The ANN Highlights LSU’s Dr. Lee Grismer – An Evolutionary Biologist

On April 27, 2011 the Adventist News Network published an article detailing the thrilling exploits of Dr. Lee Grismer, an evolutionary biologist from La Sierra University, who has “discovered 80 new species of reptiles and amphibians during his 15-year career” at LSU. The article goes on to twice describe Dr. Grismer as an “Adventist field biologist.” (Read the Article)

While there is no doubt that Dr. Grismer’s work is very exciting and thrilling indeed, I personally feel it unwise for the ANN to promote Dr. Grismer as an “Adventist field biologist” when he is one of several LSU professors who are ardently undermining the Seventh-day Adventist position on origins – in no uncertain terms. Dr. Grismer is in fact an ardent evolutionist who believes and teaches his students at LSU that life has existed and evolved on this planet, in a Darwinian manner, over the course of hundreds of millions of years. He teaches his students that the SDA position on origins, the literal six-day creation week in particular, is scientifically ludicrous and even morally dangerous...

In February of 2009, I gave an impromptu presentation at LSU on the topic of creation/evolution. The very next week Drs. Lee Greer and Lee Grismer put together a presentation to challenge my talk on a literal interpretation of
the Genesis account. Dr. Grismer in particular derided students who questioned his evolutionary view on origins suggest that those who hold outdated literal creationist beliefs are the same ones who “fly airplanes into buildings”. This is right in line with the public comments of long-time LSU professor, Dr. Gary Bradley, who declared that the SDA view on a literal creation week is held by the "lunatic fringe" and that he is not about to get up in front of his class and say that mainstream science is a bunch of “bs” – to quote Dr. Bradley in his interview in 2009 with *Inside Higher Ed*.

Such events and comments formed the basis for the rising concern over the promotion of mainstream evolutionary theories in our classrooms. This concern has increased dramatically over the past two years that this issue has gained a degree of public attention within the SDA Church at large. And yet, the ANN sees fit to present such professors as models of Adventist education? the very same professors who have long been deliberately undermining the most basic of SDA fundamental goals and ideals in their classrooms?

Is this not equivalent of the ANN shooting itself in the foot? – promoting LSU’s science department by highlighting the truly thrilling work of one of its evolutionary biologists while failing to explain that this very same man is also boldly attacking the Church’s position on origins as a paid representative of the Church? Does it matter how good and exciting the work may be of any pastor or teacher if this individual is, at the same time, attacking the foundational pillars of the Church? Does the good truly outweigh the negative influence of such individuals when it comes to the primary goals and ideals of the Church as an organization? – or does the good simply act as capsule that helps one swallow the poison a bit more easily?