

Although we observe a general tendency for life to evolve from simple to complex, this cannot be predicted for any single group of organisms, and the record shows simple and complex organisms living side-by-side in every geologic age. (Schafersman, in Godfrey, 1983, p. 237)

A very important part which Morris failed to understand, which misunderstanding has apparently contributed to the trouble he experiences in recognizing that most sedimentary rock strata are old, is the first sentence of the quotation given above. Note that the index fossils are used, not as a standard which possesses age information by virtue of its own nature, but as a convenient tool for comparing a given stratum with the "type section of rock" that has earlier been dated by objective methods of petrology and stratigraphy. The "type sections" of rock in which the index fossils were found are known and catalogued by geologists for this process of correlation classification and dating of new rock sections which are found. The type section may be located at varying distances--sometimes a great distance--from the new rock section being studied, but because of the thoroughly demonstrated fact that the several invertebrate animal species used for "index fossils" became extinct within relatively short time periods, geologically speaking, the varying distances are not significant.

Because of Morris's gross misunderstanding of the manner in which index fossils have been chosen, dated, and used, Schafersman has been able to deal a very effective blow to Morris's scientific integrity in pointing out this wrong usage which he has so frequently employed in arguing for a young earth. Schafersman then applies Morris's errors to all creationists in the closing paragraph of that subsection, as follows:

Morris's creationism is a powerful system of fallacious reasoning.... I have taken it upon myself to refute one argument in detail [the assertion of Morris concerning index fossils] to show the real nature of the creationist pretension to scientific knowledge. The creationists' method of discovering knowledge is the antithesis of the scientific method. (Godfrey, 1983, p. 241)

4. Science on Trial

Another of the very influential anti-creationist books which were published in 1983 is Science on Trial, by D. J. Futuyma. Again, here is a work which strongly defends macroevolution, but which is able to seriously belittle and degrade the Bible and Christianity, because the author can point to many striking errors in the published works of "creation scientists."

This book is written from the standpoint of, and with a concern for, science education. The author, being a professor of biology (State University of New York), devotes a large part of the book to defending evolutionary science. Futuyma is outspoken in his opposition to the Bible as being of little or no value to modern society. In the book, this opposition is very obviously increased by the encounters the author had had with certain "creation scientists" who make the open claim that the Bible should be used as a source of specific scientific information. He frequently refers to these claims, and gives quotations from them.

Futuyma devotes several pages to presenting an extensive series of absurdities and contradictions in the "Flood-geology" explanation of the sedimentary fossil record. After pointing out how completely untenable the "ecological zoning" hypothesis of "Flood geology" is, he adds: