

**The Truth About Ice Cores**  
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[www.answersincreation.org/icecore.htm](http://www.answersincreation.org/icecore.htm)

Ice cores drilled from the polar regions provide us with excellent records of the history of the climate on earth. They are also very useful in dating the ice caps, as you can count the layers, similar to counting tree rings. These layers are deposited annually, and are relatively simple to read. Although not an exact science, it does provide a good estimate of the age of the ice caps. Naturally, since these ages are said to be over 400,000 years old, they disprove the young-earth theory that the world is only 6,000 years old. Because of this they have been the target of multiple attacks by the young-earth crowd.

This article will address one such attack, made by Michael Oard of the Institute for Creation Research ([icr.org/index.php?module=articles&action=view&ID=120](http://icr.org/index.php?module=articles&action=view&ID=120))

### **Discussion**

Mr. Oard critiques the ice cores known as GRIP and GISP2. There is nothing spectacular about these cores. They are standard cores which are very easy to read and understand. Of course, if you a young-earth creationist, they present quite a problem. As usual, the YEC (young-earth creationist) comes up with an alternative explanation for these ice layers. He claims that the layers during the glaciation period (the time immediately following the Flood, during which YECs claim all the evidences for Ice Ages occurred) there was much more precipitation, yielding these thicker layers of snow.

This is an interesting claim, mainly because of the fact that he presents no evidence to support this claim! He doesn't give layer thickness data from the cores in support of his argument. In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that the young-earth model is viable. This is unusual for a young-earth claim...normally they give evidence (albeit wrongly interpreted).

The only other apparent fault of the ice cores mentioned by Mr. Oard is the counting of the dust layers. He claims that they came up a number that did not correspond to the deep sea ocean sediment time scale. Therefore, they recounted the layers using a finer instrument, and added 25,000 layers, which is more in line with the corresponding deep sea ocean sediment time scale. He claims they were assuming an age for the ice, and recalculated it in order to achieve this older age. In effect, they kept going until their assumption was proved.

He is absolutely correct, but this is actually a good thing. For instance, if you know the distance from New York to Los Angeles, and then drove it, and found that your numbers were off by 200 miles, then you examine your route and try again. Scientists have a valid date based on ocean sediments, and this can be used to calibrate other methods of dating. If they are off, then you must refine your measurements to get more accurate results. This is not, as Mr. Oard implies, bending the data until you get the

desired result. This is comparing data to make sure your measurements are accurate. It's no different than calibrating a weight scale. You know that a pound weight maintained at the National Institute of Standards and Technology<sup>1</sup> in Washington, DC is exactly a pound. If you have a block used for calibration based on the standard in Washington, and your scale is off by half an ounce, you know you must recalibrate your scale. The same is true of the ice core...it was merely recalibrated to obtain valid results. This is not baseless assumptions by biased people...it is real science, being performed by real scientists.

## **Conclusion**

As shown through science, the ice cores prove valid for giving an estimate of their age based on the layers of ice. Of special interest to this argument is the last two sentences of Mr. Oard, which states "In other words, the uniformitarian scientists date the ice sheets to hundreds of thousands of years because they believe the ice sheets are old to begin with. They have "proved" only what they have assumed!" Unfortunately for Mr. Oard, he is the one guilty of trying to prove what he assumed. All of young-earth science is built on the assumption that the earth is 6,000 years old. In effect, Mr. Oard is only trying to prove this assumption. He is guilty of the very thing that he accuses real scientists of doing. This goes back to the argument that young-earth scientists are not true scientists, because they don't live by the definition of a scientist (see [www.answersincreation.org/scientist.htm](http://www.answersincreation.org/scientist.htm)).

<sup>1</sup> <http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/230/235/owmhome.htm>