People and Places:
Jack T Chick
Randy Moore

Figure 1. A collection of Jack T Chick tracts from NCSE’s archives. Photograph: Robert Luhn.
Jack T Chick was born on April 13, 1924, in Los Angeles, California, as the first of two children to artist Thomas Chick and his wife Pauline. In 1943, Chick enlisted in the Army and served in the Pacific theater during World War II. Chick, who failed the first grade, became a Christian fundamentalist after hearing an anti-evolution sermon that was broadcast on a radio program called Charles Fuller’s Old Fashioned Revival Hour.

After working as an illustrator in the aerospace industry, Chick began a kitchen-based business built on publishing religious tracts. One of Chick’s most popular publications is Big Daddy?, a small, 24-page comic book written with the help of young-earth creationist Kent “Dr Dino” Hovind. Big Daddy? is the most widely distributed anti-evolution publication in history.

Big Daddy? begins with an arrogant biology professor humiliating a student who dares to question evolution. In a classic David-versus-Goliath confrontation, the enraged professor screams that the student is a fanatic and threatens him with jail, but the tide turns when the student tells the professor about “amazing findings which are rarely made public”. These “amazing findings” expose evolution as a “big lie” and force the professor to admit that the student is “destroying me.” The humiliated and repentant professor then pleads for the student to answer the questions that science can’t answer. The story ends when everyone becomes a creationist and the professor—admitting that he can no longer teach evolution—is fired by heathen administrators.

Big Daddy? was originally published in 1972, and today appears in many different languages; there are millions of copies in print, and thousands of new copies are distributed each year. More people have seen Big Daddy? than all other anti-evolution publications combined.

Chick’s opposition to evolution also appears in In the Beginning, which uses the Paluxy dinosaur footprints and a talking serpent in the Garden of Eden to attack evolution and promote young-earth creationism. Biologists are described as brainwashed, and evolution as the religion of scientists who laugh at God. Some of Chick’s other publications (for example, The Collapse of Evolution) allege that there is undeniable scientific evidence proving that evolution is false and videos that force even the most devout evolutionists to reconsider their beliefs. These videos—which are promoted with Lenin’s quote “Give me your four-year-olds and in a generation I will build a socialist state”—describe how God cures cancer, how Noah packed dinosaurs and other animals on the ark, and how readers can get evolution out of textbooks.

Chick has more than 500 million books and booklets in circulation, some of which appeared in the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History. His publications, which have been translated into more than 150 languages, link evolution with social ills such as pornography (Wounded Children), gay rights (Doom Town, The Story of Sodom), rock ‘n’ roll (Angels), Catholicism (The Attack), Islam (Allah Had No Son), and Halloween (Satan's Big Night). Chick's The Ark describes Russia’s attempts to block Christians from finding Noah's Ark atop Mount Ararat, and his Primal Man? depicts brainwashed scientists who are making a film about evolution despite the fact that many viewers will lose their souls.

Chick, a recluse who avoids publicity, lives in California.
About the Author

Randy Moore is the HT Morse–Alumni Distinguished Professor of Biology at the University of Minnesota. His most recent book (with coauthor Sehoya Cotner) is Understanding Galápagos: What You’ll See and What It Means (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003).

Author’s Address

Randy Moore
University of Minnesota, MCB 3-104
420 Washington Avenue SE
Minneapolis MN 55455
rmoore@umn.edu