

## Older – Evolution (6:30)

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Feature editor (voice on phone) FE (female if possible)

Eager cub reporter

Older the Elder (sitting in chair)

Enter eager cub reporter, phone to ear

ECR

Yes ma'm. You got my story assignment?

FE

Yep. You get evolution, kid.

ECR

Evolution! That's old stuff! Why do I always get the old stuff?

FE

This is the Sunday supplement, kid. Our readers are all old stuff.

ECR

Can I do a new slant?

FE

You can try. Just be sure to get both sides.

ECR

Oh, God! I'm going to have to write about creationism and intelligent design with a straight face?

FE

Nah. Laugh all you want, kid. Just remember you get paid by the word. You do both sides, you get twice as many words.

ECR

Where am I going to find people against evolution?

FE

I gave you my rolodex.

ECR

Yeah, but they're all dead.

FE

So what. Just use their old quotes.

ECR

Don't you think people will remember?

FE

Hell, our readers do well to remember their names. Anyway, I just sent you to Older the Elder. He's one of our house critics.

ECR

What is a house critic?

FE

You've seen where a news story gives a report and then goes on with:

"Critics say..."

ECR

Yeah, but I thought we just made that stuff up.

FE

Well, with a little experience, you can make it up. But for beginners, we have house critics that will make it up for you.

ECR

So I should ask him to say something critical about evolution.

FE (knows more than she is telling)

Okay. Ask him that. Be sure to take good notes.

ECR (Walks over to where Older is sitting)

Good morning, sir. I'm a reporter for the Eternal Times. You know. Everything that's fit to print, whether it's news or not.

O

Oh, yes. You're new there, aren't you?

ECR

Yes, sir. I am here to ask you about evolution. What is your position on it?

O

Well, I figure I'm right down at the end of it. At least for now.

ECR

Well, I really mean are you for it or against it?

O

I'm against it.

ECR (pleased)

Oh. That's interesting. Why are you against it?

O

I figure we've evolved enough. We're already so smart we can't stand ourselves.

We better stop it right now, before it gets out of hand.

ECR

How would we go about stopping it?

O

Oh, I just work the big picture. I leave the details to the engineers.

ECR

Oh. But anyway, you do believe in evolution?

O

I believe it's ok for dogs. Not for people.

ECR

I mean you believe it happens?

O

Sure. Happens all the time.

ECR

So do you think it should be taught in school?

O

Don't know about that. Not sure people know how to teach it.

ECR

Well, there are course curricula that teach it. That's what they teach in schools.

O

Stuff like that just teaches people to talk big words. That's to make 'em sound educated. Don't know that it teaches 'em to evolve.

ECR (confused)

Well... Well, people don't evolve. Evolution is something that happens to species, not to individuals.

O

Well. If they can't do it in school, why spend time teaching them? Can they do it after school?

ECR

Well, no. They can't do it ever. Surely you don't think education should be limited to what people can do!

O

Nah. But it's priorities. Should teach 'em things they can do first. Like sex education.

ECR (exasperated)

They can't do sex in school!

O

Don't you ever read the news, sonny?

ECR  
O Anyway, we're off topic. This story is about evolution, not sex.

O  
ECR Can't have evolution without sex.

O  
ECR Can we get back to teaching evolution in schools? Are you for it or against it?

O  
ECR Yes.

O  
ECR Yes what?

O  
ECR Yes, sonny. I don't say "yes, sir" to anybody anymore.

O  
ECR I mean, what is your position? Are you for it?

O  
ECR Well, that depends. I'm for it, unless...

O  
ECR Unless what?

O  
ECR Unless I'm against it, of course.

O  
ECR But you have to take a stand.

O  
ECR What's your stand?

O  
ECR I'm a news man. I don't take a stand. I have to cover both sides.

O  
ECR How do you know there ain't three sides?

O  
ECR What three sides?

O  
ECR For, against, and I don't give a damn.

O  
ECR But it's your civic duty to take a position.

O  
ECR You in charge of civic duties, sonny?

O  
ECR Well, no.

O  
ECR Who is?

O  
ECR I don't know. What's that got to do with evolution?

O  
ECR You go around handing out civic duties and you don't know who's in charge of them? Where'd you get the civic duty you just tried to give to me?

ECR

I don't know.

O

If you're going to hand out civic duties, it's your civic duty to know where they come from.

ECR

Where did you get that idea?

O

Same place you got that idea about my civic duty.

ECR (back on topic)

So you are saying you don't have a position on teaching evolution in schools.

O

Didn't say that at all.

ECR

So what is your position?

O

I don't give a damn. You can quote me on that. I'm a house critic for the Eternal Times. Your feature editor told you that didn't she?

ECR

Yes. But I can't quote you if you don't take a position.

O

Sure you can. You just write it:

"Critics say they don't give a damn."

ECR

But that's not news

O

Neither is the story you're doing about evolution in schools.

ECR

Well, no. It's a feature story.

O

You could call it "Creation, twenty years after."

ECR

That might be a good title. But what do the critics say?

O

Oh, things like:

Mosquitoes were an obvious mistake.

Flies should have been bigger and more edible.

Maybe we needed tortoises, but did they have to be so ugly?

What was God thinking when he made pigeons?

ECR

I can't use those. They sound critical of God.

O

You wanted a new slant, didn't you?

ECR

But not something that will offend some readers.

O

Don't worry. Nobody's gonna read it.

ECR

My editor will read it.

O

Maybe for laughs. But she's only gonna use it if she needs to fill out a page. Sending you here was just the treatment she gives to greenhorns. Tomorrow she'll send you to the stockroom for a shit splitter.

Both Exit