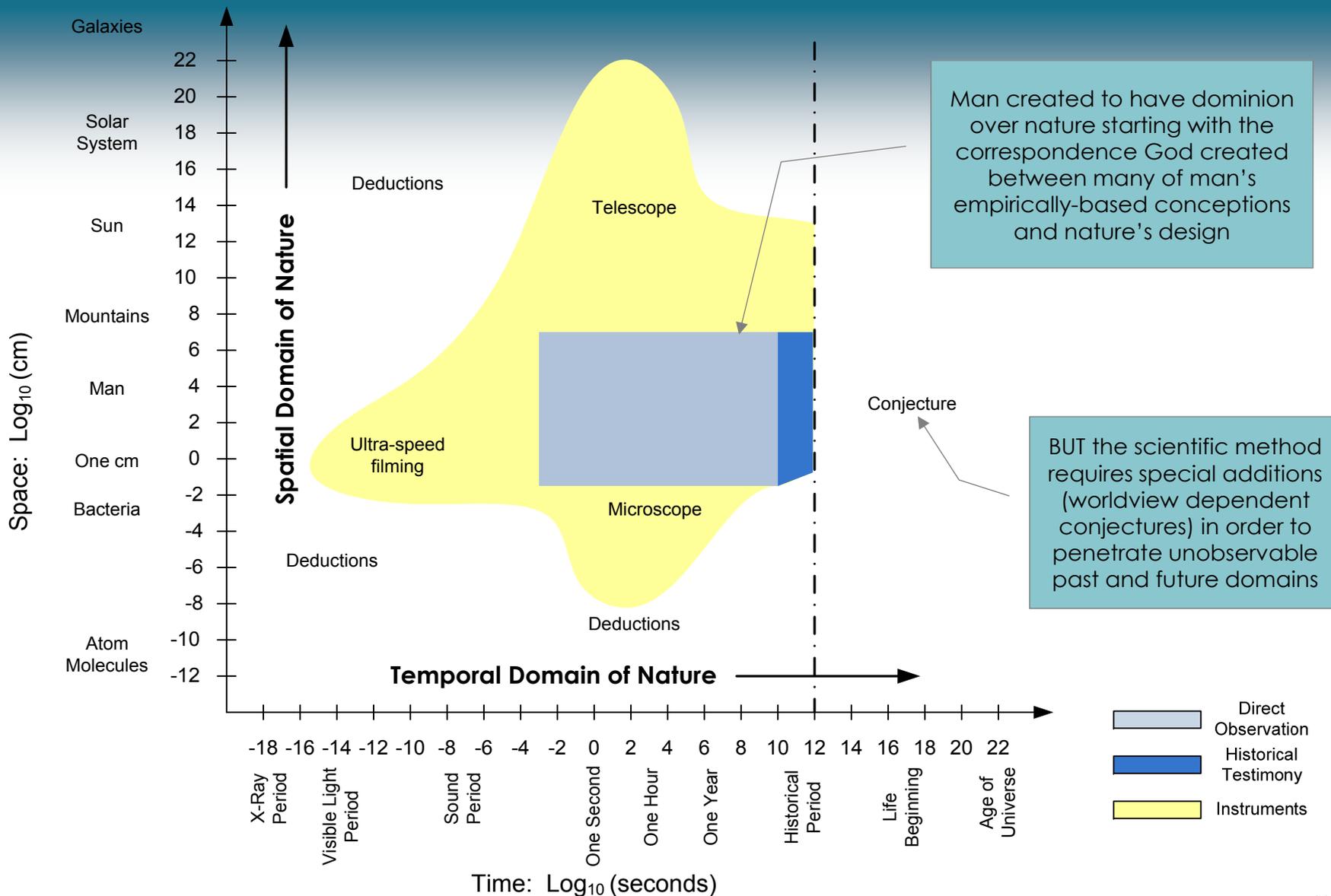


The Geologic Column's Conundrum

Beth Haven Creation Conference

May 13, 2017

Limits of empirical knowledge



Shall I bow to my Creator?

- **YES!**

- ancient monotheism
- ancient Israel
- Bible
- fundamentalism

- **CREATOR/creature**

- God || man | nature
- everlasting distinctions

- **PERSONAL SOVEREIGN**

- ultimate responsibility

- **NO!**

- ancient myths
- eastern religions
- western philosophy
- modern theology

- **Continuity of Being**

- nature > gods > man
- transmutation / evolution

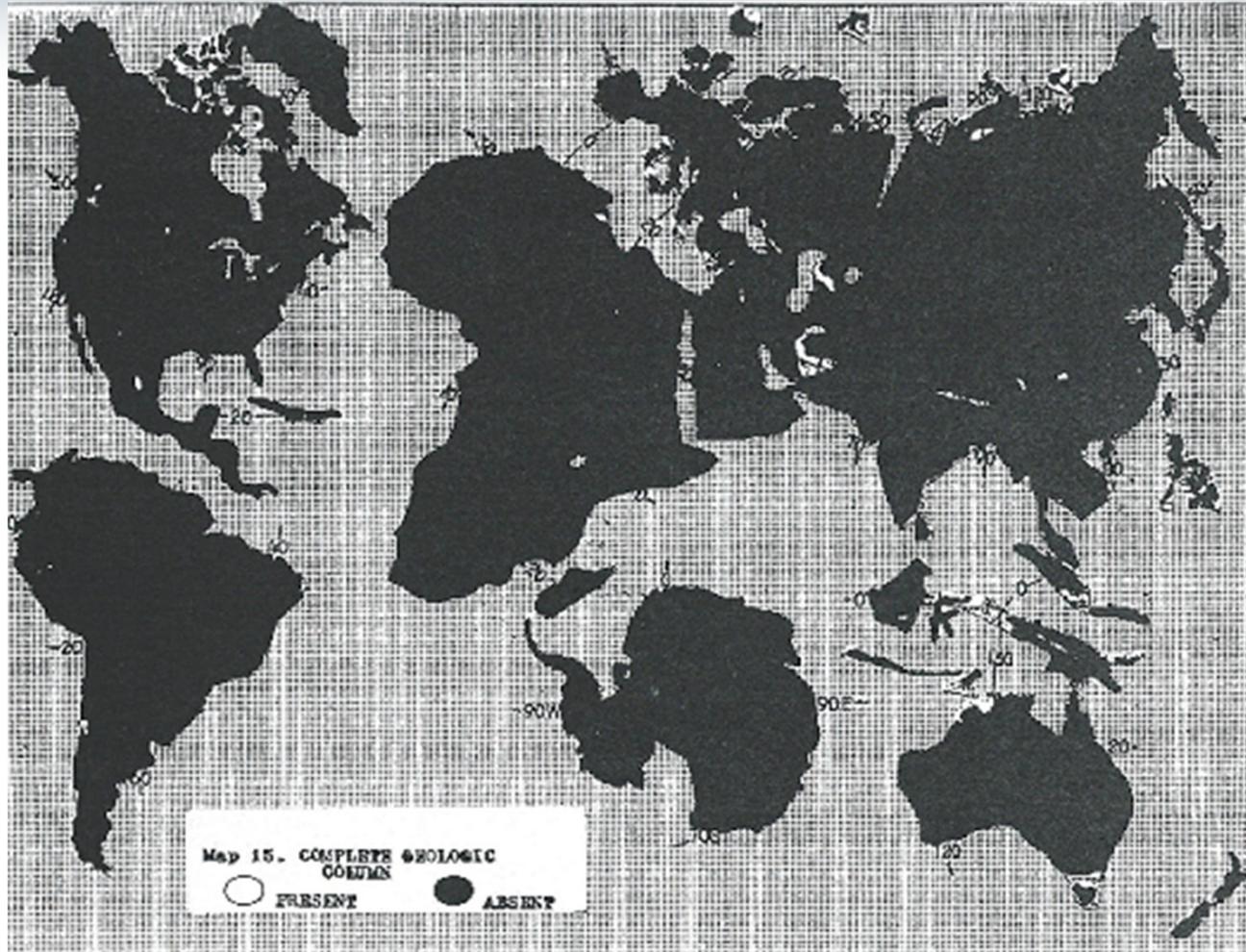
- **IMPERSONAL FATE & CHANCE**

- ultimate victimization

Standard geologic column

<i>Usual Upward Sequence</i>	<i>Usual Ages</i>
CENOZOIC (Tertiary and Quarternary)	66 millions yrs to present
MESOZOIC (Triassic up to Cretaceous)	245 to 66 million yrs
PALEOZOIC (Cambrian up to Permian)	570 to 245 million yrs

The geologic column



**White
areas: all
10
geologic
periods
present**

Woodmorappe,
CRSQ June
1981

Naturalism's interpretation of the geologic column

“Naturalism’s control of origin science did not begin with Darwin’s theory of evolution, but over 50 years earlier with the idea of millions of years in geology. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, deist and atheist scientists attempted to explain the origin of the world and unravel the history of the rocks and fossils. They did so by rejecting the truth of Genesis 1–11 and using the assumptions of naturalism.”

Terry Mortenson, *Naturalism* (Answers in Genesis blog on World Religions, 2017) Chapter 12

Lyell's uniformitarianism & Charles Darwin

“The physical part of Geological inquiry ought to be conducted as if the Scriptures were not in existence. ... [To a fellow uniformitarian geologist, Lyell wrote he wanted to] ‘free the science [of geology] from Moses.’”

Darwin wrote: “He who can read Sir Charles Lyell’s grand work on the *Principles of Geology*, which the future historian will recognize as having produced a revolution in natural science, yet does not admit how incomprehensibly vast have been the past periods of time, may at once close this volume.”

Terry Mortenson, *Naturalism* (Answers in Genesis blog on World Religions, 2017) Chapter 12

Uniformitarianism decoded

Lyell used the term “Uniformity” as purposeful equivocation in 1830

S. J. Gould first exposed the equivocation in 1980—150 years later!

Different meanings	Explanation
Uniformity of law	Presupposition of all science
Uniformity of process kinds (actualism)	Past processes no different from presently observed processes
Uniformity of process rates (gradualism)	Processes common to past and present have same rates

Empirical challenges to uniformitarianism

Empirical Challenge	Explanation
Polystrata fossils	rapid deposition of multiple layers of material gradualism
Clearly catastrophic event: Lake Missoula flood (Pacific Northwest)	rapid, massive simultaneous erosion gradualism
Clearly catastrophic event: Mt. St. Helens eruption	rapid (photo documented) deposition and later erosion actualism, gradualism
Clearly catastrophic event: Grand Canyon with nearly the same radioactive decay dates at bottom and top layers	rapid, massive deposition and later fast erosion while sediments were soft gradualism

Problems of uniformitarianism acknowledged by the “Establishment”

“It can be said that the geologists’ knowledge of the past is based upon pretheoretical assumptions, often of a metaphysical nature, not susceptible to logical or empirical proof. In a certain sense, they are the products of the geologists’ imagination.”

Gadi Kravitz in *Rethinking the Fabric of Geology* (2013), 21