

WALLACE'S VIEW ON OUR ORIGINS

Creationism vs. Evolution. The debate is still heated after 150 years. It's not a topic to be brought up lightly over dinner amidst those of differing opinions. It's a topic, which advocates of either side tend to get quite passionate about, quickly lock horns over, and disregard each others' views as those of "ignorance" or "mis-guidance". This debate is explored in our play through Wallace's unique view on our origins. Wallace advocated for Evolution, but as he aged and was swept up in the Spiritualist movement, he grew to believe that natural selection couldn't explain everything and developed an unique view on our origins. He outlined his emerging views in his book entitled *Darwinism*.

Wallace maintained that natural selection could not account for mathematical, artistic, or musical genius, nor metaphysical musings, and wit and humor; and that something in "the unseen universe of Spirit" had interceded at least three times in history: 1. The creation of life from inorganic matter. 2. The introduction of consciousness in higher animals. 3. The generation of the above-mentioned faculties in humankind.

These views greatly disturbed Darwin in his lifetime, who argued that spiritual appeals were not necessary and that "sexual selection" could explain apparently non-adaptive phenomena.

Could Wallace be considered one of the earliest advocates of what today is called "Intelligent Design"? Wallace discusses this in the production (the term was used in the mid-1800s, but the Intelligent Design movement didn't actually begin until the 1980s.) It seems unlikely he would have mingled well with today's strongest proponents of the "Intelligent Design" theory, most of whom ascribe the designing to the Christian God. Wallace would not have been so specific.

ERSTWHILISTS' NEWEST RADIO DRAMA

The Erstwhilists who previously brought you the classic *Suspense* radio dramas *Donovan's Brain* and *Sorry, Wrong Number* as well as the silent film *Caligari* with live dialogue, will be performing in a new and different kind of radio drama. They will be presenting an adaptation of Minnesota's own F. Scott Fitzgerald's short: *The Camel's Back* this fall.

Written in 1920, this was the third story of Fitzgerald's published in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Fitzgerald was home for Christmas break in 1919 and heard about a wild night at the Hill's (family of railroad tycoon James J. Hill) annual Christmas costume party. Those events inspired the tale.

Like all of the Erstwhilists' radio drama productions, this show will give the audience a rare opportunity to view the myriad of sound effects gadgets at work alongside the vocal artists. A live music accompaniment will also be part of this show.

The first run will be taking place at the Sibley House Historic Site. Go to: www.events.mnhs.org/calendar/index.cfm?VenueID=18&bhcp=1 or call 651-452-1596 for tickets/info.

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