The Paradigm Shift from Creation to Evolution

Controversy over the creation of mankind has existed for thousands of years as the origins of the Earth, life, and humanity have continuously perplexed thinkers. As scientific knowledge progressed over time, theories regarding the origins of life also changed. Primitive societies reasonably assumed a supernatural cause, as no scientific theories were yet in place. These beliefs in a supernatural being, or a God, were then strengthened with the development of the Bible, which caused the view of the world to become essentially static. Humans believed that everything which the Earth consisted of was created in its exact form by God and that species were entirely unchanged since the moment of their creation. Although this common belief received little disapproval in early times, there were still various scientific and philosophical thinkers that proposed evolution-like ideas. It was suggested that rather than being individually created by God, species have gradually developed over successive generations in order to better adapt to their environments.

Several decades ago, laws prevented the teaching of this theory of evolution in many communities and regions in the United States. The ideas of the Bible were widely accepted and served as a reliable source of human origins. Nowadays, however, nearly the opposite is true. The teaching of the Bible is banned in American schools and the discussion of the biblical view of the creation of our universe is no longer acceptable. Simultaneously, criticism of the theory of evolution is harshly suppressed in academic and scientific environments. Throughout the late nineteenth century and the entire twentieth century, various events occurred which led human
beliefs to shift from creationism to evolution. As a result, the teaching of creation science in schools was entirely replaced by the teaching of evolution.

From the introduction of public schooling in America until the late nineteenth century, only creationism was taught in schools throughout the United States. Literal interpretation of the Bible was considered inerrant, and therefore, it was taught that the universe, the Earth, and life are the creation of a supernatural being. The most common creationist theory in early societies was the Young Earth Theory, which employs the most literal and direct interpretation of the Bible. This theory simply suggests that “God created the Earth and everything on Earth individually within six, twenty-four hour days approximately six thousand years ago” (McIver). It is this idea that was taught to students in the very first “free grammar school” in North America, which was opened by Massachusetts Puritans in Boston in 1635. The goal of the school was to explicitly teach religion in order to establish a devout and well-informed community (Inglis). As grammar schools continued to emerge throughout the United States, creationist theories were introduced to more and more American families, gradually eliminating the likeliness for different theories to arise. Consequently, creationism became the prominent theory behind the origin of species in the United States.

Meanwhile, in areas such as Greece and Rome, philosophers began to develop evolution-like ideas, although they did not specifically refer to their concepts as “evolution”. Some theories suggested the idea that all things originated from certain elements such as air or water, whereas other theories even attempted to relate different species, such as humans and apes, to one another. Unfortunately, early thinkers were unable to provide any scientific evidence to disprove religious beliefs due to the lack of scientific and technological progress at the time (Shtulman).
Proof that species on Earth are actually related did not begin to appear until the middle of the eighteenth century when a Swedish scientist, Linnaeus, created a classification system for all life on Earth, in which he divided species into kingdoms, classes, orders, and genera. Although he grouped species based on certain traits and characteristics, Linnaeus’s system did not imply that species are related through evolution. It merely stated that each species is a distinct “archetype” and a reflection of God’s intent (Muller-Wille). Nevertheless, the findings of Linnaeus would significantly influence Charles Darwin and other future scientists. Almost a century later, for example, French naturalist, Jean-Baptiste de Lamarck, proposed that all living things evolve to become more complex over time. He argued that there exist “vital forces” within creatures that help them adapt to environments, and that these creatures must use certain traits more than others in order to adapt (Burkhardt, 275). As a result, these are the traits that are passed on to successive generations. Although Lamarck’s theories lacked research and evidence, they significantly contributed to Darwin’s theories of evolution and natural selection which would be introduced several decades later.

Charles Darwin used Lamarck’s theories along with the ideas of other scientists (Cuvier and Lyell) that related evolution to geology in order to prove that evolution among species truly exists. Darwin first experienced the previous ideas of evolution when he traveled to the Galapagos Islands and discovered an abundance of fossils and species that slightly differed from the other organisms that existed on Earth at the time. “For example, Darwin noticed ground finches with different-sized beaks but otherwise similar characteristics. Darwin discovered that large-beaked finches ate large seeds, while their small-beaked cousins ate small ones. And thin-beaked finches went after insects” (Masci). After performing further research, Darwin became convinced that species are not individually created, but they actually evolve over time as a result
of genetic mutations and natural selection. He also concluded that only the organisms that are best adapted to their environment tend to survive and transfer their genes to succeeding generations whereas organisms that are not as well adapted tend to be eliminated.

Unfortunately, Darwin’s discoveries occurred at a time of widespread Christianity when the general public still strongly believed that all species were created by God and creationism was taught throughout every school in America. In fear of threatening social and political order, Darwin kept his theories secret for nearly twenty years, until another scientist, named Russell Wallace also came upon the theory of natural selection that Darwin had been working on. In order to become the first to introduce the theories of evolution and natural selection to the general public, Darwin decided to publish his work *On the Origin of Species* in the year 1859. As expected, Darwin’s theories aroused much controversy and debate. “The idea that all living creatures, especially human beings, were the product of natural processes and not the direct handiwork of God was disconcerting to most people: For Darwin's hypothesis implied that God was not a necessary ingredient in human creation” (Masci). Throughout the nineteenth century, millions of evangelical Christians and other Americans believed that the Bible is the literal truth and that non-biblical explanations for the creation of the Earth and life are invalid. Therefore, Darwin’s theory did not become widely accepted until the late 1860s, when magazines, newspapers, and even religious publications finally began to promote evolution.

Regardless of the widespread support that Darwin’s theories eventually received in England, his ideas were still doubted by millions of steadfast Americans. However, one powerful advocate of Darwin’s theories was Harvard student, Asa Gray, who was also an evangelical Christian and America’s leading botanist. According to Randy Moore:
Gray espoused a progressive, God-driven evolution of life. Although some people were disturbed by Darwin's ideas, Gray's reconciliation of God and evolution eased many people's concerns about evolution. Gray's *First Lessons in Botany and Vegetable Physiology* (later renamed *The Elements of Botany*) was the leading botany textbook of the late 19th century and the first high school textbook after the publication of *Origin* to include Darwin's ideas about evolution. (Moore)

After the publication of Gray's book, the idea of evolution, rather than that of creationism was first introduced in public schools.

Finally, American families began to learn about evolution throughout the early twentieth century as the nation significantly increased the amount of public high schools being built. Also, teenagers were now forced to attend school, so everyone had a chance to learn about the contradicting theories regarding the creation of species. While some people immediately shifted their beliefs from creationism to evolution, others argued that the theory of evolution should not be taught in schools because it negates the ideas presented in the Bible and could even suggest that God is nonexistent. As the nineteenth century continued, support for the ideas of evolution increased, but this also resulted in a large anti-evolution movement. By the 1920s, this movement was already a national phenomenon. “Throughout the decade, the movement lobbied hard, especially in the South, to get state legislatures to enact laws banning the teaching of evolution. By 1930, 20 states had considered anti-evolution bills, and three - Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee - had actually banned evolution from school science curricula” (Masci).

The most significant controversy of the decade actually occurred in a courthouse, rather than a statehouse, in Dayton, Tennessee in 1925, “where science teacher John Scopes was on
trial for teaching evolution in violation of a state law that prohibited teaching Darwinian theory” (Masci). In this trial, Clarence Darrow was Scopes’s primary attorney, while three-time presidential candidate argued for the prosecution of Scopes. Throughout the trial:

Darrow argued that academic freedom was being violated and claimed that the legislation had indicated a religious preference, violating the separation of church and state. He also maintained that the evolutionary theory was consistent with certain interpretations of the Bible, and in an especially dramatic session he sharply questioned Bryan on the latter's literal interpretation. (Bertschi)

Scopes was initially found guilty, but the verdict was then overturned due to a technicality. Although the education laws in Tennessee remained intact after the case, the widespread publicity of the trial tended to discourage the enactment of similar legislation in other states. The trial also effectively “publicized the Fundamentalist–Modernist Controversy, which set Modernists, who said evolution was not inconsistent with religion, against Fundamentalists, who said the word of God as revealed in the Bible took priority over all human knowledge” (Cotkin, 7). Thus, the trial served as both a theological debate and a debate on whether modern science regarding the theory of evolution should be taught in schools.

Unfortunately for Modernists, evolution did not reappear in textbooks until the 1950s after the Supreme Court finally banned religion in public schools in 1947, realizing that schools were violating the first amendment by teaching Biblical views (Kurland). “From this point on, even Roman Catholic schools began to rely upon the standard evolutionary theories rather than the Bible to explain the creation of the universe and humanity” (Masci). However, schools in several states (especially in the South) still neglected to teach the theory of evolution, so in 1981, bills were adopted that required schools to provide equal time in teaching creation science and
evolution science (Kurland). Since such bills were passed, the teaching of creationism has gradually begun to diminish in public schools. Nowadays, the ideas of creation by a supernatural being are only discussed throughout private, Catholic schools or other specific religious schools. On the other hand, the only creation theory still taught in a majority of public schools is Darwin’s theory of evolution.

Now that the world has seen substantial scientific progress, it is appropriate that students are no longer required to learn about creationism in schools. After all, there is no factual evidence to support this theory, unlike the theory of evolution which has now undergone extensive research and experimentation. Therefore, by learning about Darwinism and evolution, students are receiving a proper scientific education. Even if students are strong believers of God or creationism, it is useful for them to learn about the scientific explanation for the diversity of life. Regardless, they are under no obligation to accept the ideas of evolution.

Nevertheless, controversies still exist over the theory of evolution, and they will most likely never cease to exist. Select individuals will continue to argue against the ideas presented by Darwin and fellow scientists, but the instruction of evolution should always remain in schools. Evolution has now become the foundation of biology, as it connects the discoveries made by modern biologists into a comprehensive understanding of life. Removing the education of evolution from school curricula would be identical to removing other forms of basic scientific knowledge such as electricity, light, or gravity. Overall, the shift in the teaching of creationism to the teaching of evolution is one that was destined to occur, and one that will presumably never be reversed.
Works Cited


Formless and Void: Gap Theory Creationism

Imagine going to your doctor’s office to refill some important anxiety medication, but. This test recently added on sociology as a huge section. In fact, this section Jaquette 7. of information is just as predominant as the biology section, which speaks numbers (Monitor on Psychology). In hospitals, doctors are also taught to have close doctor-patient relationships. a new governance paradigm, using its power to establish and maintain the paradigm. This may operate. locally, regionally, or globally (e.g., the USA at Bretton Woods after World War II is a global). This section leads off with a brief reference to the industrial revolution in its early organic phases. This provides a backdrop for characterizing the emerging sustainability revolution. 4.1. Early Industrial Revolution (Toward the End of the Eighteenth Century) [23]. The ongoing paradigm development a gradual shift from the economistic, industrialization paradigm to one or more forms of a sustainability paradigm entail the establishment of new ways of thinking, acting, organizing, and regulating (in part, the establishment of Paradigm Shift Seminar Workbook (1). To improve the quality of your life a Paradigm Shift is required. That’s really what you were looking for when you got involved in this program. However, if asked, you might not be sure of what you were looking for. Whatever it is that you want to accomplish in life, if it is beyond where you are, a Paradigm Shift will be required. A force which is much greater than we believe ourselves to be, yet it is not separate from us and needing to be persuaded or compelled, or inveigled into doing what we want; it is the substratum of our own being which is continually passing up into manifestation on the visible plane and becoming that personal. Jan Babcock is a professor in the English department at Pennsylvania State University - see what their students are saying about them or leave a rating yourself. Most helpful rating: ENGL137H. Dec 11th, 2018. Jan was a ridiculously easy grader.