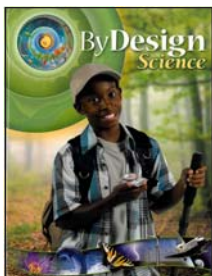


GEOSCIENCE NEWSLETTER

Number 33 April 2013

GRI FIELD SCHOOL

Planning for the 2014 GRI Field School for Teachers is well underway. This Field School will be held July 13-24, in the area of Denver, Colorado, and is especially designed for teachers using



the new *By Design* textbook series. Fascinating locations for field site stops include Dinosaur Ridge and Rocky Mountain National Park.

For further information, see <http://www.grisda.org/2014-gri-field-school-for-teachers-denver-colorado/>

GRI ACTIVITIES

Meetings in the Philippines

At the invitation of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, Jim Gibson met in February with Union Conference leaders in both northern and southern Philippines. In addition, he presented lectures at Central Philippine Adventist College, Mountain View College, Adventist University of the Philippines, and to a student group at University of the Philippines Los Banos.



Church leaders meeting in Cebu.



Participants in Peru study a fossil whale.

Origins Teaching Workshop

Raúl Esperante of GRI and Orlando Poma of Peruvian Union University presented a course in teaching origins in high school to a group of thirty teachers and graduate students. The 12-day course covered topics in origins and included a field trip to study fossils.

Celebration of Creation, Friedensau

The first Celebration of Creation event in Europe was held at Friedensau University from January 25-26. Tim Standish, Ben Clausen, and Raúl Esperante presented lectures, with other speakers from Austria, Germany, and Spain.

The event was sponsored by the Faith and Science Council. The next



Lecturers for the Celebration of Creation.



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Celebration of Creation is planned for Walla Walla University in October.

GRI Participates in European Theology Teachers Meetings

Raúl Esperante and Tim Standish met with the European Theology Teachers' Convention in Beirut, Lebanon, March 27-31.



Raúl Esperante and Daniel Duda discuss a point in the Mt Lebanon Range.

The group consisted of University theology teachers from all over Europe, and focused on the theme of science and Christian faith.

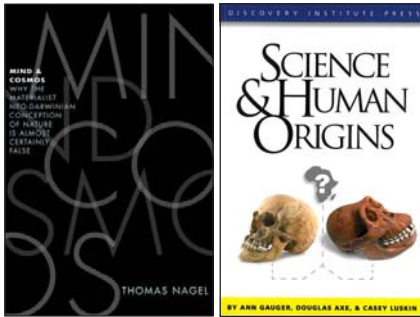
Visit to GRI Branch Office in South Korea

Tim Standish visited Seoul, Korea in February, where spoke at Sahmyook University and met with leaders there, including Dr John Choi, director of the GRI Branch Office. During the visit plans were laid for a 2014 Celebration of Creation at Sahmyook University.



Drs. Tim Standish and John Choi.

NEW BOOKS OF INTEREST



Neo-Darwinism Inadequate

Nagel T. 2012. *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature Is Almost Certainly False*. Oxford University Press. 144 pages. \$24.95

Nagel argues that materialist naturalism, in the form of neo-Darwinian theory, is inadequate to explain certain features of the human mind. As a committed atheist, he rejects any appeal to a divine agent, leaning instead toward a kind of monism of physical and mental properties. In doing so, he seems to edge toward a kind of naturalistic pantheism.

Nagel uses four examples to make his case: the origin of life; the origin of consciousness; the origin of reason; and the origin of value. Neo-Darwinism fails to give a satisfactory explanation for any of these phenomena. Nagel argues that neo-Darwinism is not a complete explanatory system of reality, and hints that recognition of that fact might open the way to a better understanding of the history of biodiversity.

Unsurprisingly, Nagel's conclusions have been met with alarm and hostility on the part of the neo-Darwinian establishment, perhaps in part because of fear that Nagel is right about the failure of the materialism on which neo-Darwinism is based.

Human Origins

Gauger A, Axe D, Luskin C. 2012. *Science & Human Origins*. Seattle: Discovery Institute. 126 pages. \$14.95

The main thesis of this book is that neo-Darwinian theory does not provide a plausible explanation for the origin of

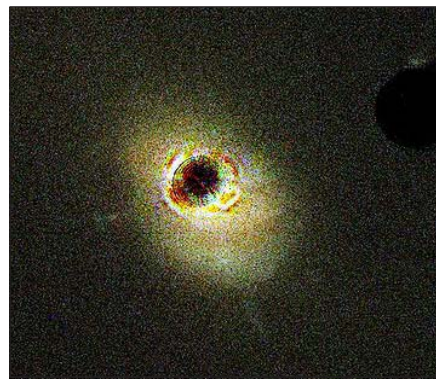
humans. The principal argument is that the number of mutations required to convert an ape-like ancestor into a human is far too large to have been fixed by natural selection in the amount of time accepted by evolutionary theory.

Another argument is that similarity does not demonstrate common ancestry, but may be due to common design. The book is written for the public, and makes a useful contribution to understanding human origins.

SCIENCE NEWS

Too Big for the Theory

Clowes RG, et al. 2013. *A structure in the early Universe at $z \sim 1.3$ that exceeds the homogeneity scale of the R - W concordance cosmology*. Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society 429(4, 2013):2910-2916.



Quasar 3C 273. NASA/STScI. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia.

Summary. One of the key assumptions of cosmology is that the material in the universe is distributed evenly when viewed on a sufficiently large scale. This assumption, known as the "cosmological principle," is challenged by the findings reported here. Astrophysicists calculate that no structure in the universe should be larger than about 370 Mpc (Megaparsecs). (This is equivalent to about 1.2 billion light years). A cluster of 73 quasars has been discovered in which the longest dimension of the grouping is 1240 Mpc, much larger than theory allows. This discovery challenges the validity of the Cosmological Principle.

Comment. Big Bang theory is widely regarded as strongly verified. Since the theory depends on the Cosmological Principle, this finding raises questions about the Big Bang theory. It is too soon to guess how this situation might be resolved, but it does serve as a reminder of the difficulty of studying the past, and the tentative nature of all scientific conclusions

Another Class Joins the Cambrian Explosion

Caron J-B, Conway Morris S, Cameron CB. 2013. *Tubicolous enteropneusts from the Cambrian period*. Nature 495:503-506.

Summary. A newly identified fossil from the Burgess Shale is a marine worm-like organism known as an enteropneust. This fossil belongs to the phylum Hemichordata, which consists of two major classes. The other class, is already known from Cambrian deposits, but this is the first confirmed Cambrian record of the Class Enteropneusta.

Comment. The sudden appearance of most major phyla at the beginning of the fossiliferous record is perhaps the most striking feature of the fossil record. Each discovery of an additional higher taxon in the Cambrian fossil record emphasizes the inadequacy of the theory of universal common descent to explain what has been called "disparity before diversity."



Enteropneust hemichordate worm. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia.