

## Walter Bradley: For a Greater Purpose

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Announcer:

Greetings, and welcome to Mind Matters News, published through the Walter Bradley Center for Natural and Artificial Intelligence. Now, perhaps you're asking yourself who is Walter Bradley? Well, you're in for a great time today as our host, Robert J. Marks, chats with William Dembski about the life and legacy of Walter Bradley and why they were inspired to write Bradley's biography titled, For a Greater Purpose. Enjoy.

Robert J. Marks:

Greetings. We are with the Walter Bradley Center for Natural and Artificial Intelligence. Mindmatters.ai is a website which is sponsored by the Walter Bradley Center for Natural and Artificial Intelligence. A lot of people know about Mind Matters, a lot of people know about the Walter Bradley Center, but not about Walter Bradley per se. Well, there's a new biography, and we recommend it to you. It's a biography of Walter Bradley written by William A. Dembski and me, and its title is For a Greater Purpose: The Life and Legacy of Walter Bradley. And to talk about Walter Bradley and some of the contents in the book, we have today with us, William A. Dembski, who needs no introduction, do you, Bill?

William Dembski:

I don't know, I like an introduction now and again but-

Robert J. Marks:

You like an introduction.

William Dembski:

... I guess it's even better not to need one.

Robert J. Marks:

I guess so. Well, I think that Bill is, at least, in the area of Intelligent Design a type of celebrity. He was one of the founders of Intelligent Design, did a lot of work in the mathematics and the probability of Intelligent Design. He published a book with Cambridge, is that right?

William Dembski:

That's right.

Robert J. Marks:

What was the title of the book?

William Dembski:

The Design Inference.

Robert J. Marks:

The Design Inference, which is still in print. You're looking to reprint that maybe, is that right?

William Dembski:

I actually got the rights back from Cambridge. I asked them for it and they gave it to me, so I'm planning a second edition.

Robert J. Marks:

So you're going to add to it, right? We're going to see brand new stuff on it?

William Dembski:

It's going to be very radically rewritten. Although, I think the core ideas will still be there.

Robert J. Marks:

Okay. When I came to Baylor University, I met William Dembski and we resonated. We just had a lot in common in terms of probability and genetic algorithms and evolutionary computing, and we've done quite a lot together. We've published some really good archival journal papers. We put together a book, Introduction to Evolutionary Informatics, which is available now and is a really great book. The third author of that is Winston Ewert, and that is still available. And that has to do with the mathematics of evolution, and it builds on Bill's foundational work. But we're not here to talk about that. We're here to talk about Walter Bradley.

Robert J. Marks:

Now, what's interesting is that we wrote a book about the biography. Again, the name of the book is For a Greater Purpose: The Life and Legacy of Walter Bradley. We're going to put a link to that in the podcast notes. Just my introduction, before I begin to query Bill. I tell the story of a retiring professor in my department whose office was cleaned up. They took his books, they took his papers, they put him outside, and just to make sure that the night person took away the box of papers and stuff, somebody wrote very boldly trash on it, and they put it on top of the box. I thought, "What a terrible metaphor for the life of a person, a career of a professor."

Robert J. Marks:

Now, the person I'm talking about had much more in his life than these books and these papers. But if you think about it, what does your life stand for? What does your life mean? What have you accomplished in your life? The reason I think that we wrote the book on Walter Bradley is that Walter Bradley's life exemplifies what one can do if one wants to achieve great things in academia, in ministry, in apologetics, and in other areas. We're excited about the book, and you are going to find out so very much about Walter Bradley in the book. It turns out that today's heroes are primarily people like celebrities, musicians, politicians.

Robert J. Marks:

We very rarely take a person of character and a person of high accomplishment and hold them up as heroes. Well, I think both Bill and I can agree that Walter Bradley is indeed our hero, and we're going to

find out today why he is our hero with all of the incredible stuff that he has done. And these things are covered in the book. The book, again, I think the politicians say in order to get across the point, you have to mention it three times. So this is the third time that I'll mention it, For a Greater Purpose: The Life and Legacy of Walter Bradley.

Robert J. Marks:

The irony about Walter's life is that you cannot be like Walter Bradley by trying to be like Walter Bradley. Rather, you are like Walter Bradley if you spend your life, as the book says, for a greater purpose. Not looking at your accomplishments and not looking at things that you would like to do to build up your legacy, but to do things that should be done for the purpose of doing them right. Bill Dembski, Walter Bradley and I met at Baylor University, and you were somewhat instrumental in getting Walter Bradley to Baylor, in a sense. You gave some input into the provost at the time.

William Dembski:

Yeah, I was at least for a time in my tenure at Baylor, or stay at Baylor, I should say, I was never even on a tenure track, but I had some connections and influence with people that were doing hiring. There was this big vision at Baylor to turn Baylor into a full fledged research university, but that was also faithful to its Christian commitments. So they were looking for faculty that were both excellent in their research and also committed Christians.

William Dembski:

Walter's name was one that was floated, and I was asked to make some initial inquiries with Walter, whether he might be interested in coming to Baylor. After that, it quickly shifted over to the provosts' office and it seemed that they were just very excited to the prospect of bringing Walter on, and they did indeed. I think it was around 2002, and then with Walter here, that led to him recruiting you. So you had this-

Robert J. Marks:

That's right.

William Dembski:

... like the dominoes were falling and then you and I-

Robert J. Marks:

And I was the second domino. Yeah, Walter Bradley recruited me to come to Baylor. The President at the time, Robert Sloan, writes a testimonial in the biography of Walter Bradley. This is what Robert Sloan, the President of Baylor University, currently the President of Houston Baptist University, writes about Walter Bradley when he came to Baylor University. This is very typical of the accolades that we get about Bradley. It says, "Walter Bradley is one of the most remarkable Christian scholars I've ever known." That's saying a lot because Walter Bradley is one of a number of different faculty, but for Robert Sloan to say that he is one of the most remarkable Christian scholars I've ever known as saying a lot.

Robert J. Marks:

He said, "All of us, as his colleagues, were encouraged by his enormous capacity to integrate historic Christian faith with cutting edge scientific thinking." So that was Walter Bradley's accolades from Robert Sloan who was the President of Baylor. Now we have another one here, let me see if I can find it. This is from the previous Provost at Baylor University, that was David Jeffrey. I don't remember what he said, but David Jeffrey was the one that hired me with the approval of Robert Sloan. Yeah, the accolades are really, really high for Walter Bradley.

William Dembski:

There are just so many endorsements and paragraphs written at the end of the book about him. I was just reading it the other night when I saw the passage from David Lyle Jeffrey. So it's there, it's just probably hard to find.

Robert J. Marks:

Yeah, it's so much. Yeah, because there's so many things at the end. Let me read some of the other accolades, and these are from celebrities in the philosophy and apologetics community. We have people like William Lane Craig saying, "Walter Bradley is one of the most extraordinary men I have ever known. I am in awe of him." That's a comment again from William Lane Craig. We have Douglas Axe, who those of you that are familiar with the Discovery Institute know about. Douglas Axe said, "Luminaries like Walter Bradley paved the way for me to dedicate my career to advanced design thinking in biology."

Robert J. Marks:

We have a number of other ones. Let's see. We have Brian Thomas, who is a professor here in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Baylor University says, "Walter was instrumental in helping me understand that my gifts and talents as an engineer could be used to serve the poor and marginalized." Hopefully, we can get to this, what professor Thomas was talking about. Walter was one of the founders of the idea of appropriate technology. The idea is that in developing countries, you do not need a new supercomputer, you need technology, which is going to help the country where it's at. And Walter Bradley was a pioneer in this.

Robert J. Marks:

One of the things he did is noticed around the world that coconuts were a waste product. In fact, coconut hulls used to accumulate on the grounds of these developing countries, and they used to fill up with water. Just like abandoned tires, mosquitoes would lay their eggs in there. It would be a great farm for mosquitoes coming out. The question is, is how could coconuts be used in order to, in a free market situation, to do some incredible things? So Walter was the pioneer of that.

Robert J. Marks:

His idea was to go into these different countries and not help the people, but rather help the people help themselves. The idea was to set up a company which nationals could take over, they could run and use their local natural resources in order to perpetuate the business. Then Walter would step away and the business would continue. This is what professor Brian Thomas in our department is still doing. He goes to places such as Haiti, he used to go to Africa, still does Central America, and help the poor and marginalized. One of the things he did, for example, which was really cool, and this was under the sponsorship of the Bradley Center, he went to Haiti and one of the fascinating things is that everybody in the world today has a cell phone, no matter where you go.

Robert J. Marks:

But the problem is they have problems with WiFi, with reception, but more importantly, they have problems with recharging their cell phones. He ran around and started these little micro businesses where he put out solar panels and nationals would run little businesses where people could take their cell phones and get them recharged for a small fee. So he had these little micro businesses all around. This is just a classic example of so-called appropriate technology. But this is the tip of the iceberg. Walter did a number of other things. One of the other things he did was the co-author on just a classic book, *The Mystery of Life's Origin*. Bill, I wonder if you could comment on the *Mystery of Life's Origin* and maybe the impact that Walter's book had on you?

William Dembski:

Sure. Well, in the mid '80s, when that came out, the work, the books, popular books that were critical of evolutionary theory and origin of life that were naturalistic origin of life accounts was largely the Young Earth Creationist literature. There were some good valid insights there, but it was also always combined with a Young Earth's 6/24 hour day creation approach. There was always this sense of conflation of science and religion, and then in the end people on the atheistic side could always say, "Well, it's really just a science versus religion controversy."

William Dembski:

What this book did was it really put the whole question of the origin of life as a science versus science controversy and showed that all these naturalistic scenarios for explaining how life could have arisen by purely materialistic means couldn't work. That there was an information problem and an entropy problem that was in Super Bowl for these materialistic scenarios. The thing is the book was published by Philosophical Library. This is a publisher that had published eight Nobel Laureates. It was respectable, it was finally getting out of the Christian publishing ghetto and getting this material out in front of the mainstream audience.

William Dembski:

I don't mean to be unkind and say Christian publishing ghetto, but there's a sense in which credibility is just so hard one, and this is what was really needed to get that book. Get at the eyeballs that it needed from the people who understood what the debate was and could really engage in it. So it was groundbreaking. It came out in the, I think, it was 1984/85. In the appendix it raised the question of, "Well, if naturalistic or materialistic origin scenarios don't work, then what could?" It raised the possibility of intelligent design.

William Dembski:

The thing is with the origin of life, if you don't have a naturalistic origin of life, then you really don't have a naturalistic theory of evolution because evolution, biological evolution, is downstream from an origin of life. If you've got a gaping hole at the start, everything that follows isn't going to work either. It was a huge event. I give Walter credit, John Buell who was with the foundation, or actually, I think it was Probe Ministries at the time that got behind it. Charlie Thaxton and Roger Olson, and it was just wonderful to see 35 years later this new addition.

William Dembski:

It's not just a new addition, it's not like it's just been lightly touched up. I mean, you have all these contributions by luminaries in the field of origin of life coming at it from various perspectives and

disciplines, and really bringing it up-to-date. So here you have a 35th anniversary edition, but that really does bring the discussion up-to-date. Nothing has really changed except that the problems have gotten worse for the materialists. The information problem is worse for them, so the case that Walter Bradley and his colleagues made back 35 years ago is, if anything, stronger now.

Robert J. Marks:

Yes, and it turns out that Walter's work has been celebrated by some pretty top flight scientists. We have Fritz Schaefer, for example, who gives a comment on Walter Bradley in the book. Fritz has been nominated for the Nobel Prize a few times in chemistry. And Marlan Scully, who is a PhD and a member of the National Academy of Sciences. This is what Scully wrote, "Walter is an outstanding example and role model for young faculty. He greatly improved engineering at both Texas A&M and Baylor. Walter is a great friend and colleague. He is indeed, and in fact, a distinguished professor and a Christian."

Robert J. Marks:

Yeah, Walter, in writing and co-authoring the *Mystery of Life's Origin* hit a nerve with some people. Some people didn't like the fact that his last chapter had to do with possible theistic solutions to this. That's one of the things that the authors of the *Mystery of Life's Origin* did. They didn't talk about theology or anything. They laid out the possibilities of, at the end of the book, after going through all the problems, they laid out all of the possibilities for the *Mystery of Life's Origin*. Could it have been panspermia where life was planted here? Could it have been just spontaneous generation where chemicals turned into life?

Robert J. Marks:

That was basically what they debunked in the book, and there is also the possibility of a creative God. So he presented a small section, or the authors presented a small section at the end of the book about that. I don't know, people didn't like that. I don't know why they don't like that explanation, Bill. What's the deal?

William Dembski:

Well, I think it's a matter of presuppositions, right?

Robert J. Marks:

It is a matter of presuppositions.

William Dembski:

If you want the world to be a certain way, and if God is not supposed to be part of that, then anything that would point to it becomes a challenge, and there are other people who just don't like it.

Robert J. Marks:

Well, this brings up one of my favorite Walter Bradley's stories. He was under a deposition for textbooks in Texas, and Walter is from Texas. Texas adopts textbooks and things such as biology, and there's always a question of the degree to which evolution should be presented. Should the controversy be also presented? Walter was on deposition by the opposition and it was an ACLU lawyer that came up and says, "Dr. Bradley," they always say Dr. Bradley in a most condescending tone that they possibly can. He

said, "Are you a Christian?" Walter says, "Why, yes I am." He says, "Dr. Bradley, how is it then that you can be objective when looking at scientific issues if you're a Christian?"

Robert J. Marks:

Walter shot back, he says, "Well, I'm not really the one that is not objective. You live in a little silo of materialism. You can't see outside of this silo. I live in a much larger perspective, a much larger worldview. My question is not whether or not God did it, my question is how did God do it? I would submit to you, sir, that you are the one with a narrow perspective on life and I have a much more broader perspective and could therefore be much more objective in my analysis than you and your ilk." It shut up the ACLU lawyer, and he, totally, he changed the topic immediately, which I thought was just a genius response on Walter's side.

Robert J. Marks:

We had contributions from a lot of people. If you get the book and read it, you'll see indeed that this is the case. The forward to the book is by the great Christian philosopher, J.P. Moreland, who knew Walter personally when they worked together at the Colorado School of Mines. He tells a very interesting story in the beginning of book about his relationship with Walter Bradley. We wrote the, For a Greater Purpose: The Life and Legacy of Walter Bradley, not necessarily to celebrate the life of Walter Bradley, which we certainly want to do, but it is rather to lay out an example of what somebody in academia, specifically, and more general in life can do, and still do their day jobs.

Robert J. Marks:

What he was able to do in terms of ministry, in terms of outreach, in terms of appropriate technology, in terms of crisis pregnancy centers even is just astonishing. That's what we want to talk about. I wanted to talk, first of all, about when Walter Bradley was a professor, and one of the things that he wanted to do was he wanted to talk about his faith and science. He talked about engineering and he wanted to talk about his faith, and he and his wife, they said, "Walter, you have to go in and you have to say something." Walter went in and said, "I was going to say something about my faith and then I chickened out."

Robert J. Marks:

They went home and they prayed some more, and then Walter went in the next day and said, "Okay, today I'm going to share my faith." He went in and he chickened out. You can see in the book that he did this for 22 times before he had the guts to actually make the presentation in class about his faith. It wasn't proselytizing, it was simply saying that, "I want you to know that I'm a Christian, and as a result of that, I hope that you see its impact on the way that it treats you." Then Walter went, ultimately, around to different universities, including where I was at with the University of Washington sharing with faculty how to live out loud as a Christian.

Robert J. Marks:

If you have followed academia today, you know that this idea of Christianity being talked about on college campuses is not celebrated very much. One time Walter was sharing his faith and the associate provost, this was at Texas A&M University, sent out a memo to 2,500 faculty saying, "You shall not talk about Christianity in the classroom." Wow, this was probably in response to Walter's doing this at Texas A&M. This was a number of years ago, of course, I'm sure that this assistant provost moved on. Walter

immediately called them up, and this is one thing about Walter, he had a lot of guts. He called them up and says, "Look, you and I need to sit down and talk."

Robert J. Marks:

He went over and very politely said, "Okay, I think this might be a good idea not to be able to share your faith in the classroom. But if you do this, how are we going to keep quiet all of the people that dis Christianity and say that Christianity has nothing to do with science, that Christianity has nothing to do with the pursuit of knowledge. We have to get a rule where this doesn't happen either. How are we going to do that?" The assistant provost paused for a second and he said, "You know, I never really thought of it that way." As a result, the assistant provost put out a memo and the memo basically retracted his previous criteria and he said, "Just be careful about talking about your faith to make sure that you don't alienate any of the students."

Robert J. Marks:

Which I think was probably a fair thing. But I thought that was a very fascinating response that we had from Walter Bradley in terms of defending his ability and in the United States and our First Amendment rights to share faith, at least in public forums. Now, both Bill and I have had challenges at Baylor, and one of those was Bill with the Polanyi Center, which was... I forget what years were that, Bill.

William Dembski:

1999 to 2000.

Robert J. Marks:

Yeah, and Walter was very supportive in your conflict with Baylor at that time. Tell us what was going on there?

William Dembski:

Well, he was, I think, probably cheering from the sidelines because he was at A&M at that time. He didn't come on to Baylor faculty until 2002. So he and I knew each other, we were very friendly and so I think he was certainly supportive of the type of research that I did. But it was an incredibly contentious time in the history of the university. The faculty were very divided over where Robert Sloan was trying to take the school because I think there was a secular arm to the faculty that was really just hoping that Baylor would blend in with the other secular schools and that its Christian identity would be muted.

William Dembski:

If anything, Robert Sloan wanted to bring that Christian identity to the forefront, but then also improve the quality of the school by hiring research professors such as Walter and yourself. There was a real tug of war at the school and I was caught something in the middle there because I was this poster child in some way for what the President was trying to do with the school. The thing is I wasn't particularly diplomatic or politically astute at the time. I think if there was a time machine for putting the present me back into the old me, the Polanyi Center might still be around, but such was the case.

William Dembski:

But, yeah, Walter, I mean, he and I actually met, it was as far back as 1992 at a conference in Dallas. It was a conference about the then recently written book by Phil Johnson, Darwin On Trial. So he showed



up there. He is not one of the main participants, but how do I want to put this, there were participants that were invited to do talks and write up their talks basically to contribute to a volume. But he was more there as a commentator. But I just remember seeing him there for the first time and thinking he was an impressive guy and our paths just kept crossing over the years.

William Dembski:

With his in intelligent design, especially at the level of cosmology, fine tuning, seeing the hand of design in the structure of the universe and then also with the origin of life. And then my work more focused on the mathematics of design detection and then applying these ideas to evolutionary theory, our paths kept crossing. It's always been cordial and it's been a joy to work with him.

Robert J. Marks:

Yeah, that's great. Baylor in maintaining its Christian identity is not unique. In history, there's been a lot of universities that started with the Christian identity and went by the wayside. I'm thinking, initially, probably in England, Oxford, and Cambridge.

William Dembski:

Well, but just in the US, just virtually all the universities up until the late 1800s, I think Cornell was the first university that was really started on explicitly secular principles. But virtually every school, if you look at their mottoes, there's some biblical theme there that's there and that's expressing what they're trying to accomplish. But that has been the consistent pattern in the 20th century. It was that schools that had a Christian identity, that identity kept being drowned out, and just it really didn't do much to distinguish the schooler too. The emphasis was much more, I think, with blending in and not having that Christian identity play much of a role, if any.

Robert J. Marks:

So what happened there? What happened at Princeton? What happened at Harvard? What are steps that somebody like Baylor can take in order to not go down that slippery path again?

William Dembski:

Yeah, well, I don't know. Each school I think has its own story. Harvard, there's a whole big Unitarian move in Massachusetts at the time. Princeton, there is certainly, with the seminary and the university, there's some illustrious theologians connected with it. But I think there's a big cultural move I think towards a secular naturalistic point of view in which God and Christianity seems less and less plausible, less and less important. You think about who were the most important thinkers, the most respected intellectuals, the public intellectuals of the age, 17th, 18th century America would be the preachers, the theologians. But then when you get into the 19th century, especially post-Darwin, post-enlightenment, I think you get a much more secular view that doesn't really see Christianity as the central truth that ties everything together.

William Dembski:

The scientists, the business people, the titans of industry, these are the people that start getting the most play. They're the ones that have the respect. These are the people that you listen to. I think we see it even in our day. It's with COVID-19, science tells us to do this. And nothing against science, but I think often when you hear that science tells us this, it's not that science itself is telling us this, it's that certain people with certain biases are using science to try to get you to do something, which is different.

Robert J. Marks:

Exactly. Yes, and science has been again and again and again shown to be incorrect. There's a lot of stuff that does stack, but I'm thinking about George Washington, for example, dying because they bled him to death, I mean, that was science at the time. I'm thinking about John West, great documentary. If you have time to watch it, I would recommend it highly, called Human Zoos on YouTube. Watch it, and how the science of Eugenetics... did I say that right?

William Dembski:

Eugenics.

Robert J. Marks:

Eugenics, Eugenics. Okay, Eugenics. How the science of Eugenics was used to substantiate racism in the early 20th century for quite a long time. This was not something which is isolated among a bunch of bigots, but was a science which, "science", that was accepted by places such as Harvard and Princeton and the Smithsonian and other places. You always have to ask yourself with the history of so-called science and what science says is what makes us sure that today science is telling us what is right. There is established science and then there's science which is spun for political reasons and such.

Robert J. Marks:

That's something which probably needs to be avoided quite a bit. This is fascinating. One of the other things about Walter is he had a lot of guts. We talked about the idea when he went to the associate provost and he said, "We have to make sure that the professors also stopped dissing Christianity. They can't keep knocking Christianity. If you want to play fair across the board," and this changed the provost mind.

William Dembski:

He had such a disarming way.

Robert J. Marks:

He did and he's so-

William Dembski:

But the thing is it is just sticking the stiletto in, though, you know what I mean?

Robert J. Marks:

It is.

William Dembski:

He was a master. He is a master.

Robert J. Marks:

But he does it so wonderfully. He finally asked the provost, he said, "Where did this complaint come from?" It turned out it came from two atheist professors, the provost finally admitted. So Walter, in true fashion of Walter Bradley, contacted the two professors that were atheists and said, "Let's set up a time

and meet and I'd like to talk to you about this." He never got a response. They didn't do anything. Something else that was very bold that Walter did, Baylor does not allow atheist student groups, but there was nevertheless an atheist student group that met on the Baylor campus.

Robert J. Marks:

Now, I don't know what your initial reaction would be, but mine would be something like, "We have to go in there, pound our fist, and we have to say these atheists cannot meet on the campus." Walter didn't do that. He decided that he would join the atheist group, sit down and have a chat with them. He sat down and had a chat with them and went over some of their objections and then ultimately invited them over to his house. This atheist group met with Walter for a number of different weeks, and finally, the whole group disbanded because of what Walter did. He killed the atheist group with his love, with his compassion. I tell you, that's another example of taking a lot of guts to do things.

Robert J. Marks:

We're talking again about Walter Bradley's book and many of these stories and other stories are covered in the book written by, authored by William Dembski and I called For a Greater Purpose: The Life and Legacy of Walter Bradley. We're going to put a link to that and it's available on amazon.com. There's no doubt that you will enjoy it. It's a wonderful, wonderful biography, and you will learn a lot. You will learn a lot about what you can do in order to increase your ministry, in order to increase your effect on people doing your day job. Walter did all of this stuff while being a very successful researcher in mechanical engineering. He attracted millions of dollars in external grants and was just a model of what a mechanical engineering professor should do.

Robert J. Marks:

But in his spare time he did these incredible things. One of the things that Walter did, and this is outlined in the book also, is he had the guts to go to over, well, hundreds of campuses and make a presentation called scientific evidence for the existence of God. That's a pretty provocative title. Have you ever heard him give that talk, Bill?

William Dembski:

I'm sure I have. I don't remember that title exactly, but I know that, that was the theme that he was always hammering.

Robert J. Marks:

Yes, and he's given it here, he's given it in dozens of foreign countries. Of course, with a title like that on a religious unfriendly campuses, he drew quite a crowd and it was always he always presented it, like you said, Bill, in this very disarming manner. And he was asked questions at the end and he was all always able to answer them calmly and convincingly. Often the entire meeting would leave and there would always be students which come up and wanted to talk more about it. He had an incredible impact. That's one of the first places that I met Walter Bradley when I was at the University of Washington. He came there and did that sort of thing.

Robert J. Marks:

Yeah, one of the other things that Walter Bradley did in his presentation in his faith is he was the one that helped create and promote the arm of campus crusade, which is now referred to as crew that ministered towards college professors. There were many college professors such as me that because of

the penalties of coming out with your faith and talking about faith and science publicly, you were afraid that you would get really ridiculed. He had been through this and he went to different campuses and talked to different professors, including myself, and said, "You need to come out of the closet." It was very exhilarating for me to do that at the University of Washington.

Robert J. Marks:

Because one of the things that I found out is when I was very vocal about expressing my faith, that people gave me more respect. It was kind of like if I was ashamed of it, they would come and kick me in the chins and bullying me and things of that sort. Yes, the book is For a Greater Purpose: The Life and Legacy of Walter Bradley. The book is published by Erasmus Press, which is a imprint that Bill Dembski owns, right?

William Dembski:

Right.

Robert J. Marks:

Yeah, so tell us about Erasmus Press? You have another book coming out with Erasmus Press, which I look forward to reading and it has something to do with baseball. What's the deal?

William Dembski:

Well, Erasmus Press is an imprint, so it's actually Influence Publishers is the publishing house and it's a small publisher but we try to do interesting things. The baseball book is titled Dalko: The Untold Story of Baseball's Fastest Pitcher. It was about five years ago that I have an interest in the game, I have a son who plays, who's a pitcher and really good-

Robert J. Marks:

Did you used to play baseball?

William Dembski:

I never really... I enjoy just hitting it around a sand block, but never anything formal but-

Robert J. Marks:

But your son, Will, is quite a pitcher I understand.

William Dembski:

He's good, and so he made it first team all state in high school, I think, two years running. So he's real good. Anyway, love the game, and so you always wonder who brought the hottest heat? Who had the most gas? Who could throw the ball the hardest? The overwhelming testimony, as you start looking into it, it was a fellow named Steve Dalkowski. He was born 1939. He died actually of COVID.

Robert J. Marks:

Really?

William Dembski:

Yeah, but the thing is he played for New Britain, Connecticut in high school. Then within a week of his 18th birthday in 1957, all 16 teams at the time, there were the eight in the National League, eight in the American league, were looking to recruit him but he signed on with Baltimore. The estimates are that he was hitting 110 miles an hour. People who caught him and who also caught Bob Feller, who saw Nolan Ryan pitch, the fastest recorded pitch with any modern technology is Nolan Ryan. It was, I think, about 101 near the plate, and so when you extrapolate back, it's about 108. But people who saw Ryan pitch, saw Koufax, saw Bob Feller, they all say that Dalko was faster and even a lot faster.

William Dembski:

It's just an interesting story. What makes it also interesting is that he had this phenomenal arm. He was not particularly big, he was 170 pounds, maybe 5'11, but he had this once in a century arm. The other thing though is he couldn't control it. There are times he could, he pitched in high school back to back no hitters, and then he could walk as many as he struck out. He could strike out 18 in a game, walk 18 and lose eight to three or something like that.

Robert J. Marks:

It reminds me of, who was it, Charlie Sheen played Wild Thing and he was Wild Thing. What was the movie? Do you remember?

William Dembski:

Was it Major League or was it?

Robert J. Marks:

Yeah, Major League, I believe it was. Yes.

William Dembski:

Then there was Nuke LaLoosh in Bull Durham is modeled on Steve Dalkowski. Ron Shelton, the screenwriter for that, played Minor League Ball and knew of Dalko. So Dalko was... Steve Dalkowski was the inspiration for the Nuke Laloosh character played by Tim Robbins. Yeah, so it's a fascinating story. The thing is he never made it into the majors. In fact, after six years in the minors, he was just at the point. In 1963, he was pitching against the Yankees. It was, finally, he was settling down and I think he had struck out Roger Maris, he had struck out some major Yankee players in the exhibition, and he blew out his elbow.

Robert J. Marks:

Oh, is that right?

William Dembski:

Blew it out is perhaps overstating it, but it seemed that he was never quite the same. Then he was just at the point, I mean, probably the next week he would've made it into the majors. So there's a Greek tragedy aspect to it. The Eucharist who flies too high and comes tumbling down. The Tantalus where all the goodies are always just out of reach. Sisyphus is always almost getting up to that precipice and then it just comes tumbling down. It's a fascinating story. I don't think there's anything quite like it, and it is... I'm convinced that, and I think my co-authors are, and we were tracking down people who are getting close to 100 years old now who remembered him, and the overwhelming testimony is none faster.

Robert J. Marks:

The name of the book is *Dalko: The Untold Story of Baseball's Fastest Pitcher* by Bill Dembski, Alex Thomas and Brian Vikander. That's one of the imprints of Erasmus Press.

William Dembski:

Yeah.

Robert J. Marks:

The other one that we're talking about, we went down a rabbit trail there a little bit was another imprint of Erasmus Press, *For a Greater Purpose: The Life and Legacy of Walter Bradley*. We haven't had time to talk about everything, but if you want to find out what Walter Bradley had to do with the movie, *Unplanned*, if you've seen the movie, *Unplanned*, which is the story of a crisis pregnancy center and somebody that worked at planned parenthood and was disgusted when she finally saw an abortion happening and turned totally the other way. What does that have to do with Walter and his wife, Anne?

Robert J. Marks:

Another thing is what has Walter done in order to make people know that there are Christian professors? One of Walter's laments was that he went through his entire undergraduate and graduate experience and never had one professor say that he was a Christian. So what has Walter done in order to address this? These are in the book, we don't have time to cover everything in the book. But I recommend it highly, of course, because I'm a co-author. But it is well written. We've been getting a lot of great compliments about it. It has five stars on amazon.com and we recommend it to you.

Robert J. Marks:

Our guest has been William Dembski, who is the co-author with me of *For a Greater Purpose: The Life and Legacy of Walter Bradley*. The forward by J.P. Moreland available at amazon.com. We suggest that this is a great present and a great read. We should mention also that it's available in Kindle form and also in Audible. I'm listening to most all of my books today on Audible, and so this book is also available on audio. So that wraps it up for this time, so until we meet again for Mind Matters News, be of good cheer.

Speaker 4:

This has been Mind Matters News with your host, Robert J. Marks. Explore more at [mindmatters.ai](http://mindmatters.ai). That's [mindmatters.ai](http://mindmatters.ai). Mind Matters News is directed and edited by Austin Egbert. The opinions expressed on this program are solely those of the speakers. Mind Matters News is produced and copyrighted by the Walter Bradley Center for Natural and Artificial Intelligence at Discovery Institute.