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My THINKING CAP

Solutions for Global Crisis

Brad fregger



What is Intelligent Design?

My Thinking Cap

By Brad Fregger

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Editor

Barbara Foley

Book Design & Production

M. Kevin Ford

Cover Design & Production

M. Kevin Ford

Original Front Cover Image

M. Kevin Ford

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What Is Intelligent Design?

What sparked my interest in this subject was Ben Stein's movie, *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*. Like most of you, I had always assumed that Intelligent Design was just another name for Creationism. Ben Stein set me straight.

This is one more issue that the media has distorted. I blame the media, because they have a responsibility to do the necessary research. Well, this time most of them don't have a clue.

First, let's define some terms that we must have agreement on:

- Creationism: The belief that the world was created by a living God between 6000 and 10000 years ago. And, that God is still very active in the Universe and our individual lives.
- Darwinism: The belief that life has evolved without a God through a process, Natural Selection, that Darwin postulated in his book, *The Origin of Species*.
- Darwinist: People who believe that Natural Selection is the only process involved in the creation of life and new species. Darwinists are, essentially, atheists.

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- Atheists: People who do not believe in God.
- Theists: People who believe there is a God, a conscious force in the Universe.

Theists come in many forms; the spectrum would include: those that believe God started things going, but may not be directly involved at this time; to those that believe that there is something going on that can only be explained by the existence of some sort of conscious force in the Universe; to those that believe that God is still very much involved in everything that goes on in your life; passing judgment on how you are living it, on the decisions you are making, and on whether you will spend the rest of eternity in heaven or hell.

Creationists are the most conservative of the theists; while the agnostic, someone who isn't quite sure what's going on but isn't ready to toss God under the bus, is the most liberal. The beliefs of the vast majority of us fall somewhere on this spectrum.

However, from all appearances, the media see's only two choices: you are either a Darwinist/atheist or a Creationist. In other words, you either believe that God doesn't exist now and has never existed, or you believe that the world was created between 6000 and 10000 years ago by a living God that has a personal stake in our lives.

There is no place for those of us who believe that something is going on that can only be explained by a conscious force in the Universe. We may not be able to define that force, but we have faith that it exists.

The media's attitude is extremely narrow-minded and has led to a great amount of confusion, confusion that has led to some wrong-thinking decisions, where people who have a faith (in some sort of higher being or consciousness) find themselves supporting the atheists (regarding the issue of intelligent design), because they cannot align themselves with the Creationists.

Most of us agree it is naïve to believe that God created the Universe 6000 to 10000 years ago. To believe that, you have to believe that the entire Universe, everything from fossils to the distant stars is a fraud, designed to test the strength of our faith. I don't know what this conscious force in the Universe is, but I do know that it's not a fraud, and wouldn't play these types of games. Because I am a thinking being, I cannot align myself with the Creationists.

But, neither can I except the premise that everything I have seen, everything I know, everything that I have experienced is the result of some cosmic accident or series of accidents.

The result: I'm left out of the discussion, as are the millions like me.

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First, since you may not have seen it, let me summarize the important points from Ben Stein's movie.

The main message of the film seems to be that in order to be recognized as a creditable scientific researcher, you must accept that the process for creating life, creating new species, and creating new types within species, is essentially a process very similar to Natural Selection. There is not, nor ever was, a universal intelligence involved. If you don't accept this as fact, your personal intelligence is suspect and, therefore, also your credibility.

I'm not sure that this judgment is pervasive throughout the scientific community. I know of many scientists who have a strong faith. To support this contention, Ben had some scientists that stated they had been "black-balled" for seriously suggesting that the possibility of an intelligent source for the creation of life, was worth looking into.

There was no sense that any of these scientists were Creationists, only that they felt that the search for an intelligent source was as important as the search for a non-intelligent process. There is no doubt that we, and I'm including the world scientific community, haven't a clue as to how life first began; or was created (sprung forth) from non-life.

Ben also spent a lot of time showing us where the Nazis had done some of their research, and then aligning the Nazis with the Darwinists. His contention was that a belief in the ultimate power of Natural Selection, leads to a conclusion that, with our current knowledge, we can take control, even speed up the process, and develop a super race.

It's pretty clear that was what the Nazis were about, and it is well-known that they embraced the concept of Natural Selection; that they were, therefore, Darwinists. This is why they euthanized all who did not meet their requirements, i.e. Jews and the mentally and physically disabled. Since Ben is a Jew, I can easily understand his concern that Darwinism could lead others to make the same decisions—for the good of our species.

It's also very clear that those who support Darwinism would take great offense at this suggestion.

I've made the contention that the media cannot see beyond Darwinism and Creationism, completely ignoring those of us who believe in a conscious force in the Universe. A conscious intelligence that, at the very least, got the ball rolling—created life in the beginning. Therefore, they call anyone seriously suggesting the concept of

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intelligent design a “creationist crackpot” who shouldn’t be listened to.

Let me prove my point; below are a few quotes from the media, reviewing Ben’s movie. In reading them, remember that Ben’s movie never suggests any of the concepts embraced by the Creationist, only that for life to begin, there probably was an intelligence involved.

Frankly My Dear... Movies with Roger Moore
OrlandoSentinel.com

How do you re-package that tried and untrue, untested and untestable faith-without-facts war-horse, "Creationism," after its nearly-annual beat-down by an increasingly exasperated scientific community?

After you've tried renaming it "Intelligent Design," ... Maybe Stein will repackage himself as the new face of Creationism.

Scientific American, John Rennie

Unfortunately, *Expelled* is a movie not quite harmless enough to be ignored. Shrugging off most of the film's attacks—all recycled from previous pro-ID works—would be easy, but its heavy-handed linkage

of modern biology to the Holocaust demands a response for the sake of simple human decency.

Expelled wears its ambitions to be a creationist *Fahrenheit 911* openly. ...

Expelling All Reason, Dan Whipple
Committee for Skeptical Inquiry

The film, more than any other creationist/ID effort I've seen, is antiscientific and antirational. In it, Frankowski (the producer) opposes not just evolutionary theory but the scientific superstructure built in the West since Renè Descartes. Using Darwinian evolution as a springboard, he attacks nearly every scientific discipline and the scientific method as leading inevitably to atheism and global evil.

Below I give credit to someone who got it right:

National Review Online, Dave Berg

Dawkins (well-known Darwinist scientist) dismisses the Emmy-winning actor as having “no talent for comedy.” He believes during the interview Stein is an “honestly stupid man, sincerely seeking enlightenment from a scientist.” A lawyer, a law professor, an

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economist, and a speechwriter for both Nixon and Ford, Stein hardly seems to fit the description “honestly stupid.”

In the end, the film isn't really about intelligent design as much as about a relentless attack on an authentically free inquiry. As Ben Stein points out, “Freedom of inquiry has been greatly compromised, and this is not only anti-American, it's anti-science. It's anti-the whole concept of learning.”

The bottom line is, should we not teach in our public schools' science classes that there are two basic thoughts regarding the beginning of life?

- Some sort of accident, a chain of improbable events, came together and life began, fortuitously leading to our existence. (Given an eternity, this is probably possible); or
- An intelligent force, consciousness, created life purposefully. (This begs the question, “Where did “God” come from?)

Darwinists, as shown in Ben Stein's movie, reject the concept of an intelligent force and try to explain everything from a Natural Selection perspective. It seems to me that there is at least as much faith in this belief as

there is in the belief that an intelligent consciousness was involved.

The truth is, we just don't know.

I guess it would be okay to state in high school science classes that we don't have a clue as to how life originally began, nor, are we very clear on how new species are created. These are the two controversial issues. Darwin's explanation as to how species adapt to the environment is accepted as scientific fact.

Anyone can come up with a hypothesis to explain how life began and/or how new species are created. For example, I believe that new species are created during catastrophic times, asteroids hitting the earth, super volcanoes creating "nuclear winters," etc. During these times all protections are removed and cosmic rays beam down at full strength, causing massive mutations and the creation of new species. Can I prove this? ... No. ... Is it as good an hypothesis as anyone else has come up with? ... Well, in my opinion, it is.

How about the theory of Intelligent Design? Can we come up with an hypothesis that supports that possibility, and yet would be scientifically feasible?

How about this one: prior to the Big Bang, there was no consciousness, there existed only a single point that contained everything we now call the Universe.

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Then, 14 billion years ago this single point began to expand, we aren't quite sure why. At that moment, matter, space-time, and *consciousness* were created. The Universe became aware of itself and marveled in what it was and the potential it had. Soon it began to “play” and the galaxies, stars, and planets were formed. Next the consciousness decided to bring life into the Universe; ultimately, beings that lived and walked and procreated. ... Why not?

So, what do you think? Should the hypothesis that an intelligent force was involved in the creation of life be taught in our high school science classes? As I've said, in my opinion, that hypothesis is as viable as saying that life was an accident. Why not present both possibilities?

Maybe we should do neither, maybe just say, “We don't know how this happened—that's what science is all about, finding out how the Universe works. However, if we really want to find out ... we probably shouldn't denigrate any course of action. We really never know where the answer is going to come from.

Here's a story that I think fits well at the end of this chapter. The beginning of the story is fairly well known; I've added my own ending.

A Tall Tale of Turtles

At some time in the distant past, humanity forgot that the Earth hung in space and revolved around the Sun. The Masters of that time met together to develop an allegory to explain what was holding up planet Earth. They decided to tell people that Earth rested on the back of a giant turtle.

As the ages went by, people forgot this was an allegory and later Masters taught it as a Truth. Then one day, a student came to one of the Master's with a question, "What, Master, is the turtle standing on?"

The Master thought for a moment and then said, "On the back of another giant turtle."

The student thanked the Master and went on his way. However, a week later, he was back, again asking, "Master, on what is the second giant turtle standing?"

The master again thought for a moment, and then replied, "On the back of another giant turtle."

Again the student went away, and again, he was back a week later. However, this time, before the student could even ask his question, the Master looked into his eyes and with a deep wisdom in his voice, said, "My son, it's turtles all the way down."

As the years passed, more and more students began to question the concept of "turtles all the way down." In fact, many of these questioning students became Masters themselves and found it hard to give this explanation to the students who approached them.

Finally a meeting of Masters was called, and it was decided the turtle explanation would no longer suffice. They

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would have to come up with another explanation to meet the demands of the students. After days of discussion and argument, they decided their story would be that God, after creating Earth, had no place to set it; so He hung it in space, in the exact center of the Universe. Therefore, the rest of creation revolved around us.

The Masters knew this was only a story they had made up to satisfy the curiosity of their students. But they also knew if they could satisfy their students' curiosity regarding where Earth was, they could more quickly move them to the greater questions of what existence was and who they were.

As the years went by, even the Masters forgot they had made up the story; ultimately it, too, became a Truth all were expected to believe.

Then one day a student came to his Master and said, "Master, I have used some new instruments that have come into my possession and made some measurements. These measurements seem to show that Earth is not the center of the Universe ... what am I to make of this?"

And the Master said, "There is nothing that evil will not do to confuse us. These instruments are the product of an evil one who has given them to you to cast doubt on the Truth, to lead you from the true path. Take these instruments ten miles out to sea and cast them overboard."

The student did as his Master commanded.

Author's Bio

Brad Fregger has 45 years combined experience in retailing, corporate training, publishing, and software development. He has worked in large and small companies, started three of his own businesses, and worked as a senior executive in two other startups. He is currently President/CEO of Groundbreaking Press, an author-services book publishing company. Additionally, Brad is a lecturer (professor) at Texas State University-San Marcos (Business Communications) and a member of the adjunct faculty at Franklin University (Business Ethics for Leaders) in Columbus, Ohio.

Brad taught graduate-level courses at Saint Edward's University in Austin, Texas for over five years, including one year (2002) as the Executive in Residence for the Graduate School of Management. Fregger helped develop and then teach courses in the MBA Program: Introduction to eCommerce and Managerial Communications; and the Master of Science in Organizational Leadership & Ethics: Leadership & Imagination.

He also designed and taught the on-line version of Introduction to eCommerce, which received strong reviews from the Instructional Technologies department at Saint Edward's. He also taught two other courses for

both the Graduate School of Management (Human Relations) and New College (Business Communications).

Brad is a practitioner/scholar, using the skills and knowledge he has learned to amass a remarkable record of accomplishment over the past 25 years, in addition to the numerous programs he developed as founder of three major corporate-training departments (Mervyns, Atari, and Activision).

He has produced more than 50 videos, 12 audio books, over 100 consumer and business enterprise software products, including the most successful computer game in the world (Shanghai) and the most played computer game in the world (computer solitaire), and published over 50 books on a wide variety of subjects.

He has completed every project begun in the past 25 years, and, even more important, during that time not a single team member left during the development of a product. This is what Brad calls "employee retention."

Brad is an expert in many critical areas of business, from customer service to the management of technology. He's an international speaker providing programs to major companies throughout the Middle East (Tunisia, Dubai, Beirut, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar), Europe, and Canada in a broad spectrum of subjects including, Effective Leadership, negotiation, project management, technical risk management, creativity, and team building.

As an author, in addition to *My Thinking Cap - Solutions for Global Crisis*, he's written four other books, *Get Things Done - Ten Secrets of Creating and Leading Exceptional Teams*; *One Shovel Full - Telling Stories to Change Beliefs, Attitudes, and Perceptions*; *Lucky That Way - Stories of Seizing the Moment While Creating the Games Millions Play*; and *Why Publish - Making the Right Choices for Your Book*. Brad is currently writing his sixth book, *The Art of Leadership – A Practical Guide to Creating and Leading Organizational Teams*.

In addition, Brad has published articles in professional journals, including a series on book publishing for *Sharing Ideas* magazine (Los Angeles, California), an article on career change for *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal* (San Jose, California), and he wrote a column, "On a Tangent" for *Creative Pulse* magazine (Austin, Texas).

Brad's amazing ability to complete projects on time and on budget, plus his creative management style, caught the attention of Tom Peters (*In Search of Excellence*), who then featured Brad in his book, *Liberation Management*.

Brad is especially skilled in facilitation toward solving motivational and managerial communication issues. Brad believes that ineffective communication is at the heart of most personnel issues, but that these issues are often not solved by learning listening techniques.

“Courses that teach listening skills can be a waste of time. Why? Because we already know how to listen, we just choose not to at times. The secret is learning why we make this choice and why it’s important to make other choices.”

Brad holds a Master's Degree in Futuristics (San Jose State University). His speech, "Earthward Implications of Cosmic Migration," was given at the American Astronautical Society's proceedings in honor of the tenth anniversary of Apollo 11's landing on the moon. He is a frequent guest on radio-talk shows across the nation, usually discussing the future of our society in the areas of genetic engineering, space travel, virtual reality, and extinction-level events.

Brad and his wife/business partner, Barbara Foley, live in the Texas Hill Country south of Austin.

Brad can be contacted at:

Website: www.groundbreaking.com

Email: brad@groundbreaking.com