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"Judgment Day" Accurate, NCSE Reports [3]

November 13, 2007 -- The National Center for Science Education congratulates the producers of *Judgment Day*, a documentary about the seminal Kitzmiller v. Dover trial of 2005, for its accurate portrayal of the case that showed intelligent design to be a specific religious viewpoint. *Judgment Day* premieres on November 13, 2007, on PBS stations nationwide.

"NCSE has been studying the influence of creationism and its assault on science education for the past twenty years," said Eugenie C. Scott, NCSE's executive director. "*Judgment Day* accurately portrays the events that led to the legal decision that it is unconstitutional to teach intelligent design in public school science classrooms."

NCSE served as a consultant for the plaintiffs' successful legal team in the case, and three members of its board of directors -- Kevin Padian, professor of integrative biology at the University of California, Berkeley; Barbara Forrest, professor of philosophy at Southeastern Louisiana University; and Brian Alters, professor of education at McGill University -- testified as expert witnesses at the trial.

Research in the NCSE archives played a crucial role in demonstrating the links between intelligent design and previous forms of creationism. "They tried to make an end-run around an earlier generation of legal rulings by switching the word 'creation' to 'intelligent design' in drafts of a creationist textbook," commented Nick Matzke, NCSE's scientific consultant for the Dover plaintiffs and now a doctoral student in integrative biology at the University of California, Berkeley. "We found documents in the NCSE archives which were 'missing links' in this evolution of creationism."

"Intelligent design has been judged by both the scientific community and a court of law to be a form of creationism," explained Richard Katskee, assistant legal director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State and co-counsel for the plaintiffs. "It isn't science and it doesn't belong in the science classroom."

On December 20, 2005, Judge John E. Jones III ruled that intelligent design is "a religious argument. In that vein, the writings of leading ID proponents reveal that the designer postulated by their argument is the God of Christianity ... The overwhelming evidence at trial established that ID is a religious view, a mere re-labeling of creationism, and not a scientific theory. ... It is therefore readily apparent to the Court that ID fails to meet the essential ground rules that limit science to testable, natural explanations. Science cannot be defined differently for Dover students than it is defined in the scientific community."

NCSE board member Barbara Forrest's expert testimony about the history of the intelligent design movement played a key role in the ruling. "The intelligent design movement is a direct descendant of 'creation science' and employs virtually all of the arguments and terminology used by earlier creationists. Most important, like earlier forms of creationism, ID is driven by the same religious motives and goals," Forrest commented. "The NCSE archives provided primary sources critical to showing how ID's arguments, ideas, and people simply moved from 'creation science' to 'intelligent design.'" The National Center for Science Education maintains an archive of transcripts, expert reports, legal filings, and other documents related to the Kitzmiller trial on a website at <http://ncse.com/resources/kitzmiller> [4].

The National Center for Science Education is a nonprofit organization dedicated to defending the teaching of evolution in the public schools. The NCSE maintains its archive of source material on the history of creationism at its Oakland, California, headquarters. On the web at www.ncseweb.org [5].

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