

# Amerika-Haus-**B**ibliothek Schülervortrag

January 25th, 2011, 5:30 p.m.

## Darwin's Dodos - Evolution, Creationism and (Religious?) Education in the United States

Speaker: **Torsten Kathke, M.A.**

More than 150 years after Charles Darwin's "The Origin of Species," his theory of evolution is still fighting its own struggle for existence in the United States. Beginning in the early 20th century with the famous Scopes "Monkey Trial" in Tennessee, to purportedly scientific ideas of the "Genesis Flood" and catastrophism by mid-century, to the ban of creationism in public schools in the 1980s, and recent attempts to reintroduce it, the idea of descent with modification has constantly been the subject of much debate, and has often come under attack.

At the end of his "Origin," Darwin expresses awe at the fact that "whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved." Creationism itself might also fit that description: it has seemingly teetered on the brink of extinction numerous times, yet has time and again made a - modified - comeback.

The United States of America has played a momentous role in the story of Darwin's theory. This is closely tied to the history of the country and its relationship to religion, but it also has much to do with the history of Darwin's theory itself. To understand either, it is thus crucial to take a closer look at how they are intertwined.

We will ask and attempt to answer questions such as: What is a "Young Earth" Creationist? What does "Intelligent Design" mean? Do some people still believe the Earth is flat, and how does that relate to evolution? What is the difference between religion and science? Are science and religion in conflict with each other? And where do Dodos fit into this picture?

**No fee. Registration for students of the "Gymnasiale Oberstufe" and teachers:**

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