

# Denying evolution: Creationism, Scientism & the Nature of Science

**T**he conflict between modern science and Christian religious fundamentalism concerning the theory of biological evolution has raged in America throughout the 20th century and shows no sign of abating at the dawn of the 21st century. The problem results from complex social and psychological phenomena, ranging from excess scientism to many forms of anti-intellectualism. This lecture will investigate the roots of the conflict, examine mistakes and logical fallacies committed by both sides, and propose how scientists and educators should approach the problem in the future.

**Monday, February 24, 2003**

**7:30 p.m. • Nebraska Union Auditorium**

14th & R streets • University of Nebraska–Lincoln

**Dr. Massimo Pigliucci**  
University of Tennessee–Knoxville



*Dr. Massimo Pigliucci is an Associate Professor at the University of Tennessee–Knoxville, where he teaches ecology and evolutionary biology. His research concerns the evolution of genotype-environment interactions and the role of constraints in evolutionary biology, and he also has interests in epistemology and the philosophy of science. He has published 71 technical papers and two books on evolutionary biology. Dr. Pigliucci has received several awards from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory for excellence in research and was awarded the Dobzhansky Prize by the Society for the Study of Evolution.*

Sponsored by the Math/Science Education Initiative and  
the College of Arts & Sciences



UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Lincoln

## ADDITIONAL EVENT:

**“Is intelligent design a valid  
scientific alternate to evolution?”**

A debate between **Dr. Massimo Pigliucci** and  
**Dr. Paul Nelson**, philosopher and Senior  
Fellow of the Discovery Institute

**Sunday, February 23, 2003**

**3–4:30 p.m. • free and open to the public**

**St. Paul United Methodist Church**

**1144 M St., Lincoln**

Denying Evolution aims at taking a fresh look at the evolution-creation controversy. It presents a truly "balanced" treatment, not in the sense of treating creationism as a legitimate scientific theory (it demonstrably is not), but in the sense of dividing the blame for the controversy equally between creationists and scientists—the former for subscribing to various forms of anti-intellectualism, the latter for discounting science education and presenting science as scientism to the public and the media. The central part of the book focuses on a series of creationist fallacies (aim Denying Evolution aims at taking a fresh look at the evolution-creation controversy. It presents a truly balanced treatment. creationism is more properly called evolution denial. creationism is not a viable theory of anything, and it is certainly not a scientific theory. ushered in a new age for science, one in which concern for the public acceptance of scientific ideas was as important as their acceptance among peer scientists...these men understood—much like creationists understand today...that in a democracy...it is equally crucial to defend and nurture them in the public's mind. pg 9,10. Science does have a bearing on supernatural hypotheses, and its verdict is uniformly negative. We will discuss five arguments that have been proposed in support of IMN: the argument from the definition of science, the argument from lawful regularity, the science stopper argument, the argument from procedural necessity, and the testability argument. We conclude that IMN, because of its philosophical flaws, proves to be an ill-advised strategy to counter the claims of IDC.