

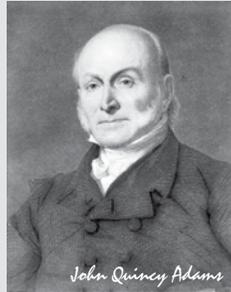
The Founders: Atheists & Deists, or Theists & Christians?

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Since the 1960s, widespread misconceptions regarding the religious orientation of the Founders of the American Republic have prevailed. The prevailing propaganda suggests that most of the Founders were either atheists and religionless at most, or deists at the very least. Deism is currently defined as: “The belief, based solely on reason, in a God who created the universe and then abandoned it, assuming no control over life, exerting no influence on natural phenomena, and giving no supernatural revelation” (*American Heritage*..., 2000, p. 479). This assessment of the Founders’ beliefs is so thoroughly embedded in societal consensus that the one who questions it is immediately discounted as an ignorant fool.

But the real ignorance is seen in the misrepresentation of American history and the successful perpetration of one of the big myths of our time. Immediately after World War II, revisionist historians, who seem to have possessed an ardent hostility toward Christianity, were determined to expunge the role that God, the Bible, and the Christian religion played in the founding of America. Nevertheless, an honest seeker of truth may overcome their big myth by simply returning to the original documents. That seeker will be overwhelmed with the magnitude of the Founders’ reliance on and commitment to God and Christianity.

Take, as one of a myriad of examples, an address delivered by an early President of the United States, John Quincy Adams. Not only did John Quincy live during the founding era (born in 1767), not only was his father a primary, quintessential Founder, but John Quincy was literally nurtured by his father in the vicissitudes and intricacies of the founding of the Republic. John Adams involved his son at an early age in his own activities and travels in behalf of the fledgling nation. John Quincy accompanied his father to France in 1778, became Secretary to the American Minister to Russia, was the Secretary to his father during the peace negotiations that ended the American Revolution in 1783, served as U.S. foreign ambassador, both to the Netherlands and later to Portugal, under George Washington, to Prussia under his father’s presidency, and then to Russia and later to England under President James Madison. He served as a U.S. Senator, and then Secretary of State under President James Monroe, and



John Quincy Adams

then as the nation’s sixth President (1825-1829), and finally as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he was a staunch and fervent opponent of slavery.

Here was a man whose long and distinguished career in behalf of his country was virtually unparalleled. He was sufficiently intimate with the founding era to know whereof he spoke. **He was there**—and his life not only spanned the founding era, but was intricately intertwined with the circumstances surrounding the birth of the country. While Secretary of State, in a July 4, 1821 speech to the citizens of the nation’s capital in Washington, John Quincy Adams articulated a penetrating summary of the theological beliefs of the Founders:

From the day of the Declaration, the people of the North American Union and of its constituent States, were associated bodies of civilized men **and Christians**, in a state of nature; but not of Anarchy. They were bound by **the laws of God, which they all**, and by **the laws of the Gospel, which they nearly all**, acknowledged as the rules of their conduct (1821, p. 26, emp. added).

Observe: this well-qualified eye-witness to and participant in the founding of the Republic claimed that **all** of the Founders believed in the God of the Bible. **Not an atheist among them!** He further claimed that **nearly** all—the vast majority—of the Founders also believed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Christian religion. Case closed. So who should we believe? The ACLU, the NEA, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, revisionist historians, liberal politicians, activist judges, and socialist educators—or John Quincy Adams?

REFERENCES

- Adams, John Quincy (1821), *Address Delivered at the request of a Committee of the Citizens of Washington on the Occasion of Reading the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July, 1821* (Washington: Davis & Force), [On-line], URL: <http://digital.library.umsystem.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?sid=b80c023f0007f89b5b95e4be026fa267;c=jul;idno=jul000087>.
American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2000), (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin), fourth edition.

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For several years, the mainstream scientific community has been trying to dupe the public into believing that dinosaurs evolved into birds. The dinosaur-to-bird theory is patently false, and the “evidence” for it continues to be, not only extremely tenuous, but oftentimes fraudulent.

Recently the public was introduced to *Epidexipteryx hui*. The *Live Science* article described this creature as a “bird-like dinosaur” that “sport[ed] bizarre tail feathers” (Bryner, 2008). This little six-ounce, pigeon-sized creature supposedly gives us new insight into the fact that dinosaurs evolved into birds. Yet a cursory look at the article describing the find shows the uncertainty and faulty assumptions packed into such a conclusion. Bryner, the author of the article, noted that the scientists “are not positive about the dates.” She further noted that researcher Zhonghe Zhou said the creature “cannot be the direct ancestor of birds.”

In addition, Bryner wrote that the “tail feathers” sported by this creature are unlike any feathers any person has ever seen. In fact, Mark Norell, a paleontologist at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, commented on the alleged tail feathers: “These seem to lack that main shaft down the middle and are just a really long collection of very long, filamentous-like structures” (as quoted

in Bryner, 2008). Norell added: “Things more primitive than this [dinosaur] have fully formed feathers. This is just some weirdo kind of thing this animal has” (2008).

In summary, then, a dinosaur that scientists cannot accurately date, which cannot be an ancestor to birds, has some strange filaments unlike any feathers that any scientist has ever seen protruding from its tail. Other creatures supposedly older than this animal have fully formed feathers, yet this little guy allegedly “fills in the gaps about the transition from non-avian dinosaurs to birds” (2008). With all due respect, that is ridiculous. The cold, hard truth of the matter is scientists have never found an animal that is part-dinosaur/part-bird, and they never will. Not only does the biblical record prove that land-living dinosaurs were created **after** birds (Genesis 1), but the law of Biogenesis precludes the possibility of a “transitional” creature.

Kyle Butt

REFERENCE

Bryner, Jeanna (2008), “Bird-Like Dinosaur Sported Bizarre Tail Feathers,” *LiveScience*, [On-line], URL: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,443581,00.html>.

PUBLIC DEBATE

Proposition:

I Know that the God of the Bible Does Not Exist

Affirm: Dan Barker

Co-president, Freedom from Religion Foundation
Former charismatic preacher turned atheist
Frequent debater (over 60 formal debates)
Author of *Losing Faith in Faith* and *Godless*

Deny: Kyle Butt

Apologetics Press
Gospel Preacher, author, lecturer
M.A. (Freed-Hardeman University)
Editor of *Discovery*, Associate Editor of *Reason & Revelation*
Author of *Out With Doubt* and *Behold! The Word of God*
Co-author of *Behold! The Lamb of God* and *Surveying the Evidence*

University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina
Russell House Ballroom

February 12, 2009
7:00 p.m.