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The Atlas of Creation, a massive volume by the pseudonymous Islamic creationist Harun Yahya [distributed](#) [4] throughout Europe in early 2007, is now being circulated to scientists in the United States. *The New York Times* (July 17, 2007) [reports](#) [5] that copies of the book are "turning up, unsolicited, in mailboxes of scientists around the country and members of Congress, and at science museums in places like Queens and Bemidji, Minn. At 11 x 17 inches and 12 pounds, with a bright red cover and almost 800 glossy pages, most of them lavishly illustrated, 'Atlas of Creation' is probably the largest and most beautiful creationist challenge yet to Darwin's theory, which Mr. Yahya calls a feeble and perverted ideology contradicted by the Koran."

Among the recipients were University of California, Berkeley, paleontologist Kevin Padian (who serves as president of NCSE's board of directors) and Brown University cell biologist Kenneth R. Miller (a Supporter of NCSE). Both marveled at the production values of the *Atlas*, with Miller estimating that such a book would cost at least \$100 in a retail bookstore, but both were dismissive of its content, with Padian commenting that Harun Yahya "does not really have any sense of what we know about how things change through time." Padian added that he thought that the distribution of the *Atlas* would have little effect in the United States: "We are used to books that are totally wrongheaded about science and confuse science and religion."

It is unclear how the recipients were chosen. The *Times* noted the irony that Padian and Miller, who served as expert witnesses for the plaintiffs in *Kitzmiller v. Dover*, in which teaching "intelligent design" creationism in the public schools was ruled to be unconstitutional, were on the list, as was Ohio State University biologist Steve Rissing (a member of NCSE), a long-time defender of education evolution. It is also unclear how the campaign is funded. Truman State University physicist Taner Edis (a member of NCSE), author of the recent book *An Illusion of Harmony: Science and Religion in Islam* (Prometheus

Books, 2007), told the *Times* that Harun Yahya's activities are generally described in the Turkish press as funded by donations, adding, "But what that can mean is anybody's guess."

Toward the end of the article, the *Times*'s reporter wrote, "As the scientists ponder what to do with the book -- for many, it is too beautiful for the trash bin but too erroneous for their shelves -- they also speculate about the motives of its distributors." (The *Times* was unable to reach the shipper; the publisher, Global Publishing of Istanbul; or Harun Yahya himself.) NCSE's executive director Eugenie C. Scott commented, "My hypothesis is, like all creationists, they believe that they have a startling truth that the public has been shielded from, and that if they present the facts, in quotation marks, that the scales will fall from the eyes and the charade of evolution will be revealed." She added, "These people are really serious about this."

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