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My name is William Dembski. I'm an associate research professor in the conceptual foundations of science at Baylor University. I hold a Ph.D. in mathematics is from the University of Chicago. One of the things I do for a living is study the probabilistic underpinnings of neo-Darwinian evolution.

In his testimony to you on July 9th, UT biology professor David Hillis claimed, "There is no debate about the existence of evolution in scientific circles." That may be, depending on how you define evolution. But there is considerable debate in scientific circles about the *mechanism* of evolution, namely, how it happened. Cambridge paleontologist Simon Conway Morris, writing for the premier biology journal *Cell*, remarks: "When discussing organic evolution the only point of agreement seems to be: 'It happened.' Thereafter, there is little consensus...." (Jan. 7, 2000)

Despite that, the illusion of scientific consensus is all we get in the textbooks. What's more, pro-Darwinian lobbyists, like Eugenie Scott, strive to maintain that illusion. In an interview with *Salon* (May 4, 2001), Scott tells us why. According to her, for textbooks to admit the lack of consensus over how evolution happened will "confuse kids about the soundness of evolution as a science."

Whatever happened to science education nurturing the capacity of young minds for critical thought? Whatever happened to exposing students to as much information as required to form balanced scientific judgments? All the textbooks under consideration grossly exaggerate the evidence for neo-Darwinian evolution, pretending that its mechanism of natural selection acting on random genetic change is a slam-dunk. Not so.

As a probability theorist, I, and many other mathematically-trained scientists, regard claims for the creative power of natural selection as implausible in the extreme. To see why, MIT's Murray Eden asks us to imagine a library evolving from a single phrase: "Begin with a meaningful phrase, retype it with a few mistakes, make it longer by adding letters, and rearrange subsequences in the string of letters; then examine the result to see if the new phrase is meaningful. Repeat until the library is complete." (Wistar Symposium, p. 110) From the standpoint of probability, neo-Darwinism is even more absurd.

Mathematicians aren't the only ones criticizing neo-Darwinism. Consider Franklin Harold, a professor emeritus of cell biology at Colorado State University. In 2001 he published *The Way of the Cell* with Oxford University Press. He remarked: "There are presently no detailed Darwinian accounts of the evolution of any biochemical or cellular system, only a variety of wishful speculations." (p. 205)

Last year I debated Brown University biologist Kenneth Miller, the lead author for one of the biology textbooks under consideration here (Fourth World Skeptics Conference, June 21, 2002). At that debate I read Harold's criticism. Miller didn't dispute the truth of Harold's statement, but merely made the irrelevant observation that Harold had retired fifteen years earlier. Sadly, such failures to address meaningful criticism of neo-Darwinian theory also pervade Miller's textbook and the others under consideration.

In his July testimony David Hillis implored you to "ignore the push to take the science out of our school science textbooks." Hillis missed the point entirely. The point is to put *more* science into our textbooks by including not only the strengths but also the weaknesses of neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory. Don't believe for one moment that all meaningful scientific debate about biological evolution has ceased or that it is only about loose ends and trivial details. If that were the case, none of us would be here today.