

In 2014, science educator Bill Nye and Young Earth creationist Ken Ham debated the legitimacy of evolution and creationism. What rhetoric did they use to make their case? How did they establish credibility, signal shared values, and incorporate facts? In this hands-on workshop, we'll annotate and analyze their arguments, and explore how science uses rhetoric.

Opening Statement: Ken Ham

When this was first announced on the Internet, there were lots of statements like this one from the Richard Dawkins Foundation: "Scientists should not debate creationists." I believe there is a gross misrepresentation in our culture. People have been indoctrinated to believe that creationists cannot be scientists. I believe this is a case of secularists hijacking the word "science." I want you to meet a modern-day scientist who is a biblical creationist:

Video clip: My name is Stuart Burgess. I am a professor of engineering design in the UK. I have published over 130 scientific papers on science and design. In my research work I find that scientific evidence supports creationism as the best explanation to origins.

Ham: Stuart is a biblical creationist, who is a scientist; he is also an inventor, and I want young people to understand, that the problem I believe is this: we need to define terms

correctly. We need to define creation, evolution in regard to origins, and we need to define science. In this opening statement, I want to concentrate on dealing with the word "science." I believe the word science has been hijacked by secularists.

What is science? The origin of the word comes from the classical Latin which means "to know." The dictionary will tell you that science is the state of knowing and knowledge, [*slide: as distinguished from ignorance or misunderstanding*]. But there's different types of knowledge, and I think this is where the confusion arises. There is experimental or observational science, as we call it, that's using the scientific method of observation, measurement, and experiment and testing. That's what produces our technology: computers, spacecraft, jet planes, smoke detectors, etc. Looking at DNA, antibiotics, medicines and vaccines. You see, all scientists, whether evolutionists or creationists, actually have the same observational or experimental science. And it doesn't

matter whether you're an evolutionist or a creationist; you can be a great scientist. For instance, here is an atheist who is a great scientist: Craig Venter is one of the first researchers to sequence the human genome. Or Dr. Raymond Damadian, the man who invented the MRI scanner and revolutionized the field of medicine. He is a biblical creationist. But I want you to also understand: molecules-to-man evolution belief has nothing to do with developing technology. You see, when we're talking about origins, we're talking about the past; we weren't there; we can't observe that, whether it's molecules-to-man evolution or whether it's the creation account.

When you are talking about the past, we like to call it origins- or historical-science. Here at the Creation Museum, we make no apologies about the fact that our origins, or historical science, is based on the Biblical account of origins. When you research science textbooks being used in public schools, what we have found is this: by and large, the origins, or historical science is based on man's ideas about the past. For example, the ideas of Darwin. And our research has found that public school textbooks are using the same word "science" for observational science and historical science; they arbitrarily define science as naturalism, and outlaw the supernatural. They present molecules-to-man evolution as fact. They are imposing the religion of

naturalism/atheism on generations of students.

I assert that the word "science" has been hijacked by secularists in teaching evolution, to force the religion of naturalism on generations of kids. Secular evolutionists teach that all life developed by natural processes from some primeval form; that man is just an evolved animal, which has great bearing on how we view life and death. [*Graphic: ape man evolving into modern man*] For instance, as Bill states, "It's hard for many of us to accept that when you die it's over." You see, the Bible gives a totally different account of origins: who we are, where we came from, the meaning of life, and our future.

Scripture: Romans 5:12: "Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin." But John 3:16, says "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." So, is creation a viable model of origins in today's modern scientific era? I say, the creation/evolution debate is really a conflict between two philosophical world-views based on two different accounts of origins or historical science beliefs. Creation is the only viable model of historical science, confirmed by observational science, in today's modern scientific era.

Opening Statement: Bill Nye

It's a pleasure to be here. I very much appreciate you including me in your facility here. I see just one bow tie, no, there's two, that's great.

So here tonight we are going to have two stories, and we can compare Mr. Ham's story to the story from the outside, what I call mainstream science. The question here tonight is, does Ken Ham's creation model hold up? Is it viable? So let me ask you, what would you be doing if you weren't here tonight? You'd be home watching CSI - (Crime Scene Investigation) TV show, CSI-Petersburg. I think that's coming. And on CSI, there is no distinction made between historical science and observational science. These are constructs unique to Mr. Ham. We don't normally have these anywhere in the world except here.

Natural laws that applied in the past apply now; that's why there are natural laws, that's why we embrace them. That's how we made all these discoveries that enabled this marvelous technology. Although CSI is a fictional show, it's based absolutely on real people doing real work, going to a crime scene, where you have evidence and you get clues about the past, and you trust those clues and you embrace them, and go forward to convict somebody.

Now Mr. Ham and his followers have this remarkable view of a worldwide flood, that somehow influenced everything we observe in nature. A 500 foot wooden boat, eight zookeepers for 14,000 individual animals, every land plant in the world underwater for a year? I ask us all, "Is that really reasonable?"

You hear a lot about the Grand Canyon I imagine, which is a remarkable place, and it has fossils, and the fossils in the Grand Canyon are found in layers. There is not a single place in the Grand Canyon where the fossils of one type of animal cross over into the fossils of another. In other words, when there's a big flood on the Earth, you would expect drowning animals to swim up to a higher level. Not any one of them did, not a single one. If you could find evidence of that my friends, you could change the world.

Now I just want to remind us all, there are billions of people in the world who are deeply religious; who get enriched by the wonderful sense of community from their religion. They worship together, they eat together, they live in their communities and enjoy each other's company; Billions of people. But these same people do not embrace the extraordinary view that the earth is somehow only 6000 years old. That is

unique, and here's my concern: what keeps the United States ahead, what makes the United States a world leader, is our technology, innovation, our new ideas. If we continue to eschew science, eschew the process, and try to divide our science into observational science and historical science, we won't move forward and embrace natural laws, we will not make discoveries, we will not invent and innovate and stay ahead. So, if you ask me if Ken Ham's creation model is viable, I say no, it's absolutely not viable. So, stay with us over the next period, and you can compare my evidence to his. Thank you all very much.