

Religious Audiences and the Topic of Evolution: What do your students think about intelligent design as you address the topic of evolution in your classes

This video was recorded at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History on April 30, 2017

- Jamie Jensen: 00:26 That's a very good question. I'm just speaking from personal experience in the classroom, because we address that directly, is what do you think about intelligent design. Intelligent design seems to be a very attractive idea to LDS people. But I think that based on, again, my experience from students, they're misinterpreting what intelligent design is. When they say intelligent design, they mean theistic evolution or evolutionary creation. Am I saying that right?
- Lee Meadows: 00:53 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Jamie Jensen: 00:54 And when I ask them, "What do you mean by intelligent design?" they generally say, "Well, that evolution happened, but God guided it." And I firmly explain that that's not the same thing, and we need to talk about it. I mean, it's possible that they may say, "Oh yeah, I meant intelligent design when I checked that survey box." But I would venture to guess, even though they're thinking intelligent design in their head, they actually mean theistic evolution.
- Audience member: 01:25 [inaudible 00:01:22].
- Jamie Jensen: 01:30 So not just natural selection, but common ancestry. And we did see some respondents that fell into that category of, "I believe in adaptation, natural selection, but no large speciation events." So there could be some overlap there with intelligent design. We didn't ask that, intelligent design, surprisingly, at least in the hundreds of essays that I read, never came up. It was never mentioned. But that adaptation only is a big thing that we do see. And we're actually doing some research at BYU on how do we get them over the barrier to speciation events, because that's another hard one for them. Yeah.

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