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Chapter 1: A Context for Discrimination Against Darwin Skeptics

by Kevin H. Wirth

It's an inescapable fact that we live in an age dominated by science and technology. Many of us make our living using the wonderful tools that have resulted from recent discoveries derived from the scientific enterprise. Concurrent with the blessings of these new scientific advances, our culture is also the beneficiary of another, much older inheritance—one that many scientists and educators believe no longer fits with our new age of scientific progress. The worldview that preceded our modern age of science held that we owe our existence to a Creator. This view still persists today, despite the efforts of many secular scientists, philosophers, and academics to replace it with what they believe to be a much more rational approach to apprehending the universe, scientific naturalism.⁴³

The battle for the philosophical heart and soul of science, in the view of many, revolves around our understanding of the theory of evolution, as governed by naturalism. Ground zero for that battle has been and continues to be waged within our academic institutions. Academia is the gateway in our culture where we allow entry for practice within a scientific venue and determine who will educate our young people about the principles of science. And, academia is also where we are currently witness to a grave injustice, often a purging, of students and educators who are skeptical about one or more aspects of Neo-Darwinism and related ideas. This intolerance and suppression of skepticism and dissent is led today by a growing number of people who are widely viewed as promoting a form of scientific fascism. A result of the intellectual carnage caused by those who participate in this purging process is the threat posed to a host of freedoms; freedom of speech, freedom of thought, academic freedom, and freedom of religious expression, to name a few. This book examines the cultural environment we find ourselves in where these freedoms are threatened as Darwin skeptics come under fire from the media, courts, scientific and academic institutions, and parents who believe dissent over evolution should be strictly controlled. We take the position that these dissenters have often been both misunderstood and improperly restricted, resulting in the creation of an environment of hostility, bigotry, and prejudice that is in grave need of correction.

Educators, scientists, and students who are skeptical of many evolutionary claims as taught in our biology classrooms have been discriminated against in

43 Johnson, 1991 p. 115

various ways for their dissenting views, resulting in countless stories of ruined careers, a few of which you are about to read. Until the publication of this book, the practice of this form of discrimination was thought to be rare, however, we reveal that quite the opposite is actually true. The case studies you are about to read provide evidence that this discrimination occurs often and can be defined by specific discrimination tactics, and is currently widespread across America.

This book tells the story about what has been going on behind-the-scenes in recent decades as students, professors, and science professionals have been systematically harassed and eliminated from their professions for harboring skepticism about Darwinism. What this book also does is provide a glimpse into the extent of the damage caused by this shameful practice that has plagued and claimed many thousands of victims. The victims of this type of discrimination are typically *not* people who are anti-science, or who reject science as a way of understanding the universe, as many of their critics often allege. Rather, these are people of conscience who have not been able to reconcile the facts of science with one or more evolutionary claims, and who insist that evolution is an inadequate explanation for the remarkable complexity of life we are just now beginning to understand.

In America, we are supposed to be protected against acts of discrimination based on gender, age, race, sexual orientation, *religion*, or handicap. Yet, as Dr. Bergman documents, within academia religious freedoms are being distorted and discarded in the name of protecting the nearly sacrosanct status of evolutionary naturalism.

According to Dr. Bergman, it doesn't matter if an educator can demonstrate his competency in an area of science – if he is also religiously oriented in any way, he is at high risk of losing not only his current job, but also the future of his career.

This book is the first installment of a series written by Dr. Bergman on this issue, and will focus on a number of case studies relating how a several victims have been discriminated against for their evolutionary skepticism. The second volume will address in some depth many of the concerns related to this issue, and some of the means by which discrimination is carried out against dissenters. Volume three will focus on just one aspect related to this issue: censorship. In combination, these and future volumes will provide readers with a thorough top-to-bottom rundown of discrimination as practiced against those who question evolution.

I would say the primary value of this first volume is that it brings into focus the extent of the deplorable practice of discrimination it exposes. In practical terms, what you'll find here is how freedom of expression is being stolen from those who dare to dissent. And, regrettably, this issue has somehow man-

aged to linger under the radar of the news media and public awareness until recently with the release of the movie “Expelled,” starring Ben Stein. When was the last time you heard a report on your nightly news of an educator who had been denied tenure for being a Darwin Doubter? Yet it occurs with frightening regularity. The impact of the discrimination you are about to read is significant: it reflects a widespread drain from academia of skilled and competent educators needed to challenge and inspire the next generation of scientists and educators. While Darwin Doubter dissidents are tolerated, and even welcomed at some universities, they are effectively being purged wholesale from other institutions within our academic environment.

Dr. Bergman understands first-hand the abuses he documents here, having been the victim of a rather protracted and incredibly unjust denial of tenure and court trial himself. His experience and research on other victims of discrimination in academia ranks him as one who is eminently qualified to address this issue. Essentially, Dr. Bergman reveals a category of hate crime that is seldom discussed in a public forum. This book has been created as part of an ongoing effort to bring this travesty into the sphere of broader public awareness.



A much smaller version of the theme covered in this volume was originally published by Dr. Bergman in a 1984 book titled *The Criterion*. Even before then and ever since, Dr. Bergman and I have discussed many of the case studies you are about to read—and beyond that—we’ve agonized over how many people have suffered at the hands of individuals and groups who don’t seem to think twice about derailing, obstructing, or ruining the careers of countless people who in good conscience could not come to terms with some aspect of neo-Darwinism.

What others have said about this book

To the majority of contemporary Christians religious persecution conjures up pictures of pogroms mandated by insane rulers. Dr. Jerry Bergman brings the issue of punishment and discrimination and injustice—which he quite properly identifies as outright anti-

Christian warfare—up-to-date as he focuses on the Twentieth Century theaters of academia, government, mass media, the courts, and the evolutionary establishment in general. The nature of the problem, religious bigotry, receives the fullest treatment in this comprehensive analysis of the battle between the creation and evolution world views, and its multi-generational spin off of religious intolerance and suppression. Something has to be done to ensure academic freedom. Dr. Bergman, I believe, brings that imperative to the attention of the reader more effectively than most authors have been able to.

—DR. D. JAMES KENNEDY

Founder of Coral Ridge Ministries.

Dr. Bergman, as in all his writings, has abundantly documented his case. He has proved beyond question that true Christianity in general, and supernatural creation in particular, are under nationwide bigoted attack by our leading educators, our news media, our courts and practically our whole intellectual establishment. All Christians, and conservative non-Christians as well, need to become aware of this situation and would be well advised to read this book.

—HENRY M. MORRIS

Founder of the Institute for Creation Research

Bergman's detailed and wide-ranging assessment of the state of intellectual freedom to question Darwinian evolution, from a scientific or a religious perspective, is a valuable resource for the growing intelligent design controversy. The case studies show clear evidence that many university officials and faculty are deeply afraid of intellectual freedom on this subject, raising the question of just what role Darwinian evolution plays in society today. Is it really a theory in science or a play for power by an outdated elite?

—DENYSE O'LEARY

Award Winning Author of *By Design or by Chance?*

