

Judge John E. Jones, III Speaks at Meredith College

Meghan Grady, Staff Writer

On Tuesday, March 23, 2010, the Honorable Judge John E. Jones, III spoke on "Our Constitution's Intelligent Design" in Meredith College's Jones Auditorium to members of the student body, faculty, and general public. Judge Jones is a graduate of Dickinson College, as well as Dickinson School of Law located in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. It should be noted that in May 2006, Judge Jones was named to Time magazine's "100 World's Most Influential People" list. As marked by Meredith College, he received a Rave Award for Policy from Wired Magazine, and he was the recipient of the first John Marshall Judicial Independence Award, presented by the Pennsylvania Bar Association. Jones is a member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Judges Association.

Jones became a United States District Judge in August 2002 and sits in the Middle District of Pennsylvania. He is the 21st judge to hold this office, and he received his position with a unanimous vote of approval by the United States Senate on July 30, 2002 following his appointment by former president George W. Bush in February 2002. In this position, he was the presiding judge over *Kitzmiller vs. Dover School District*--a controversial court case dealing with the legalities of evolu-

tion about which he lectured last Tuesday evening.

Kitzmiller vs. Dover School District was a lawsuit that sought declaratory and injunctive relief. In this case, eleven parents of students in Dover, Pennsylvania sued the Dover School District. The parents' filed the suit in response to a requirement by the school board that all ninth-grade students must be read a statement by their teachers concerning intelligent design prior to their lessons in evolution. Intelligent design was required to be stated as an additional option to evolutionary theory of the origin of life. The intelligent design mandate by the board was refused by some teachers who would not read the statement in their classrooms.

The Center of Science and Design states that, "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." The plaintiffs found this requirement to be in violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the Constitution, as they believed intelligent design is a form of creationism, and to assert any form of creationism would be overriding the separation of church and state. The eleven parents who filed suit wanted an injunction

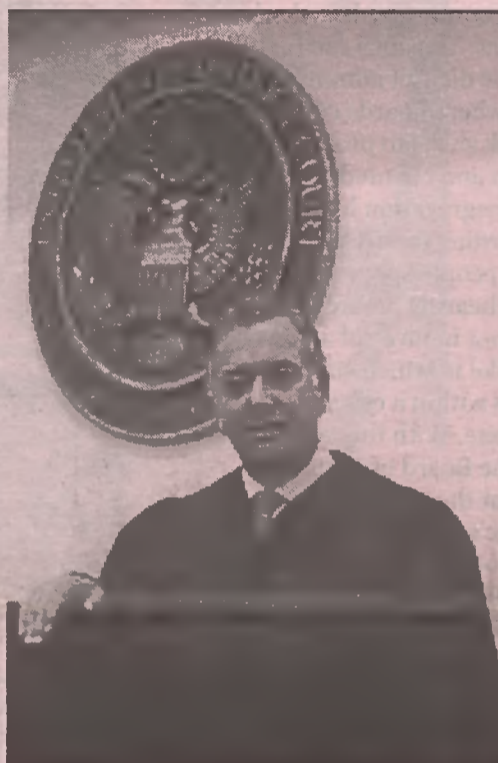


Photo courtesy of *The New York Times*

to this policy, declaring that it be removed from public schools.

Judge Jones heard testimony from experts on both sides of the case. In the end, he ruled that the discussion of intelligent design in public classrooms was unconstitutional and violated the Establishment Clause. During his discussion at Meredith he stated that "Intelligent design is the grandchild, son, or daughter of creationism," and that it is obviously a theory of religious origin. Judge Jones also discussed the legal tests used to evaluate a scientific theory in court, arguing that theories must be falsifiable and in agreement with current scientific opinion and methodology. Intelligent design failed all of these tests, therefore it deserved no place in the science classes of public high schools in the district. This ruling came as a shock to some, as Jones is a republican known to be conservative.

"Evolution" is a course offered here at Meredith College taught by biology professor, Dr. Francie Cuffney. Recent discussions in her evolution course have focused on what actually makes science a science. Science can be tested and falsified. One of the goals of science is that there can be trial

Experience "The Thinker" at the N.C. Museum of Art

Anna Turner, Staff Writer

One of the North Carolina Museum of Art's newest exhibits includes a one-ton bronze cast of Rodin's "The Thinker." The museum offers a unique opportunity for visitors to view a collection of Auguste Rodin's work. According to WRAL, this is the largest Rodin sculpture display ever exhibited in the Southeast. It is also the largest Rodin exhibition seen in the United States in two decades.

Many assume that "The Thinker" is simply a statue of a man who, with his head on his hand, is pondering life's questions. However, author and art critic, David Steele, believes that Rodin sculpted "The Thinker" in the likeness of poet, Dante Alighieri, who wrote *The Divine Comedy*. Steele explains that "The Thinker" is actually Dante, thinking of the poem he is about to write.

Visitors can view Rodin's collection through April 13. This exhibit is part of a four-month-long festival that is celebrated at art museums across the Triangle called Festival Rodin. Visitors can purchase a Super Pass that will let them into the Rodin exhibit at the North Carolina Museum of Art, the Museum of Natural Sciences, Exploris, and Museum of Sciences in Durham.

The Super Pass is \$15 for adults and \$5 for children. Regular admission into the exhibit at the N.C. Museum of Art is \$7.50 for adults, \$5.50 for senior citizens, and free for children under 12.

and error experiments conducted to form facts about an organism. Scientific results are also published and peer-reviewed. These points were addressed by Dr. Cuffney and other panel speakers which included History and Political Science professor, Dr. Clyde Frazier, Religion and Philosophy professor, Dr. Steven Benko, Education professor, Dr. Monica Mckinney and moderator Dr. Matt Stutz, professor of Chemistry, Physics, and Geosciences at a panel discussion that took place on Monday, March 22. At this event, a video highlighted a similar case, *Kansas vs. Darwin* followed by the panel discussion.

This landmark case along with Judge Jones' ruling was the first of its kind in determining whether or not intelligent design should enter the classroom, but as Judge Jones mentioned it will certainly not be the last. This topic contains a highly controversial combination of government and religion--a volatile mixture that is sure to reach courts again soon.

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