

The push for Intelligent Design

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The debate over teaching evolution in public schools is back. This time, instead of focusing on Creationism the argument is over Intelligent Design. The Discovery Institute, a main proponent of Intelligent Design, states on its webpage, "The theory of Intelligent Design holds that certain features of the universe and of living things are best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection."

While Intelligent Design cannot be scientifically proven, some of its proponents still insist it has a place in a scientific curriculum. "Both sides ought to be properly taught ... so people can understand what the debate is about," President Bush said at a press conference on August 1.

This comment has been widely criticized by scientists who argue that there is no scientific basis to merit its place in the classroom. Geology and Earth Studies professor Dave Dobson said "They are trying to teach religion in schools. They wouldn't be happy with the Hindu creation myth or the Greek

creation myth. They talk about both sides which betray their viewpoints." He also said that teaching Intelligent Design to students in high school would require them to forget it all to become a successful biologist. "Teaching Intelligent Design wouldn't harm a smart student, but it will confuse people."

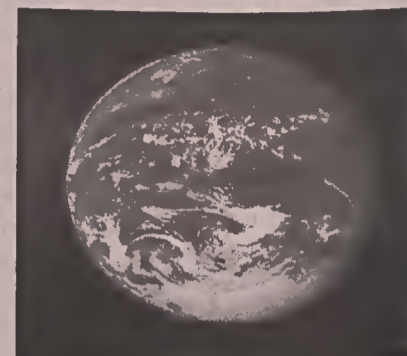
According to a 2004 Gallup poll, 45% of Americans believe that God created human beings in their present form at one time within the last 10,000 years. Only 13% said that humans evolved from less advanced forms of life and God had no part in the process. The vast majority of scientists, however, support some form of evolution.

Many feel that teaching Intelligent Design does not directly oppose evolution, because the theory doesn't argue that evolution didn't happen. It does suggest that some sort of greater mind was behind the process.

Philosophy professor Vance Ricks said that Intelligent Design should not be taught in a science classroom, but instead a religion or philosophy class. He also said that a problem with this debate was that "Scientists become frustrated about the misunderstanding of the word theory and opponents of

Darwinism take theory to mean blind conjecture."

When asked about the possibility of Intelligent Design being taught in Guilford county schools, English Professor Nicole McFarlane, a mother of three, said, "I'm sure it's on the horizon in the next 2-3 years. The fact that we're talking about it shows it's going on."%



NASA STOCK PHOTO

What big brother knows

Megan Feil

Staff Writer

Databases. Millions of students are entered in them. Even here at Guilford there is the address book database online.

Nationwide, there is a new system of collecting information. The Pentagon has compiled a youth database consisting of the information of students (ages 16 and up) in public schools in the United States. They have access to social security numbers, birth dates, grade point averages, ethnicity, email addresses, and the subjects these students studied.

According to the *Washington Post*, the Department of Defense says of the database, "The purpose of the system ... is to provide a single central facility within the Department of Defense to compile, process and distribute files of individuals who meet age and minimum school requirements for military service." This is supposed to be a more effective, efficient way of recruiting.

A private database marketing company called BeNow is the intermediary for

finding candidates for possible military recruitment.

Based on the Electronic Privacy Information Center's research, "BeNow, does not even have a privacy policy, nor has it troubled itself to enlist in a privacy seal program". EPIC's further investigations show that there is "disclosure of records contained in the database for functions wholly unrelated to recruitment."

Robert Duncan, a Guilford political science professor, says, "That must violate the Privacy Act somehow". Ironically, the government is involved in this.

Because of an unrelated clause in President George W. Bush's No Child Left Behind Act, the government has been granted the right to cut off federal aid from public schools if they do not release students' personal information. Duncan calls this a "devious, slippery trick, characteristic of the current administration".

How recruitment for the military should be addressed seems to be an issue that the government and the public seem to be divided on.%

An Amnesty primer

Jabari Sellars

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A picket line of angry activists forms a gate between a politician and his office, yelling for the consideration of an exiled mother and child of an African nation, who are blocked by a gate of guns.

Chains of fleshy hands and arms hold fast, arguing for the rights of those in chains of rusted steel locks and bolts.

A group of citizens threaten to stand and protest until criminals no longer lie down and prepare for their government-approved death.

The piercing cries for universal justice, the body blows taken in the name of equality, and the time spent for achieving such goals are all parts of life for a member of Amnesty International. The non-government-affiliated organization has spent over 40 years fighting for the rights of those whom many argue deserve none.

Whether working towards the abolishment of the death penalty for all criminals, protesting for the rights of prisoners of war, or trying to voice the opinions and wants of those who are unable to do so, Amnesty International calls its vision "a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

In this declaration, approved by the General Assembly in over 300 languages in 1948, there are proclamations ranging from the prohibition of slavery and servitude to total restriction of a government's ability to arbitrarily arrest and/or exile its citizens.

However, critics of Amnesty International find some of its policies and goals erode nations' sovereignty. In a 1976 article, author Michael Phillips argued not only that "political crime is not an obvious category", but also said that Amnesty International "assumes a universal standard of human values, which doesn't exist".

By having goals of ending capital punishment, allowing the recognition of all marriages, and strengthening the rights of prisoners, the organization's opponents often find Amnesty International's goals undermining policies that have either passed the test of time or have yet to be tested at all.

Regardless of its opponents' sharp words and actions, Amnesty International has continued to grow in power and in its number of members and supporters.

With more than 1.8 million registered members and supporters in more than 150 countries, Amnesty International believes it is gaining greater ability to achieve its goals, goals once considered lofty and overly optimistic.

As wars continue to rage within Northern Africa and Southeast Asia, and civil wars plague countries that many overlook, Amnesty International finds itself at a point in its development where it has the opportunity to either help the lives of many weak and unable people or do nothing and become stagnant through routine protests and activist exercises.

With record support and membership, perhaps Amnesty International has the ability to make the changes in the world that they have desired for decades.%