

I'll Follow the Son

By Crispin Sartwell
Capital Times Advisor

Copies of Nicolas Copernicus' masterwork **De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium** are disappearing from libraries around the world. The book summarizes Copernicus' interesting but obviously false theory that the earth revolves around the sun rather than vice versa.

First editions, worth maybe half a million bucks each, have been pilfered from Kiev, St. Petersburg, Champaign-Urbana, Krakow, Stockholm and so on. Police have developed the theory that the thefts are being perpetrated on behalf of some obsessed collector who eventually would like to acquire all 260 copies of the 1543 edition. But I have another idea. I think someone (don't worry, Alan Keyes and Pat Robertson, I won't say who) is trying to rid the world of pernicious heliocentrism. Once there are no more extant copies of Copernicus, the earth will return to the center of the universe; *the Bible and we who take it literally will once again be vindicated.*

Perhaps you recall a little to-do between the Catholic Church and this dude named Galileo who seemed to think that observations made through his delusory

invention the "telescope" confirmed Copernican astronomy. The church forced him to recant. Well, its too damn late to force Nicolas to recant; his book was published after he was dead and he's already being spit-roasted by Satan. But it's never too late to defend the literal truth of scripture against the ridiculous and illogical theories of so-called scientists. Silencing the enemies of God never goes out of style.

You've got to check out a website called www.fixedearth.com which declares boldly that "there is no proof that the earth rotates on a (sic) "axis" daily and orbits the sun annually. None." And yet there is rich evidence that the sun moves in relation to the earth: "Then spake Joshua. . . Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still . . . and hastened not to go down about a whole day" (Joshua 10:12).

Many ancient Greek philosophers believed such primitive myths as that the earth was round (*they even calculated its approximate "circumference"!*), that the earth revolved around the sun as did the other planets, that the earth rotated on its axis, and so on. But with the help first of Aristotle and then of Ptolemy, they came to see the error of their

ways. The earth was fixed in space and the sky was a kind of vault or planetarium above us in which little dots of light moved in seemingly arbitrary epicycles.

It has been pointed out that the Ptolemaic system was jerry-rigged and ad hoc, and that it was utterly discredited by the "telescope," not to speak of space travel. But when you think about it carefully, being jerry-rigged, arbitrary, or even baldly ridiculous, is no more objection to a scientific theory such as Ptolemy's than it is an objection to a religion such as mine and Jerry Falwell's. And as to space travel, any person with even rudimentary rationality can see that it follows from the fact that it is impossible that it never happened. QED.

Christian fundamentalists such as myself have long argued that the theory of evolution is a laughable pastiche of immensely compelling data. We ourselves account for the fossil record in much simpler terms, in fact with breathtaking elegance: it was all planted there by God as a test of faith. In fact pretty much the whole universe is a test of faith in the sense that it cannot be accounted for at all according to our belief system.

But perhaps we have been premature in objecting to the theory of evolution. Don't blame Darwin; the slippery slope began with Copernicus. He was one of the first post-ancient Europeans who allowed the obvious evidence of their senses to interfere with their slavish conformity to Christian dogma, thus paving the road to hell.

Terrible, terrible things have happened since 1543. The Third Reich. The Return of Buggery. John McCain. Video games. Feminism. Coincidence? I think not. Forget about Darwin for a little while and refute the pernicious "theories" put forward in **De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium**.

Better yet, steal all the copies and destroy them, in accordance with the beautiful tradition of the religion we all share.

Crispin Sartwell is chairman of the PSH chapter of the Campus Crusade for Jesus.



Cheers for Dr. Nelson

Dear Capital Times Editor,

There is a professor here at Penn State Harrisburg that is deserving of recognition. Since he will never admit it, much less advertise the job he did, I felt it my duty to let everybody on campus know about this professor.

Back in October 1999, Dr. Blake Nelson received a packet of materials from the American Mock Trial Association. That packet contained a court case that was to be tried in the mock-trial forum during the weekend of 2/11-2/13/00. Throughout the five months that followed, Dr. Nelson took time out of his schedule to teach two teams of students the proper procedures of trying a case in court. During the week, the time taken out of his schedule would vary from eight hours to sometimes more than 20 hours per week.

This past weekend, the two teams he taught for those five months went to the 2000 Mid-Atlantic Mock Trial Regional Competition held at Princeton University in Princeton, N.J. Following two days of competition, an awards ceremony was held in front of all 21 teams that were present at the competition. A team award was announced



and it was also announced that there was a tie for this award. Not one, but both the teams from Penn State Harrisburg received this award. While this award, The Spirit of AMTA Award, speaks highly of both teams, it also speaks volumes of Dr. Nelson. Without his help, guidance, and professionalism none of us that went to competition would have stood a chance against other schools.

Three of Dr. Nelson's students also received individual awards during the award ceremony, and once again, credit is to be given to Dr. Nelson, and those three students as well.

Please, if you see Dr. Nelson in the halls around campus, shake his hand and offer him congratulations for his work.

Dr. Nelson, congratulations and thank you for the job you did for us. We hope you are very proud of what you did, because we are very proud of what we did, and even more proud of you.

Thank you,
Sean Vanek, Communications,
for the members of teams 506 and 507

From the Cap Times Office

Dear Readers:

A well-produced newspaper is like a well-produced puppet show. The people behind the curtain and the elaborate network of strings needed to make the show happen should be invisible.

Mid-terms, course deadlines, Tarnhelm judging and having esteemed editor Matt McKeown sidelined with what he thought was the flu made this issue of *The Capital Times* a particularly difficult one to produce.

So, I want to pull the curtain aside for a moment and recognize some of the puppeteers.

First, SGA President Rod Lee has the fastest email response time of anyone I know. Thanks, Rod, for helping me sleuth out the needed details for several stories in this issue!

Dr. Sheldon, thanks for having your Journalistic Writing students cover the SIE initiation story as a class assignment. It was a pleasure to read so many excellent reviews. It was also one less story we had to write. With Matt sick, the timing was perfect!



Brad G. and Jesse, thanks for the emergency help on Monday.

Nicole and Dan, thanks for always being there. Copy entering and proofreading will look good on your resumes. Really they will!

Thanks, also, to the many people who took time to talk with me and/or return my calls on a Sunday. Putting an issue together takes the better part of four days. If information isn't available until Monday, we're behind schedule.

But, the bulk of my thanks goes to my buddy Alice, recent PSH graduate and lifesaver. I can pull together content. I can write, edit, use a dictionary, a thesaurus and an AP Stylebook (thanks again, Dr. Sheldon), but I have never done layout. With Matt completely out of commission, this was a serious problem. Alice came out of "retirement" and put some serious time into this issue.

Matt, get well soon!
Cathie McCormick Musser

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