

**The Suppression of Galileo - Part I**

**Lead: Few early scientists contributed as much to the understanding of the way the universe works as Galileo but in his lifetime he was not popular.**

**Intro.: "A Moment in Time" with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: Galileo Galilei was the son of a poor nobleman and destined for a medical career. Yet, while at the University of Pisa in northern Italy, he became fascinated with mathematics and by 1589 was teaching at the University level. Fairly early in his**

**career, he came to believe the theory taught by the Polish mathematician Copernicus that the planets revolve around the sun, but was hesitant to teach this openly because of the almost universal acceptance of the older theory which placed the earth of the center of the universe.**

**In 1609, Galileo became aware of a new invention, the telescope, built and improved one himself and adapted it for the study of the heavens. The following year he announced a series of discoveries. He found the moons of Jupiter, observed that the surface of Earth's moon was not smooth and developed the idea that the Milky Way was composed of a collection of stars.**

**He was convinced that his telescope validated Copernicus.**

**In 1611, Galileo visited Rome and brought his discoveries to the attention of church authorities. Encouraged by the reception he received, he began to teach more emphatically Copernicus' theory that the planets revolve around the sun. As Galileo moved from practical observation into theory, however, he began to attract vigorous opposition. Most of the universities remained under the control of those who were convinced that the Scriptures taught the earth was the center of the universe.**

**On March 5, 1616, the church declared that Copernicus was wrong**

**and told Galileo to neither hold nor defend his teachings. He obeyed for seven years long years. Next time: Galileo breaks loose.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

**Resources**

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**Langford, Jerome J. *Galileo, Science, and the Church*. New York, NY: Desclee Publishing Company, 1966.**

**Ronan, Colin A. *Galileo*. New York, NY: Putnam and Company, 1974.**

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