

Monday, September 26, 2005 (Excerpt of testimony from Kenneth R. Miller, Plaintiffs' expert in biology, evolution, creationism and intelligent design).

Q. (By Witold Walczak) The School District argues, you know, it takes a minute to read this statement. I haven't timed it. It takes about a minute to read this statement. What's the big deal? What's the harm in reading this to Dover School District students?

A. (By Kenneth R. Miller) That's a very interesting point. And if they raised the issue, what is the harm in reading it, one might well turn around and say, well then why read it in the first place, if it makes so little difference, if it is of so little consequence? Then why have you insisted on doing this and why are you in court today? The only thing I can infer from turning that question around is that the Dover School Board must think this is enormously important to compose this, to instruct administrators to read it, to be willing to fight all the way to the court. They must think that this performs a very important function.

Now turning it around back to my side of the table, do I think this is important? You bet I think this is important for a couple of reasons. One of which, first of all, as I mentioned earlier, it falsely undermines the scientific status of evolutionary theory and gives students a false understanding of what theory actually means. Now that's damaging enough.

The second thing is, it is really the first attempt or the first movement to try to drive a wedge between students and the practice of science, because what this really tells students is, you know what, you can't trust the scientific process. You can't trust scientists. They're pushing this theory. And there are gaps in the theory. It's on shaky evidence. You really can't believe them. You should be enormously skeptical. What that tells students basically is, science is not to be relied upon and certainly not the kind of profession that you might like to go into. And thirdly, that third paragraph that we haven't talked about very much right now points out that intelligent design, which has implicit endorsement in this statement, because we don't hear that it's just a theory, we don't hear that it's being tested, it sounds like it's a pretty good explanation. It's available. It's good stuff. And students will understand immediately, as anybody does who reads Pandas, that the argument is made on virtually every page of Pandas for the existence of a supernatural creator designer.

And by holding this up as an alternative to evolution, students will get the message in a flash. And the message is, over here, kids. You got your God consistent theory, your theistic theory, your Bible friendly theory, and over on the other side, you got your atheist theory, which is evolution. It produces a false duality. And it tells students basically, and this statement tells them, I think, quite explicitly, choose God on the side of intelligent design or choose atheism on the side of science.

What it does is to provide religious conflict into every science classroom in Dover High School. And I think that kind of religious conflict is very dangerous. I say that as a person of faith who was blessed with two daughters, who raised both of my daughters in the church, and had they been given an education in which they were explicitly or implicitly forced to choose between God and science, I would have been furious, because I want my children to keep their religious faith.

I also want my students to love, understand, respect, and appreciate science. And I'm very proud of the fact that one of my daughters has actually gone on to become a scientist. So by promoting this, I think, this is a tremendously dangerous statement in terms of its educational effect, in terms of its religious effect, and in terms of impeding the educational process in the classrooms in Dover. THE COURT: I was going to break about 3:00, Mr. Walczak. Is that good for you. If you want to move onto another line of questioning, this might be a good time to do it.