

the MEL GABLER^S
Educational Research Analysts
Newsletter

Providers of Textbook Information • PO Box 7518 • Longview, TX 75607-7518 • 903/753-5993 • fax 903/753-7788 • e-mail TxtbkRevws@aol.com • May 1998

Calls Gabler critique "offensive," "insulting," "dead wrong"

Evolutionist zealot blasts Gablers as his "biology" book flops in Texas

Publishers know that those who care about public school textbooks can lose a battle in Austin, but still win the war in the only place it counts — local adoptions. Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) conservatives again proved this recently, to the pouts of a devout evolutionist.

Last year SBOE conservative Richard Watson put medical doctor Barney Maddox on Texas' high school biology textbook state review panel. Dr. Maddox found that Prentice Hall's *Biology: The Living Science* most violated state law requiring discussion of scientific weaknesses of evolution.

With just *3 minutes* each to testify at the public hearing in September, citizens noted this book's censorship of scientific weaknesses in evolution. So in November, Prentice had Ken Miller, this book's co-author, defend it before the SBOE for about *15 minutes* with no equal time.

That shows how inept publishers give the advantage in textbook adoptions to conservative advocates for students. Prentice erred by bringing Miller in to preach for evolution — thank you very much — because textbooks sell by stressing their *teaching aids*, not their controversial content.

Our own review confirmed Dr. Maddox's charge that *Biology: The Living Science* (Prentice Hall, 1998) was a textbook on evolution, not biology. We therefore faxed info on this and other academic defects to each Texas school district during the local adoption season.

As you know, publishers closely watch Texas sales, and the Prentice *Biology* sold well in the 1991 adoption. But this time it got a mere 12% of the Texas market, while the two biology books ranked best on our rating sheet won 67% ... and Ken Miller was claiming martyrdom.

"Even in America," he whined to a Texas school district that rejected his book, "... there is a price to pay for being outspoken, and Mel Gabler, of Longview, Texas, is determined to make sure that I pay that price." Miller pretended that his was not an inflammatory evolutionary text.

The 1998 biology textbook adoption proves that many public school teachers, parents, and local school board members want to do right and welcome informed input from credible conservatives with the standing to speak. Another triumph for Texas' heroic SBOE conservatives.

... for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. — Joshua 1:9

CANs and CAN'Ts of teaching origins in public school science classes

On public school science course content standards, keep in mind the:

distinction between what teachers *must* teach, and what they *may* teach

States can legally *require* teachers to discuss evolution in science classes. They *cannot* require them to discuss creation. Teachers *may* discuss creation in science classes if they wish.

prevailing notion that evolution is scientific, and that creation is religious

This is why courts always overturn mandates to discuss creation in science classes. But satisfactory public school science course content standards on evolution are possible within this constraint.

distinction between scientific weaknesses in evolutionary theory, and scientific evidence for creation

Courts allow requiring the former, but not the latter, in public school science courses, because they (wrongly) assume that evolution is scientific but creation is religious.

distinction between requiring discussion of weaknesses of all scientific theories, and "singling out" evolution

To avoid legal challenges alleging a "non-secular purpose" in public school science courses, formulate *general* curriculum standards on this topic that do not mention evolution.

Texas has met those criteria over the years
with these variant wordings of its
public school science course standards:

"examining alternative scientific evidence and ideas to test, modify, verify, or refute scientific theories"

"The student shall be provided content necessary to formulate, discuss, critique, and review hypotheses, theories, laws, and principles and their strengths and weaknesses."

"The student is expected to analyze, review, and critique scientific explanations, including hypotheses and theories, as to their strengths and weaknesses using scientific evidence and information."

NATURALISTIC WEAKNESSES

in evolutionary theory

which do not imply intelligent design, creation science, and/or young earth

- no fossil evidence for gradual evolution** "Punctuated equilibria" theory admits the systematic gaps between life forms in the fossil record, and the lack of evidence there for gradual evolution.
- no known mechanism for rapid evolution** Neo-Darwinians say no known genetic mechanism can produce the sudden evolutionary leaps envisioned by "punctuated equilibria" theory.
- conflicts between anatomy and biochemistry** Phylogenies based on comparative biochemistry often contradict phylogenies based on comparative anatomy, and *multiply the number of missing transitional forms in the fossil record*.
- circular reasoning in "punctuated equilibria" theory** "Punctuated equilibria" theory says evolution occurs too slowly to see it in the present, and too quickly for the fossil record to capture in the past. This is circular reasoning: the lack of evidence for evolution proves it happened.
- circular reasoning in the standard geological column** "Index fossils" are fossils of life forms that evolutionists think lived only briefly in geologic time. Evolutionists position rocks in the Standard Geological Column by the stage which their index fossils represent in the presumed evolution of life. Thus the Standard Geological Column reflects evolutionary assumptions but does not prove them.
- subjective interpretation of the standard geological column** No actual single example of the entire Standard Geological Column exists in nature. The alleged evolutionary ages of rock strata do not always match the alleged evolutionary ages of some of the fossils they contain. Supposedly younger strata sometimes contain supposedly older fossils. Supposedly older strata sometimes contain supposedly younger fossils.
- complex initial appearance of life forms in the fossil record** Evolution says complex life forms developed from simple forms. But the "earliest" fossils of each life form are as structurally complex as their modern counterparts. The kingdoms, phyla, and classes that first appear in the fossil record still exist today.
- no undisputed transitional forms in the fossil record** Below the level at which they discovered *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus*, the Leakeys at the same site later found remains of a stone dwelling clearly built by man. Some *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus* specimens have also been dated at the same or greater ages than *Australopithecus*. Thus these creatures may not be *Homo sapiens'* ancestors.
- variation is not "micro-evolution"** Evolution requires increased net genetic complexity (between the first cell and man, there had to be new genes). Recombination reshuffles chromosomes. Mutations restructure DNA. Neither increases net genetic complexity. Darwin's finches, Kaibab and Albert squirrels, industrial melanism (spotted moths), penicillin-resistant bacteria, and DDT-resistant insects are non-evolutionary adaptations of existing life forms to new environments, involving no increased net genetic complexity.
- flaws in radiometric dating** Radiometric dating methods give conflicting dates for the same object and/or for different samples of the same object.