

# "RATE" Leaders Abandon Geologic Fantasies and Admit that Extensive Radioactive Decay has Occurred

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For decades, young-Earth creationists (YECs) have vainly searched the geology and geochemistry literature to find ways of discrediting radiometric dating and protecting their antiquated biblical interpretations. YEC John Woodmorappe (a pseudonym), for example, has been at the forefront in [misquoting](#) and [misrepresenting](#) radiometric dating results from the geology and geochemistry literature (e.g., Woodmorappe, 1979, 1999). Woodmorappe's shotgun attacks against radiometric dating even include the ridiculous accusation that concordant radiometric dates may be nothing more than products of "chance"; that is, random numbers (Woodmorappe, 1999, Figure 20, p. 51; p. 52, 87-92). Woodmorappe (1999, p. 85) even endorses YEC Robert Witter's [outrageous charge](#) that geochronologists could obtain just as good radiometric results by throwing darts at a concordia diagram. I often refer to this groundless attack as "Woodmorappe's Crapshoot".

A small group of YECs with legitimate Ph.D.s (including D. Russell Humphreys and John R. Baumgardner) have formed the RATE (Radioisotopes and the Age of The Earth) committee to attack [the validity of radiometric dating](#). Rather than embracing the embarrassing distortions and nonsensical accusations of Woodmorappe or John and Henry Morris, Humphreys and Baumgardner have finally realized that geology and geochemistry are not going to give them the answers that they want. In an Answers in Genesis (AiG) [article](#) Carl Wieland had this to say:

**When physicist Dr Russell Humphreys was still at Sandia National Laboratories (he now works full-time for ICR), he and Dr John Baumgardner (still with Los Alamos National Laboratory) were both convinced that they knew the direction in which to look for the definitive answer to the radiometric dating**

puzzle. [new paragraph] Others had tried—and for some, the search went on for a while in the early RATE days—to find the answer in geological processes. But Drs Humphreys and Baumgardner realized that there were too many independent lines of evidence (the variety of elements used in "standard" radioisotope dating, mature uranium radiohalos, fission track dating and more) that indicated that huge amounts of radioactive decay had actually taken place. It would be hard to imagine that geologic processes could explain all these. Rather, there was likely to be a single, unifying answer that concerned the nuclear decay processes themselves.

In other words, after decades of YEC failures to undermine radiometric dating with geology and geochemistry, these YEC leaders now recognize that enormous amounts of radioactive decay have occurred. They are now relying on nuclear physics, *e.g.*, [Chaffin, 2003](#) (Adobe Acrobat file) and probably an ample supply of groundless [miracles](#) to speed up the decay rates without frying Adam or Noah. [Humphreys et al. \(2003\)](#) (Adobe Acrobat file), although full of errors and bad assumptions, also makes the following candid admission (p. 3), which is a veiled attack on Woodmorappe's "crapshoot" and similar YEC schemes that involve bogus accusations against radiometric dating methods and equipment:

**Samples 1 through 3 had helium retentions of 58, 27 and 17 percent. The fact that these percentages are high confirms that a large amount of nuclear decay did indeed occur in the zircons. Other evidence strongly supports much nuclear decay having occurred in the past [Humphreys, 2000, p. 335-337]. WE EMPHASIZE THIS POINT BECAUSE MANY CREATIONISTS HAVE ASSUMED THAT "OLD" RADIOISOTOPIC AGES ARE MERELY AN ARTIFACT OF ANALYSIS, NOT REALLY INDICATING THE OCCURRENCE OF LARGE AMOUNTS OF NUCLEAR DECAY. But according to the measured amount of lead physically present in the zircons, approximately 1.5 billion years worth – at today's rates – of nuclear decay occurred. [*my emphasis*]**

## CONCLUSIONS

Over the years, YECs have invoked a large array of imaginative and fruitless excuses to defame radiometric dating. These attacks include: magma mixing, Woodmorappe's crapshoot, excess argon, neutron fluxes, neutrinos, and just plain creationist magic. Humphreys, Baumgardner, and other YECs in the ICR-AiG alliance have finally realized that they can't use geology and geochemistry to undermine radiometric dating. They are now relying on physics and probably a liberal dose of untenable miracles to save their dogma. YECs must realize that they're rapidly running out of "scientific excuses" for confusing and deluding the public about the true nature of radiometric dating.

## REFERENCES

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