



## Triangle Freethought Society

Press Release  
For Immediate Release  
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### **Triangle Freethought Society starts 2011 with a program about the Intelligent Design controversy**

*The Triangle Freethought Society (TFS) is pleased to host Barbara Forrest, Ph.D. board member of the National Center for Science Education (NCSE) on Sunday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Hall on Wade Avenue in Raleigh, NC. Dr Forrest's talk is titled, "Update on the Wedge: Intelligent Design Creationism Since the Dover Trial."*

Raleigh, NC, January 8, 2011 - To mark the beginning of 2011, TFS has invited Dr. Barbara Forrest to speak at its first meeting of the new year. Dr. Forrest's presentation is titled, "Update on the Wedge: Intelligent Design Creationism Since the Dover Trial," and will touch on themes surrounding public education, separation of church and state, and updates regarding the Intelligent Design (ID) movement since the landmark ruling in *Kitzmiller et al. v. Dover Area School District* (2005).

Dr. Forrest was an expert witness for the plaintiffs during the case. Her areas of expertise in the trial were the history and strategy of the ID creationist movement and the development of the creationist textbook, "Of Pandas and People." Her service in the case was an outgrowth of her co-authorship with Paul R. Gross of Creationism's "Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design" (Oxford University Press, 2004). The book details the nature of ID creationism and the political tactics that ID advocates at the Discovery Institute's Center for Science and Culture are using to advance their "Wedge Strategy." Forrest has also written a personal account of her experience as an expert witness. Her interest in the ID issue stems from her support for public education and the separation of church and state.

"We are extremely excited to have Dr. Forrest present to our members and guests," said Mark Zumbach, President TFS, "as her talk fits in very nicely with much of our agenda for 2011."

"TFS is committed not only to separation of church and state, but also to ensuring that public education in NC is based in sound established scientific principles and not pseudo-science," continued Zumbach.

Dr. Forrest's presentation will be part of TFS's monthly business meeting. The business meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. and Dr. Forrest's talk will start at 6:30 p.m. TFS meetings are open to the general public and free of charge.

#### **Additional biographical information on Barbara Forrest, Ph.D.**

Dr. Forrest has a Ph.D. from Tulane University in Philosophy, an M.A. from Louisiana State University in Philosophy, and a B.A. in English from Southeastern Louisiana University. She serves on the NCSE Board of Directors. Dr. Forrest joined NCSE's board of directors in 2004 after ten years of activism and professional scholarship on behalf of public education, especially science education, and civil liberties. Her doctoral dissertation, "Naturalism in Education: A Study of Sidney Hook," examined Hook's philosophy of education, which stressed the teaching of critical inquiry throughout the curriculum. As mentioned above, she was an expert witness for the plaintiffs in *Kitzmiller et al. v. Dover Area School District* (2005), and she co-authored, with Paul R. Gross, "Creationism's Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design" (Oxford University Press, 2004). Additionally she and serves on the Board of Trustees for Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

#### **Additional background on *Tammy Kitzmiller, et al. v. Dover Area School District***

The Dover case was the first direct challenge brought in the United States federal courts against a public

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school district that required the presentation of intelligent design as an alternative to evolution as an "explanation of the origin of life." The plaintiffs successfully argued that intelligent design is a form of creationism, and that the school board policy thus violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

The suit was brought in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania seeking declaratory and injunctive relief. Since it sought an equitable remedy, the Seventh Amendment right to a jury trial did not apply. It was tried in a bench trial from September 26, 2005 to November 4, 2005, before Judge John E. Jones III, (a conservative Republican appointed in 2002 by George W. Bush). On December 20, 2005, Judge Jones issued his 139-page findings of fact and decision ruling that the Dover mandate which required the statement to be read in class was unconstitutional and barring intelligent design from being taught in the Dover school district's public school science classrooms. The eight Dover school board members who voted for the intelligent design requirement were all defeated in a November 8, 2005 election by challengers who opposed the teaching of intelligent design in a science class, and the school board president stated that the board did not intend to appeal the ruling.

### **About the Triangle Freethought Society (TFS)**

TFS was founded and incorporated in North Carolina in the autumn of 2009. It was officially voted in as a chapter of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, Inc. during their annual meeting in November, 2009. TFS is a group of atheists, post-theists, non-theists, agnostics, freethinkers and skeptics in the Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill areas of North Carolina.

The purpose of TFS is to protect the separation of church and state as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the constitution of the United States and to educate the public on matters relating to non-theism. TFS is working for the rights of atheists and agnostics to ensure that they enjoy the same rights as religious citizens, and is working to correct the distorted image of atheists and agnostics that has been perpetrated in mainstream culture. TFS defends science education from pseudo-science, and promotes reason and compassion as an alternative to unquestioning faith in supernatural deities.

### **About the Freedom From Religion Foundation, Inc.**

The Freedom From Religion Foundation, Inc. is an educational group working for the separation of state and church. Its purposes, as stated in its bylaws, are to promote the constitutional principle of separation of state and church, and to educate the public on matters relating to non-theism.

Incorporated in 1978 in Wisconsin, the Foundation is a national membership association of freethinkers: atheists, agnostics and skeptics of any pedigree. The Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3). All dues and contributions are deductible for income tax purposes.

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