



Science Debate on Evolution vs. Creation Draws Huge Audience

A science debate on the origins of life between Bill Nye “The Science Guy” (shown) defending the theory of evolution and Biblical creationist leader Ken Ham, who supports the literal Genesis account in the Bible, drew a massive online audience estimated between 800,000 to as high as three million. All of the 800 or so tickets for the live event were gone within minutes of going on sale. The huge viewership highlighted the deep and ongoing interest in the subject among Americans, who according to [polls](#) still remain sharply divided on the origins of life.



Of course, virtually nobody expected anyone to change their mind on evolution or creation after the debate. Still, supporters of both theories declared “victory” in the aftermath of the event, again illustrating the polarization among Americans when it comes to the issue. “I think it shows you that the majority of people out there, they’re interested in this topic, they want to know about this, they don’t want debate shut down,” said Ham, a former science instructor and founder of the Creation Museum where the debate was held.

Ham and others who support his views believe in what is known as the “young Earth,” essentially that the planet and life were formed about 6,000 years ago by God as described in the Bible’s Book of Genesis. Not all Christians, particularly Catholics, support a literal interpretation of Genesis, although polls suggest that the numbers are growing despite government schools teaching only the evolution theory. Former TV host Nye, on the other hand, refers to himself as an agnostic who supports the theory of evolution.

Throughout the debate, Nye consistently tried to portray the issue as a supposed battle between “science” and the Bible. He also repeatedly referred to himself as “reasonable” — implying that those who disagree with the evolution theory are unreasonable. However, as Ham pointed out multiple times during the debate, the alleged conflict between science and religion is largely manufactured by secular forces trying to claim the mantle of science.

Ham, for example, cited a vast amount of scientific evidence that he said supports his views: that the Earth and life were created just as the Bible says in its opening chapters. He also argued that the term “science” has been hijacked by secularists, and that it is deeply misleading to suggest that “science” somehow contradicts the Bible. No such evidence exists, Ham explained, arguing — as even many evolutionists have — that accepting the evolution theory requires belief in processes that are not observable.

At one point at least, however, Nye seemingly contradicted the “science vs. religion” narrative by claiming that there are “billions” of religious people in the world who “do not embrace” a literal



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interpretation of the Book of Genesis. He also pointed to a senior self-described Christian U.S. government official who apparently supports the evolution theory.

Nye acknowledged not having answers to a broad range of major questions, which he said scientists were still working to understand. What started the alleged “Big Bang,” for example, is a “great mystery,” Nye said. He also admitted to not having answers about how “consciousness” emerged. If the United States is to succeed, however, Americans must start rejecting the creationist worldview, he told the audience.

Ham, meanwhile, pointed out that many of the greatest scientists in history — Sir Isaac Newton, for example — were actually Biblical creationists. Today, many respected scientists around the world continue to adhere to that view, he said, noting that they publish their work in secular journals just like secular scientists. Ham also strongly emphasized the division between observational science, which can be observed, and historic science dealing with the past. On the evidence, the two agree, said Ham, who also founded Answers in Genesis. Where they differ is on how to interpret it.

“Secular evolutionists teach that all life developed by natural processes from some primordial form, that man is just an evolved animal, which has great bearing on how we view life and death,” Ham explained during the nearly three-hour event, pointing out that Darwin’s theory taught that the white race was higher than other supposedly inferior races. “For instance, as Bill [Nye] states: ‘It’s very hard to accept for many of us that when you die, it’s over.’ But you see, the Bible gives a totally different account of origins, of who we are, where we came from, the meaning of life, and our future.”

The debate in Petersburg, Kentucky, was sparked after a 2012 video in which Nye said parents should teach their children the evolution theory instead of the creationist worldview. Ham responded with an online video segment of his own rebutting Nye’s claims, eventually culminating in the February 4 debate. Moderated by CNN correspondent Tom Foreman, the only element that viewers seemed to agree on was that the event was respectful.

After decades of failing to eradicate Biblical creation theories by exclusively teaching the evolution theory in taxpayer-funded government schools, even the staunchest evolutionists knew the latest debate would be unlikely to change any hearts or minds. According to a 2012 [Gallup survey](#), about 46 percent of Americans believe that God created man in the present form within the last 10,000 years — more than the 44 percent who answered that way two decades ago. About one-third of Americans believed God guided evolution, and just 15 percent thought man evolved from other life forms without divine intervention.

Photo of Bill Nye at the February 4 debate: AP Images

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