February 2006

Dear Alumni and Friends:

The IUPUI School of Science and the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI have combined forces this year to plan what we believe is our best Deans’ Day program ever. Our theme deals with the very topical subject of Science and Faith in our society and we have our very best outstanding faculty and community leaders lined up to cover a wide array of topics relating to the theme.

We hope you and your spouse or friends will plan to join all of us for this intellectually stimulating morning of presentations and question and answer sessions.

Sincerely,

Dan Henkle, President
IU School of Liberal Arts Alumni Association

Lorraine Wright, President
IUPUI School of Science Alumni Association
The Realms of Science and Faith

8:30 – 9:00 a.m. Registration and Coffee and Pastries

9:00 a.m. Opening Remarks -
- Joe Kuczkowski, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Associate Dean Emeritus.

9:05 a.m. “The Realms of Science”
- David Stocum, Ph.D., Professor of Biology, Dean Emeritus, Director of the IU Center for Regenerative Biology and Medicine Science

From the Latin word scientia, is any systematic field of study or body of knowledge that aims to produce reliable explanations of natural phenomena through observation, experiment, and inductive and deductive reasoning. Learn the history of the scientific method and the role of imagination, creativity, and insight in scientific discovery. Understand what science has accomplished for civilization — including limitations in the ability of the scientific method to gain access to the truth about the material world. Discuss the difference between science, art, and religious faith.

9:25 a.m. “The Realms of Faith”
- Marti J. Steussy, Ph.D., MacAllister-Petticrew Professor of Biblical Interpretation, Christian Theological Seminary

Religion (a term chosen to avoid “faith’s” possible implications of unquestioning assent) involves beliefs and actions connected with our sense of ultimate meaning, which in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam derives from relationship to a specific God. Religion helps people to face suffering and death and to behave well. It also helps us interpret moments of awe. Like science, religion can be conceived of as giving answers or as a process of asking questions. Because both religion and science seek to help us understand “reality,” they address some common questions, but to treat them simply as competitors for the same turf is to misunderstand them both.

9:45 a.m. Audience Q&A

10:00 – 10:15 a.m. BREAK

10:15 – 11:15 a.m. “The Origin of Things”
- William Jackson, Ph.D., Professor of Religious Studies and Lake Chair in Religion and Philanthropy

Why are beginnings and origin stories important to people? It is significant that human beings in cultures all around the world have felt that they can know and say how things began – one way or another. I’ll briefly explore some of the implications of this in religious origin stories and scientific ones.
- Kashyap Vasavada, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Physics Department

The Physical Origins of Things
According to modern physics, our universe has an amazing and fascinating structure stretching from sub-atomic world, which is some trillion trillion times smaller than us, to galactic world, which is some trillion trillion times larger than us. Discover how all of this came into being. The subtle physical theories, which explain these, have implications for human beings’ place in the universe and perhaps for a philosophical basis for religions.

11:15 – 12:15 p.m. “What does it mean to be human?”
- David Craig, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Adjunct Faculty in Philanthropic Studies

The Varieties of Human “Meaning”
Debates about religion and science reflect broader questions and concerns about human “meaning.” Discussing which of the many stories and traditions, goals and purposes, best express who we are can help make these debates more meaningful and productive.
- Kathy Johnson, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Psychology Department

Associate Professor of Psychology

What is it that sets Homo sapiens apart from even the most symbol-savvy, tool-using nonhuman primates featured in documentaries? From the perspective of cognitive science, the answer is rooted in the more recently-evolved regions of the cortex that enable humans to plan future actions, reflect upon the past, monitor their own thoughts and behaviors, and — perhaps most importantly — inhibit actions or thoughts intentionally. Humans are almost certainly unique in their capacity to have a sense of “self” and in their ability to acquire and use language to support these cognitive abilities. These capabilities will be argued to serve as fundamental prerequisites to the creation (and evolution) of culture.

- Richard Ward, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Professor of Anthropology

What does the fossil evidence tell us about what it means to be human?
The “missing link” between our non-human ancestors and modern humans has been the holy grail of human evolution. Yet, like the Holy Grail in Dan Browne’s popular novel “The Da Vinci Code” the missing link is more metaphor than reality. The five million year fossil record of human evolution, though far from complete, has no missing links because human evolution has not been a chain of unbroken “progress” toward our present form but rather a fabric of great complexity that we are only beginning to unravel. We will examine some of the more interesting threads to our evolutionary story for insight into when key features that identify us as humans may have first emerged. We will find the term “human” to be associated with a surprising degree of ambiguity.

12:15 – 1:15 p.m. Lunch

- Sheila Sueks Kennedy, J.D., Associate Professor of Law and Public Policy, SPEA, adjunct professor of political science at SLA, Philanthropic Studies, Faculty member, Fellow at the Center for Religion and American Culture, and Tobias Institute Fellow

Different Realities: Religion, Science and the Shaping of Public Policies
Religiously-rooted cultural differences inform U.S. policy more than we realize, even policies based on scientific evidence, from environmental policy to stem cell research and intelligent design/creationism. Americans inhabit different realities, which are virtually all rooted in religious ‘ways of knowing’ even when we do not believe ourselves to be religious.

Deans’ Day
Continuing Education Program

IUPUI School of Science Alumni Association
IU School of Liberal Arts Alumni Association

Saturday, March 4, 2006
University Place Conference Center and Hotel
850 W. Michigan St., IUPUI

Registration
Register online at www.

Name

Guest Name(s)

Address

Day Phone

Email

Cost is $20.00 per person

Checks payable to: IUPUI Office of Alumni Relations

Charge my □ Visa □ MasterCard □ AMEX

Card #     Exp. Date

Signature

Please make reservations no later than February 24, 2006 by returning this form to: IUPUI Office of Alumni Relations 850 West Michigan Street, Suite 241 Indianapolis, IN 46202-5198 or fax to 317-274-5064

For more information call Yvonne Owens at 317-274-5063

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