

McLean vs. Arkansas Board of Education

When the Arkansas State created an act entitled the "Balanced Treatment for Creation-Science and Evolution-Science Act" (I think you can read between the lines in that one!), scientists and religious groups alike were outraged. Most of them felt that creationism was not science, and thus had no place in the school system under the heading of biology. They decided to settle it in court, and the plaintiffs were led by the Methodist minister William McLean.

The offending act read: "Creation science means the scientific evidences for creation and inferences from those evidences. Creation science includes the scientific evidences and related inferences that indicate:

Sudden creation of the universe, energy and life from nothing.

The insufficiency of mutation and natural selection in bringing about development of all living kinds from a single organism.

Changes only with fixed limits of originally created kinds of plants and animals.

Separate ancestry for man and apes.

Explanation of the earth's geology by catastrophism, including the occurrence of worldwide flood.

A relatively recent inception of the earth and living kinds."

At the end of the case, the court ruled that creationism was unconstitutional when taught as science. "Creation science," said Judge William Overton, "is not science because it does not meet scientific standards."

After the case, creationism was renamed first as creation sciences and eventually, after that was put down, intelligent design.