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Headline: Top 10 Darwin and Design News Stories of 2007

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Access Research Network has just released its second annual “Top 10 Darwin and Design News Stories” and its “Top 10 Darwin and Design Resources” list for the year ending in 2007.

The origins debate continued to capture the attention of a world-wide audience in 2007, as evidenced by some of the key news stories designated as among the more important according to Access Research Network (ARN), a leading science and technology watch-dog group based in Colorado Springs, CO.

“Part of our mission at ARN is to help educate the public about issues relating to Darwin and Design. Not only are there a lot of moving parts to this issue, but it also suffers heavily from significant mis-information. One of the things we do is monitor science news and other reports related to this topic, and provide access to resources designed to help others better understand the full scope of this issue. Overall in 2007 I’d say we’ve observed a growing consternation running through many scientific disciplines over issues that were once thought to be resolved long ago” says Kevin Wirth, ARN Director of Media Relations. “For example, the so-called ‘simple cell’ continues to demonstrate far more complexity and information content than anyone ever imagined. This continues to sustain the argument for Design theorists, but places a growing burden on Darwinists who maintain that this is merely evidence of ‘apparent design’. But we’re seeing a growing number of scientists who simply aren’t buying the ‘apparent design’ explanation.”

“The news reports we’ve cited in our Top 10 News Stories this year reflect many of those concerns” added Wirth. “One of the things we’ve noticed is that the probability surrounding the notion that life arose spontaneously and evolved over eons is straining the limits of credulity among observers who are not heavily invested in Darwinian speculations. I think it’s important that we listen carefully to the voices of those who are truly independent and critical observers of this issue.”

In addition to the increasing level of complexity being discovered in small biological systems, the level of biological complexity being discovered in early life history provided another challenge for Darwin’s molecule-to-man theory in 2007. Well-preserved jellyfish fossil finds in Utah confirm that the modern form of the jellyfish existed nearly 200 million years earlier than previously thought. This leaves an insufficient amount of time for complex life to have developed only via the Darwinian principles of random mutations and natural selection. Evidence like this caused some scientist this past year to suggest that Darwin’s “Tree-of-Life” model should be discarded and replaced with a “Biological Big Bang” model.

Dennis Wagner, ARN Executive Director, noted that “We have a whole generation of people who have been raised according to Darwinian fairytales, like ‘human and chimpanzee genetics only differ by 1%’ and ‘the human body is full of leftover evolutionary

vestiges like the appendix and junk DNA.’ However, scientists demonstrated that these Darwinian stories do not belong in our science textbooks with some of the new discoveries made in 2007. These are Darwinian ‘arguments from ignorance’ that continue to be discarded as scientists uncover the incredible design and purpose of biological systems”

Wagner also noted that several new books in the ARN 2007 Top 10 Darwin and Design Resource list such as Michael Behe’s *The Edge of Evolution* and Mike Gene’s *The Design Matrix* are causing a healthy shift in the debate from ‘Darwin versus Design’ to ‘Darwin and Design.’:

“The debate has been highly polarized for generations because you have one group claiming everything can be explained by Darwin and another group claiming everything can be explained by design. These new books are revealing that scientific evidence is now indicating life bears the hallmarks of both. The information content present in living systems can only be explained by design, while biological systems also appear to have been designed to adapt to their environment through variation and natural selection. Trying to decipher from the evidence exactly what evolution can and cannot do, rather than resorting to imaginative Darwinian stories to explain all of life by naturalistic processes is a great step forward in the debate.”

While scientific evidence continued to mount in favor of intelligent design in 2007, so did the political and academic persecution against those who challenge Darwinism. Wagner observed that “our modern western culture is so ingrained in the naturalistic Darwinian creation story that those who challenge the story, even with scientific evidence in hand, are treated as outsiders and outcasts. Even though scientists should be free to follow the evidence wherever it leads, the 2007 stories about Guillermo Gonzales being denied tenure at Iowa State and Robert Marks having his lab and website shutdown at Baylor University prove that we are not as free as we would like to think. Ben Stein’s documentary *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*, scheduled for release in early 2008, will document these stories and many others, and serve as a real eye-opener to the average citizen.”

Wirth concluded, “As we monitor scientific discoveries and reports in the news, I think we’re beginning to see a growing trend overall that the sufficiency of Darwinian explanations to describe how life evolved is turning out to be substantially inadequate in a growing number of fields, particularly in the areas of genetics and molecular biology. I think it’s becoming clear that Darwinism is on the verge of one of the greatest challenges it has faced in many decades. And, based on what we’re seeing, I suspect the debate about origins will heat up again significantly in 2008.”

These stories and many more about the Darwin and Design debate can be found on the Access Research Network website www.arn.org.

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Access Research Network is a 501(c)3 scientific and educational organization dedicated to providing accessible information on science, technology and society issues from an intelligent design perspective.

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