

EVOLUTION, INTELLIGENT DESIGN, AND OUR EDUCATIONAL CULTURE WAR

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'Intelligent Design' (ID) is a new label for an old view: the thesis that the organizational structure of living creatures compels us to attribute their existence to an intelligent artificer. Over the last two decades this view has coalesced into a sociopolitical movement asserting that ID "theory" is a scientifically legitimate alternative to Neo-Darwinian Evolutionary Theory and that public school life science courses should give equal time to the ID-based arguments. In this presentation it will be argued that although ID-motivated educational policy initiatives are damaging to the goal of scientific literacy, First Amendment Free Exercise considerations may nonetheless favor such initiatives, but only if First Amendment Establishment Clause concerns are adequately addressed. Should we welcome incorporation of some ID arguments, along with additional modifications necessary to avoid Establishment Clause violations?