



Published on NCSE (<https://ncse.com>)

[Home](#) > Darwin's Darkest Hour

---

SHARE TWEET EMAIL [PRINT](#) [1]

[Glenn Branch](#) [2]

09.24.2009

## [Darwin's Darkest Hour](#) [3]



*Darwin's Darkest Hour* — a new drama about Darwin's decision to publish his work on evolution — will air on October 6, 2009, on public broadcasting stations around the country. According to a [press release](#) [4] (PDF):

NOVA and National Geographic Television present the extraordinary human drama that led to the birth of the most influential scientific theory of all time. Acclaimed screenwriter John Goldsmith (*David Copperfield*, *Victoria and Albert*) brings to life Charles Darwin's greatest personal crisis: the anguishing decision over whether to "go public" with his theory of evolution. Darwin, portrayed by Henry Ian Cusick (*Lost*), spent years refining his ideas and penning his book the *Origin of Species*. Yet, daunted by looming conflict with the orthodox religious values of his day, he resisted publishing — until a letter from naturalist Alfred Wallace forced his hand. In 1858, Darwin learned that Wallace was ready to publish ideas very similar to his own. In a sickened panic, Darwin grasped his dilemma: To delay publishing any longer would be to condemn all of his work to obscurity — his voyage on the *Beagle*, his adventures in the Andes, the gauchos and bizarre fossils of Patagonia, the finches and giant tortoises of the Galapagos. But to come forward with his ideas risked the fury of the Church and perhaps a rift with his own devoted wife, Emma, portrayed by Frances O'Connor (*Mansfield Park*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Steven Spielberg's *Artificial Intelligence*), who was a strong believer in the view of creation and honestly feared for her husband's soul. *Darwin's Darkest Hour* is a moving drama about the birth of a great idea seen through the inspiration and personal sufferings of its brilliant originator.

Further information about the film, including a preview and interviews with John Goldsmith and Henry Ian Cusick, is [available](#) [5] at NOVA's website. Information on finding local public broadcasting stations is

[available](#) [6] via PBS's website.

[General](#) [7]

[2009](#) [8]

[National](#) [9]

[+ read](#) [3]

---

**Source URL:** <https://ncse.com/news/2009/09/darwins-darkest-hour-005067#comment-0>

#### **Links**

[1] <https://ncse.com/printpdf/13447>

[2] <https://ncse.com/users/glenn>

[3] <https://ncse.com/news/2009/09/darwins-darkest-hour-005067>

[4] [http://streams.wgbh.org/online/pressroom/2009\\_09/NOVAFall09.pdf](http://streams.wgbh.org/online/pressroom/2009_09/NOVAFall09.pdf)

[5] <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/darwin/index.html>

[6] <http://www.pbs.org/stationfinder/index.html>

[7] <https://ncse.com/general>

[8] <https://ncse.com/news/2009>

[9] <https://ncse.com/news/national>