

What Is the Written Debate Offer?

The following offer is for a written, scientific debate on the creation-evolution issue. It addresses a longstanding desire by the public for a comprehensive and understandable comparison of the two main explanations for how everything began—a heated issue in which little constructive dialogue has occurred. Scientific disagreements can and should be discussed without acrimony.

Notice several things about this sincere and fair offer on pages 468–469. Evolutionists who disagree with these proposed debate procedures but wish to participate can propose their own suggestions for a written, strictly scientific debate. They must sign a statement, as I will, that they will abide by the editor’s decisions resolving disagreements about procedures.

*However, **the debate must be restricted to science and avoid religion**, a broader, more complex, and less-structured subject. (Because I am not a theologian, I will not debate those topics. My focus is on the scientific evidence relating to origins.) Scientific methodology is also better understood by more people. Indeed, methods for reaching religious conclusions are diverse, subjective, and cultural. Religious disagreements have been with us for thousands of years. A purely scientific debate will be broad enough.*

Many can participate on the evolutionist side. Only the lead evolutionist must hold a doctorate in either applied or basic sciences. Those who wish to participate but have no formal

qualifications may recruit a lead evolutionist and offer their services to the evolutionist side. (A lack of recognized qualifications does not mean that a person has nothing to contribute. However, without them, many readers might dismiss that side’s case or blame a poor performance, not on a weak case, but on a lack of scientific qualifications.)

Once a lead evolutionist agrees to participate, we will search for and select an editor associated with a large, neutral publisher. I am confident that many publishers will be interested. Those invited may conclude that one or both sides have not demonstrated the ability to produce a credible, unemotional, and thorough case, understandable to most readers. If so, sales of the final, book-length debate would suffer. Sales, after all, are a publisher’s main concern. Editors and publishers may also conclude that one side is unprepared to address all relevant disciplines in the creation-evolution issue: life sciences, astronomical sciences, earth sciences, physical sciences, and their many subdisciplines. If so, the editor and publisher might ask one side to add qualified people to its side or withdraw.

The editor/publisher may require both sides of the debate to sign a contract to complete the manuscript as described in this offer. Because the publisher has “first right of refusal” and makes no commitment to publish the completed debate, the publisher has much to gain with little risk.

Written Debate Offer

The purpose of this debate is:

- a. To provide a vehicle for a dispassionate exchange of scientific data on both sides of a heated issue in which little constructive dialogue has occurred.
- b. To make available to interested readers a clear explanation (in English) of the major scientific evidence on both sides of the creation-evolution issue. Alternate interpretations and counterevidence will be contrasted. The disciplines will include the life sciences, astronomical sciences, earth sciences, and physical sciences (physics and chemistry).

The debate question is: ***Does the scientific evidence favor creation or evolution?*** Each side will present the evidence it feels supports its view of origins and refutes the opposing explanation. Each side will summarize its position in 100 words or less and submit it with this signed paper. (Possible examples are given below.)

- a. The Creation Position:
 - ◆ Everything in the universe, including the stars, the solar system, the earth, life, and man, came into existence suddenly and recently, in essentially the complexity we see today.
 - ◆ Genetic variations are limited.
 - ◆ The earth has experienced a worldwide flood.
- b. The Evolution Position:
 - ◆ Over billions of years, the universe, the solar system, the earth, and finally life developed from disordered matter through natural processes.
 - ◆ All life has a common, single-celled ancestor.
 - ◆ Random mutations and natural selection produced today's many forms of life.

The debate will consist only of scientific evidence and the logical inferences from that evidence. Religious ideas and beliefs, while possibly correct, will not be allowed. The editor will strike such ideas from the record. The “no religion” rule would be violated by

- a. referring to religious writings, such as the Bible or the Qur'an,
- b. ridiculing a deity or religious belief, or
- c. using a religious writing to support a scientific claim. However, using scientific evidence to reach a conclusion that happens to correspond to a religious writing would not be a violation.

The credibility of creation and the flood, as a scientific matter, should rise or fall based on evidence, not the religious beliefs of either side of this debate. If the debaters scrupulously avoid religion, the debate's content can be used in the public schools. Each side will define its terms, organize its evidence, and submit its arguments in whatever way will add clarity to its case.

Debate Procedures

1. One side, selected at random, will begin by nominating a willing editor who is associated with a large publisher. (A large publisher is defined as one with annual sales of more than 10 million U.S. dollars.) The other side can either accept that nomination or propose a different editor-publisher combination. This nomination process will continue until a side has received three nominations. Then it must accept one. The editor must have no strong opinions on the creation/evolution issue.
2. Companies specializing in book design will be asked to bid on all computer aspects of assembling a full-color book with an index. The editor and each side of the debate will vote to select the book's designer. Before the book is published, the publisher will pay the editor and the book's designer. If the book is never published, neither the editor nor book's designer will be paid.
3. Each side of the debate will make four submissions of up to 100,000 words each. Each picture, figure, graph, or sequence of equations will be considered the equivalent of 200 words. Submissions, in a computer-readable form, will be sent to the editor by email at four-month intervals. The first submission will be due four months after the editor is selected. The editor will delete from all submissions any religious ideas, unprofessional remarks, or comments that do not contribute to the debate's intent. Within one month of receiving both submissions, the editor will simultaneously transmit both edited submissions to each side.
4. The editor will:
 - a. Make whatever rulings will help accomplish the debate's purpose.
 - b. Resolve all procedural disagreements raised by either side.
 - c. After consulting with each side, select the style manual to be followed and provide formatting and layout guidance to the book designer.
 - d. Collect a color photograph of each participant and a biographical sketch of 100–200 words.
 - e. Direct each side, if needed, to address the more important unanswered points made by the other side, to include new issues raised during the last submission.
 - f. Terminate the debate if, in his or her opinion, one side is not participating adequately.
 - g. Organize and edit the final written product.
 - h. Write the book's preface, including a description of these agreements and whether or not both sides followed them.
 - i. List for the publisher all of the book's intended artwork, along with costs and copyright owners. The

authors, operating within a budget established by the editor, are responsible for obtaining this information. The eventual publisher will purchase all artwork that is used, design the cover, and obtain an ISBN number and a Library of Congress number.

5. Outside parties who contribute significant ideas, data, or logic to the written product must be cited. Those who contribute substantially to the debate may become joint participants. However, the lead debater for each side, whose signature appears below, is responsible for integrating all viewpoints for his or her side into one coherent case.

6. One side may feel that the other has not adequately documented a claim. If, after consulting with each side, the editor agrees, either the documentation must be provided or the claim withdrawn.

7. One side may feel that the other has quoted an authority out of context. If the editor concurs and the quotation is not qualified or removed, the editor may add a comment.

8. If both sides have difficulty finding certain references cited by the other side, the editor will direct that each side provide specific documents to the other. The editor, after considering the number and costs involved, will balance the burden placed on each side.

9. Each side will be allowed four extensions of one month each. The side requesting the extension must notify the editor and the other side as soon as possible but at least seven days before the submission is due.

10. If one side withdraws from the debate, as confirmed and explained in writing by the editor, the other side will have exclusive rights to publish any or all of the partially completed debate. The remaining side can include in the final published document the 100,000-word submission it was working on at the time of the withdrawal.

11. Within one month after receiving the fourth submission, each side can notify the editor if it feels new issues were raised in that submission. If the editor agrees, he or she may permit responses to those new issues.

12. Each side is encouraged to correct errors in its case. Corrections or deletions of previous arguments are allowed if they do not exceed that submission's word limit. If, however, a correction is suggested by an opponent's

rebuttal, that error can be changed only as described in paragraph 13 below.

13. One month after the fourth submission has been made and all new issues have been answered, each side can propose that certain of its arguments be deleted or modified. This "bartering process" between debaters is intended to aid the reader by eliminating, in balanced fashion, earlier statements that are superfluous or inaccurate, or have been effectively rebutted. The editor will try to facilitate the bartering process.

14. The final form of the written debate should be as clear and readable as possible. Therefore, after the fourth submission, the editor will direct each side to gather into one coherent argument any scattered arguments dealing with a narrow topic. No new ideas can be added in this revision. In this way, readers can easily study and contrast opposing arguments. The completed written debate will be in the format directed by the editor and will include, as far as possible, the evidence and arguments placed side by side and point by point. It will consist of two main parts: (a) the evolution case with the creation rebuttals placed directly below each argument, and (b) the creation case with the evolution rebuttals placed directly below each argument. The book will begin with the shorter of the two cases.

15. One month after revisions are submitted, the editor will send a complete manuscript to each side along with a reasonable deadline for submitting final comments. After the editor finalizes the book, the publisher associated with the editor will have the "first right of refusal" to publish the written debate. If the publisher declines, each side may publish the debate or sell the publishing rights. Printed copies of the debate must contain the entire debate in final form, including the editor's preface.

16. The two debaters, by mutual consent, can modify this agreement.

[INITIAL IF APPROPRIATE] I wish to propose a change to the above procedures (1-16). However, I am willing to have the editor decide the matter after my opponent and I have presented our positions. I will abide by this ruling and participate in the written debate. My proposals are attached.

[Signed and dated by the principal debater for each side. List name, address, phone and FAX numbers, and email address.]

What Is the Recorded and Transcribed Telephone Debate Offer?

The hydroplate theory, explained in this book, shows how a catastrophic, global flood rapidly produced 26 otherwise mysterious features of the earth and solar system. The theory also explains where all the flood water came from and where it went. Failure to understand the flood led to the mistaken belief in evolution over billions of years.

If you know any credible individuals who disagree with the hydroplate theory, but are unwilling to enter a written, publishable debate as explained on pages 467–469, here is their opportunity to show, before a potentially large audience, that they have a scientific case. This is also your opportunity to see if their criticisms have merit. Critics—with your urging, if necessary—should send an email to

phonedebate@creationsscience.com

(1) requesting a recorded telephone debate with Dr. Walt Brown, followed with written exchanges as necessary, and (2) stating that they have read the hydroplate theory (Part II of *In the Beginning* and pertinent cross-references and technical notes). Please include full name, address, phone and FAX numbers, present job, and academic credentials. No particular academic credentials are required.

Walt Brown is able to participate in a 60-minute conference-call debate once a month. The debate will be recorded by goconferencecall.com and will be available to anyone immediately afterward. The recording, in MP3 and WAV format (and its transcription), can be distributed—or broadcast—anywhere by anyone if done in its entirety. Participants may also record the call.

If more than one person wishes to debate Dr. Brown in a given month, the individual with the strongest scientific credentials will be selected. Participants will be notified at least one month before each conference call, and a mutually agreeable time for the call will be arranged. CSC will post a transcript and an audio version of each month's phone debate at

www.creationsscience.com/podcasts/csc_phonedebate_podcasts.rss

Others can do the same at their websites. (*As of this writing, no one has accepted this offer.*)

A neutral debate moderator, jointly selected by both debaters, will be a debate instructor/coach from a randomly selected university or college in the United States. The conference call will begin with the moderator introducing both participants to the listening audience and summarizing the debate rules—namely, that all of the hydroplate theory has been read, and that no religion (only science) will be discussed. The “no religion” rule would be violated in this telephone exchange by

- ◆ referring to religious writings, such as the Bible or the Qur'an,
- ◆ ridiculing a deity or religious belief, or
- ◆ using a religious writing to support a scientific claim. However, using scientific evidence to reach a conclusion that happens to correspond to a religious writing would not be a violation.

After introducing the two debaters, the moderator will ask the hydroplate critic two questions:

- ◆ Is it correct that you have read the hydroplate theory?
- ◆ What is your first criticism of the theory?

Then Dr. Brown will respond and the discussion will focus on the critic's topic and related issues. The moderator's role is not to interview participants, but to listen to the exchange, enforce the rules, and ensure that both sides have about the same speaking time and questioning opportunities. If necessary, the moderator will intervene or edit out statements about religion or unprofessional comments (yelling, repeated interruptions, etc.).

If, in the moderator's opinion, the hydroplate critic has not carefully read the theory, as previously claimed, the moderator will end the conference call. Obviously, a debater's credibility falls apart if it becomes clear that he has not read what he is criticizing. (Dr. Brown cannot take his limited debating time to explain relevant portions of the theory to someone who has chosen not to read it.)

Also, the breadth of the hydroplate theory—purportedly explaining the origin of mountains, volcanoes, coal, oil, earthquakes, the Grand Canyon, ocean basins, the ice age, the frozen mammoths, fossil sorting, layered strata, the rapid drift of the continents, earth's inner and outer core, earth's magnetic field, comets, meteorites, asteroids, earth's radioactivity, and dozens of otherwise strange features on earth—makes a thorough reading even more imperative. *The events that formed each feature relate to and support those that formed all other features—and a global flood.* Dr. Brown will be happy to read before the debate any of the critic's specific, written objections to the hydroplate theory. If complex issues are raised, a follow-on debate could be scheduled for a future month with written exchanges occurring in the interim.

Part II of this book, pages 107-325, explains the hydroplate theory. Scientific information in other parts of the book, such as the Technical Notes, also relates. All are referenced in Part II. A 170-word summary of the hydroplate theory is on page 48, and a one-chapter summary of the theory begins on page 109. Almost all critics of the hydroplate theory have not read it, choose to be anonymous, will not put their science to the test before Dr. Brown (as he will before them), or are scientifically uninformed.