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### Culture

#### **New Survey Supports Evolution, But Critics Disagree**

By Penny Starr

CNSNews.com Senior Staff Writer

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(CNSNews.com) - A new study of 1,000 likely U.S. voters apparently confirms that the majority of Americans support evolution, its role in science, and the importance of teaching evolution in schools, according to the [Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology](#) (FASEB), which published the study this month in *The FASEB Journal*.

"The bottom line is that the world is round, humans evolved from an extinct species, and Elvis is dead," said Gerald Weissman, editor-in-chief of *The FASEB Journal*, in describing the survey in a press release earlier this month. The survey was conducted by the Coalition of Scientific Societies.

"In an age when people have benefited so greatly from science and reason, it is ironic that some still reject the tools that have afforded them the privilege to reject them," said Weissman.

The report says that the introduction of "non-science," such as creationism and intelligent design into science education, "will undermine the fundamentals of science education, including use of the scientific method, understanding how to reach scientific consensus and distinguishing between scientific and nonscientific explanations of natural phenomena."

But reactions to the report by some who reject the idea that evolution is irrefutable say the survey reveals more than statistics.

Hugh Owen, director of the Kolbe Center for the Study of Creation, a conservative group, told **Cybercast News Service** that the survey is another attempt by evolutionists to defy any opposition to their claims, even within the scientific community.

As an example, Owen recounted the story of Dr. Dean Kenyon, professor emeritus of Biology at San Francisco State University and a world-renowned evolutionary biologist. In the early 1980s, when Kenyon began to express doubts about his own theories, he was criticized by students and disciplined by administrators.

Owen said Kenyon and others in the scientific community who have been "viciously persecuted" for their doubts about Darwinian evolution will be the subject of a Ben Stein film, "Expelled," opening in theaters in February.

Moreover, Owen told **Cybercast News Service** that forbidding students to hear all sides of the evolution debate is destructive to scientific research.

He cited the long-held belief by evolutionists that some human organs may still exist but have been

made insignificant by evolutionary changes, including the appendix.

"They said the appendix was useless, which blocked scientific progress by medical researchers to actually find out what its function is," Owen said. "Now it's generally recognized that the appendix is part of our immune system.

"In fact, it can be shown that evolution has slowed scientific advances," he added.

Moreover, Owen said if scientists and others in the education community have students' best interest in mind, they would be open to teaching all theories and beliefs about the origin of man and the natural world.

"That would form young people who know how to think for themselves," Owen said. "They could look at the body of data and the different ways of looking at that data and decide which theory better explains the facts.

"The last thing we should do is put young people in a situation where they only hear one explanation when there is more than one possible explanation."

Even those who would not include creationism in the science classroom say it's inaccurate for *The FASEB Journal* to lump creationism and intelligent design into the same category.

Rob Crowther, director of communications for the Discovery Institute, said because creationism is based on religious documents and beliefs, it doesn't belong in the public school curriculum.

Also, intelligent design -- which Crowther described as a scientific theory based on the same set of data used by evolutionists -- should not be mandated, he said, but certainly teachers should not be forbidden from discussing it.

"Evolutionists don't want to allow any scrutiny, questioning, or any critical analysis of evolution," Crowther said. "That's not scientific. They are misleading students by not presenting all information." (On its Web site, the Discovery Institute offers a [Scientific Dissent from Darwinism](#).)

More than 700 scientists worldwide have signed a statement expressing skepticism about Darwinian evolution, according to the Discovery Institute. One of those scientists is Dr. Michael Engor, professor of neurosurgery and pediatrics at State University of New York-Stony Brook and a brain surgeon who was named one of New York's best doctors by *New York Magazine*.

In a statement last year, Engor said: "Darwinism is a trivial idea that has been elevated to the status of the scientific theory that governs modern biology."

A spokesman for the California-based National Center of Science Education said his organization not only sees intelligent design as another version of creationism, but that science taught in the schools has to be based on researchable data.

"We want accurate science and evolution is accurate," Josh Rosenau said.

Owen, however, sees a more sinister side to the groups that want to limit discussion in the classroom to Darwinian evolution.

"What the article indicates is that the evolution community is running scared and wants to prevent

people from seeing the flaws in the evolutionary model," Owen said. "If evolution is shown to be false, then people will recognize the obvious; that there is a creator to whom they are accountable. Evolutionists don't want that because they don't want to be accountable to anyone but themselves."

The Coalition of Scientific Societies that participated in the FASEB survey include American Association of Physics Teachers, American Astronomical Society, American Chemical Society, American Institute of Biological Sciences, American Institute of Physics, American Physical Society, American Physiological Society, American Society for Investigative Pathology, American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, American Society of Human Genetics, Biophysical Society, Consortium of Social Science Associations, Geological Society of America, Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, National Academy of Sciences, National Science Teachers Association, and Society for Developmental Biology.

Cybercast News Service was told by Americans United for Separation for Church and State that the organization's spokesperson was out of the country and unavailable for comment.

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