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The threat of creationism in public education continues to occupy the headlines in the United Kingdom, prompted in part by a propaganda blitz on the part of a newly formed creationist organization styling itself Truth in Science. In September 2006, Truth in Science sent packets of creationist teaching material, including two "intelligent design" DVDs, to the science heads of every secondary school (of which there are about 5700) in the United Kingdom. The *Guardian* (November 27, 2006) [reports](#) [4] that Truth in Science is claiming to have received 59 positive responses. On November 1, 2006, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills [replied](#) [5] to a member of parliament's question about the Truth in Science packets by saying, "Neither intelligent design nor creationism are recognised scientific theories and they are not included in the science curriculum," adding, "the Truth in Science information pack is therefore not an appropriate resource to support the science curriculum."

According to the *Telegraph* (November 28, 2006), however, there is concern that the government's disclaimers are insufficient. James Williams, head of science teacher training at Sussex University, [told](#) [6] the newspaper that hundreds of schools may be teaching creationism in science classes: "The problem we have got is that no one has carried out any proper research to find out how widespread the teaching of creationism and aspects of creationism are in science." Williams also blamed the government for failing to resolve ambiguity in its guidelines for biology curricula, such as a syllabus that required students to be able to "explain that the fossil record has been interpreted differently over time (eg creationist interpretation)," leading to confusion that creationists are now exploiting. The *Telegraph* also reported that "a spokesman for the DfES [Department for Education and Skills] said that new guidance would clarify its position that creationism cannot be debated in science."

The scientific establishment in the United Kingdom is also reacting to the campaign. The developmental biologist Lewis Wolpert told the *Guardian*, "There is just no evidence for intelligent design, it is pure

religion and has nothing to do with science. It should be banned from science classes," and Lord Rees, the Astronomer Royal and the president of the Royal Society of London, [responded](#) [7] to a question about the teaching of creationism by answering, "As a scientist, I feel that science is part of our culture and anyone is culturally deprived who can't appreciate how our universe evolved from mysterious beginnings to the creation of atoms, stars, planets, biospheres and eventually brains that can wonder about it all and share in the wonder and mystery" (*Guardian*, November 30, 2006). In a 2005 address, his predecessor, Lord May, decried the prospect of "creationism, or its disguised variant 'intelligent design', in the science classroom."

Among the groups opposing creationism in the United Kingdom are the [British Humanist Association](#) [8], which describes itself as "in the forefront of bringing creationism in British schools to public attention early in 2002," and [Ekklesia](#) [9], a Christian think tank; in September 2006, the two groups together petitioned the government to ensure that "guidelines are explicit in requiring teachers to maintain a wholly scientific perspective." In a press release, BHA and Ekklesia [emphasized](#) [10] that they joined forces "to make it absolutely clear that the issue of the integrity of evolutionary theory as a cornerstone for teaching modern biology is not one of religious or non-religious conviction, but a matter of straightforward scientific truthfulness." Ekklesia later [reported](#) [11] that they were assured that DfES is working "to find a suitable way of communicating to schools" that creationism is not part of the national science curriculum. Also active is the [British Centre for Science Education](#) [12], which is increasingly being consulted by the British media for comment.

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