

# Top 5 Reasons Why the *Intelligent Design* Debate is Important

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Astr 836  
9/19/06

# What is intelligent design?

- “Certain features of the universe and of living things are best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection.”
- Signs of intelligence:
  - irreducible complexity
  - rare Earth

# What is the debate?

- Specifically: What should be taught in **public schools**
  - teaching ID as an alternate scientific theory, and/or
  - teaching about flaws / uncertainties in theory of evolution
- General issues:
  - Is ID science? Is it religion?
  - Are scientists/ journal publishers biased against ID?
  - Are there problems with the theory of evolution?
  - Should HS students be taught about potential problems with major theories?

# Events in the debate

- 1968, US Supreme Court: states cannot ban evolution from curricula
- 1987, US SC: teaching creationism in public schools violates 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment
- 1991, Philip Johnson writes *Darwin on Trial*; founder of modern ID
- 1999, KS school board: teachers do not have to teach evolution
  - Decision reversed in 2001, and again in 2005. And again ...?
- 2005, federal district court in PA: ID is religion

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- ID is broad based attack on natural origins
- “Fine Tuning” of the Universe, “Rare Earth”
- The word “evolution”
- “Just a theory” - confusing to public

## 4 - Bringing ID to high schools circumvents the scientific community.

- Skip the peer review
- Any “theory” could be taught - FSM <http://www.venganza.org>
- Politicians decide what’s taught as science

### 3 - The debate polarizes science vs. religion

- The public may feel they have to choose between evolution/science and religion (especially Christians)
- Religion will almost always win

## 2 - Many proponents of ID want it taught in public school science classes.

- ID is creationism in disguise - the same except they don't say who the designer is (God)
- Violation of separation of church and state
- ID is not science
- High school is not the place for this debate - should be in the scientific community

# I - Scientific integrity & the definition of science are under attack.

- “natural” vs. “logical” explanation of nature - supernatural is okay
- ID makes no predictions, is not testable
- claim that evolution/science is just another religion
- ID arguments undermine the scientific community - scientists don't know what they're talking about, or they're liars

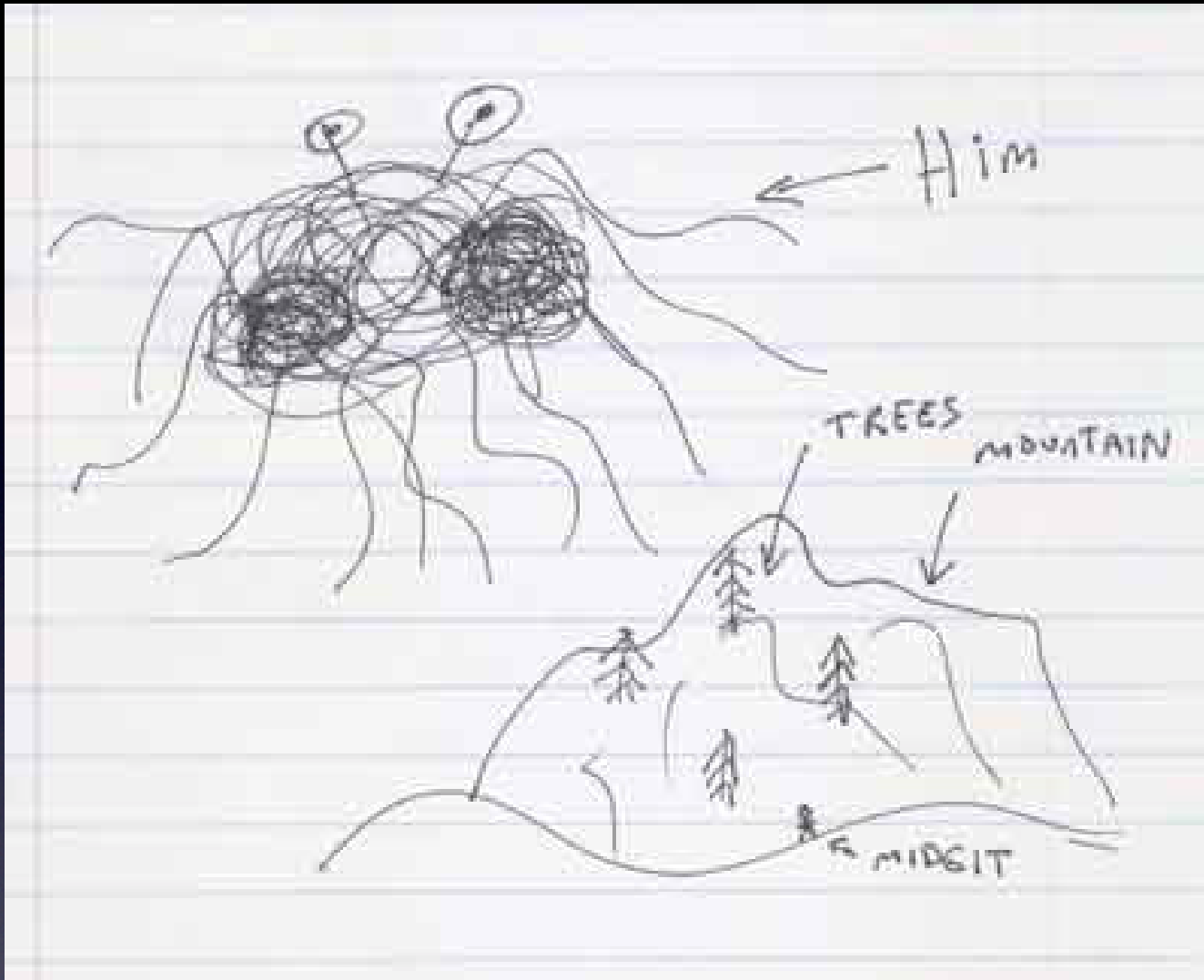
The U.S. National Academy of Sciences has stated that intelligent design "and other claims of supernatural intervention in the origin of life" are not science because they cannot be tested by experiment, do not generate any predictions, and propose no new hypotheses of their own.

- Wikipedia

# A good scientific theory = ?

- **Consistent** (internally and externally)
- **Parsimonious** (simple, to the point)
- **Empirically testable & falsifiable**
- **Based upon multiple observations** (and can be repeated)
- **Progressive** (advances beyond previous theories)





FSM

