCE: Patrick Craine’s “New campaign launched opposing Canada’s beleaguered human rights commissions,” *lifesitenews.com*; Nov. 11, 2010 and [humanrightscommissions.ca](http://humanrightscommissions.ca)

wearing of the burqa or niqab face covering in public;

- B. gang violence;
- C. religious beliefs that run contrary to the Charter in that they demean individuals or jeopardize public safety;
- D. terrorism – which includes promoting and supporting subversive terrorist groups (the most numerous are those involving Muslim extremists, but there are others such as Tamil and Sikh organisations) in their country of origin and worldwide.

“All such practices that constitute a violation of the signed pledge will be considered serious enough to warrant deportation back to the country of origin.”

SOURCE CHP.ca



# Political self-defense

## Some people find Christianity quite offensive – it just isn't so

by Michael Wagner

The concept of self-defense is easy to understand and its validity is recognized by most people, whether Christian or not. If somebody is attacked, it is easy to understand that fighting back is a proper and even moral thing to do. That's why people sympathize with the victim in these situations – self-defense seems naturally just.

### I'm a victim!

That's also why when a political debate is being framed, each side wants to be seen as the side that is being attacked – they want to be the side that is simply fighting back, rather than the bully who is picking fights.

So it should come as no surprise then that whenever Christians get politically active, they are portrayed as the aggressors. Ever since the 1970s when today's conservative Christian political movements first began to take shape, Christians have been accused of trying to force our morality on other people. Why, oh why can't we just leave others alone?

But it just isn't so. Christian political activism has been a *defensive* response to secularist attacks. If we look at things in their proper historical context, it leads to the question, "who was forcing what upon whom?" Did groups of Christians suddenly decide to organize politically to force other people to adopt Christian styles of living?

No. The fact is, it was social movements on the Left that began forcing changes that led Christians to respond with social and political action of their own. The other side was (and is) on the offense, and Christians are simply responding.

### Reactions

This was pointed out as far back as 1982 by a prominent American sociologist, Nathan Glazer. He wrote an article at that time explaining the efforts of the then newly-formed Christian political groups that had played an important role in the 1980 American election that saw the rise of President Ronald Reagan. His article was called "Fundamentalists: A Defensive Offensive" and was republished a few years later in a collection of essays entitled *Piety and Politics: Evangelicals and Fundamentalists Confront the World*. (Don't be confused by the word "fundamentalist." It is a common term used to describe conservative Protestants, although in many contexts it is meant in a disparaging way.)

Glazer lists the various issues that were (and still are) of primary concern to conservative Christians to show that they are fighting defensive battles. "Abortion did not become an issue because Fundamentalists wanted to strengthen pro-

hibitions against abortion, but because liberals wanted to abolish them." Pornography did not become an issue because Christians suddenly decided to ban adult literature, but because by the 1970s porn was becoming ubiquitous and prominently displayed in stores. Homosexuality didn't become an issue because Christians suddenly became obsessed with it, but because the homosexual rights movement began to make big political and legal strides. Feminism also emerged as a powerful political force leading to a Christian response.

In each of these cases the Christian activity was a response to a political offensive from the other side. This leads Glazer to write,

"What we are seeing is a defensive reaction of the conservative heartland, rather than an offensive that intends to or is capable of really upsetting the balance, or of driving the United States back to the nineteenth century or early twentieth century."

Due to the initial surge of Christian political activity, many people viewed the Christians as being on the offensive. But even if their activity did amount to an offensive of sorts, its whole purpose was ultimately defensive. In this respect Glazer calls it a "defensive offensive." But it's vitally important to keep the defensive nature in mind.

"This 'defensive offensive' itself can be understood only as a response to what is seen as aggression – the aggression that banned prayer from the schools, or, most recently, the Ten Commandments from school-house walls, that prevented states from expressing local opinion as to the legitimacy of abortion, and that, having driven religion out of the public schools, now is seeking to limit the schools that practice it."

### Conclusion

Every society operates within some code of morality. All laws are based on a concept of morality, even traffic laws which protect people from the careless driving habits of others. Conservative Christians have not taken it upon themselves to introduce some new rules upon society but simply to defend the rules that have served well for hundreds of years. It is the other side that is trying to force a new morality onto society, and then accusing the Christians of doing so. Thus not only is their accusation false but it is also hypocritical. Christian activism is a form of political self-defense. Christians didn't start this fight. They are responding to changes launched from the other side.





# Paying Politicians to Party

## Should tax dollars fund political parties?

by Mark Penninga

A storm is brewing in Ottawa. In early 2011, Prime Minister Harper went on record to state that his party will be campaigning against the direct public financing of political parties. He was referring to the \$27 million that we taxpayers coughed up last year that went directly to the party coffers.

This is no minor matter. As Harper found out the hard way in 2008 it was enough to spark a rare political insurrection in which the opposition parties tried to form a coalition and bring down the government. So why is Harper so intent on pressing on? Is this a matter of principle, or a matter of pragmatism?

### How we pay for parties

In 2003, then Prime Minister Jean Chretien introduced legislation that both prohibited corporate and union donations, and limited individual contributions to political parties to \$5,200 (which has subsequently been lowered to just \$1,100). Chretien forced this through Parliament because he knew this would make things difficult for then Finance Minister Paul Martin who was receiving huge corporate donations to run for the leadership of the Liberals. It would also curtail the infamous Adscam in which contracts were given to Quebec firms who then kicked money back to the party.

But if these parties weren't allowed to get big cheques from corporations, unions, or even individuals, how would they pay for their own expenses? After all, running a series of political attack ads on TV isn't cheap.

The legislation answered this by giving \$1.75 (adjusted with inflation) to the parties for every vote they earned, annually. Based on our most recent

election, the Conservatives receive a handsome \$10.4 million every year, the separatist Bloc Quebecois receive \$2.7 million, and the Green Party, which didn't even capture a seat, received a whopping \$1.8 million. These parties also became eligible to receive 50 per cent of election expenses (60 per cent for individual campaigns).

The impact of this new law was huge. For example, prior to this new source of money, the Green Party relied on volunteers (working out of their basements) to carry out the day-to-day work of the party. After the infusion of cash they were able to pay for a headquarters in Ottawa and hire a professional staff. Their membership exploded more than ten-fold and the financial contributions increased along with that.

But there is a hitch to all of this free money. The 2004 law required that

political parties had to get at least 2 per cent support from all votes cast, or a higher threshold of 5 per cent of all votes in constituencies where the party had a candidate. This is what kept the Christian Heritage Party from benefiting from this payout.

To add to all of this funding, all of the parties (CHP included) get the benefit of being able to grant huge tax receipts to donors. As much as 75 per cent of a donation to a party or candidate is given back via these receipts. Fundraising shouldn't be too difficult with this incentive.

### The Conservative motivation

For several years now the Conservatives have been pushing to get rid of direct public financing altogether. But why would they want less money? It only takes a glance at how much individuals gave to each party in 2009 to reveal the answer:



**ONE POLITICAL PARTY ACTUALLY WANTS  
TO RECEIVE LESS OF YOUR TAX DOLLARS.  
INCREDIBLE, BUT TRUE!**

*Contributions to Political Parties in 2009:*

- Conservatives: \$17.77 million
- Liberals: \$10.12 million
- NDP: \$4.04 million
- Green: \$1.17 million
- BQ: \$0.83 million

If these parties were cut off of the direct public funding, the Conservatives would be left with far more money than the others because they get many more donations. A party like the Bloc Quebecois, which in 2007 received 86 per cent of its funding from taxpayers, won't be too thrilled about having their public subsidies cut. In contrast, the Conservatives only received 37 per cent of their funds through this public subsidy (in 2007) and could quite easily move forward without that money.

But given the Conservative's reliance on individual donations, it is unlikely that Harper would also want to "save public funds" by reducing the massive tax refund that donors get when making a contribution to a party.

Harper knows that cutting direct public funding for political parties will make life very difficult for all of the other parties. It will hurt them so much that a slightly-decreased budget for the Conservative Party will be worth swallowing. For Harper, it's an investment in the long-term success of his party. Plus, his position isn't too hard to sell to a public that doesn't mind the idea of reducing government spending, especially if it is going to be "politicians" that take the hit.

**What are we to think?**

Pragmatic motivations aside, is Harper's position in itself worthy of support?

.....  
***In 2003, then Prime Minister Jean Chretien introduced legislation that both prohibited corporate and union donations, and limited individual contributions to political parties. . . .***  
 .....


Cutting direct public funding would probably result in a paradigm shift for Canadian politics. Parties will need to come up with policies and make decisions that would be attractive enough for someone to personally donate to the party. This means that parties will likely become more ideological – they will try to stand for something. That is a big contrast from today, where the Conservatives, Liberals, and NDP really aren't that different. They are all brokerage parties that try

to rule based on current public opinion rather than a belief in what really is best for the country. Why would somebody want to pay a party to simply make decisions based on what is popular? People will pay for something they believe in. As a result, parties will probably at least appear to become more principled, both towards the right and the left side of the political spectrum.

Christians would welcome this kind of paradigm shift because it would result in a political climate where opposing beliefs can be publicly debated based on their merits. That is a contrast from the current climate in which all of the big parties want to publicly support politically correct ideas (like climate change) even if their membership base opposes them. This attempt to look politically correct is the reason why the federal Conservatives haven't done anything about the Canadian Human Rights Commission even though over 95 per cent of their membership voted to reign the CHRC in at their policy convention.

.....  
***It is hard to think of ways in which Canada would suffer if our political parties had smaller budgets***  
 .....

Another benefit of dropping direct public funding would be that the parties would become less professional. They couldn't rely on massive public funds to hire a staff of spin doctors or keep polling firms in business. Parties would have to turn to volunteers if they want to be organized and effective. Again, the benefit would be that the party would have to stand for something if someone is going to volunteer their time for the cause. This will only help instigate an open and public debate over issues which for too long have been ignored because they are controversial or politically incorrect. Professionalism may benefit a party, but it would be difficult to show how it benefits Canadians. Not too many people would complain if these parties can't afford more TV attack ads, or if there were fewer election signs dotting the landscape.

It is hard to think of ways in which Canada would suffer if our political parties had smaller budgets and had to work for donations. After all, they can't make the case that our governance relies on them. Our constitution welcomes Members of Parliament who sit as independents and are elected based on their own merit. I, for one, would welcome a political climate where merit and principle were given a greater role. Harper may have self-serving motives in wanting to cut direct public funding of our political parties, but it is an idea that would do Canadian democracy well. 

# What makes you a Christian business owner?

by Keith Knight

How would you define a Christian business? Would you define it by the product it sells, the biblical text on the office wall, the music selection being played over the store's sound system?

When asked what set his business apart, a friend recently responded: "I don't allow any swearing in my office. And if I am in a board meeting and someone swears, I walk out."

It can be both quite simple and quite difficult to be a Christian in business today; simple for the person who has adopted a business version of the Ten Commandments to govern his conduct and that of his employees; but much more difficult for the person who decides to reflect his faith in all that he does, including his business practice.

The Canadian business community is blessed to be peppered with Christian men and women who use their gifts in a wide range of business enterprises; everything from chiropractors and accountants to shop owners and CEOs of multinational corporations. Christians, especially, have an entrepreneurial spirit and a deep desire to use their God-given gifts in a wide range of professions or within the service and commercial industry. Each of those men and women view their profession as much more than a job or an opportunity to create an income; it's viewed as ministry. Many Christian business leaders possess a deep sense of calling and purpose, understanding the need to reflect Christ in all that they do, from the service or product they provide to the way they treat employees, clients, and the environment. They deal daily with questions of stewardship, or how much profit they should make, or what a just and fair wage is for their employees.



## Diving into Scripture and prayer

While there are dozens of Christian leadership books on the market, many of them with sound advice, the foundational leadership book continues to be the Bible. After the death of Moses,

Joshua was groomed by God himself to provide leadership to the Israelite nation as they moved into the promised land. Joshua not only had to contend with a strong military presence in the promised land, he had to lead

a band of nomadic shepherds across the Jordan River to do battle. God realized Joshua's need for courage and provided guidance to strengthen his faith. God reminded him who truly was in charge. Those same sources of courage that empowered Joshua are available today for any leader who will accept them.

When faced with a difficult business decision, the Christian business leader turns to prayer. In fact, prayer becomes a significant part of the leader's daily routine, both when times are tough and when everything is running like clockwork.

Christian leaders are also able to take calculated risks when they prayerfully feel led by God to do so. That's what Jesus did when he cleared the temple in Jerusalem. When he drove out the money changers and overturned their tables, Jesus ran the risk of enraging those ancient con artists. He risked antagonizing the religious leaders and being misunderstood by fellow Jews. Christ, of course, did not come into this world to please humankind; he came to redeem it. His regular prayer was that the Father's will be done.

Tough business decisions might involve closing your doors on Sundays while the competition down the street is open and your best customers switch loyalties. It might involve paying your employees a living wage while the industry average is much lower, recognizing that it will impact your bottom line.

#### What to do with God's profits?

Ah, the bottom line. That is undoubtedly one of the biggest challenges for a Christian business owner: how much profit is enough, and how do you use your profit? Do you

## What is the CCBF?

Keith Knight is the executive director of the Canadian Christian Business Federation (CCBF). It is a growing network of Christian business leaders across Canada, many of whom meet regularly over breakfasts. The CCBF group also provides mentoring opportunities for young entrepreneurs and provides internship opportunities for young men and women currently enrolled in business programs at Christian colleges and universities. You can find out more about us at [www.CCBF.org](http://www.CCBF.org)

reinvest it into your company, share it with employees, give generously (or nominally) to charity?

The biggest challenge for any Christian business owner – indeed any Christian man or woman – is to place God in charge of your pocket book and bottom line. During occasional periods of unemployment, I would pray that God would provide me with a job so that I could provide for the family. It was only when I realized that God was also in charge of my bank account that I truly found peace.

#### Learning from each other

A business leader requires much more than courage and the ability to take risks in order to operate a business and succeed in it. There are dozens of specific skills that are required, some of which come through formal education and training. Some businesses require considerable capital, an entrepreneurial spirit and strong organizational skills.

.....  
***It was only when I realized  
that God was also in charge  
of my bank account  
that I truly found peace***  
.....

But one can only become a Christian business leader by adopting and applying dozens of biblical principles. These are, in essence, characteristics of leadership that are deeply rooted in Scripture – principles dealing with integrity, stress management, accountability, team building, decision-making, values, how one handles power and influence, wisdom, character, justice, stewardship, conflict management, servant leadership, self-discipline, humility.

The development of a Christian business leader doesn't happen in isolation. While it could happen by faithfully and systematically reading through Scripture, it occurs most effectively when groups of business leaders meet together to share struggles and to learn what Scripture says about each of these principles. I am the executive director of one such business leaders' group, the Canadian Christian Business Federation, and can attest to how helpful meeting together is (for more information on my group see the sidebar "What is the CCBF?").

The Canadian business environment is complex and competitive, and for the Christian business leader it can prove to be both challenging and lonely. Connecting with business peers – being able to meet regularly with seasoned veterans – helps to develop character, focus and a sense of purpose. Yes, it is possible to develop a legalistic approach to business by posting a business version of the Ten Commandments on your office wall. More often than not, business life isn't that simple.



# Canada and the Tea Party

## All aboard the Tea Party Express?

by Adam van den Hoven

Though it had to withstand sustained attack by the mainstream media and political operatives of all stripes, the Tea Party set the agenda for the 2010 US mid-term elections. The candidates they helped nominate and the platform they pushed for gave the Republicans unprecedented gains in both houses of Congress and at the state level. The movement nearly shattered the power and influence of the establishment elites in both the Democratic and Republican parties.

Could Canada benefit from its own Tea Party? Canada certainly faces similar problems: the government and bureaucracy continues to grow in size and influence, constantly eroding our long recognized rights and freedoms. And politicians and pundits routinely attack and malign conservatives, especially social conservatives.

With a possible spring election looming, thousands of Canadians, fed up with things as they stand, are asking whether the Tea Party could succeed in Canada. Could a locally organized and outspoken body of “moral majority” voters, demonstrating frequently and proudly, writing letters to the editor and calling into every available talk show have the same effect here in Canada that it did in the US?

Let’s see.

### Getting the message out via the New Media

One reason the US’s Tea Party succeeded was because their message was heard. Though the mainstream media mostly ignored them, or mocked them, they still managed to get their message out to the nation via New Media sources like the social networks (Facebook, MySpace, etc.), thousands of independent conservative blogs, and emerging online media outlets like TownHall.com and Pyjamas Media.

This New Media is a force to be reckoned with, particularly when the thousands of bloggers turn their attention to any information or data the government releases. These bloggers could best be characterized as an enormous research team, and their size has allowed conservatives to dig deep, and do their own analysis of government proposals and policies, and then present alternative interpretations of events. One example: this New Media was instrumental in sifting through innumerable politicians’ records and exposing those who were Republican-In-Name-Only, or RINOs.

Of course there were a couple more traditional media sources that also helped the Tea Party: Rush Limbaugh and Fox News (not to mention a large number of other conser-

vative talk show hosts like Sean Hannity, Mark Levin and Laura Ingram, some of whom also have shows on Fox). There is much analysis available online about the influence that both Limbaugh and Fox News had on the outcome of the 2010 elections.

## What is the “Tea Party” movement?

by Jon Dykstra

The Tea Party is an American political movement that sprung up in 2009, largely in reaction to President Obama’s trillion-dollar stimulus program. The name “Tea Party” references the Boston Tea Party, which took place in 1773, and involved colonists objecting to a new British tax on tea by dumping a shipment of British tea into the Boston Harbor.

The modern Tea Party is conservative, primarily (but not exclusively) in a financial sense, and stands for lower taxes and less government spending. It is a national movement in that there are Tea Party groups in states across the US, but it has no real hierarchy and would best be characterized as a “grassroots movement.” It has been involved in orchestrating large protests against spending in most every state, and in nominating political candidates for offices, local and national. And while it is not tied directly to the Republican Party, the vast majority of Tea Party candidates ran for Republican Party nominations (at least one did run for the Democrats).

## Would it work in Canada?

Now for a Tea Party to happen in Canada, we would need similar means of getting the message out and stirring the populace into taking action.

There aren't as many conservative talk shows in Canada, with only Charles Adler holding a significant, cross-Canada presence. Still, they do exist. And some time this year Quebecor will launch the conservative news channel SunTV News, which is already being called "Fox News North" by those who oppose it. And on the Internet there are a myriad of alternative, conservative New Media sources, including *LifeSiteNews.com*, *Small Dead Animals*, *Daily Split* and a myriad of others.

So a host of small local conservative voices could take up the cause much like they did in the US.

## Step 2

This means that in Canada we do have the first ingredient necessary to get a Tea Party movement started – a voice to spread the message. So let's say the message starts being spread, and is well-received to the point that anywhere from dozens to tens of thousands of people start meeting at public places protesting the outrageous spending and ruinous policies of our government, in every town from Ucluelet to St. John's to Hamilton to Whitehorse. This would be the second ingredient – a receptive audience, ready to get active and protest.

Would this be enough to see the unprecedented results of the 2010 US elections replicated in Canada?

No – because a third ingredient would still be needed. It wasn't the protests, after all, (as massive as they were!) that changed the course of American politics. In reality the Tea Party was successful because it got involved in nominating political candidates – the protesters who came out by the hundreds and thousands to the rallies went home to their local districts and worked to nominate candidates who shared their Tea Party values.

## How governments change

Can we duplicate this third step in Canada?

To answer that question we need to take a closer look at the US electoral system. Americans effectively have an election prior to an election, called a primary. In the primary candidates run for either the Republican or Democratic nomination, and the winner of each of those nominations will then run against each other in the upcoming election. Each state has its own rules (and some use a different process) but in every case the results are *binding*.

The Tea Party has used this primary process to get "their" candidates nominated as Republican candidates<sup>2</sup> on the ballot for the mid-term elections in November. In many cases these candidates were not ones that the Republican Party leadership wanted, and some even replaced the incumbents. But they couldn't stop the Tea Party – the US political system upon which the US is build allowed them to override the party elite.



## Reality check

Sadly, in Canada no such liberty exists. The closest thing we have to a primary is the nomination campaign of an Electoral District Association. The members of a particular political party choose (typically by secret ballot) the individual whom they wish to nominate as the candidate for that party to run in their riding.

But their choice is not binding on the party leadership. The leader of the party has to endorse the chosen individual before he becomes a candidate for their party. The ultimate decision is up to the leader, though typically the decision is made by a committee. For instance, the constitution of the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) says:

"the candidate selection committee at the national level shall have the right to disallow the candidacy of any person before or after nomination by the electoral district association, subject to the appeal of such a decision to the National Council whose decision shall be final and binding. . . ."

Most parties are organized along similar lines.

## No Tea with the CPC

The CPC is the party that a home grown Tea Party movement would be targeting, but recent history shows that Stephen Harper has no problems wielding the power of his office to see that only the candidates he prefers are nominated. In 2007, the late Heather Stilwell, a long time Surrey School board member recognized in 2010 for her lifelong work for the pro-life movement was forbidden to running in Newton-North Delta because of her outspoken social conservative views; in her case they used a technicality to forbid her from running but

“ . . . in an interview with *LifeSite News.com* Stilwell said she wished the Party would have told her upfront that her social conservative past would prevent her from being accepted. ‘People warned me this would happen’ said Stilwell. ‘I was sure that my 14 years of elected office, my reputation as a hard-working person of integrity would at least give me a chance.’”<sup>1</sup>

Ultimately the party brass decide who will and will not be a candidate for the party, just as the leader decides what platform the party will run on. It might be possible to change the party from the inside, becoming part of the national executive, but this is a slow and arduous process and one which would

be difficult to navigate in the numbers needed to affect real change.

So the Tea Party movement can't succeed in Canada. In the US it wouldn't have succeeded if the Republican Party hierarchy had had the power to stop it, but they didn't. In Canada, Stephen Harper does have that power. . . and he'll use it.

## Another option

There is a model for conservative renewal in Canada that works; the formation of an alternate party. The strength of the Green Party has pulled the Liberal and NDP parties strongly left precisely because there is a real, and growing threat that they will lose support to the Green Party. In the 1980s Preston Manning and others dissatisfied with the PCs formed the Reform Party of Canada. This provided Canadians with an alternative choice to the PCs and ultimately supplanted the PCs. Unfortunately, in uniting with the remains of the PC party, the leaven has done its job and we are in the same political situation we found ourselves in the 1980s.

It is always possible to create a new political party to do this again, but there really is not need.

## Tea with CHP Canada

Created shortly before the Reform Party, the Christian Heritage Party of Canada (CHP) provides a conservative

option that any Canadian, regardless of their religious beliefs, can support. Unlike the old Reform party, CHP Canada recognizes an absolute, objective standard of truth and considers itself and its members answerable to an authority higher than themselves. For this reason, it is unlikely that the CHP will do what the Reform party did and put aside moral issues in favor of attaining power.

In some ways the US Tea Party seems to be taking the Reform Party approach. Recent polls of Tea Party members reveal a desire to focus on fiscal conservatism as the big tent issue, and to leave social issue alone for the time being. While it is certainly the case that reducing the size of government will have a spillover effect on social issues, it won't lead to substantial long-term change. We can see this in the history of the Reform Party, which focused primarily on fiscal issues and now we have a Conservative prime minister who is openly hostile to Christian political views (like the sanctity of life) and a government that is indistinguishable from the Liberals they replaced.

To effect real change you need a party with principles that are clearly and firmly established, that won't sway with public pressure, and one that will address the real underlying *moral* issues of our time. To effect real change you need a party that won't change, whose principles are founded on God's unchanging Word.

A Tea Party movement won't succeed in Canada, because the Conservative hierarchy won't let it. But there is another way to be heard, and effect change, and that requires a party in which socially conservative citizens have a real voice.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> “Conservative Party of Canada Rejects Nomination Bid of Well Known BC Social Conservative” by John-Henry Westen posted to *LifeSiteNews.com* Feb. 9, 2007

<sup>2</sup> Though there was at least one Democratic Tea Party candidate.



# Moving forward

## Arguments creationists should *not* use

by Jonathan Sarfati

There are many strong arguments for Creation, but some are not so strong, and others are totally unsound. It's important to know the difference. This is why it's important to keep up with current creationist literature. There is so much good evidence for Creation that there is no need to use any of the "doubtful" arguments.

Using discredited arguments rebounds on the user, and it's a poor testimony for the cause of Christ. It's the truth that sets us free (John 8:32), not error – and Christ is "the truth" (John 14:6)!

Christians should not become alarmed when they find out creationist researchers have overturned their favorite arguments. Rather, they should refocus on the main issue, the authority of the Word of God, the 66 books of the Bible, not the theories of fallible humans, whether creationist or evolutionist.

### Our starting point

The authority of the Bible is the main emphasis of the organization I work for, Creation Ministries International (CMI). We don't try to "prove" the Bible with science; rather, we accept the Bible's propositions as true without proof, i.e. as axioms or presuppositions.

All philosophical systems, not just Christianity, start with axioms. There are good reasons for accepting the axioms of Scripture as true, because it can be shown that they lead to a consistent view of physical and moral reality, which other axioms can't provide.

Genesis contains a number of Hebrew grammatical features that show it was intended to teach a straightforward history of the world from its creation. Genesis, backed up by the rest of Scripture, unambiguously teaches that:

- The heavens, Earth and everything in them were created in six consecutive normal days, the same as those of our working week (Exodus 20:8-11).
- Earth is about 6,000 years old, since Jesus said mankind was there from the "beginning of creation," not billions of years later (Mark 10:6).
- Adam sinned and brought physical death to mankind (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22).
- Since man was the federal head of creation, the whole creation was cursed (Romans 8:20-22), which included death to animals, with the end of the original vegetarian diet for both humans and animals (Genesis 1:29-30).

- God judged the world by a globe-covering Flood, which Jesus and Peter compared with the coming Judgment (Luke 17:26-27; 2 Peter 3:3-7). This destroyed all land vertebrate animals and people not on the ocean-liner-sized Ark.
- God then judged the people by confusing their language at Babel – after they had refused to spread out and repopulate the Earth after the Flood.

### Using this framework

It's important to realize that all "facts" of science do not speak for themselves, but are interpreted within a framework.

Evolutionists start with the axiom of naturalism or materialism, i.e. God (if He even exists) performed no miraculous acts of creation.

Biblical creationists interpret the same facts and observations, but within the framework outlined above.

### What should we defend, and what should we hold loosely?

It's very important to distinguish the Biblical framework from various creationist scientific models within this framework. To Christians, the framework should be non-negotiable, but the models should never be held dogmatically.

All theories of science are fallible, and new data often overturn previously held theories.

Evolutionists continually revise their theories because of new data, so it should not be surprising or distressing that some creationist scientific theories need to be revised, too.

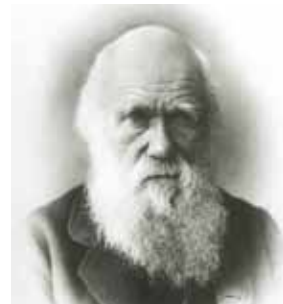
My organization, CMI, has never promoted many of the fallacious creationist arguments we will list. Indeed, some have not been promoted by any major creationist organization; rather, they are straw men set up by anticreationists.<sup>1</sup>

Ironically, some skeptics criticize creationists when they retract doubtful arguments, but the same people accuse creationists of being unwilling to change their minds.

### Some arguments creationists should avoid<sup>2</sup>

*"Darwin recanted on his deathbed"*

Many people use this story, originally from a Lady Hope. However, it is almost certainly not true, and there is no corroboration





from those who were closest to him, even from Darwin's wife Emma, who never liked evolutionary theory.

Also, even if true, so what? If Ken Ham recanted Creation, would that disprove it? So there is no value to this argument whatever.

#### *"Moon dust thickness proves a young moon"*

For a long time, creationists claimed that the dust layer on the moon was too thin if dust had truly been falling on it for billions of years. They based this claim on early estimates – by evolutionists – of the influx of moon dust, and worries that the moon landers would sink into this dust layer.

But these early estimates were wrong, and by the time of the Apollo landings, most in NASA were not worried about sinking. So the dust layer thickness can't be used as proof of a young moon (or of an old one either).

#### *"The Japanese trawler Zuiyo-maru caught a dead plesiosaur near New Zealand in 1977"*

This carcass was almost certainly a rotting basking shark, since their gills and jaws rot rapidly and fall off, leaving the typical small "neck" with the head. This has been shown by similar specimens washed up on beaches. The effect is so well-known that these carcasses have been called "pseudoplesiosaurs."

Also, detailed anatomical and biochemical studies of the Zuiyo-maru carcass confirm that it could not have been a plesiosaur.

#### *"Women have one more rib than men"*

CMI has long pointed out the fallacy of this statement. Dishonest skeptics wanting to caricature creation also use it, in reverse. The removal of a rib would not affect the genetic instructions passed on to the offspring, any more than a man who loses a finger will have sons with nine fingers.

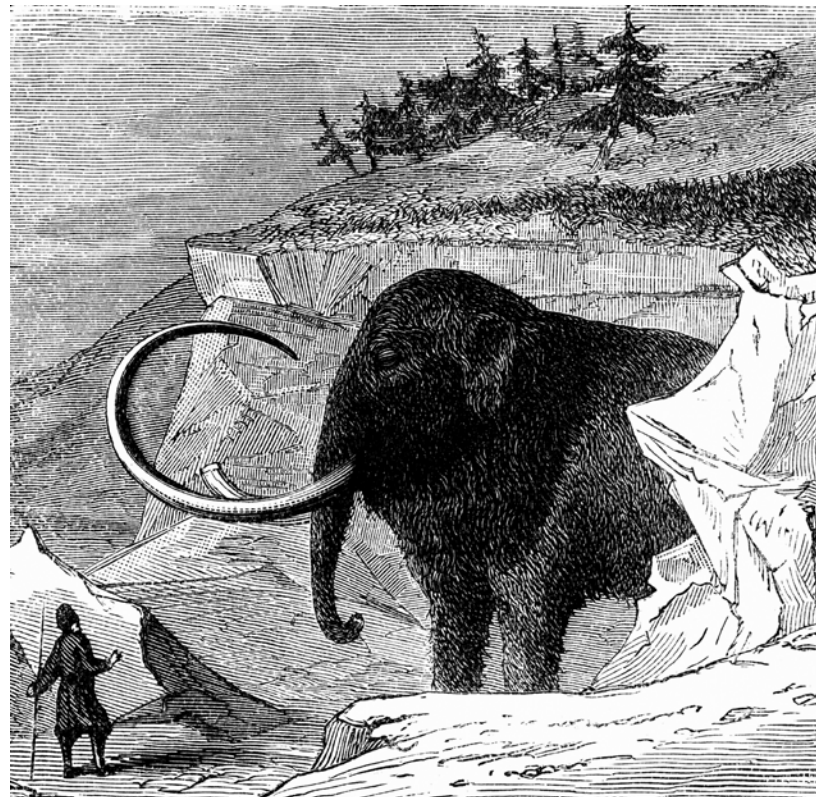
Note also that Adam wouldn't have had a permanent defect, because the rib is the one bone that can regrow if the surrounding membrane (periosteum) is left intact.<sup>3</sup>

#### *"Woolly mammoths were snap frozen during the Flood catastrophe"*

This is contradicted by their geological setting. It's most likely that they perished toward the end of the Ice Age, possibly in catastrophic dust storms. Partially digested stomach contents are not proof of a snap freeze, because the elephant's stomach functions as a holding area – a mammoth with preserved stomach contents was found in mid-western USA, where the ground was not frozen.

#### *"The 2nd Law of Thermodynamics began at the Fall"*

This law says that the entropy ("disorder") of the universe increases over time, and some have thought that this



was the result of the Curse. However, disorder isn't always harmful. An obvious example is digestion, breaking down large complex food molecules into their simple building blocks. Another is friction, which turns ordered mechanical energy into disordered heat – otherwise Adam and Eve would have slipped as they walked with God in Eden! A less obvious example to laymen might be the sun heating the Earth, but to a physical chemist, heat transfer from a hot object to a cold one is the classic case of the Second Law in action. Also, breathing is based on another classic Second Law process, gas moving from a high pressure to low pressure. Finally, all beneficial processes in the world, including the development from embryo to adult, increase the overall disorder of the universe because the disorder of the surroundings is increased more than that of the system is reduced, showing that the Second Law is not inherently a curse.

Death and suffering of *nephesh* animals before sin would be contrary to the Biblical framework above. It is more likely that God withdrew some of His sustaining power (Col. 1:15–17) at the Fall so that the net effects of the Second Law would now lead to overall decay.

#### *"Archaeopteryx was a fraud"*

Some have claimed that feathers were attached to a dinosaur skeleton or that the fossil, which allegedly shows both bird-like and reptilian features, had its fine feather impressions added by a forger, making it one of the world's first paleontological hoaxes.

The fossil specimens are however, genuine.<sup>4</sup> The skeleton has a proper bird skull, perching claws, tiny bumps on the bones where the feathers were attached to the bones by ligaments, and evidence of pneumatized bones indicating the unique avian lung system. Also, patterns on the limestone slabs, including some on top of the feather imprints, match perfectly so must have formed on the bedding plane before the slab was split.

*“Dubois renounced Java man as a ‘missing link’ and claimed it was just a giant gibbon”*

Evolutionary anthropology textbooks claimed this, and creationists followed suit. However, those who said this actually misunderstood Dubois, as Stephen Jay Gould has shown. It’s true that Dubois claimed that Java man (which he called *Pithecanthropus erectus*) had the proportions of a gibbon. But this was because he had an eccentric view of evolution, universally discounted today. His idea demanded that, in the alleged transitional sequence leading to man, the brain-size/body weight ratio would fit into a mathematical series. His “gibbon” claim was in order to make the Java man find fit this view, so as to reinforce its ‘missing link’ status.

*“Evolution is just a theory”*

What people usually mean when they say this is “Evolution is not proven fact, so it should not be promoted dogmatically.” (Therefore that is what they should say.) The problem with using the word “theory” in this case is that scientists use it to mean a well-substantiated explanation of data. This includes well-known ones such as Einstein’s Theory of Relativity and Newton’s Theory of Gravity, and lesser-known ones such as the Debye–Hæckel Theory of electrolyte solutions and the Deryagin–Landau/Verwey–Overbeek (DLVO) theory of the stability of lyophobic sols, etc. It would be better to say that particles-to-people evolution is an unsubstantiated hypothesis or conjecture.

*“The phrase ‘science falsely so called’ in 1 Timothy 6:20 (KJV) refers to evolution”*

To develop a Scriptural model properly, we must understand what the author meant to communicate to his intended audience, which in turn is determined by the grammar and historical context. We must not try to read into Scripture that which appears to support a particular viewpoint. In this passage, the original Greek word translated “science” is *gnosis*, and in this context refers to the elite esoteric “knowledge” that was the key to the mystery religions, which later developed into the heresy of Gnosticism. This was not an error by the KJV translators, but one example of how words change their meanings over time. The word “science” originally meant “knowledge,” from the Latin *scientia*, from *scio* meaning ‘know.’ This is not the way it is used today, so modern translations correctly render the word as “knowledge” in this passage.

## Icons of Evolution by Jonathan Wells

Regnery Publishers, 2002  
338 pages; Softcover;  
\$25.00 Can

reviewed by Anthony Van Orizande

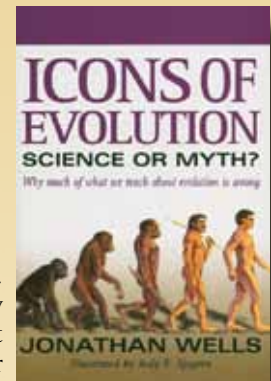
In the book *Icons of Evolution*, Jonathan Wells sets out to show that a large number of the most common proofs for evolution, or “Icons” as he calls them, are seriously flawed. He does this quite handily over 10 chapters with each chapter being dedicated to debunking one “Icon” of evolution. His book is mostly the result of previously available research known to specialists in each specific area. Wells has taken this research and combined it into one very readable book.

Wells contends that these “Icons” persist in modern textbooks because of dogmatic evolution and because the majority of textbook publishers tend to cheap out and use recycled material and research. The result of these textbooks is that a large percentage of students grow up believing that evolution is firmly grounded and well researched. Even if they question one of the tenants of evolution, there are still nine others to help them maintain the faith.

In an appendix Wells evaluates ten recent textbooks and shows how they all fail to warn the reader about the weaknesses in the evolutionary proofs. To further test the relevance of Wells’ book, I spoke with a science teacher at one of our Christian schools. He confirmed Wells’ assertions and indicated that “yes,” these flawed proofs for evolution were used in his school’s biology texts. He had not read Wells’ work, but he knew about these evolutionary “proofs” and he made a point of giving his students extra reading material.

As is to be expected, this is a fairly controversial book. I found one whole web site dedicated to the rebuttal of *Icons of Evolution*. Having read some of their material, I would still strongly recommend *Icons of Evolution* to those who intend to teach or deal with the biological sciences. It does an excellent job of covering the material and it comes with an extensive list of research notes. It should give you and your students a much keener eye when it comes to reviewing current scientific literature.

Of course CMI believes that evolution is anti-knowledge because it clouds the minds of many to the abundant evidence of God’s action in Creation and the true knowledge available in His Word, the Bible. But it still is wrong to use fallacious ar-



Some of the “Icons” covered include:

- The Miller-Urey Experiment
- Darwin’s Tree of Life
- Haeckel’s Embryos
- Peppered Moths
- Darwin’s Finches

guments to support a true viewpoint. On a related matter, it is linguistically fallacious to claim that, even now, “science really means knowledge,” because meaning is determined by usage, not derivation (etymology).

*“If we evolved from apes, why are there still apes today?”*

Some evolutionists also miss the main point, by protesting that they don’t believe that we descended from apes, but that apes and humans share a common ancestor. The evolutionary paleontologist G.G. Simpson had no time for this “pussyfooting,” as he called it. He said,

“In fact, that earlier ancestor would certainly be called an ape or monkey in popular speech by anyone who saw it. Since the terms ape and monkey are defined by popular usage, man’s ancestors were apes or monkeys (or successively both). It is pusillanimous [mean-spirited] if not dishonest for an informed investigator to say otherwise.”



Many evolutionists believe that a small group of creatures split off from the main group and they became reproductively isolated from the main large population. Most change supposedly happened in such a small group, which can lead to allopatric speciation (a geographically isolated population forming a new species). So nothing in evolutionary theory requires the main group to become extinct.

It is important to be aware that this mechanism is not the sole property of evolutionists – creationists

believe that most human variation occurred after small groups became isolated (but not speciated) at Babel, while Adam and Eve probably had mid-brown skin color. The quoted erroneous statement is analogous to saying “If all people groups came from Adam and Eve, then why are mid-brown people still alive today?”

So what’s the difference between the creationist explanation of people groups (“races”) and the evolutionist explanation of people origins? Answer: the former involves separation of already-existing information and loss of information through mutations; the latter requires the generation of tens of millions of “letters” of new information.

*“NASA computers, in calculating the positions of planets, found a missing day and 40 minutes, proving Joshua’s ‘long day’ and Hezekiah’s sundial movement of Joshua 10 and 2 Kings 20.”*

This is a hoax. Essentially the same story, now widely circulated on the Internet, appeared in the somewhat unreliable

1936 book *The Harmony of Science and Scripture* by Harry Rimmer. Evidently an unknown person embellished it with modern organization names and modern calculating devices.

Also, the whole story is mathematically impossible – it requires a fixed reference point before Joshua’s long day. In fact we would need to cross-check between both astronomical and historical records to detect any missing day. And to detect a missing 40 minutes requires that these reference points be known to within an accuracy of a few minutes. It is certainly true that the timing of solar eclipses observable from a certain location can be known precisely. But the ancient records did not record time that precisely, so the required cross-check is simply not possible. Anyway, the earliest historically recorded eclipse occurred in 1217 BC, nearly two centuries after Joshua. So there is no way the missing day could be detected by any computer.

Note that discrediting this myth doesn’t mean that the events of Joshua 10 didn’t happen. Features in the account support its reliability, e.g. the moon was also slowed down. This was not necessary to prolong the day, but this would be observed from Earth’s reference frame if God had accomplished this miracle by slowing Earth’s rotation.

### Summary

This article is meant to encourage trust in God’s infallible Word, not man’s fallible theories – even our own. Its purpose is also to help people avoid defending the cause of the Truth with faulty arguments, and instead focus on the many effective arguments for Biblical Creation and against evolution/billions of years. To keep yourself up-to-date with both types of argument, keep up with our periodicals (including the *Journal of Creation*), and visit [Creation.com](http://Creation.com) regularly.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Those (such as Hugh Ross) who believe that God created over billions of years and thus have animal death occurring before sin, are also guilty of setting up straw men. See Ham, K., *Demolishing ‘straw men,’* *Creation* 19(4):13–15, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller, frequently updated list, see Q&A: Arguments creationists should NOT use at [Creation.com/arguments-we-think-creationists-should-not-use](http://Creation.com/arguments-we-think-creationists-should-not-use).

<sup>3</sup> [Creation.com/regenerating-ribs-adam-and-that-missing-rib](http://Creation.com/regenerating-ribs-adam-and-that-missing-rib).

<sup>4</sup> Fraud of this type does happen, however, as occurred with the more recent and proven fraud, *Archaeoraptor*, featured in a leading world journal, where portions of different fossils were glued together to make a “bird-dinosaur missing link.”

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# Leaving these behind

## Arguments evolutionists just have to let go

by Jonathan Dykstra

Sometimes the silliest things get me going. This time it was a T-shirt I came across on the Internet, pictured on this page, called “Noah’s dilemma.” I couldn’t help myself; I had to respond. So I ended up sending the folks who created it a note:

If I told you I’m 6’4” and my mother is 5’6” you would know I must be lying. After all, how could someone that small ever have carried someone as big as me in her womb? If that strikes you as strange logic, then your “Noah’s dilemma” t-shirt should too. Both ignore that biologically speaking, whatever is big was once small – Noah didn’t take an adult T-Rex with him (or rather, two); he took a couple of junior size versions, which, scientific-types estimate, could have been as small as chickens. So your “Noah’s dilemma” should be redone as “No dilemma.”

The shirt hit a nerve because it made its bad argument with such confidence. The dilemma they present – “how did Noah get dinosaurs on the Ark?” – could be solved in about the time it takes to type the question into a search engine. There are good answers, easily available, that go far beyond my simple analogy<sup>1</sup> but some Bible-critics are so very sure their opponents are stupid they can’t bother spending the thirty seconds it would take to see if there might be an answer available for their “unsolvable” dilemmas.

### Arguments evolutionists need to let go

What follows is a list of evolutionary arguments that are unquestionably bad, but which keep coming up. While creationists haven’t answered every evolutionary objection to the Bible’s account of Creation, they have answered these, conclusively, so it’s about time evolutionists abandoned them.

*“The Miller-Urey Experiment shows how life can come from non-life”*

The problem for evolutionary theory is explaining the origins of life. That’s a surprise to most – we’ve been told that evolution explains how muck eventually, through countless mutations and millions of years, became man. But the truth is, while theories abound on how the first living cell became a man (through countless mutations and millions of years) there’s almost nothing on how muck became that first cell, on how life actually began. It’s too implausible, even for evolutionists, that millions of years<sup>2</sup> could make dirt breath.

In 1953 a couple of scientists did conduct an experiment that, they thought, gave insight into how some elemental building blocks of the first cell might have come into being. Graduate student Stanley Miller, and his Ph.D advisor, Harold Urey managed to create some amino acids by sending an electric spark through a mixture of gases they thought replicated the Earth’s primitive environment.

The experiment was widely celebrated in the science journals and the popular media too, where it was presented as proof of how life began. But the experiment’s result was hardly so grandiose – it had only produced a few of the building blocks for life, not life itself. The difference between a few amino acids and a complete living cell is comparable to the difference between a pile of metal, and a complete, functioning Boeing 747 jetliner.

Despite the rather minimal results produced, it was celebrated because this was the most successful experiment on the origins of life ever conducted. From the fifties onward, the Miller-Urey experiment would be given as *the* example of how life came from non-life in high school and college textbooks, and in the popular press too.<sup>3</sup>

### The dilemma...



....solved

And as the only tangible step forward in explaining how life began, the experiment continued to be listed in textbooks in the nineties and into the two thousands even as evolutionists themselves began to dismiss it. The experiment required a particular mix of gases, and absolutely no oxygen present to succeed. This was easy to do in a laboratory but, as even most evolutionists now agree, oxygen has always been around on Earth. And that would preclude any Miller-Urey-like processes from occurring.

Hmmm. . . so what was it again that evolution was supposed to explain? This is the best explanation evolutionists have of how life could come from non-life, and even they don't buy it anymore.

You'll still see the Miller-Urey experiment come up in newspapers when the topic of the origins of life is covered. It's still in textbooks too, though now it often includes an acknowledgement that the experimenters were wrong about the atmosphere on "primitive Earth." What isn't made clear is that because Miller and Urey were wrong about Earth's atmosphere the results of their experiment are meaningless.

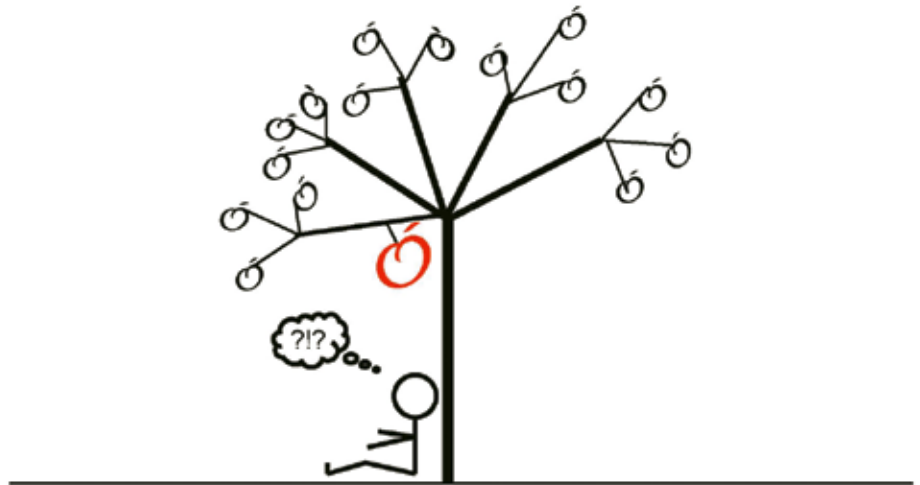
Evolutionists need to let this one go.

*"Doubting evolution is like doubting gravity"*

The stick man in the cartoon on this page is clearly made of straw. The cartoon is from a 2009 contest run by Floridan Citizens for Science, and was one of ten "winners," all of which caricatured creationist positions.<sup>4</sup> So is doubting the Theory of Evolution just like doubting the Theory of Gravity?

The folks at Answers in Genesis have given this argument a wonderfully succinct response:

"Why does this argument fail? We'll show you. Take a pencil or pen. Hold it in the air. Then drop it to the floor. That's gravity. Next, make a single-



Don't worry, Isaac. "It's just a theory."

celled organism – like an amoeba – turn into a goat. Go ahead. We'll wait. . . . No? As you can see, there's a fundamental difference between operational science, which can be tested through repeatable experimentation, and historical science, which cannot."<sup>5</sup>

*"Creationists believe in the immutability of all living things even though we see change happening all around us."*

Admittedly very few evolutionists make this argument using the term "immutability" but it's a common enough accusation, and the one leveled in the Doonsebury "doctor and creationist patient" cartoon (shown on page 23).

The premise here is that creationists believe God created every living thing we see today just the way we see it today, and for the last 6,000 years they have remained entirely unchanged (immutable).

But this isn't even close to what creationists believe. What we believe is that God built in change and variation into animals and plant kinds and all the living things He created. In fact, creationists believe that substantial changes to a species can occur much more rapidly than evolutionists propose. Just look at all the different dog species, from tiny

Chihuahuas to the gigantic St. Bernard; we believe this incredible diversity arose in just the last 6,000 years!

However, it's important to note that change is not evolution. Evolution – the sort that proposes to explain how life evolved out of the muck, and eventually became Man – requires changes that *add* genetic complexity. Muck-to-Man evolution requires continual improvement and that's not what we see happening around us.

For example, the different dog breeds came about by selecting and isolating different traits that were *already present* in the species. There was no increase in genetic information. We didn't see dogs growing new organs, new limbs, or new anything else – their complexity remained the same. The same is true of Tuberculosis – drug resistant strains are now a problem, but these strains seem to be variations that were already present, but less prevalent until antibiotics killed off the other competing variations. There was no increase in complexity - no evolution – and it remains Tuberculosis.

We also see mutations causing change via a *loss of genetic complexity*. For example one species of beetle has, via mutation, lost its wings. This turned

## The Scopes Monkey Trial, and the legacy of *Inherit the Wind*

### Inherently Windy: A Hollywood History of the Scopes Trial

by Dr. David Menton

Illustrated Lecture

74 minutes; \$13 US

Can be viewed free online at:

[AnswersInGenesis.org/media/video/ondemand](http://AnswersInGenesis.org/media/video/ondemand)



reviewed by Jon Dykstra

In 1925 teacher John Scopes was found guilty, and fined \$100, for violating a law which prohibited the teaching “that man descended from a lower order of animals.” But while the court found him guilty, the US media championed him in their papers, and fed the public a distorted account of events that made the anti-evolutionist prosecuting attorney, William Jennings Bryan, look like a fool.

A play about events, called *Inherit the Wind*, often produced by high schools and colleges, spread the distorted account to subsequent generations, and a 1960 film of the same title (starring Spencer Tracy) took the distortion to a whole new audience. There was no attempt at fairness – in one bombastic scene the town’s fundamentalist Christians are portrayed as an angry mob, marching on the jail to lynch the evolution-teaching teacher!

This, then, is another caricature of creationists, but bigger than most in that its portrayal of creationists as violent, dim-witted and bigoted has impacted public perception for generations.

One of the best responses to the film is a lecture done by Dr. David Menton, which is available on DVD or can be viewed for free online at [AnswersInGenesis.org/media/video/ondemand](http://AnswersInGenesis.org/media/video/ondemand). In his presentation *Inherently Windy: A Hollywood History of the Scopes Trial* he deconstructs one outrageous lie after another by showing a scene from the film, and then explaining the actual facts of the matter. Even if you’ve never seen or heard of *Inherit the Wind* before, it’s still worth watching this lecture just to learn about the contempt and hatred Hollywood has historically had for Bible-believing Christians. And if you *have* seen the film Dr. Menton’s presentation will blow your mind. You may have realized the film was propaganda, but you never realized just how little regard the filmmakers had for truth, fairness and honesty.

out to be an advantage, because it lived on a windy island where flying beetles would be swept out to sea and die in the water. So it changed, and the change (losing its wings) enabled it to better suit its environment, but the change came about via a *loss* of genetic information.

Rather than evolution what we see happening could best be characterized as simple variation or as *devolution*.

*“Creationists are soooooo stupid!”*

This is probably the most common anti-creationist “argument” of all, and refreshing in a way, because of its open arrogance. The other arguments are arrogant too – they come from critics who don’t think enough of their opponents to do a little research – but here this disrespect and incivility is brought right out in the open: “We think you creationists are idiots!”

There are a couple of fun ways to respond to this open aggression.

We could respond in kind: “And you’re a poopyhead.” Yes, seriously. One advantage of this response is its brevity – no need to waste time talking to someone who thinks so little of you. It’s likely they won’t listen to anything you have to say anyways. Another advantage is its appropriateness – by descending to their level, we may be able show them just how low that level is – nothing more than 1<sup>st</sup> grade name calling. If they then apologize you might be able to start up a real conversation.

We could also ask for a definition: “What do you mean by stupid? I know of creationists who are college presidents, professors, lawyers, doctors, astronomers and one who was the national chess champion of New Zealand. Is that your idea of stupid?”<sup>6</sup>

### Conclusion

Scripture offers advice on answering someone who is asking questions but doesn’t really want answers: “Answer not a fool in his folly” (Proverbs 26:4).

However, even though these are outmoded, outdated and even insulting arguments, not everyone who presents them, or asks them as questions, is a fool caught up in folly. They could simply be indoctrinated. Hear that creationists are dumb as rocks enough times, and if you hadn’t actually met any, it would be hard to think of them as anything but. So we do need to be ready to answer anyone who has serious questions – even when they are silly – about Creation and the Bible.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> See [answersingenesis.org/get-answers/topic/noahs-ark](http://answersingenesis.org/get-answers/topic/noahs-ark) for more good answers, but a couple others include:

– The Ark was much bigger than it is commonly imagined (children’s toy arks have done a disservice in representing

the Ark as something so small giraffes could only fit in if a hole was cut in the roof to let their heads through) and is comparable to a gigantic oil tanker.

- There were far fewer animals to take on the Ark than is commonly recognized. When Noah took two of each kind (and seven of each clean animal) these kinds were most likely very large groupings. So instead of hundreds of different cats, Noah probably took only two cat “kinds”: large cats, from which all large cats then descended, and a set of small cats from which all small cats descended. We can see even today evidence of these kinds, in that what we think are separate species are not so separate after all. Horses are

able to mate with donkeys (producing mules) and zebras (zorses), and whales can mate with dolphins (wholphins) and lions are able to crossbreed with tigers (either ligers or tigons). So Noah didn’t need to take “all those animals” on the ark – he only took one set (and seven of each clean animal) of each *kind*.

<sup>2</sup> Countless mutations don’t come into play here, because mutations can’t occur until after you have something alive to mutate.

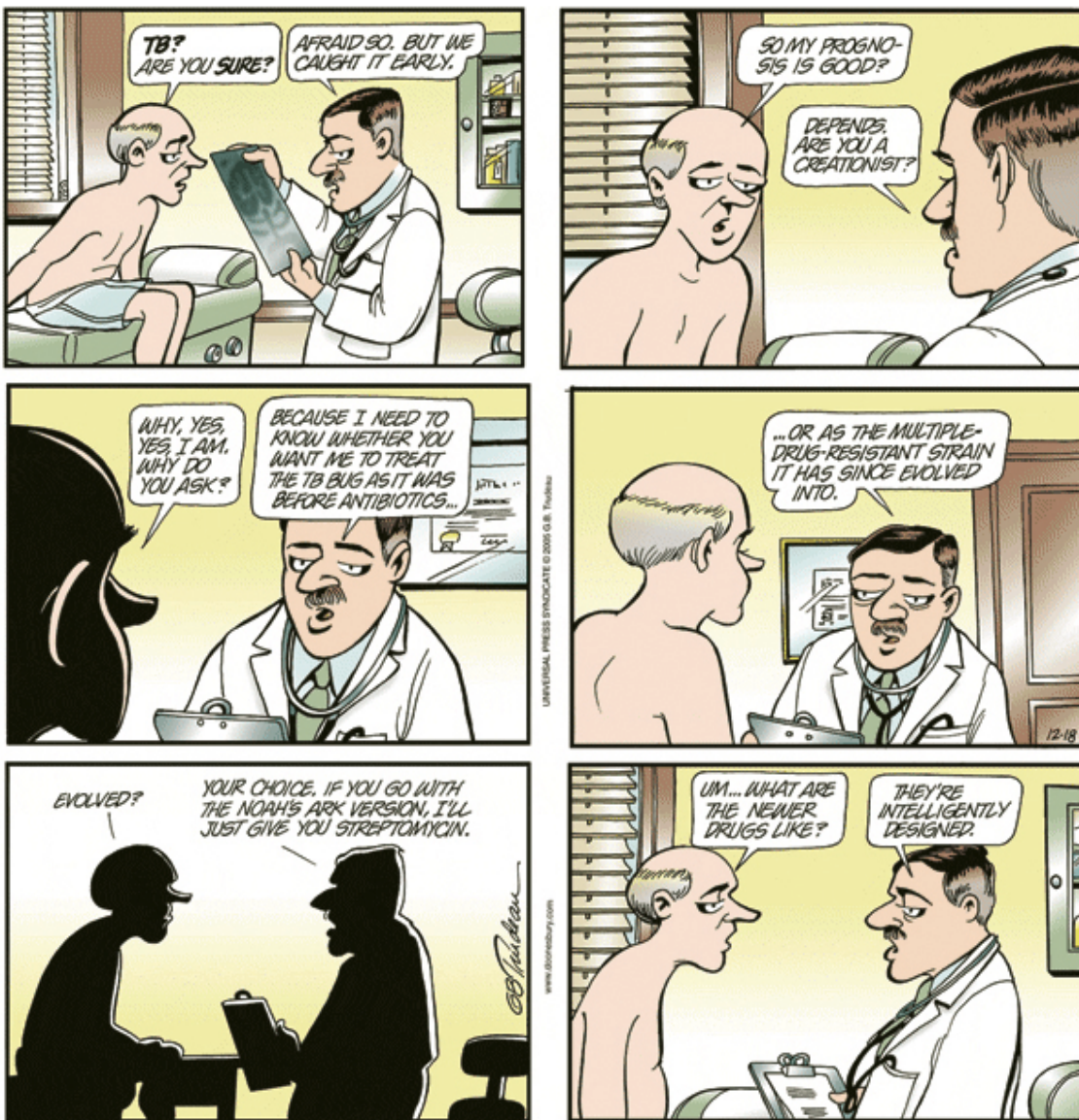
<sup>3</sup> I found the Miller experiment cited in all three of the secular science references I own: *Get a Grip on Evolution* by David Burnie (1999), *1001 Things Everyone Should Know About Science* by James

Trefil (1992) and the *New York Public Library Science Desk Reference* (1995). In each case it is cited as the proof for life from non-life. No other examples are given. *Icons of Evolution* author Jonathan Wells lists one high school biology text published in 2000 text that still gives Miller as a proof of the origins of life.

<sup>4</sup> To take a look at the other entries, and the Creation Ministries International response to each one, go to [Creation.com/citizens-for-science-and-ncse-cartoons](http://Creation.com/citizens-for-science-and-ncse-cartoons).

<sup>5</sup> Twelve Arguments Evolutionists Should Avoid” posted to [AnswersIn Genesis.org/get-answers/features/arguments-evolutionists](http://AnswersInGenesis.org/get-answers/features/arguments-evolutionists).

<sup>6</sup> If we wanted to create a list of smart creationists, we could start off with some names very familiar to RP readers: Margaret Helder, John Byl, Douglas Wilson, R.C. Sproul, Jonathan Sarfati (the author of the other feature article this month, and a former New Zealand chess champion), Albert Mohler. . .



# BEST BOOKS: THREE JAN BRETT PICTURE BOOKS

reviewed by Janet Faber

## BERLIOZ THE BEAR

by Jan Brett

I consider Jan Brett one of my favorite children's picture book authors and illustrators. This fall I had the opportunity to meet her and my appreciation for her talent has grown. She estimates that it takes her one hour to do an inch of her illustrations.

In 1991 Brett published her sixth book, *Berlioz the Bear*, about a bear who hears a strange *zum, zum, buzz*, sound coming from his double bass. Berlioz is in a hurry to perform at a ball in the town's square with his wagon full of fellow musicians. Berlioz becomes so baffled about his buzzing bass that he steers the wagon in a hole. A number of animals try to unsuccessfully rescue the bandwagon. Time is running out and the suspense mounts. The surprise that saves the day is the strange buzzing in Berlioz's instrument.

The charming illustrations in this book cause the eye to linger on the pages. Brett traveled to Bavaria to research the setting, costumes, and bandwagon in this story. Each page has a border that enhances the story by showing the village animal venturing to the town square.

After reading *Berlioz the Bear* the reader will want to roar with the villagers in the story: "Encore, Encore!"



## THE MITTEN

by Jan Brett



In 1989 Jan Brett traveled to the Ukraine to study the costumes, furniture and landscape of the country to make her book *The Mitten* truly authentic.

In *The Mitten* a young boy from the Ukraine, called Nicki, pleads with his grandmother to knit him a pair of white mittens. Grandma hesitantly knits the mittens because they will be hard to find if Nicki loses them in the snow. And, of course, Nicki does lose a mitten.

Soon a number of forest animals snuggle inside the deserted mitten and it bulges to many times its size. Finally, a mouse begs to come in and perches on the nose of a bear. The bear sneezes and the mitten and all its inhabitants go flying. Nicki finds his lost mitten and shows it to his grandmother who is puzzled by how stretched out it has become.

Brett uses her talent as an artist as she paints the expressions on the faces of the animals as they discover the mitten. Brett also paints with words, creating pictures in the minds of her readers with her choice of vivid verbs: the animals *swoop, lumber, trot, snuffle, and jostle*.

In *The Mitten* Jan Brett has knitted together great art and a memorable story.

## THE 3 LITTLE DASSIES

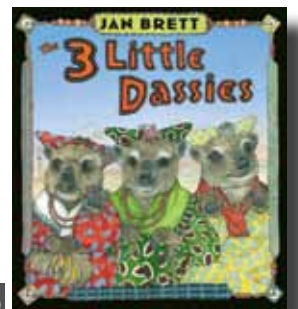
by Jan Brett

This past year Jan Brett did it again with her newly released book *The 3 Little Dassies*, an African version of *The Three Little Pigs*.

Instead of pigs, Brett uses three little dassies (a rodent-like animal) who set out into the big world. After building their huts they soon encounter the eagle, a natural predator of the dassies, who threatens to "flap and clap and blow their houses in." Two dassies end up in the eagle's nest and are later rescued by an Agama lizard. The two dassies find shelter in the wise third dassie's house where the eagle tries one last time. He tumbles down the chimney where he is met with a blast of fire and quickly squeezes back up the chimney to "fly home for a nap."

As in her other books, Brett's signature borders enhance the story. Included in the borders are authentic African beads, plants and costumes. Brett's visit to Nambia – a small country in Africa – was the impetus for writing this story.

Jan Brett has over 33 million books in print and is one of the foremost author and illustrator of children's books. I recommend that you don't just borrow them from the library but buy them so that you can read them again and again with your children and see something new each time. I eagerly wait to see what Brett will write in the future. 





# Being a Christian in a Community

by Jeremy Vink

God cares about how your community is designed. If that strikes you as an odd assertion, and maybe even a mistaken one, consider these two questions:

- 1) Do you think God cares about how you interact with your neighbors?
- 2) Does the physical make-up of your community – how it is designed – impact that interaction?

The answer to the first question is clear. The second greatest commandment – to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:39) – makes it clear that God cares about how we interact with our community. We can't show love to our neighbors without interacting with them, so it is key as a Christian to actually be a part of the community we live in, to share our values in an effort to build up and support a Christian community.

## Our own, enclosed castles

The second question should also be answered with a yes. The way our community is designed, and the choices we make about where we will live – the type of neighborhood, the type of house, the way we travel through it – will have a huge impact on how we interact with those right next door to us.

Most North American communities are not built with human interaction in mind. We're more focused on individualism, independence, commercialism and an element of self-entitlement. "Community" now is built so we can get from our front door – or garage door – to the store and work, and back again as fast as we can with the least amount of interaction with others. Our subdivisions are boring repetitive garages protruding out with homes on the back. As for the concept of walk-



ing somewhere that is almost a foreign concept to some people. Yet many people are too busy finding ways to buy a bigger property further away from a community so they can have even less interaction. None of this leads or provides an opportunity for meaningful interaction.

Author Eric Jacobson succinctly summarized this concept:

"We seem to have forgotten the importance of the public realm to our democratic aspirations, and we have forgotten the essential role that the neighbourhood plays in the shaping of human community. We have forgotten the connections that used to link us spatially with our neighbours and chronologically with our past.

"Before the Second World War, there were no retirement homes because a person could fully participate in our society without the necessity of operating an automobile. In most neighbourhoods, grocery stores, laundromats, barbers, and coffee shops were all within walking distance of homes. There were no 'soccer moms' because ball fields were distributed among the neighbourhoods of a

community, and kids could walk to them. Public spaces (parks, plazas, squares, and sidewalks) used to have priority in commercial and residential developments and gave a sense of harmony and order to distinct areas. Young and old used to enjoy informal contact in non-commercial public spaces because there were interesting places to walk and sidewalks upon which they could walk."<sup>1</sup>

## Encouraging real community

To encourage community, we have to involve and create opportunities for interaction. So there are two aspects we can consider: how to put ourselves into the community and how to put the church in the community.

We can start by supporting development and policies that support interaction and not individualism. Simple and critical element of design can influence and build interaction. Well-designed houses and streets can promote walking; having sidewalks, along with local parks and neighborhood stores, supports interactive community. We need to direct government and policy to support community interaction and move away from the sprawl, auto centered development.

### *Putting ourselves in the community*

Being part of our community means we have to participate and socialize in it. This participation allows us the opportunity to have real meaningful conversations, it allow us to provide our Christian views and perspectives. By our walk and talk we can convey this Christian attitude and perspective. Just as Jesus had to come down from heaven, and just like the apostles went out to the world, we cannot influence, aid, or spread the Word unless we engage the rest of society. So the first step is to put ourselves into environments where we can have this opportunity.

This can be as simple as going to the park and meeting other parents and conversing with our neighbors. You would be surprised what sitting on your front step at night can lead into with passersby!

What more can one do? Simple: join local committees, volunteer, and be active in local politics. Be part of community groups that make decisions like library boards, food banks, school boards, council, local environmental groups, and business groups and bring forward the Christian and the upright moral perspective. Our local church mission committees should encourage this kind of "outreach" into the community. Just as a little salt goes a long way, or a little light can do much, so too a Christian perspective and love go a long way.

What if you are not a community leader, cannot be a foster parent, and are not able to help pick up garbage or plant a tree, etc? No matter what, we are all called upon to pray for our community. Pray for the leaders to make the right decisions, pray for godly development of our community, pray for opportunities for us to be a part of the community. Pray for the people in the community to follow God's will.

These concepts are so simple, yet so foreign to many. How often do people in our Reformed church circles not criticize and complain about public schools and our society in general? But the fingers point back at us for turning away from the society we live in, by not being active in it. Prior to creating our own schools we were active in our local public schools, so imagine what happens when

we all turn inward to our private schools and are no longer involved in the local schools? As you can guess if you take the Christian influence out of community, they will lack direction. So we need to find ways to give a Christian influence.

### *Placing the church in the community*

The church building itself can be part of that interaction. We do not have many public spaces and although a church is not a public space it often plays a public role. So the church, its design and location can play a role in the community. Historically, churches were on hills or a tall building in the centre of the community – playing a symbolic role so they could be seen by all from a distance as a reminder that God is near by at all times not just Sundays, and the bells rang as a reminder that you are called to church. It is not about being an elaborate structure, but its placement and design was a symbol and reminder just like the tabernacle to Israel in the desert or the temple in Jerusalem.

Placement of the church building is something to be considered. It is more beneficial to have a church in an area so people can walk to allow those who may not have vehicles to attend church. As we have an older society and understand that more people are living in poverty, the opportunity to walk to a church for segments of society may become more important.

Also, by being accessible to the community there are opportunities to open the church doors to invite the community in. If you are looking for local mission opportunities find out a need in the community and find a way to be part of a solution such as, have a youth night to invite local young people out, or seniors drop in, or open the doors to young mothers in the day time, or teach English to new immigrants. We can use the church building to provide for a need in the community and promote interaction!

### **Conclusion**

It is time that we take steps to be part of our communities. It is time to balance our Christian duties in the church with our task outside the church. We must be active in our communities in many ways, to reform and rethink our duty to those around us. Let us be citizens in our community and seek its well being for "When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices; when the wicked perish, there are shouts of joy. Through the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is destroyed" (Proverbs 11:10-11).

### **Endnote**

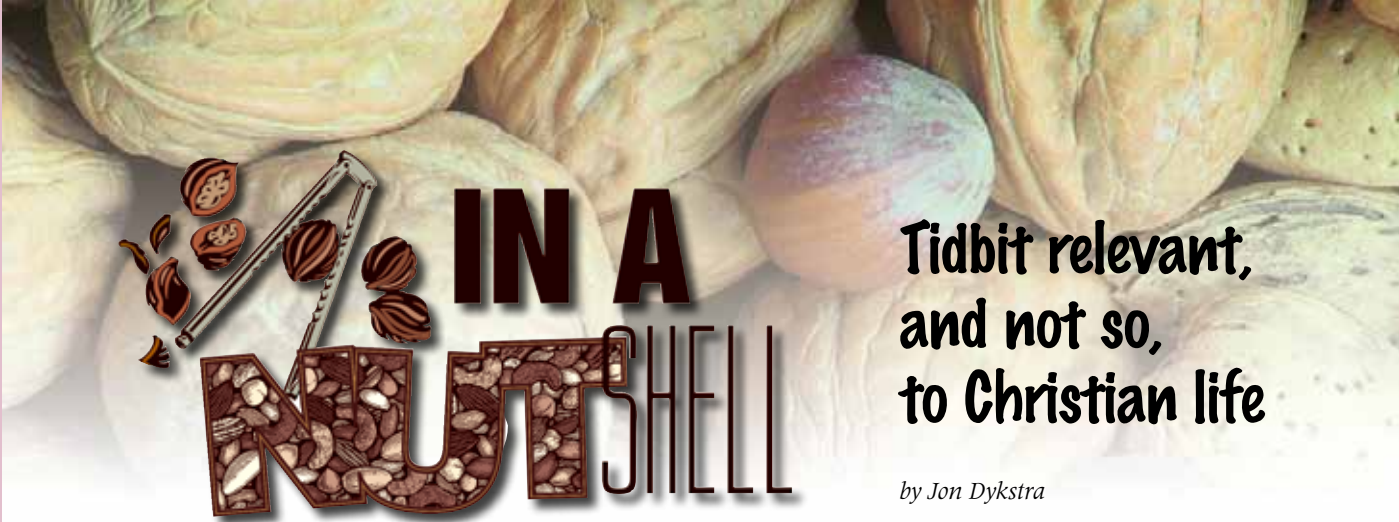
<sup>1</sup> Eric Jacobson's "Lawless Prophet: James Howard Kunstler and the New Urbanist Critique of American Sprawl" in the June 1, 2004 *Comment* ([cardus.ca/comment/article/221/](http://cardus.ca/comment/article/221/))



## **WHY DO WE SUFFER? BUDDHISM vs. CHRISTIANITY**

**The website's feature  
article this month  
explores and contrasts  
Buddhist and Biblical answers  
to this age-old question.**

**ReformedPerspective.ca**

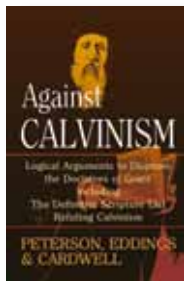


# Tidbit relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

.....  
**A gift for good-humored Arminians**

Three Calvinists have recently revisited an old gag. In the nineties a book came out with the title, *Everything Men Know about Women* – as you might have guessed, all 100 pages of the book were blank.



The three Calvinist gentlemen have taken this gag and put a theological spin on it. Their book is called *Against Calvinism: Logical Arguments to Disprove the Doctrines of Grace including the Definitive Scripture List Refuting Calvinism*. The book isn't entirely blank though. It starts with a twenty-page introduction on the Reformation, and brief histories of John Calvin and Jacob Arminius. What follows in the next 70 pages are succinct, compelling presentations of each of the five points of Calvinism (summarized as TULIP), each of which is followed by a list of the Scripture texts which refute that particular point. The space allotted for these Scripture proofs is, of course, blank.

.....  
**Two sinners become one**

I recently had the pleasure of hanging out with a young couple who had never yet argued, and seemed to think they never would.

Of course at some point arguments will happen and if a newly married couple is expecting only bliss, it can be quite a shock when they go from this like-minded state to what might seem like a series of recurring arguments. If a couple has gone from always agreeing, to always arguing, what should they do?

Well, it might help to know that many couples go through tough times, especially early on. When non-Chris-

tians go through these lows, divorce is an option some investigate – why stay married when you are both miserable? But a recent national American study shows that things might have ended differently for these couples if they had only been willing to stick it out.

“[C]ouples... were asked to rate their marriage on a scale of one to seven, with one being very unhappy and seven being very happy. Those who rated their marriages a ‘one’ had incredible turnarounds just five years later – if they stayed together. In fact, 77 percent of those giving their marriage a very unhappy ‘one’ rated their marriage as a ‘seven’ after five years. Was there some breakthrough therapy involved? No. In fact, many did relatively little – they just ‘stuck it out’ and things got better.”

“Two becoming one” (Gen. 2:24) is a difficult task for a couple of sinners to do, so it is inevitable that any marriage will go through some tough stretches. That’s why Christians can be so very grateful to God that, except in exceptional circumstances, He has taken the option of divorce from us.

SOURCE: “Is There Hope for My Marriage?” by Amy Desai, J.D. as found on [www.focuson-thefamily.com](http://www.focuson-thefamily.com) Dec. 11, 2010

.....  
**What have they done to my  
cheeseburger!**

Everyone needs to intake, on average anywhere between 1,500 and 3,000 calories a day (depending on height, weight, age and physical activity level). Now we all know fast food makes it hard to stay within our proper range, but did you know that fast food is making it harder on us than it used to? The *Eat This, Not That – Restaurant Survival Guide* notes that in the last 20 years caloric counts have gone up, sometimes dramatically on a variety of fast foods. For

example, twenty years ago coffee was a low calorie drink – roughly 45 – but with the advent of fancy coffees, and added syrups and whipped cream, a cup of coffee can easily hit over 300 calories. The typical serving of fries was 210 calories two decades ago, but now hits over 600. This is due in part to bigger portions, but also higher caloric ingredients.

And the typical cheeseburger? It was only a little over 300 calories then, but now registers in at just under 600.

.....  
**Classic Canadiana online**

For Canadians of a certain age the 3-minute film *The Log Driver's Waltz*,



and the song that makes it go, will be as familiar as an old friend.

*Waltz* was a regular feature on the CBC through the 1980s, and now the National Film Board of Canada has made the film available for viewing online at [NFB.ca/film/log\\_drivers\\_waltz](http://NFB.ca/film/log_drivers_waltz).

.....  
**Those not so ‘orrible Americans**

While speaking ill of Americans is a favorite past time for many, there is a lot to love about them. One example – Americans are very generous.

In fact, the average American gives twice as much of his income, by percentage, as the average Canadian, and it gets even more impressive when their generosity is compared globally: It would take 2 Canadians, 3 Frenchmen, 7 Germans or 14 Italians to equal the charitable giving of 1 American.

SOURCE: Mint.com/blog & WallStats.com’s “Charity, who cares?”; The Fraser Institute’s “Generosity in Canada and the United States: The 2009 Generosity Index”



# O Taste and See!

by Christine Farenhorst

Many years ago, when I was a young girl and just married, I worked at the University of Guelph in the Department of Political Studies. My secretarial duties often required that I serve as a messenger between our department and various other departments. Consequently, in the course of my gopher-duties, I met an older woman down the hall who was secretary to a professor of surveying, or of something of that sort. Bernice, a friendly, short, stoop-shouldered woman, with eyes that protruded abnormally from a small olive face, was Jewish. Talking was her second nature. Proudly keeping me up to date whenever I saw her with son number one who was a doctor and son number two who was a lawyer, she also frequently mentioned that she and her husband had paid for every penny of their expensive education. Describing in glorious detail, during the course of the time that I was acquainted with her, clothes she bought, furniture she chose, and the interior of the car she drove, she also regularly gave me hints for bargain shopping. It was obvious that Bernice was not overly fond of her husband, often implying that her spouse did not earn enough money to suit her and that it was a good thing she herself worked hard. The woman never stood still, was always on the move, and totally avoided any direction on my part towards serious conversation. It seemed almost as if she was playing hide-and-seek with the inevitable; as if she was running away from the last enemy of all those living; and ignoring the one who patiently stalks all mankind – death. Bernice wanted to hear nothing of the God of the Bible, shrugging indifferently at my, usually inept, attempts to tell her where my affections and comfort lay.

Several years later, I traveled from our home in northern Ontario to visit my parents in Hamilton. Snugly ensconced in the soft seats of a Greyhound bus with my two and three-year-old daughters, I was immensely surprised when a small woman stopped next to me in the bus aisle during our stop-over in Guelph.

“Bernice,” I exclaimed, “How nice to see you!”

She blinked nervously, smiled at the girls and wiped her fogged-up glasses. The girls said “hi,” looking at her curiously. It was a dark, dreary day. And such was Bernice’s face – dark and dreary.

“Please sit next to us, Bernice.”

I took one of the girls on my lap and she squeezed in next to us, politely inquiring, as the bus began its journey onward, about my husband, our home and the children. But it was evident that she was distracted.

“How is your husband, Bernice?”

“He died.”

“I’m very sorry to hear it.”

She shrugged, her well-made, elegant raincoat encasing her in a grey cocoon. Then she began to talk – and there was no stopping her. Her sons, both well-established around the Toronto, Ontario area, both did not want her to live with them. As a matter of fact, they had made it perfectly clear that even her visits were not appreciated. She was retired now, and her days were long and empty. There was, as she put it, nothing left – nothing at all.

.....  
***I took one of the girls on my lap  
and she squeezed in next to us,  
politely inquiring, as the bus  
began its journey. . .***  
.....

When she was finished, I spoke, albeit haltingly, of her need for a friend, an eternal Friend, a Savior. And, unable to walk away, she listened. Recounting times that I also had felt lost and abandoned, I suggested that she obtain a Bible and read about the Savior who was always there. She smiled and told me I was nice to care about her but she was old, too old to change.

“You are welcome to visit us,” I responded and gave her our address.

At the Hamilton station, she stumbled out of the bus ahead of us.

I never saw Bernice again.

\*\*\*\*\*

Last Monday, my niece Nelly died. She lived in Rotterdam, that huge city, and was only forty-three years old. Nelly was a slow learner. She needed help with a lot of things. But she was a cheerful, bright woman and did not mind being helped. There was one thing, however, of which she was absolutely convinced; there was one thing with which she needed no help at all; and that was her constant love for the Lord Jesus Christ. Every Saturday, she faithfully made her way to a children’s center and told Bible stories to the little Rotterdam toddlers gathered there. Jesus was her all, and she made sure that all those around her partook of her enthusiasm for her Savior.

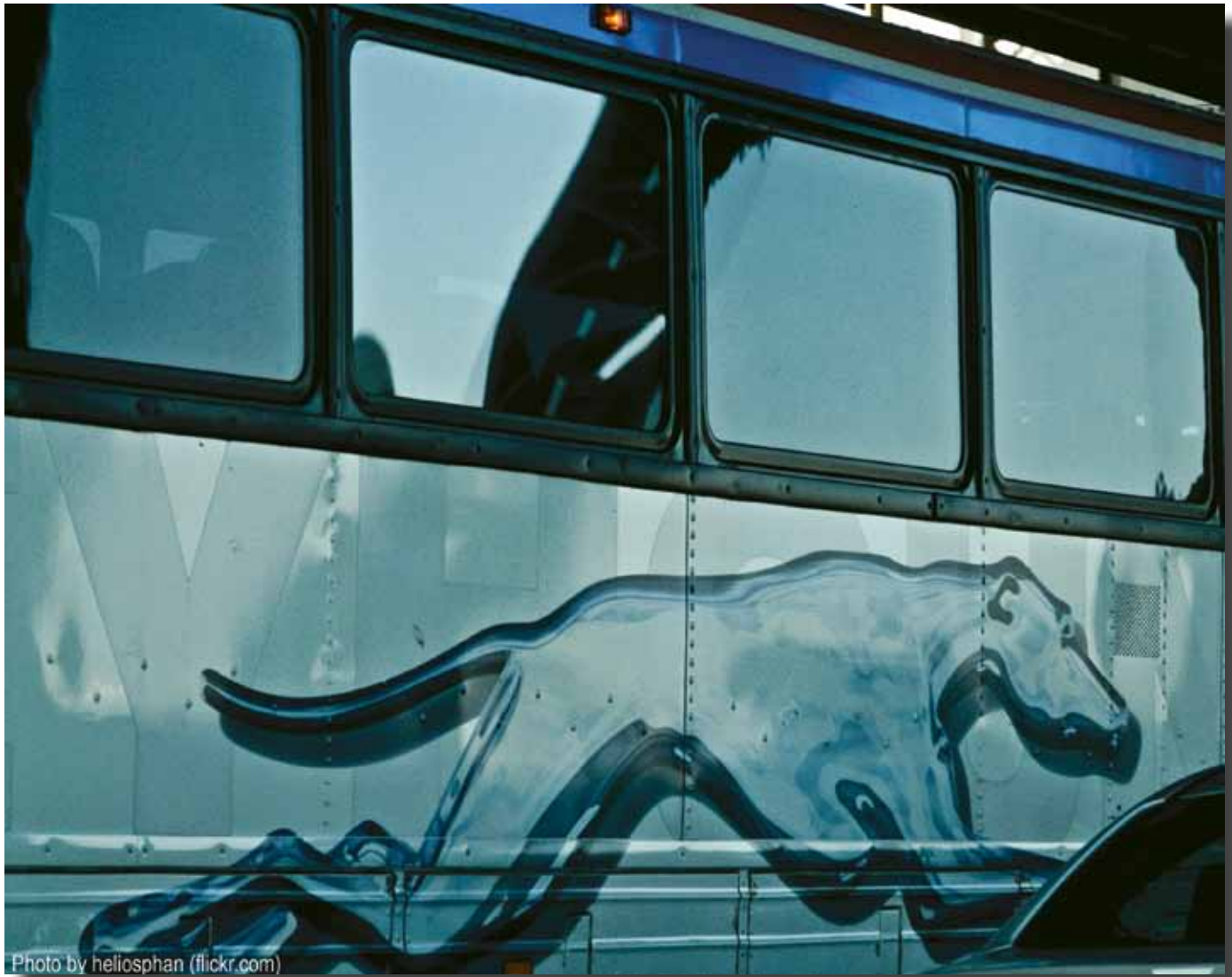


Photo by heliosphan (flickr.com)

In the last few weeks of her life, cancer having spread throughout her body, Nelly was hospitalized. She was often in pain and discomfort. The doctors put her on morphine. In moments of great lucidness, however, she would testify and challenge those around her.

“Do you know the Lord Jesus?”

Whether it was to a nurse, a doctor, a psychologist or someone cleaning the room, Nelly spoke happily and convincingly – could, indeed, not seem to keep quiet – about her great love for her Lord. She would pray out loud and seemed to have such a personal relationship with her Father in heaven, it could not but help make people reflect. The doctor and the nurses wanted Nelly’s parents to give them permission to inject her with extra sedation, so that she might “go to sleep.” Again and again, they refused the doctors’ euthanasia

suggestions. Nelly had pain, but she lived on, prayed on, and smiled with earnestness as she continued to confront those who visited her.

Then, last Monday, Nelly wanted to wear her Sunday dress. It was her best dress. She wanted to meet her Savior in her very finest clothes. And so she lay in her hospital bed in her Sunday clothes. Her sister was sitting at her bedside. Without any seeming transition, Nelly died. She had a huge smile on her face. The kind of smile you have when you recognize someone dear, someone very dear. Her Mom and Dad said her face was literally shining.

I know that I will see Nelly again.

*“O taste and see that the Lord is good! Happy is the man who takes refuge in Him!” (Psalm 34:8)*





# Soup & Buns

## Wherefore art thou, Romeo?

by Sharon L. Bratcher

There's an amusing and poignant book entitled *Just Ella* by Margaret Peterson Haddix which is a sequel to "Cinderella." Ella moves into that beautiful castle, eager to live life as a princess. But she discovers that life inside isn't all entertainment and wonderful food. She must take lessons and learn to behave like a Royal. She rarely sees the Prince because he's either off hunting or else he is busy learning how to run the country. She decides to break the engagement and go "home." So much for being a princess!

Haddix does a great job of showing her readers that even though somebody else's life looks perfect, it has its own pile of problems.

### When, oh when?

I thought of this recently when I renewed contact through Facebook with a former Christian high school classmate. We talked for a while about old times. She (I'll call her Rose) was surprised to hear about how I had felt back then about *not* dating. I never got asked out during high school, and therefore I wasted tons of emotion assuming that something was wrong with me. I worried about it a lot. I envied the girls with boyfriends; it seemed they were loved and adored, and I wasn't. I ignored the crying in the restrooms when the current Mr. Wonderful broke up with them and the sniping at each other for supposedly "stealing" a boyfriend. All I knew was that I was on the outside, looking in.

And it never occurred to me that I was coveting what someone else had, what God had not given to me at that point in time. I wanted *love* and that was that. It was *so* wonderful in movies and television and books. When, oh when would it be my turn?

I am positive that it would have helped me to know that over 50% of all high school girls do *not* date during high school. I wouldn't have thought there was something particularly wrong with me.

I met my husband in college and we married two years afterwards. I am very happy with the "deal" I ended up with. Twenty-five years into marriage I found out that at least 5 of those girls that I had envied back then ended up divorced, and a couple of them never got married. That doesn't mean that romances that begin in high school don't last – it just means that I wasted a whole lot of time envying someone else whom I thought had something better than I had.

Looking back now, I also realize how naïve I was and I see that God was actually protecting me from harm from others, or from myself and the consequences of bad decisions I might have made, if given the opportunity. A lot of maturing takes place between 15 and 20 – it comes in handy when you have to navigate the stormy seas of relationships.



### Envy, ever wasteful

So, back to the conversation with Rose. She was always kind to me and everyone else as far as I could tell. She was what my friends and I called "drop-dead gorgeous." She always had a boyfriend. In my mind she "had it made" because she had the two things that I so desperately wanted: beauty and a boyfriend. But did she "have it made?"


No, not really. Rose told me that her father was an alcoholic and her parents had difficulties in their marriage and she endured a lot of hardships during those high school years. She was terribly lonely back then. I actually felt pretty stupid to be thinking: how could you have been lonely when you were gorgeous and had a boyfriend?

Here's a tip for all you girls and ladies out there. Finding a guy doesn't end all your problems in life. Sometimes it starts a whole new set. Too bad I didn't spend more time cherishing my intact Christian family life, my Lord, my wonderful church, my good friends, my talents, and yes, even my schoolwork.

Most Christian females have an inner desire to find a man who will cherish and love them, with whom they can build a life together to live for the Lord as one. But it's important to wait patiently on the Lord and pray about it.

In the meantime, quit thinking the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. Weeds grow over there, too.

*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you – Matthew 6:33*

45 of Sharon's articles are in *Soup and Buns: Nourishment from God's Word for Your Daily Struggles.* \$10 (US)/book plus shipping. Contact [sharoncopy@gmail.com](mailto:sharoncopy@gmail.com) 

# ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

Send Puzzles, Solutions, Ideas to Puzzle Page, 43 Summerhill Place, Winnipeg, MB R2C 4V4 OR [robleach@gmail.com](mailto:robleach@gmail.com)

## NEW PUZZLES

### Riddles for Punsters #174 – “Fishy Choices”

What kind of sea creature is liked by:

- |                                    |                                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a) bowlers?    ___ o o n fish.     | d) astronomers?    ___ fish.   |
| b) theologians?    ___ fish.       | e) jewellers?    ___ fish.     |
| c) carpenters?    ___ head sharks. | f) dessert chefs?    ___ fish. |

### Problem to Ponder #174 – “One must score and the other must miss”

To do the following, note that the probability of tossing a die and getting “6” followed by “5” when the same die is tossed again is: Probability (“6”) x Probability (“5”) = (1/6) x (1/6) = 1/36.

Imagine two hockey teams playing a long, exhausting game that ends in a tie score, even after an overtime period, making a shoot-out necessary. Imagine that they also tie on the initial “best of three” part of the shootout.

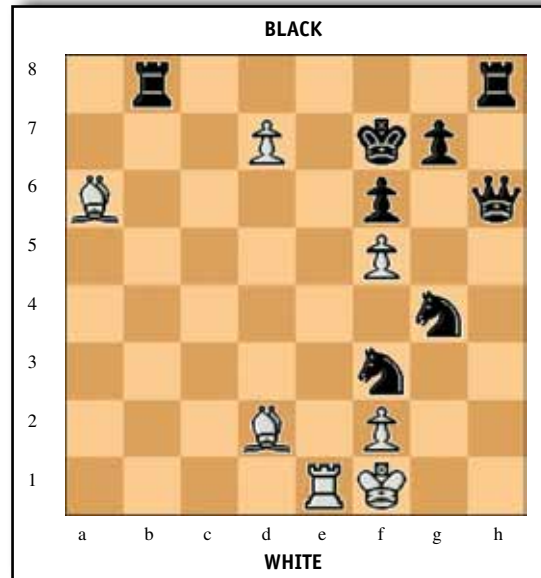
**Now the win goes to whichever team’s player scores while the other team’s player misses.** Also imagine that the probability of a team A player shooting and scoring on goal is 0.3 or 30% while the probability of a team B player shooting and scoring is 0.4 or 40%. (Therefore the probability of a team B player missing is 60%.) It is a Team A player that shoots first each round.

What is the probability of **team B** winning in the **first** round? (That is, what is the probability of the team A player missing and then the team B player scoring?)

What is the probability of **team A** winning in the **second** round?

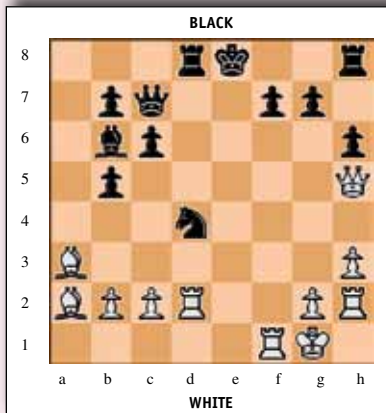
What is the probability of **team B** losing in the **third** round?

### CHESS PUZZLE # 174



**White to Mate in 3**  
Or, if it is BLACK’s Move, **BLACK to Mate in 3**

### SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 173



#### WHITE to Mate in 2 Descriptive Notation

1. BxP ch QxB
2. QxQ mate

OR

1. BxP ch K-Q2
2. Q-KB5 mate

(since the Black Knight is PINNED!)

#### Algebraic Notation

1. Ba2xf7 + Qc7xf7
2. Qh5xf7 ++

OR

1. Ba2xf7 + Ke8-d7

2. Qh5-f5 ++

(since the Black Knight is PINNED!)

#### BLACK to Mate in 2

#### Descriptive Notation

1. \_\_\_\_\_ N-B6 dbl ch
2. K-R1 QxR mate

(double check by the N and B)

#### Algebraic Notation

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Nd4-f3 dbl +
2. Kg1-h1 Qc7xh2 ++

(double check by the N and B)

## SOLUTIONS TO THE (JANUARY) PUZZLE PAGE

### Answer to Riddles for Punsters #173 – “Vegetating on Vacation”

What did the vegetable farmer say when he was on vacation?

I have b e a n playing s q u a s h all morning. Now I y a m very tired and just want to have some p e a s and quiet in my room at the R a d i s hon hotel. I am going to sit and read a book about Elvis P a r s l e y that I just bought at the c o r ner store.

### Answers to Problem to Ponder #173 – “Penguins Talking in Circles?”

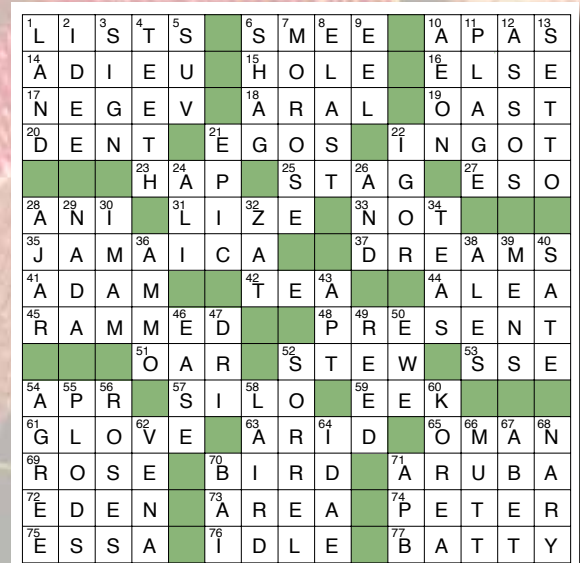
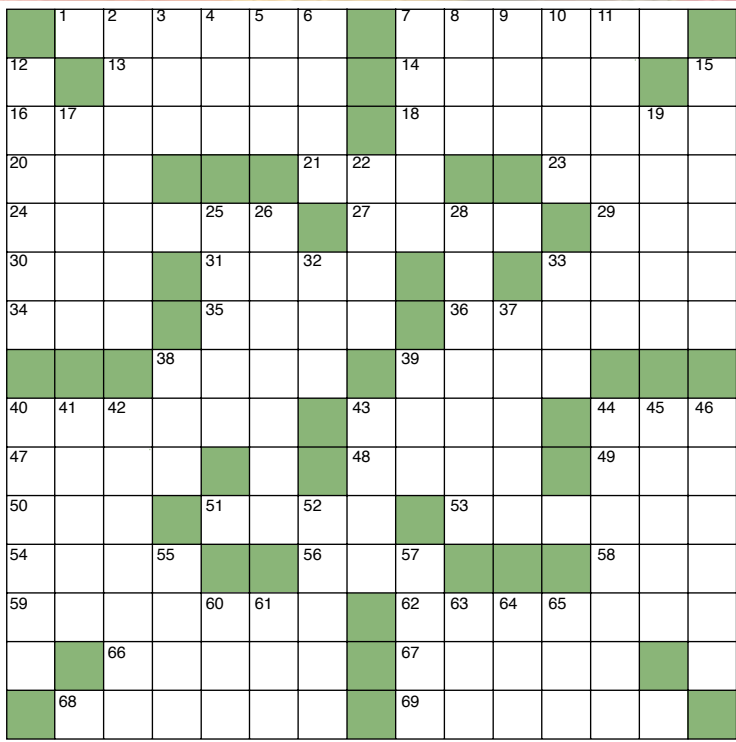
A penguin stood in the middle of a large number of “rings” of penguins. The first ring around the central penguin consisted of 4 penguins, the next ring 7, then 10, and so on. The width of each ring of penguins was only 20 cm, since the penguins were huddled close together to keep warm.

- How many penguins would be in a full 50<sup>th</sup> ring?
  - How far from the central penguin would the outer edge of that 50<sup>th</sup> ring reach?
  - How many penguins would be there altogether?
- For the first ring (n=1) there are 1 + 3(1) = 4 penguins  
For the second ring (n=2) there are 1 + 3(2) = 7 penguins  
For the nth ring (n=n) there are 1 + 3(n) = 1 + 3n penguins  
*Thus in a 50<sup>th</sup> ring (n=50) there would be 1 + 3(50) = 151 penguins*
- The distance would be 50 rings x 20 cm/ring = **1000 cm = 10 m.**
  - The rings have 4 + 7 + 10 + . . . + 145 + 148 + 151 penguins in the 50 rings. These can be paired up (4 + 151, 7 + 148, 10 + 145, . . .) to make 25 pairs that each total 155, so the total number of penguins is 25 x 155 + 1 (in the center) = **3876 penguins.**

# Crossword Puzzle

Series 18 No 1

Last Month's solution  
Series 17 No 12



## ACROSS:

1. Climb upward
7. Stuffed dough envelope
13. Organ served with onions often
14. Physical likeness
16. Date before the actual time
18. Type of fishing lure
20. Reagan, to his friends
21. Buddhist temple
23. Island in the Hebrides, center of early Celtic Christianity
24. Endows with a gift
27. Cold spreader
29. Riot of people
30. Direction
31. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974
33. Lunch place
34. Term of respect
35. He won the Nobel Prize in 1982 for research
36. Asian fox
38. Horse holder
39. Corpse
40. Write, in French
43. Fight or spat
44. Before, prefix
47. Put down to rest
48. Levesque's first name
49. Rabbi's title
50. Part of a circle
51. Feeling or vibration, for short
53. Any electronic device having three electrodes
54. Enter into spiritual communion with God
56. Kind of palm
58. Soviet space station
59. Duties performed by a waiter
62. Pharaoh's transportation
66. Style of indoor scenery
67. Runs really rapidly
68. Trigonometry term
69. Shoelace hole

## DOWN:

2. Thin
3. Criminal Investigation Dept. of Scotland Yard
4. Girl's name
5. Fish catcher
6. Made a picture
7. Downhill ski run trail
8. Mischievous thing
9. Radioactive iodine (abbr.)
10. Lasciate \_\_\_\_\_ speranza, voi ch'entrate (= abandon all hope, ye who enter)
11. Full sets of chromosomes
12. Shopping bonanzas
15. Type of language
17. Veronica's name, to friends
19. \_\_\_\_\_ Gay, famous bomber
22. Eager
25. Long, narrow ridge of sand
26. Antonio \_\_\_\_\_, Austrian composer (1750-1825)
28. Add up again
32. Large wine cask
33. Kind of wine
37. More stranger
38. Done away with
39. Busy insect
40. Pass, go by, as in time
41. John Le \_\_\_\_\_, spy novelist
42. Spanish form of "Richard"
43. Guitar part
44. Covenant
45. Music player
46. Turns outward
52. French ale
55. Man's name which in France means "archer"
57. Land measurement
60. Here, in Paris
61. Opposite of pro
63. Field harvest
64. Expert flier
65. Religion (abbr.)

Joyce