

To: Centre Daily Times Editor

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I would like this letter to appear in the CDT. A suggested title: "Bacteria change is not evolution":

I am responding to Sunday's letter by Paula Ralph (Evolution should be taught). She echoes a common and fundamental misunderstanding of evolution when she claims, "It would be impossible to understand the emergence of new strains of bacteria... without understanding the principles of evolution." Evolution requires the formation of *new genetic material*, i.e., *new information* in the organism's DNA. New information *cannot* arise by random chance - only by intelligence. The emergence of new strains of bacteria is *not* evolution because there is *no new information*. Most of the changes we observe in bacteria are due to natural selection and mutations, which are in fact *losses* of genetic information. For example, when an antibiotic kills all the non-resistant bacteria in a population, a small number of resistant bacteria survive and multiply - leading to a strain of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Is this evolution? No, it is merely survival of the fittest - the DNA sequences that provide drug resistance were already present in the original bacteria population. There is *no new genetic information*, and therefore *no evolution!* In fact, the new strain has less genetic information than what was present in the original population - a net *loss* of information. In other cases bacteria "steal" genetic information from the DNA of other organisms, and this can also lead to antibiotic resistance in a population. But here again, this is *not* evolution because *no new genetic information* arises. Naturalistic evolution of life from pond scum to trees and elephants and human beings is not possible since there is no mechanism for new genetic information to arise without intelligence and design. In summary, "intelligent design" is the only logical scientific conclusion that can be drawn about the origin and complexity of life. Our school children should be taught facts, not myths.

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