

Otherwise, Christians will be on a path of blissful ignorance, ignoring the trends and challenges around them, and failing to cast a Christ-centered eye over them. Ramm is to be congratulated for showing the relevance of theology and that some theologians are open to ongoing debate over science and its implications.

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56315/PSCF9-23Padgett>

1973

CARL E. ARMERDING, "Biblical Perspectives on the Ecology Crisis," *JASA* 25, no. 1 (1973): 4–9.

I first ran into the journal in a college library. I have long been something of a library hound, enjoying a fine collection and walking the shelves to see what might look interesting. I was a transfer to a Christian college from two secular colleges, and had not even heard of any such thing as "Christian scholarship" or "faith and learning," being a recent convert to Christianity from a background in math and physical sciences. The *JASA/PSCF* ("the journal" herein) was displayed in the new issues rack near the entrance. Imagine how wonderful it was for a young Christian with my background to run into an entire *journal*, a whole *association*, devoted to this new idea that robust Christian faith and serious, academic and scientific research and inquiry can and should belong together! While I could not afford to go to any conferences, I did read each new issue with great interest, and perused the back issues in the serials collection. The library had the entire print set, I was happy to discover.

I used the journal as a kind of introduction to the field of science and Christian theology. Often I would find an author introduced, or a footnote to a standard work, in its pages. That would send me to the card catalog (!) (soon to be the computer terminal), to seek other works by the same author. Sometimes I would find the book itself in the good old Southern California College library (now Vanguard University). The librarians were friendly and helpful, offering to order books from other libraries if they did not have it. Looking back, I am sure they found it odd to find a student who would come across a journal, and start to read it right away. I did that a lot with the journal, new issues and old volumes alike.

It was in the pages of the journal that I was introduced to important topics. Serious and learned debate about origins and evolution was there, to be sure, but also discussion about a range of scientific issues I simply had never thought of from a faith perspective. Looking back at those issues in the 1970s and 1980s, I see some old friends and much respected scholars and authors I first discovered there. Bernard Ramm, Ron Numbers, Richard Bube, Al Plantinga, J. W. Haas, George Murphy, and Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen were scholars I would learn from for a long time, in articles and in important books. New areas of science and theology were also found in its pages, or at least, new to me! Grounded in the physical sciences, I first learned about the Bible and our ecological crisis in an article from 1973 by Carl Armerding (a fine OT scholar as I later discovered). Then of course I had to go back and read the articles he was responding to (by Kenneth Hare and Richard Wright).

In the journal I also discovered that the social sciences, too, can and should be integrated or in dialogue with Christian theology and sacred scripture. In short, reading the pages of the journal was an access point for theology and the sciences. Thinking back to those days, I am grateful to God, and to these early Christian authors, scholars, editors and others, who created in the journal a forum for scholarly, thoughtful, engaging, and respectful dialogue in an area of research and learning I would spend many decades enjoying. Thank you!

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56315/PSCF9-23Moshier>

1979

DAVIS A. YOUNG, "Flood Geology Is Uniformitarian!" *JASA* 31, no. 3 (1979): 146–52.

A coworker at the major oil company where I worked handed me a dog-eared and underlined copy of an article from the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*. It was not my introduction to the author, Davis Young, whose book *Creation and the Flood* (Baker, 1977), I had recently read. But "Flood Geology Is Uniformitarian!" was my introduction to the ASA and its journal. Now, uniformitarianism presumes that Earth history can be interpreted from the study of rocks having formed by presently

Article

Twenty-Five ASA Fellows and Editors Tell of PSCF Articles That Changed Their Lives

observable geologic processes, or otherwise by processes conforming to natural laws and conditions. Young Earth Creationism and flood geology presume unfamiliar catastrophic and often miraculous (unnatural) interventions.

The relatively short article provided both philosophical and historical contexts to the propositional concerns that mainstream geologists, including Christians like me, have with flood geology as promoted by its advocates. Using their examples, Young explained how flood geologists misunderstood the practical meaning and application of uniformitarianism in their rejection of mainstream geological interpretations and their catastrophist re-interpretations. He also responded to their theological proposition that uniformitarianism was, at its base, unbiblical. His historical review distinguished methodological uniformitarianism, as practiced by mainstream geologists, from substantive uniformitarianism, a variant that would presume no catastrophic processes in the formation of rocks or landscapes. Young states,

The fact of the matter is that flood catastrophists spend considerable effort in beating a dead horse, because it is highly questionable whether any significant number of geologists has held to anything like substantive uniformitarianism for a number of years. (p. 149)

Of historical note, the discovery of the global deposit of meteoric “dust” attributed to the mass extinction of the dinosaurs some 66 million years ago would be published in 1980. The Chicxulub Impact has become the posterchild for methodological uniformitarianism that embraces the possibility of natural catastrophe, even worldwide.

Finally, Young provides examples of how flood geology is full of uniformitarian applications, in its advocates’ interpretations of various geological features, such as fossil graveyards and submarine debris flow deposits (turbidities). And when all else fails, Young points out the biblical catastrophists’ regular appeal to miracle, in order to compress the geologic timescale from billions to thousands of years duration.

This article appears to be Davis Young’s first in *JASA*. His articles effectively advanced earlier journal contributions pertaining to the geosciences by Laurence Kulp (1950s), William Tanner (1960s), and Daniel

Wonderly (1970s). More recently, Keith Miller and Carol Hill are geologists who have written provocative *PSCF* articles that advance the geoscience-faith dialog yet further.

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56315/PSCF9-23Davis>

1984

CONRAD HYERS, “Dinosaur Religion: On Interpreting and Misinterpreting the Creation Texts,” *JASA* 36, no. 3 (1984): 142–48, and CONRAD HYERS, “The Narrative Form of Genesis 1: Cosmogenic, Yes; Scientific, No,” *JASA* 36, no. 4 (1984): 208–15.

I still remember when the September 1984 issue of what was then called the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation* arrived in my mailbox. We had just moved to Nashville for my first academic job after defending my dissertation at Indiana University in August. My initial thought was, I’m glad the ASA got my address change processed in time for this issue. On the way back to our apartment, I glanced at the table of contents on the back cover and quickly noticed an article called “Dinosaur Religion: On Interpreting and Misinterpreting the Creation Texts,” by an author I did not recognize, Conrad Hyers. Oh well, I thought, an article attacking creationism. I was hoping for something different. Maybe I’ll read it, maybe I won’t.

I decided to read it—and I couldn’t put it down. It was all new to me, and it transformed my thinking right down to this day. Once I started teaching students at Messiah about science and the Bible a few years later, I assigned it in every course where it topically fit.

As it happens, I never met Hyers, a Presbyterian minister with a doctorate from Princeton Seminary who taught religion for many years at Gustavus Adolphus College. If I had, I would have told him how important his article was to me and my students—many of whom responded to it just as I did: these ideas are really important. Why haven’t I heard this before? Although he did not use terminology associated with the “Framework View” of Genesis, that is basically what he believed (a second article of his published in the next issue nails this down). What