



Going Ape: Florida's Battles over Evolution in the Classroom

Brandon Haught

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Before William Jennings Bryan successfully prosecuted John Scopes in the infamous “Scopes Monkey Trial,” he was a prominent antievolution agitator in Florida.

In *Going Ape*, Brandon Haught tells the riveting story of how the war over teaching evolution began and unfolded in Florida, one of the nation’s bellwether states. It still simmers just below the surface, waiting for the right moment to engulf the state.

The saga opens with the first shouts of religious persecution and child endangerment in 1923 Tallahassee and continues today with forced delays and extra public hearings in state-level textbook adoptions. These ceaseless battles feature some of the most colorful culture warriors imaginable: a real estate tycoon throwing his fortune into campaigns in Miami; lawmakers attempting to insert the mandatory teaching of creationism into bills; and pastors and school board members squabbling in front of the national media that descends into their small town. The majority of participants, however, have been, and still are, average people, and Haught expertly portrays these passionate citizens and the sense of moral duty that drives each of them.

Given a social climate where the teaching of evolution continues to sharply divide neighbors and communities, *Going Ape* is a must-read for anyone concerned with the future of public education.

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