

MAKING SENSE OF MONKEY BUSINESS: CONTEMPORARY
PRESS COVERAGE OF THE SCOPES TRIAL AND ITS
ENDURING AMERICAN LEGACY

Rebecca Fleming

On the warm afternoon of May 5, 1925, a group of friends hatched a plan that would put their tiny town of Dayton, Tennessee, on the map. While sipping Coca-Cola™ at Robinson's drugstore, they read over an ad in the *Chattanooga Daily Times* placed by the ACLU which promised to pay all the legal fees and any additional costs for challenging Tennessee's new anti-evolution law, the first in the country. As George Rappleyea recounted, "I called up Scopes from Robinson's drugstore and he came over...I wrote a telegram to the Civil Liberties Union on a piece of wrapping paper, asking them if they would finance the case. The answer was, 'Yes.'"¹ Over the next three months, the "trial of the century" came and left the tiny town of Dayton, population 1,800.

Although popular opinion today considers the Scopes trial a triumph of science over religion, in fact, Scopes was convicted of breaking Tennessee's 1925 anti-evolution law. However, while the jury ruled against Scopes, the extraordinary publicity generated by the trial served to disseminate the concept of

Rebecca Fleming is at Harvard. She went to the Horace Mann School in Riverdale, New York, where she wrote this paper for Mr. Peter Sheehy's American History course in the 1999/2000 academic year.

evolution broadly beyond academia, and to highlight certain political and legal controversies that had been growing since World War I. The legal issues involved determining who should control the curriculum of public schools, how much academic freedom should be allowed public school teachers, and whether banning evolution from the curriculum violated the separation of church and state. While the lawyers focused on these legal issues, contemporary newspaper coverage reflected and reinforced popular opinion, sensationalizing the extreme positions and providing entertainment through human interest articles and humor. Although the Scopes trial brought unprecedented national and international attention, media perspectives varied. American newspaper coverage clearly differed by geographic region and distance from Dayton, but the ultimate effect of this massive coverage was permanently to associate specific political controversies with a single historical event.

Historical Background

The World War I era saw a rising fundamentalist movement in America, initially defined by what it was against. Fundamentalists rejected “modernist” theology and its “higher criticism,” which studied the Bible as an historical document, rather than as literally God’s word. As one writer put it in 1918, “The new theology has led Germany into barbarism...and it will lead any nation into the same demoralization.”² Another explained that “‘Modernism’ is the product of Satan’s lie.”³ Fundamentalists also rejected what they saw as Social Darwinist principles of *laissez faire* capitalism, appalled by the notion that unregulated business and exploitation of labor could be justified by the principle of “survival of the fittest,” which denied the Christian injunction that “the meek shall inherit the earth.” Vernon Kellogg, a Stanford University zoologist, fanned the flames when he recounted conversations with German military leaders: “Natural selection based on violent and fatal competitive struggle is the gospel of the German intellectuals...”⁴ Similarly, fundamentalists rejected the eugenics move-

ment, which seemed to favor successful people as most evolved and to denigrate many weak and poor as degenerate forms of the human species. Indeed, the most popular biology textbook of the day, Hunter's *Civic Biology*, authorized by Tennessee and used by John Scopes, explained eugenics in terms of evolutionary biology and genetics: "If such people [e.g., the mentally ill and retarded, habitual criminals, and epileptics] were lower animals, we would probably kill them off to prevent them from spreading."⁵ Many of these people saw "Darwin's dreadful law of hate...replacing the Bible's divine law of love as the origin of humanity."⁶ In short, fundamentalists credited Darwin with leading German modernists into "barbarism," for justifying the exploitation of American workers, and for inspiring the eugenics movement.

This rejection of modernism and Darwinism would not have coalesced into a crusade against teaching evolution in the public schools without two additional catalysts. Historian Jack S. Blocker estimated fundamentalists as comprising about eighty percent of the active participants in the Prohibition movement.⁷ Passage of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919, prohibiting the sale and consumption of alcohol, left a highly organized political group without a cause. Their success in using government bodies to achieve social and cultural reform motivated them to agitate for another goal, which they found in the anti-evolution crusade. In 1890, fewer than four percent of children aged fourteen to seventeen enrolled in high school, but by 1920, almost ten times as many children were enrolled, a third of the eligible population. This dramatically increased the number of young people exposed to Darwin's theory of evolution in high school science classes.⁸

The fundamentalists wanted to halt what they saw as Darwin's increasingly harmful influence on current society—and on America's future, its children—by making the teaching of evolution illegal in public schools. As fundamentalist crusader T.T. Martin warned in *Hell and the High Schools: Christ or Evolution, Which?*, "Ramming poison down the throats of our children is nothing compared with damning their souls with the teaching of evolution, that robs them of a revelation from God and a real

Redeemer.”⁹ William Jennings Bryan, who was to become the key prosecutor in the Scopes trial, kicked off the anti-evolution crusade in 1921 with stump speeches entitled “The Menace of Darwinism” and “The Bible and Its Enemies,” attacking evolution as “lead[ing] people away from God”¹⁰ and asserting that “It is better to trust in the Rock of Ages, than to know the age of the rocks; it is better for one to know that he is close to the Heavenly Father, than to know how far the stars in the heavens are apart.”¹¹ Thousands mobilized around the country to lobby their state legislatures.

On March 21, 1925, Tennessee passed the United States’ first anti-evolution law, which made it a criminal offense for any public school teacher to teach “any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.”¹² Six weeks later, on May 4, 1925, George Rappleyea, a Northerner who had already publicly protested the law, saw an ad placed by the ACLU offering to pay the legal expenses of any Tennessee school-teacher willing to test the law’s constitutionality:

We are looking for a Tennessee teacher who is willing to accept our services in testing this law in the courts. Our lawyers think a friendly test can be arranged without costing a teacher his or her job. Distinguished counsel have volunteered their services. All we need now is a willing client.¹³

Rappleyea then approached Robinson, the head of Dayton’s school board and owner of the local drug store, suggesting that prosecuting a local teacher would bring Dayton some economically useful publicity. Local attorneys would both prosecute and defend John Scopes, who was a Dayton High School general science teacher and football coach, with a local judge presiding. Before heading off to a tennis match, Scopes agreed to be arrested for breaking the new law.¹⁴

As publicity grew, Tennesseans increasingly perceived the case as a stunt, particularly given the camaraderie among Scopes, his defense, and his prosecutor. As national attention focused on Dayton, two of the most famous lawyers of the day, William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow, volunteered their services:

Bryan to lead the prosecution, and Darrow to lead the defense. Bryan called the trial “a duel to the death” and important because it would determine who should control public schools. Scopes pleaded guilty to teaching his students Darwin’s theory of evolution from *Civic Biology*, the state-endorsed textbook by George William Hunter, which had a section dealing directly with evolution theory entitled “The Doctrine of Evolution.”¹⁵ Scopes was not, however, put on the witness stand because he had not actually taught the chapter from Hunter’s textbook. He had assigned it to a substitute teacher and had been out sick himself on the day it was to be discussed.¹⁶

Dayton, known for strawberries, expected the trial to put the town on the map. The Progressive Club estimated thousands would attend the summer trial, raising \$5,000 for advertising to “promote business development during the trial” and condemning the overuse of monkeys in windows and in ads.¹⁷ Preparations for the “big show” included roping off six blocks of the town’s main street as a pedestrian mall; setting up a waste disposal system and a mobile chlorination cart to ensure safe drinking water; building a speaker’s platform on the courthouse lawn, a tourist camp for visitors, and an airstrip in a nearby pasture; and bringing in twenty-two Western Union telegraphers and additional post office and telephone employees.¹⁸ The courthouse was also refurbished: new paint, indoor plumbing, radio transmitters, a movie camera platform, telegraph and telephone wiring, microphones and loudspeakers, and 500 new seats for spectators, which would allow 1,000 spectators inside the courthouse.¹⁹ Judge Raulston set a trial date when universities and schools would be on vacation to allow scientists and professors to “be able to act as expert witnesses,” and he suggested creating a viewing area with tiered seats for “twenty thousand people” to watch the court proceedings.²⁰ Although not nearly so many visitors came to Dayton as expected, the trial was the first to be broadcast live by radio, allowing untold numbers to listen.

Bryan was the first lawyer to arrive and Darrow arrived three days later on the last train to Dayton before the trial. The defendant was so much in the background of this trial that Charles

Francis Potter, who accompanied part of the defense team into Dayton, remembered becoming

alarmed when a young man grabbed their baggage out of the open trunk. “Hey boy, what are you doing with those suitcases?” Potter shouted. “That’s all right, Doc,” Rappleyea replied, “That’s only Scopes.” The defenders along with everyone else had forgotten the defendant.²¹

The trial began with jury selection on Friday, July 10. Chairs were in such short supply that even the lawyers who rose to speak sometimes discovered that when they went to sit again their chairs had been taken by spectators.²² On Tuesday, July 21, after seven days of trial, the jury returned its verdict after nine minutes: “The jurors didn’t even sit down to think it over, but stood huddled together in the hallway of the courthouse for the brief interval.”²³ Scopes was found guilty and fined \$100, with both Bryan and the ACLU offering to pay the fine.²⁴ Hoping to set up a Constitutional appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, the defense appealed the case to the Tennessee Supreme Court which held that the law “*requires* the teaching of nothing,” and therefore does not give “preference to any religious establishment.”²⁵ Although the Tennessee Supreme Court upheld the anti-evolution law and the conviction of Scopes, postponing a Constitutional challenge for forty years, the trial became an icon for the controversy about the role of science and religion in U.S. public schools. Extensive news coverage on the trial focused the public mind and the body politic on issues that still ignite passions today.

Newspaper Coverage of Legal Issues: Control of Education

Editorials and letters to editors written about the Scopes trial showed that most Americans supported the notion that Tennessee had the right to exercise control over schools receiving state funds, that is, to control the education of children in their public schools. The Tennessee legislator, John Butler, who introduced the bill to ban the teaching of evolution, explained that we should not “set the Bible aside as being untrue and put evolution

in its place.”²⁶ As Darrow put it, there are “two rights involved: 1) the right of the people to control the schools, and 2) the right of the parents to guard the religious welfare of their children while in school.”²⁷ Butler was trying to support the beliefs of his constituents, three rural counties,²⁸ who believed that children “would be helped by good books, of which the Bible is chief. The Bible teaches the only truth that frees man from error, and leads to perfection. The Bible was, and is, the foundation of America’s liberties.”²⁹ Even the governor of Tennessee, Austin Peay, commented, “In my judgment the State had better dispose of its schools than with its Bible.”³⁰ Butler and his supporters saw the Bible as the basis for morality and the foundation for citizenship and American democracy. They viewed removing the Bible from schools to be removing “the only path of virtue and safety” from our country.³¹ As Bryan put it,

The Bible is our only standard of morality. It gives us our only conception of God and our only knowledge of Christ. Anything that attacks the Bible attacks revealed religion. A successful attack would destroy the Bible and with it revealed religion.³²

Others, who may have believed in evolution, supported the law because they felt that taxpayers should dictate how their tax dollars should be used, and that parents who oppose what is taught in public schools should send their children to private schools.³³ As Bryan proclaimed, “the hand that writes the pay-check rules the school.”³⁴

Those who supported Scopes also believed that parents should control the education of their children, but that there should be limits to this control. They argued in letters and editorials that while state legislators could determine the curriculum of public schools, they should not change the subject matter within the curriculum. As the *Chattanooga Times* put it, the question came down to “What is ‘reasonable’ legislation?”³⁵ One New York editorial, reprinted in other papers, asserted “we are convinced that no self-respecting educational system is possible in which the standards of truth are determined by electoral campaigns and the votes of a majority of legislators.”³⁶ Even though the state pays teachers’ salaries, *The Virginia Teacher* argued, it does not

mean that the legislature should control the subject matter taught any more than “the hand that writes the pay-check for campaign expenses... [should rule] the candidates and dictate the platform” or that “the hands that write the checks for advertising and subscriptions” should rule the press.³⁷ Doing so “is not only an infringement of the rights of minorities but an injury to the majority itself. It means the end of progress, the paralysis of thought, the negation of free inquiry. It is as nearly suicidal as any act of a self-governing people can be.”³⁸ A *New York World* cartoon captured the spirit of such sentiments by showing a Tennessee teacher directing her students into a cave.³⁹ Although America is a democracy which is governed by majority rule, that rule is limited in a number of areas, e.g., the court system and wherever it might result in infringement of individual rights; and it should also be limited as to public education, “which cannot be left to the mercy of untrammelled chance majorities.”⁴⁰ A cartoon from *The Washington Post*, showing the “Latest improvements in education,” brought by states with laws restricting and standardizing education, shows students being molded like factory products, mechanically, without imagination.⁴¹

Control of Teachers & Academic Freedom

Many supporters of Scopes also argued that teachers were not ordinary employees of the state, but were hired as experts in their fields, teaching:

what they believe to be the truth, and as professionals deriving satisfaction from their work. If they were legislated to teach two times two equals five, how many would obey the law and what sort of teachers would they be who did?⁴²

In answer to the question “Has not the state legislature, acting on behalf of the people, the right to dictate what shall be taught in public schools?,”⁴³ one Chicago letter writer argued that the people of Tennessee had the right to decide whether their children be taught that the world is flat or that the children, “too, are monkeys,”⁴⁴ while a Chicago editorial compared teachers to doc-

tors and engineers who have “some fitness for...work that the great mass of people have not.”⁴⁵ Continuing with a regional slur, this same editorial ended:

A southern educator once asked the school authorities in the mountains how they handled the shape of the earth. “Well,” said one, “there’s a difference of opinion in the districts. In some districts they like it flat and in others they like it round. Where they like it round we teach it round, and where they like it flat we teach it flat.”⁴⁶

Those who believed in limits on legislative control of education saw indifference to the actual expertise and professionalism of teachers as dangerous, not only to minority viewpoints, but also to the future of any majority which voted out of ignorance rather than knowledge. The notion of submitting “questions of science to a general public vote” is like submitting “the diagnosis of a sick man’s condition to a vote.”⁴⁷ In answer to the question of who should control what is taught, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* asserted that “in the teaching of science that someone ought to be the scientist.”⁴⁸ One Columbus, Ohio, cartoon shows Mother Nature flunking what should be her best subject, biology, and leaving a Tennessee school house in tears.⁴⁹ Similarly, a *Wall Street Journal* cartoon captioned “Education in the higher branches!” shows a teacher clinging to a tree branch, attacked by “Anti-This Law” and “Anti-That Law” dogs who are urged on by their owner, the “State Legislature,”⁵⁰ while a *Columbus Dispatch* cartoon titled “Rubbish” shows Bryan emptying a garbage can filled with science textbooks and scientific principles.⁵¹

Separation of Church and State

The defense also argued that Tennessee was establishing a state religion, violating the First Amendment’s provision that “Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”⁵² They saw the Tennessee law as requiring “its public schools to adopt the Bible as a textbook of science,”⁵³ essentially establishing Christianity as a state-supported religion. While one *Washington Post* editorial

took the position that the Constitution prevented the federal government from establishing religion, that did not prevent states from doing so since there was “no limitation in the Constitution on the subject of legislation by a State respecting religion,”⁵⁴ but most were passionately against it. One Washington letter writer, for example, wrote,

... the reason why the Bible should not be taught in the public schools is because it is a sectarian book. No religion of any dogmatic order can be legally taught therein. Any one that tries to so teach is an enemy to his country. Morality can be taught without any reference to heaven or hell.⁵⁵

Others questioned whether Bryan felt “it is the duty of the state by statute to support his definition of the Christian religion as the religion of the state?”⁵⁶ Even clergy argued against establishing religion by statute:

This church of ours is guarded by God and His holy angels and we need no enactments of state legislatures to safeguard us from the theories of science... [A]ppeal to the law for establishing religious creeds and beliefs has gone a long way toward secularizing things that ought to be sacred because of their spirituality and their relationship to the will and laws of God himself.⁵⁷

A cartoon in the *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger* makes the point that conflict among church-goers, both evolutionists vs. creationists and fundamentalists vs. modernists, amuses the devil, who “Listens in” at the church window and laughs.⁵⁸

Freedom of Expression for Teachers

Finally, came the argument that Scopes’ individual right to freedom of expression as a teacher was being compromised. A Stanford University letter writer described a recent Nebraska court opinion:

a law which interfered with a teacher’s right to teach a subject which was well recognized as a desirable branch of knowledge, when it did not appear that the common welfare was endangered by such teaching, was unconstitutional as well as unjust discrimination against such a teacher.⁵⁹

In other words, so long as a teacher teaches a subject worth learning and not harmful, a teacher has a constitutional right to teach it. Such a right would change the case from being about the power of the legislature to control education to being about whether evolution itself was actually harmful. Those who did not see it as harmful and who saw teachers as having special expertise argued that the:

best way of promoting sound learning is to secure teachers and educational executives who have had the advantages of the best available training and give them the freedom. Certainly the worst is to attempt to establish scientific truth by act of the state legislature.⁶⁰

By this logic, Scopes was exercising his rights as a teacher to use his training for his students. He maintained that he was a science teacher and had a duty to teach his students science and that he had a duty as a Tennessee public school teacher to teach the state curriculum from the textbook endorsed by the state.

Coverage of Soft News

Although the legal issues of the case focused on control of education and the law's constitutionality, newspaper coverage did not reflect their significance. The "hard-news" constitutional issues surfaced in interviews with lawyers, editorials, and a few of the letters to editors. Most of the coverage involved stories of extreme pro- or anti-evolution positions or entertaining human interest. As one cartoonist noted, the trial generated so much conflict that there was "no place" for either science or religion.⁶¹ This suggests that the average reader was more interested in the sensational drama of the trial than in the legalities. Further, with over two hundred reporters on assignment in Dayton, about ten percent of the town's population was looking for "news" stories during the trial. It is no wonder that so much of the news was "soft."

Sensational Positions and Self-promotion

To make their stories more interesting, newspapers pitted the two extreme positions of science and religion against each other as if they were mutually exclusive. Evolutionists were presented as seeing science as the ultimate “truth” and as seeing religion as myth and fairytale for the ignorant and uneducated. “Anti-evolutionists” were presented as seeing science as a menace to society and as a destroyer of religion and morality. Bryan and Darrow, who were seen by a number of editorial writers as publicity seekers, encouraged some of this extremism:

Men who have attained nothing better than notoriety to back them, and men who haven't even that much to excuse them, are scheduled to meet at Dayton, Tenn., to argue the inscrutability of the unknowable...Of course, the press cannot well ignore the proceedings, but what a good joke it would be if it did.⁶²

Cartoonists amused themselves by depicting Bryan as sitting on thirty years of page-one articles, carrying his own torch, using whatever was at hand to beg publicity.⁶³

Before the trial began, Bryan sought headlines with extreme stances in a series of speeches around the country. For example, he told Florida high school students:

Science is a great thing. Religion is the greatest thing. Science gives us great things, but it takes more than education to make a man or woman. Education may destroy you or make you a menace to those about you...the heart is more important than the head.⁶⁴

Those who saw evolution as dangerous were concerned not simply because they saw it conflicting with the Bible but also because they saw those who “believed” in evolution as having no use for the Bible, even wanting to burn the Bible.⁶⁵ This made the need to control education especially important because good (Christian) citizens “have the right to say through our lawmaking body that the faith and religion of our children shall not be destroyed by teachers who poison their minds.”⁶⁶ The Chattanooga paper covered a sermon by the Reverend Charles E. McCoy, a pastor in Brooklyn, which explained that:

If Mr. Scopes wishes to act as an ambassador of the devil in teaching the doctrine of evolution, let him seek a position in some of our universities where atheism, pentheism [pantheism?], and agnosticism are openly taught.⁶⁷

C.W. Brown of Franklin, Tennessee, went so far as to say, that since the United States Constitution was founded on the Christian faith, any man who did not believe in the Creator should be deported.⁶⁸ This kind of coverage caused others to compare the Scopes trial to the trials in which Copernicus, Galileo, and others were accused of heresy, inflaming passions on the other side.

Reporters portrayed evolutionists as placing unquestioning faith in science and scientific “truths,” almost as if evolution were a new religion, with scientists the new priests:

...eight apostles from America’s temples of knowledge...defended evolution as the “first law of life.” To eliminate it from the curriculums of schools, colleges and universities would bring chaos to education, they said—a disaster to the Nation—and human progress to a standstill. One denounced teachers who omitted it as committing criminal malpractice. Another charged the Bible literalists were “insulting God.” All were agreed that a dozen education courses could not be taught without it.⁶⁹

Furthermore, an underlying intolerance for the insistent ignorance of those who do not open their minds to science pervaded coverage. George Bernard Shaw was widely quoted for his comments, such as, “Let America look to it...lest their state become a mere reservation of morons and moral cowards.”⁷⁰ Other writers attacked Bryan and his presumably “unthinking” followers for unwarranted arrogance, which leads them to “evolve backward”:

It is, indeed, ridiculous, if not stupid, for Bryan to put evolution into a death grapple with Christianity. The thinking men and women of the world will laugh and pity the arrogant ignoramus of the planet. Christianity, like all religions in the history of mankind, is the result of evolution...If William Jennings Bryan would only take the time and trouble of understanding his own evolution...he could learn a great deal. But men of his make-up evolve backward—from man to monkey.⁷¹

Much of the venom of this perspective was directed toward Bryan (typically with personal attack) and toward the scientifically igno-

rant, as if a knowledge of science determines human worth. A geologist commented, for example, that

Simply because William Jennings Bryan has a peanut brain and a large, wide mouth...the only unfortunate thing is that the decision is to be left to a jury not of scientific minds but to the judgment of a few ignorant Tennessee farmers who until yesterday did not know that evolution was not something to eat.⁷²

Similarly, an editor wrote, "If God created Bryan in His own image, I rejoice in my ape ancestry"⁷³ and a Chattanooga columnist asserted, "Mr. Bryan practices what he preaches—uneducation."⁷⁴

Human Interest & Humor

In contrast to the passion and anxiety of those readers who perceived the trial as a holy war between science and religion were those who saw Tennessee and everyone involved in the trial as an amusingly primitive stage of evolution. The subjects of these human interest stories included the lawyers (what they wore, what they slept in), the families of prominent players (how they met their wives, whether Scopes' sister would get a job, Scopes' father and girlfriend), local Dayton residents and boosters (members of the Progressive Club and local clergy), monkeys and various "monkey business" (including zoo attendance, monkeys brought to dinner, and monkeys masquerading as relatives) and international comment on the trial (typically ridiculing all Americans as ignorant and narrow-minded).

Some of the commentary bordered on vicious, but most looked for humor. In one cartoon "yokels" claimed the Dayton trial was "a serious matter," but its message was that "our national sense of humor," a "saving grace," was being chased out of Dayton by a lynch mob.⁷⁵ An observer in Dayton described what amounted to a political circus:

Such a spectacle as the turning of an American court into an advertising arena for publicity seekers with warped mentalities on a parade ground for freaks, frantics and fools...The walking delegates

of agnosticism, atheism, communism, and bolshevism will be there. Everything will be there except science and religion.⁷⁶

A *Dallas News* cartoon showed the town of Dayton as an organ grinder, "Playing it for all it's worth."⁷⁷ Another cartoonist illustrated "Grandfather's Day in Tennessee if Evolution Wins": Bryan offering a bag of peanuts to a monkey.⁷⁸ The circus theme surfaced in cartoons as well, including one where Bryan arrives on a camel, riding toward the "Greatest Show on Earth, Dayton, Tenn."⁷⁹

Many articles and editorials speculated whether the Dayton trial was actually motivated by the Progressive Club of Dayton which sought to capitalize on all the publicity, securing Dayton "a place in the sun" and making it "the sensation of the world."⁸⁰ American papers considered it news that the trial was being covered all over the world, including sixteen papers in China.⁸¹ That visiting reporters took tours of Dayton, Chattanooga, Nashville, and the strawberry fields. The swimming hole was also newsworthy. There were interviews with dishwashers, carpenters, and lemonade vendors. Even the radio reporting, set up to broadcast the trial live, was covered by print reporters. After a few days in Dayton, Tennessee, it must have been hard to find a unique slant that would sell papers "back home." Following the trial, a *Nashville Tennessean* cartoonist illustrated Dayton as a lonely hill-billy, sitting on "Oblivion" hill and sighing, "Ho, Hum. Them wuz the happy days."⁸²

Differences in Regional Coverage

Because newspapers want to increase readership, the overall coverage a newspaper offers not only influences, but also reflects the opinions of its audience. While a number of different newspapers were examined for this study, three were selected for detailed comparison because a complete set of each was available on microfilm and they represented a city close to Dayton, a major midwestern and a western city. For each of these newspapers, every article, editorial, cartoon, and letter published during June and

July, 1925, was copied and then measured to compile statistical differences in coverage. The resulting database included over 1,500 individual items. A comparison of the coverage offered by the *Chattanooga Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the *Chicago Tribune*, reveals regional differences in what really mattered to newspaper readers.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* ran a significantly greater percentage of pro-evolution articles than either of the other two. Perhaps the distance from Tennessee caused San Franciscans to see themselves as more “objective” about the issues—they did not have to be so tolerant of the other side. A major city with universities that supplied science correspondents, the *Chronicle* has the smallest ratio of anti-evolution-to-pro-evolution articles and the largest percentage of articles ridiculing the trial and Tennessee. Perhaps the editors and readers of the *Chronicle* believed the trial to be foolish. That so few articles reflect the moderate position suggests that the editors did not see the moderate position as good for business or interesting to readers.

The *Tribune's* profile of articles is similar to that of the *Chronicle*, but differences are smaller. Both the San Francisco and Chicago papers contrast with the Tennessee paper in that the ratio between pro- and anti-evolution articles is almost even in Tennessee. When the editors of the *Chattanooga Times* railed against Butler's law and its ignorance of science in June, they were criticized for bias and began running articles written by local clergy who were anti-evolutionists as “news” articles to balance the articles written by scientists.⁸³ This affected the ratio dramatically. Surprisingly, the percentage of articles ridiculing the trial was still higher than the percentage of moderate articles; perhaps this was due to the number of reporters and the lack of actual news, or perhaps it boosted readership—the readers it did not amuse, it provoked to respond in letters. Controversy is good for selling papers.

Newspapers put the most important news on the first page, with less important stories in the back. By comparing what percentage of the Scopes coverage was assigned to the front page, the

next two pages and back pages, it is possible to infer what readers were interested in and what editors saw as important. The *Chattanooga Times* put over thirty percent of its coverage (in inches) on its front pages (more than the other two), and fifty percent in back pages (also more than the other two). Fewer than forty miles from Dayton, the *Times* covered everything about the trial, including surveys on favorite local beverages. The large amount of coverage caused a significant percentage of back page articles, including as many as two or three full pages devoted to court transcripts. Surprisingly, the *Tribune* gave seventy-five percent of its total coverage to the first three pages, which indicates that the Scopes coverage took precedence over most other news during the two months of activity. The *Chronicle* put most articles onto back pages, but devoted large amounts of space to coverage, with very long articles.

The three newspapers were of very different sizes. The *Tribune* had the largest, averaging about forty pages per day. The *Chronicle* averaged about twenty-five pages per day. The *Times* averaged about fourteen. One would expect the smaller paper, close to the excitement, to dedicate more space than a larger paper in a city farther away, but six percent of its total space, including advertising, sports, etc., is substantial. Even the close to one percent given by the *Tribune* and the *Chronicle* shows the appeal of this trial.

So much national and international attention had been placed on Dayton and the trial that many people who would not have thought or even known about evolution became interested and wanted to know more. An editorial in the *Chicago Tribune* claims that:

Darwin is being more read about and talked about, now that he is prohibited in the schools, than he ever had been or probably would have been. That is just the result to be expected of prohibition. The people have gone to the bootleggers for their biology.⁸⁴

That the passion against evolution would cause so much attention and increase understanding of it is ironic. As a *Tribune* cartoonist illustrated, students used to daydream during science class, but

once the anti-evolution law brought about the arrest of the science teacher, the students became very interested.⁸⁵

The Legacy of the Scopes Trial

Even though Scopes was convicted, controversy continued. The anti-evolutionists declared victory and announced that Tennessee was only the first battle in their crusade to save America's children. Headlines announced the introduction of new bills into state legislatures and one cartoonist showed "Mother" (Members of Congress) with her sick "child" (Tennessee), worrying, "My Land! What if the rest of 'em catch it?"⁸⁶ The crusade proved unsuccessful in much of the North and areas not controlled by fundamentalists, with eighteen bills defeated around the country in 1927. Indeed, after 1929, only southern states passed such laws.⁸⁷ In the public imagination, however, the victory over evolution proved Pyrrhic. A 1955 Broadway play, *Inherit the Wind*, and its 1960 movie version, "all but replaced the actual trial in the nation's memory."⁸⁸ Even today, the *New York Times*, describes the Scopes trial as having "been ingrained in the popular imagination as the archetypal clash of scientific enlightenment and old-time religion."⁸⁹

In the past twenty-five years, most recently in August 2000, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled three times on the teaching of evolution in public schools. While the position of the courts has shifted since 1925, the passion behind the issues has not. Controversy remains even in court chambers. As Associate Justice Antonin Scalia wrote in his dissent to the most recent case:

In *Epperson v. Arkansas*... (1968) we invalidated a statute that forbade the teaching of evolution in public schools; in *Edwards v. Aguillard*... (1987), we invalidated a statute that required the teaching of creationism whenever evolution was also taught; today we permit the Court of Appeals to push the much beloved secular legend of the Monkey Trial one step further. We stand by in silence while a deeply divided Fifth Circuit bars a school district from even suggesting to students that other theories besides evolution—including, but not

limited to, the biblical theory of creation—are worthy of their consideration.⁹⁰

Even in U.S. Supreme Court opinions, the Scopes trial lives on as a “beloved secular legend,” where science “won” over benighted fundamentalism.

In 1999, seventy-five years after Butler began campaigning to end the teaching of evolution in Tennessee, the Kansas Board of Education, prevented legally from prohibiting the teaching of evolution, attempted to make it irrelevant by removing it from high school assessment exams. The resulting firestorm of protest carried nationally by the media meant that a year later, four of the six board members who voted for this measure were defeated in primary elections by candidates who promised to reverse the ruling. The *New York Times* editorialized:

The balloting was a triumph for common sense...Voters in the nation's heartland will not stand to have their children's education hijacked by those who would repudiate modern science in the name of religion. They know full well that in today's world, their children would be left behind. It is a matter of natural selection.⁹¹

In Kansas—and among those who commented on the Kansas case and its elections—control over education continues to provoke passionate responses.

Debate over evolution continues to surface disagreements over the roles of teachers, their expertise, their individual right to freedom of expression, and the limits of their academic freedom. In response to the Kansas decision, for example, one letter writer protested, “If the Bible is regarded as a science textbook, it must be the only one. All other science might as well be tossed out.”⁹² On the other extreme, *Time* magazine reported on a Minnesota science teacher's lawsuit to preserve his academic freedom; his school board refuses him a biology class because he believes evolution is “flat-out bad science.”⁹³

While science and technology have progressed significantly over the last seventy-five years, many people still associate evolution and Darwin with atheism and immorality. Harking back to language typical of the 1921 crusade, House Majority Whip Tom

DeLay blamed the massacre at Columbine High School in April 1999 on teaching children “that they are nothing but glorified apes who are evolutionized out of some primordial soup of mud.”⁹⁴ A letter writer from Maine protested that “The real issue is not creationism vs. Darwinism. The real issue is ‘Does God exist?’ ... We cannot sit idly by and let the children of our nation and world end up in the flames of hell because of evolutionists.”⁹⁵ While many people do not see a conflict between evolution and religion, others see evolution as eliminating a purpose for mankind on earth, much as their grandparents and great grandparents did seventy-five years ago.⁹⁶

Interestingly, despite the extremism of the positions portrayed by the media, in 1925 and continuing even today, opinion polls report that most Americans seem to take a moderate stand on the controversy. Over eighty percent of Americans favor teaching evolution in public schools, almost as many see a place for creationism in the curriculum, and only twenty percent want evolution taught alone.⁹⁷ One letter writer, in commenting on reactions to such a poll, argued

Both religious fundamentalists and secular biologists would prefer that schools teach truth rather than provide equal time to error.

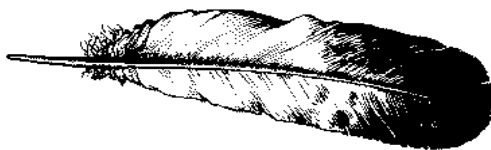
...But there's another way of looking at the results of the recent poll: as a tribute to tolerance and respect for diversity...Perhaps schools should get credit for nurturing the kind of tolerant citizens that our diverse democracy needs.⁹⁸

If the moderate position, which simultaneously accepts both science and religion, both evolution and creationism, is so common, then why do newspapers, both in 1925 and today, report conflict between the two? Is it purely because controversy and conflict sell newspapers? While conflict may indeed create interest, Edward Caudill contends that newspaper coverage of the Scopes trial had an inherent bias in favor of empirical verifiability over knowledge from personal revelation: “Verifiability was the key component of facts presented in the press. Bryan’s facts were not verifiable; therefore, he was not credible. Darrow’s facts were verifiable; he was credible.”⁹⁹ In other words, those who dismiss

fundamentalists as wrong do so because they believe the fundamentalists' route to truth is not as good as their own: they see science as the only way to know in the same way that fundamentalists see the Bible as the only guide to truth.

Amazingly, after seventy-five years the trial remains in the popular consciousness of the grandchildren and great grandchildren of the original Scopes readership. How can this be? Analysis shows that 1925 newspaper coverage in Chattanooga, Chicago, San Francisco, and around the country gave the trial's legal issues immediacy and relevance to the lives of ordinary citizens: who should control public education, how much freedom should teachers be allowed in the classroom, how does separation of church and state affect what schools teach about what constitutes Truth? The presence of so many reporters in such a tiny town also foreshadowed issues arising in today's twenty-four/seven global news arena: to what extent is media coverage itself part of the story, how does the presence of celebrities and celebrity comment affect perception, to what extent does the media shape debate by sensationalizing issues and emphasizing extreme positions?

Media coverage of the Scopes trial both reflected public concern and aroused it on topics that the trial itself did not resolve. Indeed, many of these issues are still not resolved in the public mind even after repeated review by the highest court in the land. It is the enduring legacy of media coverage of the Scopes trial that these issues, rather than standing as important in their own right, continue to be so strongly associated—in the public mind, in the press, and even in the courts—with “the much beloved secular legend of the Monkey Trial.”



¹ Charles Puckette, "The Evolution Arena at Dayton: Circus Sideshows and Curious Visitors Descend Upon Tennessee Mountain Town, But Legal Struggle Will Involve Christian Faith, Free Speech and the Constitution," reprinted from the New York Times in the Chattanooga Times (5 July 1925) p. 33

² "Editorial" Our Hope (25 July 1918) p. 49, quoted in Edward J. Larson, Summer of the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion (New York: BasicBooks, HarperCollins, 1997) p. 35

³ George E. Guille, "Satan—His Person, Power, and Purpose," in God Hath Spoken (Philadelphia: Bible Conference Committee, 1919) p. 221, quoted in Edward J. Larson, Trial and Error: The American Controversy Over Creation and Evolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) p. 44

⁴ Larson, Summer, p. 40

⁵ George William Hunter, A Civic Biology: Presented in Problems (New York: American, 1914) p. 263, quoted in Larson, Trial, p. 61; the association between scientists willing to defend evolution *and* eugenics was not illusory: six of the eight scientists willing to appear as expert witnesses "championed coercive eugenic measures to guide human evolution, measures that Darrow denounced as incompatible with human rights." Larson, Summer, p. 135

⁶ Larson, Summer, p. 29

⁷ Charles S. Blocker, Jr., Retreat from Reform (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1976) p. 10, quoted in Larson, Trial, p. 37

⁸ Edward A. Krug, The Shaping of the American High School (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969) pp. 5, 189, & 439, quoted in Larson, Trial, p. 26

⁹ T.T. Martin, Hell and the High Schools: Christ or Evolution, Which? (Kansas City: Western Baptists, 1923) p. 9, quoted in Larson, Trial, p. 36; Bryan had some data to support his contention: in 1916 Bryn Mawr College psychologist James H. Leuba published a study showing that years of education correlated with decreased religious belief, and that biologists were less religious than other scientists. Larson, Summer, pp. 40-41

¹⁰ W.J. Bryan, "The Bible and Its Enemies," p. 29, quoted in Larson, Trial, p. 46

¹¹ W.J. Bryan, "In His Image," p. 93, a version of "The Menace of Darwinism," quoted in Larson, Trial, p. 47

¹² “The Tennessee Anti-Evolution Act (1925)” in J. Peter Zetterberg, ed., Evolution versus Creationism: The Public Education Controversy (Phoenix, Arizona: Oryx Press, 1983) p. 386; debate was limited, but fierce, and passage happened only after barring an amendment “designed to ridicule the legislation by additionally outlawing instruction in the round-earth theory.” Larson, Summer, p. 55

¹³ “Plan Assault on State Law on Evolution,” Chattanooga Times (4 May 1925) p. 5

¹⁴ Larson, Summer, p. 91

¹⁵ Larson, Trial, p. 85

¹⁶ Edward Caudill, Darwinism in the Press: the Evolution of an Idea (Hillsdale, New Jersey: L. Erlbaum Assoc., 1989) p. 94

¹⁷ Larson, Summer, p. 105

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 151

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 109

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 145

²² *Ibid.*, p. 170

²³ “Scopes Fined \$100,” Chattanooga Times (22 July 1925) p. 1

²⁴ The fine was never paid because the Tennessee Supreme Court, while upholding the law, overturned the conviction on a technicality, Larson, Trial, p. 71, Summer, p. 244. A cartoonist from the Nashville Tennessean showed Darrow and Bryan huffing and puffing at each other, “Unduly Excited,” but commented that “The only issue involved” is “Is he guilty or not guilty?”; Nashville Tennessean, (25 June 1925) p. 4

²⁵ Scopes v. State, 154 Tenn. 105, quoted in Larson, Summer, p. 220; “The End,” Nashville Tennessean (24 July 1925) p. 4

²⁶ Butler cited in Larson, Summer, p. 50

²⁷ “Define Issues in Scopes Case; Attorney for Prosecution Answers ‘Notoriety’ Charges; Darrow Predicts Trial May Last Thirty Days—Chicago Attorneys Here,” Chattanooga Times (23 June 1925) p. 1

²⁸ Tom McGowen, The Great Monkey Trial: Science vs. Fundamentalism in America (New York: Franklin Watts, 1990) p. 31

²⁹ “Cooper Says Darrow’s Great Plea for Leopold and Loeb Out of Key With Stand Against Bible Teaching,” Chattanooga Times (19 June 1925) p. 1

³⁰ Associated Press, "Peay in Defense of Tennessee Law on Evolution," Chattanooga Times (27 June 1925) p. 1

³¹ Chattanooga Times (19 June 1925) p. 1

³² Philip Kinsley, "Scopes Case a 'Duel to Death': W.J.B.: Bryan Arrives, Breathing Fire; Bible on Trial! Evolution Must Go, Says Floridian," Chicago Daily Tribune (8 July 1925) p. 1

³³ Frank F. Leali, "Education by Taxpayers," Letter to Editor of Chicago Daily Tribune (14 June 1925) p. 8

³⁴ "The Established Church of Tennessee," The Virginia Teacher (1 June 1925) p. 169

³⁵ "State Control Over Schools," Editorial in Chattanooga Times (3 June 1925) p. 4

³⁶ "The Strength of Mr. Bryan's Case," Editorial reprinted from New York World by Chicago Daily Tribune (17 June 1925) p. 8

³⁷ The Virginia Teacher (1 June 1925) p. 169

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170

³⁹ Rollin Kirby, "The Little Red Schoolhouse in Tennessee (cartoon)," The New York World, reprinted in Boston Evening Transcript (12 June 1925) p. 12

⁴⁰ Chicago Daily Tribune (17 June 1925) p. 8

⁴¹ W.A. Rogers, "Latest Improvements in Education (cartoon)," The Washington Post (11 June 1925) p. 6

⁴² Vanderveer Voorhees, "The Teacher's Conscience," Letter to Editor of Chicago Daily Tribune (14 June 1925) p. 8

⁴³ F. Frank Leali, "Education by Taxpayers," letter to Editor of Chicago Daily Tribune (14 June 1925) p. 8

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8

⁴⁵ "Up the Tree in Tennessee," Editorial in Chicago Daily Tribune (8 July 1925) p. 8

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8

⁴⁷ "Thought Free, or in Chains?" Editorial in Chicago Daily Tribune (3 July 1925) p. 8

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8

⁴⁹ Ireland, "She couldn't pass (cartoon)" Columbus Dispatch, reprinted in The Outlook (1 July 1925) p. 279

⁵⁰ Cargill, "Education in the higher branches! (cartoon)" The Wall Street Journal, reprinted in The Outlook (1 July 1925) p. 279

⁵¹ Ireland, "Rubbish! (cartoon)" Columbus Dispatch, reprinted in The Outlook (10 June 1925) p. 207

⁵² "The Tennessee Case," Editorial in The Washington Post (10 July 1925) p. 6

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 6

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6

⁵⁵ G.R.T, "Evolution and Bible Teaching," Letter to Editor of The Washington Post (22 June 1925) p. 4

⁵⁶ "Mr. Bryan Getting Warmer," Editorial in Chicago Daily Tribune (10 July 1925) p. 8

⁵⁷ "State Control Over Schools," Editorial in Chattanooga Times (3 June 1925) p. 4

⁵⁸ Sykes, "Listening in (cartoon)" Philadelphia Evening Ledger, reprinted in The Outlook (10 June 1925) p. 207

⁵⁹ Don Chase, "Knowledge Is Power in All Places But Tennessee," Letter to the Editor of San Francisco Chronicle (22 July 1925) p. 22

⁶⁰ "The Established Church of Tennessee," The Christian Century (11 June 1925) p. 757

⁶¹ Dylan (?), "No Place For Us (cartoon)" The Washington Post (10 July 1925) p. 6; Science and Religion as two women who are leaving the circus tent of Tennessee with the caption, "No place for us."

⁶² Alfred Chartz, "Evolution of Constitution May Be Cleared Up," Letter to Editor of San Francisco Chronicle (20 June 1925) p. 22

⁶³ "Page One Forever (cartoon)" Columbus Dispatch, reprinted in Chicago Daily Tribune (21 July 1925) p. 8; Orr, "The Torch Bearer (cartoon)" San Francisco Chronicle (13 July 1925) p. 18; Orr, "Using the Monk (cartoon)" Chicago Daily Tribune (13 July 1925) p. 1

⁶⁴ Associated Press, "Heart More Important Than Head, Says Bryan," Chattanooga Times (13 June 1925) p. 15

⁶⁵ "Postpones Action on Scopes' Request; School Board Not to Decide Until After Trial; Dayton Professor's Application for Old Job May Be Legal Maneuver," Chattanooga Times (18 June 1925) p. 3 and Associated Press, "Author of Bill Says Evolution Infidelity," Chattanooga Times (2 July 1925) p. 2

⁶⁶ Associated Press, "Peay in Defense of Tennessee Law on Evolution," Chattanooga Times (27 June 1925) p. 1

⁶⁷ Associated Press, "Dayton Trial Mockery, Says John E. Edgerton," Chattanooga Times (30 June 1925) pp. 1, 10

⁶⁸ "Mayor House Stands for Evolution Bill," Chattanooga Times (4 July 1925) p. 2

⁶⁹ "American Scientists State the Case for Evolution," San Francisco Chronicle, 21 July 1925, p. 4

⁷⁰ "Shaw's Comment on Dayton," St. Louis Ledger (18 July 1925) p. 3

- ⁷¹ "Evolution and Religion," St. Louis Ledger (11 July 1925)
p. 1
- ⁷² R.W. Hadden, "From a Geologist," Letter to Editor of Chicago Daily Tribune (7 June 1925) p. 8
- ⁷³ "Evolution in Tennessee," Editorial from Chattanooga Times reprinted in Boston Evening Transcript (4 June 1925)
p. 15
- ⁷⁴ Verne Prater, "Verne Prater's Musings on William Jennings Bryan," Opinion, Chattanooga Times (22 July 1925)
p. 4
- ⁷⁵ Ireland, "This is a serious matter (cartoon)" Columbus Evening Dispatch, reprinted in The Outlook (29 July 1925)
p. 445
- ⁷⁶ Associated Press, "Dayton Trial Mockery, Says John E. Edgerton," Chattanooga Times (30 June 1925) pp. 1, 10
- ⁷⁷ Orr, "What It Needs Most Is Pruning (cartoon)" Chicago Daily Tribune (19 July 1925) p. 1
- ⁷⁸ "Grandfather's Day in Tennessee if Evolution Wins (cartoon)" San Francisco Chronicle (15 June 1925) p. 23
- ⁷⁹ "The Big Show Opens (cartoon)" San Francisco Chronicle (10 July 1925) p. 26
- ⁸⁰ "The Pot and the Kettle," Editorial in Chattanooga Times (17 July 1925) p. 4
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4
- ⁸² "Forever and Forever (cartoon)" Nashville Tennessean (27 July 1925) p. 4
- ⁸³ Larson, Summer, pp. 125-126
- ⁸⁴ "Bootlegging Darwin," Editorial in Chicago Daily Tribune (28 June 1925) p. 8
- ⁸⁵ "How They Are Teaching Evolution in Tennessee," Chicago Tribune, reprinted in The Washington Post (8 June 1925) p. 6
- ⁸⁶ "The Big Worry (cartoon)" Columbus Dispatch, reprinted in Chicago Daily Tribune (23 July 1925) p. 8
- ⁸⁷ Larson, Trial, p. 83
- ⁸⁸ Larson, Summer, p. 241
- ⁸⁹ Francis X Clines, "Creationist Captain Sees Battle 'Hotting Up,'" New York Times (1 December 1999) p. 18
- ⁹⁰ Thomas Vinciguerra, "In a Louisiana Parish, Dim Echoes of the 'Monkey Trial,'" New York Times (25 June 2000) p. 7
- ⁹¹ "Kansas, Evolving," Editorial in New York Times (4 August 2000) p. 26

⁹² Chris Robbins, "All Science Is at Risk," Letter to Editor of New York Times (15 October 1999) p. A34

⁹³ Josh Tyrangiel, "The Science of Dissent," Time (10 July 2000) p. 60

⁹⁴ Anthony Lewis, "Something Rich and Strange," Opinion in New York Times (12 October 1999) p. 31

⁹⁵ Ellen Goodman, "We Should Teach Children About Religion," Times Union Albany (14 September 1999) p. A11

⁹⁶ In 1925, fundamentalists were often portrayed the way the Scopes jury was portrayed, as hillbillies wearing flannel and overalls, who might well be illiterate. While this stereotype was untrue even in 1925, when many of the fundamentalist leaders came from northern cities (Larson, Trial, p. 73), it is certainly not true today: over forty percent of the people who are concerned by the effect of teaching evolution now live in suburbs, and more than a third are college-educated. (Hanna Rosin, "A Kansas Couple for Creationism," Times Union Albany, reprinted from the Washington Post [20 October 1996] p. A24)

⁹⁷ The survey by DYG, Inc., commissioned by the People for the American Way in 2000, concluded that 83% of Americans support teaching evolution in public schools; 79% thought creationism had a place in public school curriculum; about 30% believe that creationism should be taught as a scientific theory and that 20% believe evolution should be taught without mention of creationism, James Glanz, "Survey Finds Support Is Strong for Teaching 2 Origin Theories," New York Times (11 March 2000) pp. 1, 12; these are similar to conclusions by Gallup in 1979 (quoted in Larson, Trial, p. 130) and Gallup in 1982 (quoted in Larson, Summer, p. 258); the DYG study also noted that "young Americans 18 to 24 years old and Americans with relatively high education levels were more likely to support teaching evolution and less likely to favor teaching creationism."

⁹⁸ Francis Schrag, "Ways to Look at the Origin of Life," Letter to Editor of the New York Times (14 March 2000) p. A22

⁹⁹ Edward Caudill, The Roots of Bias: An Empiricist Press and Coverage of the Scopes Trial (Austin, Texas: Journalism Monographs, 1989) No. 114, p. 34

Bibliography

Newspapers from 1925

Boston Evening Transcript June & July 1925

Chattanooga Times June & July 1925

Chicago Tribune June & July 1925

The Christian Century June & July 1925

The Outlook June & July 1925

St. Louis Ledger June & July 1925

San Francisco Chronicle June & July 1925

The Virginia Teacher June & July 1925

Washington Post June & July 1925

Recent Newspapers

“Kansas, Evolving,” Editorial in New York Times 4 August 2000, p. 26

Belluck, Pam, “Evolution Foes Dealt a Defeat in Kansas Vote,” New York Times 3 August 2000, pp. 1, 30

Clines, Francis X, “Creationist Captain Sees Battle ‘Hotting Up,’” New York Times 1 December 1999, p. 18

Cocco, Marie, “Politicians Can Show Backbone,” Times Union Albany, reprinted from Newsday 30 August 1999, p. A9

Friedman, Murray J., “Ways to Look at the Origin of Life,” Letter to Editor of New York Times 14 March 2000, p. A22

Glanz, James, “Survey Finds Support Is Strong For Teaching 2 Origin Theories,” New York Times 11 March 2000, pp. 1, 12

Goodman, Ellen, “We Should Teach Children About Religion,” Times Union Albany 14 September 1999, p. A11

Gould, Stephen Jay, “Dorothy, It’s Really Oz,” Time 23 August 1999, p. 59

Henry, Tamara, “Details bedevil biology textbooks,” USA Today 28 June 2000, p. 8

Janofsky, Michael, “New Mexico Bars Creationism From State Curriculum,” New York Times 9 October 1999, p. A10

Lewis, Anthony, “Something Rich and Strange,” Opinion in New York Times 12 October 1999, p. 31

Meyer, Warren K., “Ways to Look at the Origin of Life,” Letter to Editor of New York Times 14 March 2000, p. A22

Rensberger, Boyce, “The Nature of Evidence,” Science 289 (7 July 2000) p. 61

Rissing, Steve, Letter to Editor of New York Times 14 March 2000, p. 22

Robbins, Chris, "All Science Is at Risk," Letter to Editor of New York Times 15 October 1999, p. A34

Rosin, Hanna, "A Kansas Couple for Creationism," Times Union Albany Reprinted from Washington Post 20 October 1996, p. A24

Schrag, Francis, "Ways to Look at the Origin of Life," Letter to Editor of New York Times 14 March 2000, p. A22

Scott, Eugenie, "Not (Just) in Kansas Anymore," Science 288 (5 May 2000) p. 813

Teepen, Tom, "Killing Off Evolution by Fiat," Times Union Albany 18 August 1999, p. A12

Tyrangiel, Josh, "The Science of Dissent," Time 10 July 2000, p. 60

Vinciguerra, Thomas, "In a Louisiana Parish, Dim Echoes of the 'Monkey Trial,'" New York Times 25 June 2000, p. 7

Willis, Tom, "Evolution is Religion," Opposing editorial in USA Today 3 August 2000, p. 18

Books

Allen, Leslie H., Bryan and Darrow at Dayton New York: Russell & Russell, 1967

Caudill, Edward, Darwinism in the Press: The Evolution of an Idea Hillsdale, New Jersey: L. Erlbaum Assoc, 1989

Caudill, Edward, The Roots of Bias: An Empiricist Press and Coverage of the Scopes Trial Austin, Texas: Journalism Monographs, 1989, No. 114

Ginger, Ray, Six Days or Forever? Tennessee v. John Thomas Scopes Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969

Larson, Edward J., Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion New York: BasicBooks, HarperCollins, 1997

Larson, Edward J., Trial and Error: The American Controversy Over Creation and Evolution New York: Oxford University Press, 1985

McGowen, Tom, The Great Monkey Trial: Science vs. Fundamentalism In America, New York: Franklin Watts, 1990

National Writing Board

730 Boston Post Road, Suite 24
Sudbury, Massachusetts 01776 USA

The National Writing Board will read and rate academic research papers by high school students of history in July 2001 against an international standard. Reports will be sent to the authors, who can then decide which college admissions officers should receive them to add to the information they now have with which to evaluate prospective applicants. The next deadlines for history research papers are **March 1 and June 15, 2001**.

These academic papers will be evaluated according to an independent academic expository writing standard developed by *The Concord Review*, since 1987 the only quarterly journal in the world for the research papers of high school students of history writing in English [<http://www.tcr.org>].

Papers may be submitted in two categories: Short (papers of around **2,000** words, range 1,500 to 2,500 words) and Long (papers of around **5,000** words, range 4,000 to 6,000 words) both with endnotes and bibliography. These works will be read by two senior high school history instructors, and evaluated according to a proprietary set of measures refined by the National Writing Board.

Students submitting papers for evaluation must affirm that the paper is their own work, and they must submit a form stating this, signed by them and their teacher, and **witnessed by a notary public**. Plagiarism is theft, and will be dealt with in the appropriate way. Submission forms are also available now on the website of *The Concord Review* at <http://www.tcr.org>.

Colleges have expressed a great deal of concern over the writing (and attendant reading) capabilities of their freshmen. The National Writing Board will not only help them to find out the sort of serious academic work of which their applicants are capable, but will also encourage more interest, on the part of high school history and literature instructors, in the amount and the quality of academic writing they require of their students.

Varsity Academics

Independent Assessment of Academic Writing
<http://www.tcr.org>; 800-331-5007; fitzhugh@tcr.org; 978-443-0022