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Walter R. Hearn, a biochemist active in defending evolution within evangelical circles, died on April 11, 2017, at the age of 91, [according](#) [4] to the American Scientific Affiliation (April 14, 2017). As Ronald L. Numbers wrote in *The Creationists* (1992), "As one of the first biochemists to play an active role in the ASA, Hearn felt a God-given responsibility to inform members about the growing importance [in the 1950s] of biochemistry in theories of evolution ... Because of his outspokenness, he often found himself the center of controversy with the ASA, but because of his unfailingly sweet temper, he seldom made enemies."

"Everybody in the 'science-faith game' has a history," Hearn [wrote](#) [5] in a 2014 essay. "As a minor-league player recalling many seasons, what 'strikes' me is the number of 'big-leaguers' I've actually known." He proceeded to relate his encounters with such figures as Harry Rimmer, Henry Morris, Ronald L. Numbers, John C. Greene, John Polkinghorne, Duane Gish, Francis Collins, Phillip Johnson, Michael Denton, Forrest Mims, Robert Russell, Ian Barbour, and NCSE's Eugenie C. Scott. Especially with regard to evolution, Hearn often stepped up to the plate himself, though. In the last thirty years, for example, he coauthored *Teaching Science in a Climate of Controversy* (1986), which sought — with mixed success — to advise teachers how to defuse creationism/evolution controversies; appeared in the WGBH/NOVA series *Evolution* (2001) to discuss the 1961 furor over evolution at Wheaton College; and contributed a chapter to *Darwin and the Bible: The Cultural Confrontation* (2009). He was a loyal member of the American Scientific Affiliation for over fifty years, editing its newsletter for twenty-three years, serving in the 1960s

as the book review editor of its journal (where he published negative reviews of Whitcomb and Morris's *The Genesis Flood*), and regularly contributing to its publications.

Hearn was born in Houston, Texas, on February 1, 1926. He attended Rice University, where he earned his B.A. in chemistry in 1948, and the University of Illinois, Urbana, where he received his Ph.D. in biochemistry in 1951. He taught at the Yale School of Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine, and finally Iowa State University from 1955 to 1971. He was elected as a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1963. From 1978 to his death, he was professor of Christianity and science at New College Berkeley, part of the Graduate Theological Union. Hearn was the author also of *Being a Christian in Science* (1997).

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