

## **PE1530/HH**

Paul Sanderson Email of 2 January 2015

To Whom it May Concern

Petition : PE01530

I am writing as one of the parents from the original creationist scandal at Kirktonholme Primary School in East Kilbride.

Regardless of which subject this incident occurred, there was a coordinated, underhand attempt by the local "Church of Christ" and his creationist contacts in Alabama, USA, to undermine all aspects of science before the majority of our primary school children have even had a chance to understand the subject itself. This, in an educational facility, is completely abhorrent to me and should also be to any educator.

Many intelligent people have invoked creationism and intelligent design throughout the ages, Galileo and Newton being two. They did this when their knowledge at the time was stretched to its limit. They could not describe the natural world any further and sat back, seemingly happy, with the answer that a creator must have done it. In the example of Newton it took a further 100 years for Perturbation Theory (part of celestial mechanics) to be developed, which mathematically would have been a doddle for him to solve given he invented calculus. The sum of human knowledge could be so much greater than it is today if he had and other great minds had not sat back and accepted the supernatural theory that "God Did It". Given the vast array of modern issues that we face today, from climate change, energy stocks and supply, deforestation, over population, extinctions and so on, do we really want this generation of children to accept that they cannot know the answer?

By not putting a ban on creationism the Scottish Government is not giving the teachers any support on this matter, and is allowing pushy chaplains and the religious free reign in school to teach our children to accept that there is no answer because a supernatural entity did it, claiming "it is what I believe" and "religious freedom", as though that has any founding in fact or bearing on reality. Creationism outside the science class being presented as true is just the same as having it presented in the science class as true.

Creationism does not just attempt to deny evolution, it attempts to deny the whole of science and thereby take the basic tools from the utility belt of children to understand the natural world in which they live and are part of, on a day to day basis.

I honestly do not think that the Parliamentary Petitions Committee and Scottish Government fully understand what these creationists are teaching, otherwise this would be a no brainer. Why stop at letting creationism creep into class? why not allow free reign by believers in a flat earth? Geocentrism? Alchemy? Astrology? All of these were prefatory hypotheses that have been discarded due to lack of evidence and the accumulation of superseding knowledge. Creationism is no different.

The level of debate over creationism is disproportionate to the actual amount of people who still willingly believe it in the face of the unbelievably vast amounts of evidence to the contrary. The only way they can spread their own brand of pseudo-science is to target our children before they have the capacity to critically think.

While levels of exposure to creationism may seem insignificant to you at the moment, this is only the thin end of wedge (see creationists sat on education committees as well) . A quote from "Creationism in Europe"

“A 2009 Ipsos Mori poll revealed that 54 percent of U.K. respondents favored teaching creationism, including intelligent design, along with evolution. This level of public support explains why the D.I. has mainly focused on the United Kingdom. There are also other incentives. First, there is no language barrier. Intelligent design material can be disseminated via web sites, broadcasts, and public lectures. Second, D.I. and its U.K. supporters have alluded to the absence of an American-style separation of church and state in the United Kingdom, which may reduce legal challenges to advocating the teaching of intelligent design in government schools.”

I personally believe, based on all the evidence out there, that if you do not act now, then shortly there will be creationism being peddled as a perfectly valid "theory" where the cost of legal challenges will outweigh any cost of guidance or legislation to nip it in the bud now.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and Happy New Year.

Paul Sanderson