

Origins Insights

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The Age of the Universe from a Creationist Framework: Answering the Question from Science, Part Four

by Bob Harsh

Editor's Note: This is the last article of this series in which Bob will discuss radioactive decay and present some of the findings from the R.A.T.E. project that were presented at the 2003 ICC.

Radioisotope dating is another method orthodox evolutionary science uses to demonstrate an ancient earth. What are some problems with the accuracy of radioisotope dating? **Assumptions! Assumptions! Assumptions!**

- 1- Is it proper to assume that the material being tested contained only parent material and no daughter materials when the rock was formed?
- 2- Can we know for sure that there was no immigration or emigration of either parent or daughter materials?
- 3- Are we sure that the rate of decay is constant?

It only takes an error in *one* of the assumptions to produce dates that are in error!

Radioactive material produces helium atoms as they decay. That helium is an inert gas and will not combine with any other atoms. Its ultimate destiny is to escape into the atmosphere. There is a problem for evolutionists. All of the helium in the atmosphere could have accumulated in a maximum of two million years.

Then there is the problem of too much helium remaining in certain rocks. Helium diffusion experiments give nuclear evidence for a young world. Dr. Russell Humphreys of Institute for Creation Research is working with other scientists on a project that is investigating whether the rate of radioactive decay is constant. The project is known as the R.A.T.E. project. He reported that "1.5 billion years" of nuclear decay occurred between 4,000

CSF Meetings

There will be no meeting during the month August for both CSF North and South. CSF North plans to have the tour of The Carnegie Museum in September led by Phil McCaffrey. The date and times will be announced in the September issue of Origins Insights.

and 8,000 years ago. Tiny “zircon” crystals in the Earth’s continental crust are radioactive. These crystals of Zirconium Silicate, $ZrSiO_4$, contain Uranium and Thorium atoms. The decay of Uranium 238 to Lead 206 produces eight helium atoms. The following table illustrates the percent of helium generated by radioisotope decay that remains in the zircons.

Sample	Depth (meters)	Temp.(°C)	Helium (%)	Measured D (cm ² /s)	Age (years)
1	960	105	58	_____	
2	2170	151	27	1.09×10^{-17}	7270
3	2900	197	17	5.49×10^{-17}	2400
4	3502	239	1.2	1.87×10^{-16}	5730
5	3930	277	0.1	7.97×10^{-16}	7330

So whether it is 2 million years or 7300 years, helium slams the door on evolution and says, “You’re out of time”.

Another very interesting evidence for a young Earth was reported at the 5th International Conference On Creationism in 2003. Measurable concentrations of Carbon 14 have been found in fossilized organic materials. This confirms the Young Earth Creation-Flood Model. The scientists who brought this information to the conference were John R. Baumgardner, D. Russell Humphreys, Andrew A. Snelling, and Steven A. Austin.

Carbon 14 has a half-life of 5730 years. Organic materials older than 100,000 years should contain no detectable carbon 14. It is surprising that it has been discovered that, when tested by highly sensitive accelerator mass spectrometer (AMS) methods, organic samples from every portion of the fossil record show significant amounts of carbon 14. But other dating methods determine those rocks are older than 100,000 years.

Carbon 14 contaminates all creatures. In fact you have one radioactive carbon 14 atom for every 1.2 trillion carbon 12 atoms in your body. At present 62 tons of carbon 14 exist on Earth as compared to 75 trillion tons of carbon 12. When a creature dies, the carbon-14 it contains slowly decreases. The number of carbon 14 atoms in a sample is reduced by 1/2 every 5730 years. So after 40 half-lives or 229,200 years, the amount of carbon 14 is diminished by a factor of $(1/2)^{40} = 10^{-12}$. “(This is 10^{-7} smaller than the AMS detection limit!)

“After 1.5 million years, the amount of 14C is diminished by a factor of $(1/2)^{1500000/5730} = 10^{-79}$. If the entire mass of the observable universe began as 14C, after 1.5 million years there should be not a *single atom* of 14C remaining!” [Baumgardner et.al.]

Results of AMS 14C analysis of 10 RATE coal samples. These measurements were performed using the laboratory's 'high precision' procedures which involved four runs on each sample, the results of which were combined as a weighted average and then reduced by 0.077 ± 0.005 pmc to account for a 'standard background' of contamination believed to be introduced by sample processing.

Sample	Coal Seam Name	State	County	Geological Interval	$^{14}\text{C}/\text{C}$ (pmc)
DECS-1	Bottom	Texas	Freestone	Eocene	0.30 ± 0.03
DECS-11	Beulah	North Dakota	Mercer	Eocene	0.20 ± 0.02
DECS-25	Pust	Montana	Richland	Eocene	0.27 ± 0.02
DECS-15	Lower Sunnyside	Utah	Carbon	Cretaceous	0.35 ± 0.03
DECS-16	Blind Canyon	Utah	Emery	Cretaceous	0.10 ± 0.03
DECS-28	Green	Arizona	Navajo	Cretaceous	0.18 ± 0.02
DECS-18	Kentucky #9	Kentucky	Union	Pennsylvanian	0.46 ± 0.03
DECS-21	Lykens Valley #2	Pennsylvania	Columbia	Pennsylvanian	0.13 ± 0.02
DECS-23	Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	Washington	Pennsylvanian	0.19 ± 0.02
DECS-24	Illinois #6	Illinois	Macoupin	Pennsylvanian	0.29 ± 0.03

[John R. Baumgardner, D. Russell Humphreys, Andrew A. Snelling, and Steven A. Austin.] Measurable ^{14}C in Fossilized Organic Materials: Confirming the Young Earth Creation-Flood Model, Fifth International Conference on Creationism, August 5, 2003]

I would like to make three key observations from these investigations. It is interesting that any carbon 14 remains in these supposedly ancient coal deposits. It is also surprising that the deeper, and by inference older deposits, do not contain less carbon 14 than upper layers. The third surprise is that the levels of carbon 14 are relatively the same at all levels.

It appears that all of the deposits were formed at about the same time! This is good evidence for the veracity

Continued on next page

Laptop Computer Needed

Many of you have benefited from the presentations at our monthly meetings. These presentations are often enhanced through the use of PowerPoint visual aids. Several years ago CSF purchased an LCD projector but we have been making use of borrowed computers. Your CSF board has determined that it is time for CSF to acquire their own laptop computer. As you probably know from visits to your local computer retailer or seeing ads in the paper, these computers are expensive. We are therefore asking that you consider making a donation to CSF for the purpose of obtaining a laptop computer. Any amount will greatly appreciated.

Checks or money orders can be made out to CSF and sent to:

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of Noah's flood. Only a huge catastrophic flood event could lay down this amount of sedimentary rock with its imbedded coal seams.

"The case that intrinsic ^{14}C at levels in the range 0.1-0.5 pmc exists in all pre-Ice Age fossil organic materials now appears to be an all but established scientific fact." [Baumgardner et.al.]

Here is the clincher. Diamonds are supposedly extremely old and they are very hard so carbon 14 from the surrounding environment would not leak into the diamond. Well, in 2003 a radiocarbon lab found levels of carbon 14 in South African diamonds 100 times above the detection threshold. It appears that the diamond is thousands rather than millions of years old.

In summary nature makes it clear.

- **Comets disintegrate too quickly.**
- **Not enough sediment on the sea floor.**
- **Not enough sodium in the sea.**
- **Earth's magnetic field is decaying too fast.**
- **Layers in the Greenland ice represent a few thousand years.**
- **Sedimentary rock layers not millions of years old.**
- **Sedimentary rock layers are not cracked even though tightly bent.**
- **Polystrate fossils.**
- **Radioisotope dating**
- **Not enough Helium in the atmosphere**
- **Significant Carbon 14 in "old" samples**

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