



# DAILY CAMERA

'GIVE LIGHT AND THE PEOPLE WILL FIND THEIR OWN WAY' • ESTABLISHED 1891

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## OPEN FORUM

### EVOLUTION

#### Teaching 'debate' won't shed light

On the assumption that Jason Green (Guest Opinion, Nov. 19) is talking about the science classroom as the context for his confrontation between intelligent design and evolutionary theory, can anyone seriously believe that our teachers are capable of competently teaching this material in ways that would deliver the hoped-for breakthroughs in understanding? Green's claim that debating science and theology would lead to a better understanding of each — and particularly "theology's limits" — is truly absurd. This sounds like David Horowitz calling for the teaching of more conservative viewpoints in college classrooms so that students can get "the other half of the story." Green's claim that "science and theology do not mix" is equally uninformed. Why are so many commentators on this debate, on both sides, so keen to encourage simple-minded, dualistic thinking about the world?

We should teach good evolutionary science in science class and give teachers the resources and moral support that they need to accomplish that. Science has more than enough virtues that, when taught by skilled hands, will get students thinking critically about other ways of knowing. We can then direct students to, or lobby for the creation of, appropriate courses in theology and comparative religion where students can be taught by people trained in the subject.

It's a shame that we don't teach more comparative religion in the public schools, a failing that's lamentable not only because of America's long-standing creation-evolution debate, but also because of current geopolitical realities. This is the curricular challenge for the public schools, not figuring out new ways to screw up science classes so that "both perspectives"

can be taught. If we want to encourage students to "discover for themselves what truth is," then we should make available to them varied and coherent contexts for learning where they can do precisely that, guided and nurtured by educators who actually know what they're talking about.

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