

# Smithsonian scientists accused of ID smear

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A government agency has accused scientists at Washington's Smithsonian Institution of smearing a biologist who published a paper on intelligent design.

The Washington Post reports the Office of Special Counsel suggested there was a coordinated campaign against Richard Sternberg, editor of the Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington, over a paper in the journal that questioned evolutionary theory. The office was set up to protect government employees from retaliation.

James McVay, the principal legal adviser, said "the rumor mill became so infected" that a colleague had to circulate Sternberg's resume to prove that he is a scientist.

"They were saying I accepted money under the table, that I was a crypto-priest, that I was a sleeper cell operative for the creationists," Sternberg told the newspaper. "I was basically run out of there."

Because Sternberg works for the National Institutes of Health, not the Smithsonian, the office has no power to enforce a legal remedy.

Proponents of intelligent design argue that life forms are too complex to have evolved by natural selection. Opponents charge that intelligent design is religion masquerading as science.

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