

The Smithsonian Scandal

And a Global Trans-paradigmatic Solution

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Abstract:

The purpose of this document is to provide a scientific solution to a problem now plaguing institutions of science and education worldwide. While the Smithsonian Institute's scandal may represent the highest profile case of this nature, similar conflicts are now occurring globally and are not limited to any single institute, university or nation. I argue here that the solution requires the comprehensive application of the scientific method, such that the open methodology of science is applied to the paradigms (core hypotheses) themselves. Moreover, by framing the problem in terms science greater clarity can be achieved as to what is expected of institutes of science. I subsequently propose the establishment of a trans-paradigmatic science department of the United Nations in order to monitor and educate citizens and scientists regarding these issues globally.

The Smithsonian Case

The Smithsonian Institute has recently been rocked by a scandal. The case has now resulted in two official reports -- one by the Office of Special Counsel (www.rsternberg.net/OSC_ltr.htm) and the most recent, a United states congressional investigation led by Congressman Souder www.souder.house.gov/sitedirector/~files/IntoleranceandthePoliticizationofScienceattheSmithsonian.pdf ¹



The Smithsonian scandal revolves around the work of Smithsonian research associate Richard Sternberg. Richard Sternberg has two PHD's in evolutionary biology. In 2004 Richard Sternberg was managing editor of the Smithsonian's affiliated journal (*Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*{www.biolsocwash.org}). As managing editor Sternberg permitted the publication of a peer reviewed article skeptical of Darwinism and supportive of "Intelligent Design (ID)." The initial solution pursued by Smithsonian officials was to find a way to have Sternberg fired and/or discredited in violation of his basic civil rights.

The problem with the Smithsonian's original "solution" is contained in the last words "in violation of his basic civil rights." It is the question of these rights and possible violations that has resulted in the OSC and Congressional investigations. I argue here that the reason Smithsonian officials were so upset is that the institute is (as of this writing) a gospelized mono-paradigmatic institute and ID is challenging their chosen gospel (material-ism). Darwin's theory represents a crucial strut in this materialist worldview. ID, when applied to biology challenges the materialist core assumption that biological design is merely an appearance -- an illusion. ID argues that biological design is not an illusion and in certain cases (the E-coli bacterial flagella & DNA coding) the evidence for actual intelligent design is significant and empirically detectable. Materialism has extreme difficulty accommodating a designing intelligence at this point in its materialist story-of-origin.

There exists however the natural counter hypothesis to the materialist (matter-first & mind-second) cosmology. This model puts "mind" (intelligence) first and "material" second as a product of intelligence. This hypothesis is generally referred to as "theistic." Within a theistic model, biological and cosmological ID is naturally accommodated. The theistic hypothesis however serves as a foundational belief for most, if not all of the world's religions. Within a religious context, the theistic model (hypothesis) is not embraced tentatively as a "hypothesis" or "theory" but instead non-tentatively and non-scientifically as a cherished "gospel" or "dogma."

The Smithsonian dispute therefore comes down to a debate between two different entrenched core hypotheses or "paradigms." Both "paradigms" have been high jacked by non-scientists for ideological purposes. These two "paradigms" can and should be re-expressed as "core hypotheses" to which the scientific method can then be fully applied. In keeping with scientific freedom-of-inquiry, "hypotheses," "models" and "theories" must remain as such and never be cast as sacred gospels, dogmas or ideologies. As soon as the materialist hypothesis (matter first/mind second) is turned into a gospel (material-ism), academic freedom-of-inquiry is lost. As soon as the theistic hypothesis (mind first & matter second) is turned into a gospel (the-ism), academic freedom-of-inquiry is likewise lost.

The solution therefore is the comprehensive "de-gospelization" of all hypotheses and a subsequent return to a comprehensive application of science (see "Examples" #1 & #2 below).

1. www.evolutionnews.org/2006/12/the_house_government_reform_su.html

-- Examples --

#1. A valid application of science is as follows: Hypothesis (A) versus hypothesis (B).

#2. A valid application of trans-paradigmatic science:
Theistic hypothesis (A) versus materialist hypothesis (B).

#3. An invalid application of science: The-ism versus Material-ism.

-- Example number three (#3) is not science but is instead a futile, gospelized culture war.

Note: It is often said; “A theistic hypothesis invokes the ‘supernatural’ and is therefore not a scientific hypothesis.” This statement however begs the very question needing to be answered “Is cosmic ID really ‘super-natural’ or is the materialist hypothesis an incomplete description of the natural world and therefore ‘sub-natural?’”

Recommendations

What can authorities do given the situation?

- In most countries laws are already in place to protect workers’ civil rights. New laws therefore do not appear to be required. What is needed is the full application of existing laws and strong official statements encouraging institutes of science and education to engage in science (trans-paradigmatic or otherwise) and **not** to engage in ideologically inspired witch hunts against consummately qualified and respected scientists. In a democracy, the tax-paying-public supports and funds federal science institutes with the legitimate expectation that science will indeed be performed therein. *The word “science” refers here to the comprehensive (trans-paradigmatic) science as it is understood by the public, not the polarized (mono-paradigmatic) materialist/atheistic “science” presently supported by orthodox societies such as the Smithsonian.*
- Science is a global institution. The culture-war presently infecting the Smithsonian is occurring throughout the world. Indeed, it is occurring wherever Material-ism and The-ism are vying for power. An independent international organization is needed to protect science, scientists and universities from both creation-ism and material-ism. We therefore propose the establishment of an international transparadigmatic society to educate scientists and citizens regarding the application of science at the paradigm or “core hypothesis” level.

The “Brookfield Institute” is a proposed institute supported by myself (William Brookfield) but not yet supported by the scientific or creationist communities. The goal of a “trans-paradigmatic” science institute is to support the comprehensive application of science and full freedom of inquiry for scientists and scholars over the full paradigmatic range. www.bitscience.org.

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