

PE1530/D

Leonard Sym Email of 6 November 2014

Sir,

It greatly concerns me to hear of the attempts by organisations to infiltrate non-scientific subjects and viewpoints into the science curriculum of Scottish Schools. It seems that those without a scientific grounding, or with a wilful misunderstanding of science, are attempting to lie to our children through the auspices of the education system.

This is not in the best interests of our children and does not bring credit to our education system.

Science is hard and progress is both cumulative and methodical. That is why Isaac Newton stated that he saw further than others only because he stood on the shoulders of giants. Those outside any scientific discipline can make mistakes when they move outside their discipline.

Those not within any discipline are likely to have little grasp of any scientific subject and make fundamental errors. Evolution denial is one such error.

Even great academic figures make mistakes. When Sir Karl Popper, the philosopher of science, was formulating his 'falsification' theory that is now the bedrock of the scientific method, he initially did not view evolution as a science. However, once he was shown how it did meet his stringent demands for classification as a science, he changed his mind.

That is the beauty of science - evidence changes minds.

Separate creationism and intelligent design are evidence-free pseudo-sciences. There may be a place for children to learn about them but it is certainly not in our schools.

A claim is made by the Centre for Intelligent Design that macro-evolution is unobserved so cannot be proven. If this was a valid and logical position to take, then no police force in Scotland could solve a crime, except when the police observe the crime taking place.

This claim is palpable nonsense. The police gather evidence to understand what happened in the past and prosecute. Science gathers evidence about what happened in the past to 'understand'.

I sincerely hope that science will be left to scientists, and that the 'benefits' accumulating to society will be maximised because of that.

Evolution denial has no place in our schools.

Sincerely,

Leonard Sym MA(Hons) MBA MSc(HRM) FRSA