

Ferdie J. Deering

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Don't Confuse Theories With Facts

TWO MEN were discussing a mutual acquaintance. Said one: "Well, no, I wouldn't exactly call him a liar, but he doesn't seem to have any partition between his facts and his imagination."

That may be an apt description of many modern scientists.

Recently I listened for an hour to a recognized educator lecture on the universe, how it began and how it will end. He repeatedly used such expressions as "We now know this or that happened 10 million or 100 billion years ago" and asserted positive knowledge that bodies in space went through certain steps.

It was obvious that he was stating mere scientific speculations but he was stating them as proven facts. He did not separate his facts from his imagination.

The same sort of thing happens almost daily on television "documentaries" or educational programs, and in publications. Nearly all contain declarations that mere suppositions are proven facts.

It is no wonder that there is so much confusion in the world when

what should be honest, reliable sources of information fail to distinguish between truth, assumptions and opinions.

On my bookshelf is a three-volume reproduction of the first edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, published in 1768 "by a society of gentlemen in Scotland." It is subtitled "A Dictionary of Arts and Sciences."

Much of the information therein remains acceptable today but a great deal has been supplanted by new knowledge. One wonders how much of current encyclopedia data will become obsolete by 1999.

Evolutionists often defend their theory that mankind and other forms of life originated spontaneously from single-celled creatures by asserting that creationists base their beliefs upon faith in an unprovable divine power.

It may be just as reasonable to argue that scientists also base many of their beliefs, speculations and assertions upon faith in their own limited observations. Archaeologists and astronomers draw fantas-

tic conclusions from meager evidence.

Mathematics is recognized as a precise science. Yet, a couple of years ago in a published interview Morris Kline, professor emeritus, author and former editor of Mathematics magazine, stated:

"The awareness that mathematics proper did not offer certainty developed around 1900 when scholars who were trying to perfect the logic of mathematics discovered contradictions in what was supposedly the perfected mathematics."

The public and honest scientists both are plagued by ripoff artists who obtain tax money to engage in spurious research projects. Then there are scientists whose superficial studies and misleading declarations have cost the public huge sums of money and great inconvenience before the facts were brought forward.

Scientists are entitled to their opinions but they should separate facts and imagination in their public declarations.

TO THE EDITOR:

The logic displayed by Ferdie Deering in his editorial "Don't Confuse Theories With Facts" is a bit strained.

The workings of stars can be mimicked in laboratories and on the battlefields while the tools used to study that behavior find use in the plants that build the transportation he rides in, but the finding by scientists about the behavior of stars are mere speculation to Ferdie. Does he just "speculate" that he gets around town?

He contends that supporters of evolution speak from their beliefs, speculations and assertions, reaching fantastic conclusions from meager evidence. How many transitional forms should we have before there is ample evidence?

Since Ferdie is calling for reliable, verifiable sources of information, perhaps we should recall how he qualifies his pronouncements on other subjects. The way he hypothesizes about the capacity of religion to make the world wholesome and more to his liking. His careful choice of words as he conjectures about the quality of revelation compared to the evidence of what has and does happen.

Ferdie Deering examines the claims of science, and, finding a poor reflection of his own behavior, cries for them to separate fact and imagination. If he would go on to demonstrate that ability, we would be far more impressed.

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