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## Letter to Editor

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# Letter to Editor

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30 July 2019

I opened the June 2019 issue of *Pro Rege* with anticipation, especially as it came in a Dordt University envelope. As a science and faith scholar over several decades, I was particularly interested in reading the piece by Walicord and Hayes,<sup>1</sup> even more because I had helped create and was an initial co-director of the Kuyper Scholars Program (for which this was a final project).

My excitement quickly turned to dismay. It appears the authors felt the need to bring the perspective of Jason Lisle to the attention of the academic world and the Dordt constituency, giving the impression that Lisle's perspective lines up with the Reformed Christian thinking of Bahnsen, Machen, Schaeffer, and Kuyper (the only others cited).<sup>2</sup>

The paper contains numerous misunderstandings about science, about faith, and about the decades-long dialogue that has been undertaken by scholars, including Reformed Christians, in many disciplines. The first signal that something was off was the second sentence with its reference to "plain reading of scripture." Much of the heat (and none of the light) about science and faith controversies in the past century has been due to the unsupportable idea that there is such a thing; everyone reads and interprets scripture within a particular context. A few moments of conversation with any biblical scholar or theologian will make this clear.

Categories such as "natural" and "supernatural" are simplistically understood in the paper. Efforts by diligent scholars are caricatured (and not referenced). Proper ways of handling the topic of miracles are ignored. Biblical genres are not distin-

guished. Methodological naturalism is conflated with ontological naturalism. There are many excellent resources available in the Reformed tradition regarding science and faith.<sup>3</sup> This article is not one, and neither does it point to any; the references to Bahnsen, etc., are all taken out of context, misunderstood, and/or misapplied.

It is unfortunate that the engineering student co-author was not afforded expert direction by a qualified scholar of science and faith in any of the various Dordt departments where such matters are rigorously treated.

Yours in Christ,

Arnold E. Sikkema, PhD  
Professor of Physics  
Dordt College (1997-2005)  
Trinity Western University (2005-)

## Endnotes

1. Sacha Walicord & Ben Hayes, "Science vs. Faith: The Great False Dichotomy," *Pro Rege* 47:4 (June 2019), 36; online at [digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro\\_rege/vol47/iss4/8](http://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol47/iss4/8) (accessed 30 July 2019).
2. R. Joel Duff, "Reflections on the 2013 PCA General Assembly and the Age of the Earth," *Naturalis Historia* (29 June 2013); online at [thenaturalhistorian.com/2013/06/29/reflections-2013-pca-general-assembly-age-of-the-earth](http://thenaturalhistorian.com/2013/06/29/reflections-2013-pca-general-assembly-age-of-the-earth) (accessed 30 July 2019).
3. A good starting point is Tim Morris & Don Petcher, *Science & Grace: God's Reign in the Natural Sciences* (Crossway, 2006), which I reviewed in *Pro Rege* 35:3 (March 2007), 42.