Radiometric Dating

Naturalists love radiometric dating. Of the nearly 100 ways of inferring the age of the earth (the age cannot be directly measured), exactly two give an old age. The other 98 methods give a young age that fits with 6000 years. The two radiometric processes that give an old age are alpha decay and beta decay. All radiometric methods actually use just these two processes... Except one... Carbon-14 (C-14) dating is a radiometric dating system that occurs using a process different from alpha or beta decay.

Science News to Learn By...

Preserving Dinosaur Tissue

We have written several times regarding soft tissue found in dinosaur fossils and other “ancient” creatures. Naturalists readily admit that the laws of chemistry simply do not allow soft tissue to not rot away for millions of years. Mary Schweitzer, the naturalist who first unleashed this major problem for naturalists, has found a solution! Naturalists cite her paper on her solution and exclaim, “Problem solved!”

When we first saw the solution, we thought that perhaps she had solved the problem. Here is the solution:

Most of us know that formaldehyde is a tissue preserver. In horror movies, we see brains stored in glass jar, submerged in a fluid. The fluid is formaldehyde, the fluid used during embalming so our bodies do not decompose. 

Saturn’s Magnetic Field Not Dynamo Either

We have had a couple stories in the past regarding the fact that the laws of physics forbid the earth to have a magnetic field generated by a dynamo. (And that the physicists know there cannot be a dynamo.) Then the physicists discovered that even if the impossible happened, and the magnetic field was the result of a dynamo, the earth’s dynamo is too old to exist.

The Cassini space probe has been returning amazing photographs and data about the planet Saturn. Recently, as the spacecraft approaches the end of its mission, it has been returning detailed information about Saturn’s magnetic field. Unlike the earth, where magnetic north is not the same as geographical north, Saturn’s magnetic north and geographical north are the same. Physicists tell us that under this condition a dynamo would last a very short period of time. But Saturn’s magnetic field should be over 4 billion years old. The magnetic field should no longer exist. The dynamo theory doesn’t work. It never did.

The Reason For God - 1

Pastor Timothy Keller does not consider himself an apologist (one who supports a viewpoint with logic). But he is actually one of the best apologists for Jesus and the Bible alive today. So, we are going to do a series of articles based on his book, The Reason for God - Belief in an Age of Skepticism. We hope you will explore the possibilities with us over the next several issues.

Our first topic is: Can There Be One True Religion? The key word here,
C-14 dating methods have been considered very reliable since the inception in the 1950's. Here is how it works:

Nitrogen normally has 7 protons and 7 neutrons. An atom that has the same number of protons as neutrons is stable. It likes just the way it is and tries to stay that way. Neutrons ejected from the sun strike some of the nitrogen atoms. When a neutron strikes, it knocks away a proton and adds itself. Because the atom now has only 6 protons, it is now a carbon atom. But, it now has 8 neutrons, making the nucleus unstable. The number of protons plus the number of neutrons is 14 so we call it C-14.

This C-14 atom combines with oxygen to form carbon-monoxide. Plants take in the now-radioactive C-14 and all living things end up having regular carbon (C-12) and radioactive carbon, C-14.

But plants and critters die. When a plant or critter dies, no more carbon enters. C-14 does not like being C-14 because it has more neutrons than protons.

C-14 starts getting rid of the extra two neutrons so it slowly converts into stable C-12. Every 5,730 years, one half of the amount of C-14 currently present will become C-12. So if you start with 100 C-14 atoms, in 5730 years there will be 50 C-12 and 50 C-14 atoms. In two half-lives (2 x 5730 years = 11,460 years) there will be 25 C-14 and 75 C-12 atoms present. The number of C-14 atoms cuts in half every 5730 years. If we compare the ratio of C-14 to C-12, we can determine how many half-lives have occurred and infer how old the item is.

Every critter and plant that has ever lived can be dated using C-14. Except that C-14 dating only works for critters and plants that have been dead for 80,000 years or less. Once the critter/plant has been dead for 80,000 years there is virtually no C-14 left. It has all converted into C-12.

In the 1970's, it was determined that Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) could be used to count the number of C-12 and C-14 atoms in a sample and accurately determine the age. Before each use of the AMS equipment, it must be calibrated. The best way to calibrate the AMS is to put a sample of once-living material, known to have been dead for millions of years, in the AMS, and then take a reading. That reading becomes the standard for zero C-14. It makes sense to calibrate this way. A sample of coal that is supposedly 200 million years old will give a reading of 60,000 years or more (probably more like 80,000 years) and that becomes the zero point.

So they started using various millions-of-years-old samples to calibrate the AMS. They used coal and just about every kind material that could be used to try to calibrate the AMS. A problem arose. Every reading they got was more like 30,000 years or less. This would indicate that the sample died about 30,000 years ago. Every sample they tried gave a young result!

That has resulted in studies like this one: In one study, human bones that were thought to be up to 70,000 years old dated to 5000 years or less. "Ancient human skeletons, when dated by the new Accelerator Mass Spectrometer technique, give surprisingly recent dates. In one study of eleven sets of ancient human bones, all were dated at about 5,000 radiocarbon years or less." R.. E. Taylor, “Major Revisions in the Pleistocene Age Assignments for North American Human Skeletons by C-14 Accelerator Mass Spectrometry”, American Antiquity, Vol. 50, 1985, pp. 136-140. Check the link on our web page to see the paper.

Creationists have hired secular labs to date dinosaur bones and resulting ages range from 5,000 to 15,000 years.

So, how does the naturalist react to this 100% consistent data that confirms that every fossil of anything that was ever alive results in ages of WELL LESS than 60,000 years? "CONTAMINATION!" They exclaim the same thing when THEY get results that don’t fit their assumed time line. Is this a reasonable explanation for the reality of the dates? NO. The labs go to great effort to make sure all contamination is removed from the sample before the dating is done.

Let me illustrate how concerned real naturalist researchers are regarding contamination. Do you have Netflix? Search for “Killer Landslides.” It is a recent PBS NOVA program investigating the 2014 landslide at Oso, WA. The program is very interesting, but if you just want to watch the C-14 dating part, advance to 10 minutes into the show and watch the next two minutes. A geologist takes three samples from three different trees to get a C-14 date for when a previous landslide occurred. All three samples gave a date of 5300 years ago.

"Knowing" of the “tremendous problem” of contamination, I expected the geologist to carefully drill a hole into the log and extract a sample from well inside the wood. After all, the outer surface would have been contaminated by birds and critters doing their “personal business” and more. Here he is at the first log to be sampled:

See next page
not rot away quickly after burial.

It is known among chemists that the iron in hemoglobin, the stuff of red blood cells, will also work as a preservative like formaldehyde, though not quite as well.

So, Schweitzer put blood in a small jar and added some soft tissue from an ostrich. So far, so good. After two years, she looked at the ostrich tissue and proclaimed that it didn’t look like it had rotted at all. So, blood can do the job. Now, that is a little suspicious. No objective measurements were made. We realize that objective measurements would actually not be possible, so we will just have to trust her memory...

Not very good science. Then there is the problem that the experiment was ended. Seems that if you want to show blood can do the job for 65 million years, you might want to run the experiment a few decades. THEN, I read the details of the study. First, upon opening the container of blood, she immediately added anticoagulants. Otherwise the entire jar would quickly harden into a giant scab. That would prevent the iron from being able to chemically combine with the soft tissue. Then, to make sure no scab affect could occur, she used a centrifuge to remove all platelets, white bloods cells and lipids.

Hmmm. I tell you what, when a dinosaur fossil is found beside a fossilized chemisty lab, with chemist and a centrifuge, I’ll give this possibility some consideration. This terrible “research” was actually published. That is how desperate naturalists are to avoid the obvious fact that soft tissue, like C-14 dating, shows dinosaurs were buried just a few thousand years ago in Noah’s Flood.

**FAST Adaptation**

The critters in a basic kind diversify 

**FAST**. The Atlantic Killifish is a great example. The paper written about its amazingly fast adaptation rightly credits “Extremely high levels of genetic variation.” Jesus built an amazing amount of diversity in the gnome of creatures and gave DNA and the rest of a cell’s structure (yes, recent research shows that the DNA code actually plays a minor role in adaptation) the Artificial Intelligence to quickly express new characteristics in a changed environment. Read the story by clicking the link on our web home page to see how naturalists accidently make it clear that Killifish are amazingly designed.

You see, “natural selection” has been found to be meaningless. Nature does not and cannot select. The Artificial Intelligence built into the cell adapts to new environments. “Natural selection” can be shown for what it is very simply. When a mountain lion gets hungry, which deer will he eat? The next one! The slowest mountain lion can run down the fastest deer. It is selection of the lucky, not the most fit. That means “selection” is random luck, which accomplishes nothing. Incredible design lets a critter adapt to a new environment very quickly. That is why there is so much diversity after just 4300 years since The Flood. CRM

Now he takes the sample:

That’s right. You are seeing correctly. He is ripping a piece of bark off the log. And then proudly states that he has his sample:

If contamination was a concern, he would have gone to some effort to avoid it, but he didn’t. Yet, all three samples, from three different trees, gave the exact same result, 5300 years!

Naturalists don’t understand why the dates seem off for old items, but the consistency of dates indicate there is no contamination and the methodology is dependable. They just start with the wrong assumption of an old earth.

In review. There are nearly 100 ways to infer the age of the earth. 98 of them give ages that fit with an earth 6000 years old. One radiometric method is among the methods that confirm a young earth. Two radiometric methods give millions and billions of years and they are extremely inconsistent in results. For example, lava flows on the north rim of the Grand Canyon give dates of about 1 million to over a billion years depending on which radiometric method you use.

Wait a minute, I hear you say. Why ages that are greater than 6000 years? What’s up with that? I’ll explain. C-14 is the result of a natural process described at the start of this article. The amount of C-14 in the atmosphere at the time of creation was zero. There was much less C-14 in the atmosphere at the flood than there is now, so using “now” as the standard for C-14 dating gives false readings that are much too high. When corrected for this fact, the dates fit a 6000 year old earth very consistently.

**More of the data better fits a young-earth-creation scenario than and old-earth-naturalism scenario**

G ood, in the person of Jesus, is the creator of the laws of physics and chemistry that conclusively show that the Bible is accurate in describing the history of our 6000 year-old earth home, the universe, you and me. CRM
and the complaint of the skeptic, is that Christianity is exclusive. That it is intolerant for one religion to say that religion holds True Truth and everybody else is wrong. Several solutions are offered for this “problem.”

1 **Outlaw religion.** That has been tried in several countries. But those countries have the fastest expanding Christian populations in the world today! And, as Alister McGrath states in his history of atheism: *The 20th century gave rise to one of the greatest and most distressing paradoxes of human history: that the greatest intolerance and violence of that century were practiced by those who believed that religion caused intolerance and violence.* The additional problem is that atheism is a religion. We ALL have religion. It is impossible to do away with it.

2 **Condemn religion.** Teach it away. That is the approach we see at work in the western world, including the USA. The problem is that the process simply establishes one totalitarian religion as the only acceptable religion. We see that at work on college campuses when you toe the line politically or you are shunned. This can take several forms:

   * All religions are basically the same and teach the same things. This approach states that there is really no difference in religions. That each is simply a different approach to the same god. But Hindus have 330 million gods and Buddhists have none. Obviously, atheists have none. The doctrine advocated says that doctrine doesn’t matter. But that belief is a doctrine too, so it is self-refuting.

   * Each religion is part of the truth, but none see the whole truth. Some give this illustration: Several blind men approach an elephant. One touches the trunk, another a leg, another the tail and so on. None can imagine the entire elephant, each can only describe the part they are touching. That is supposedly spiritual reality. All religions are really just part of the whole story. Every religion and person is blind and cannot see the whole picture. This concept is also self-refuting. The person presenting the analogy seems at first to be quite humble. But the opposite is true. That person is claiming to be the only person who is not blind, who can see the whole picture. Only his/her vision is the supposedly accurate one.

   * Religious belief is too culturally and historically conditioned to be True. This approach is opposite the previous one. This approach claims that all religions are false. Each religion is simply the outgrowth of the culture in which they were founded. But, doubt and skepticism must also be learned according to this view. If you can’t trust the truth of religion, neither can you trust this claim. Once again, the idea is self-refuting.

   * Evolution has led to religious belief. Religion is simply a survival tactic. It is not the result of logical thought. This one is not in Keller’s book, but since this is a newsletter about science, I’ve added the evolutionists’ approach. Evolution has led to a belief in evolution. It is simply a survival tactic. It is not based on logic.

3 **Keep religion private.** Simply put, this is impossible. There are moral questions in life. If there weren’t there would be no laws to follow. But every law is a statement about morals. Went over the speed limit? That will be $100. Killed somebody? That will be life in prison. Not only are the laws a statement of morality, but so is the punishment attached to unlawful behavior. We cannot keep religion private. The only question you have if you try to keep all religion private is whose religion will dictate what is moral and what is not. It reminds me of two situations. One was a series of articles in the Red Rock News in 2003 and the other was an audience comment at a meeting to hear an atheist give a talk. In both cases, the person told us how we should live, concluding that we should never proselytize (tell others about our religion... How we should live). Again, this position is simply impossible. And, in countries like China where it has become governmental policy, the people ignore the law and Christianity flourishes (which is why I am not concerned that Christianity is being discriminated against more and more in the USA... that will be the biggest factor that will grow my religion!)

**Christianity stands out in several ways.** All are welcome to join us. It is Christians who have built medical clinics in the jungles of Africa, South America and Southeast Asia. It is Christians who started the university system worldwide and build schools in impoverished neighborhoods worldwide today. It is Christians who went to the Gulf Coast by the thousands to help people rebuild after Katrina. We do these things for everyone, regardless of their religious belief simply because Jesus told us to reach out and help others. Hope you will join us! CRM

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**QUOTE:**

“The troubles of the radiocarbon dating method are undeniably deep and serious. Despite 35 years of technological refinement and better understanding, the underlying assumptions have been strongly challenged... It should be of no surprise, then, that fully half of the dates are rejected. The wonder is, that the remaining half came to be accepted. The implications of pervasive contamination and ancient variations in carbon-14 levels are steadfastly ignored by those who base their argument upon the dates... While the method cannot be counted on to give good, unequivocal results, the numbers do impress people, and save them the trouble of thinking excessively.”


**POINT:**

This quote is perfect example of being unable to solve a problem because of wrong assumptions. C-14 dating is not perfect by any means, though it is the best of the time estimating dating methods. Where alpha decay and beta decay radiometric dating methods usually conflict with each other by huge margins, C-14 dating is extremely consistent. Because it has been calculated that it would take 30,000 years for C-14 to go from 0% to a stable percentage (there is some fluctuation) of the atmospheric carbon, it is assumed that the amount is now stable because it is assumed the earth is much older than 30,000 years. But it was shown conclusively from the start of C-14 dating that the amount of C-14 in the atmosphere has not yet reach equilibrium. It is presently off by 25%, a far larger amount than normal fluctuations would cause. If you start with zero C-14 6000 years ago, the dates fit together perfectly.