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The South Carolina board of education voted on January 9, 2008, to add Kenneth R. Miller and Joseph Levine's popular high school textbook *Biology*, published by Prentice-Hall, to the official list of textbooks approved by the state. "Science teachers from across the state erupted in applause after the vote," the Associated Press (January 9, 2008) reported. At its last meeting, on December 12, 2007, the board withheld its approval of the book after receiving a critique of it from a retired professor at Clemson University, even though it was approved by the state's high school biology textbook evaluating committee and even though a previous edition of the book is already used in roughly half of South Carolina's public high schools.

The [critique](#) [4] (PDF) focused almost entirely on the textbook's treatment of evolution, complaining of Darwin's lack of scientific credentials, adducing the subtitle of the *Origin of Species* as evidence for Darwin's racism, and alleging problems with the book's discussion of vestigial organs, developmental homologies, and the origin of life. In a written [response](#) [5] (PDF), after responding to the critique point by point, Miller concluded, "Although the reviewer has made a few helpful criticisms which we will be glad to incorporate in our text, the concerns and objections to the treatment of evolution in our textbook expressed by this reviewer are without scientific merit."

Miller also attended the January 2008 meeting of the board to defend his textbook. *The State* (January 10, 2008) [reported](#) [6], "He said his presentation about how to teach evolution, survival of the fittest, the origin of species and fossil records can be backed up by widely recognized research over the past 150 years." Also speaking in defense of the textbook were Jerry Waldvogel of Clemson University, who presented a statement repudiating the critique signed by 130 members of the Clemson faculty; Linda

Mobley, the chair of the state's high school biology textbook evaluating committee; and Robert T. Dillon Jr. of the College of Charleston, the president of [South Carolinians for Science Education](#) [7].

Miller and Levine's textbook was finally approved on a voice vote; it is unclear what the tally was -- *The State* reports it as 10-6; the Associated Press reports it as 9-7. In any case, one of the majority, Trip DuBard told the Associated Press, "It's almost shameful to me that we're spending so much time questioning whether evolution should be taught in school in 2008." The victory for science education wasn't complete, however: a college-level textbook used in high school advanced placement biology classes -- Raven, Johnson, Losos, and Singer's *Biology*, published by McGraw-Hill -- was similarly attacked in December 2007 and then withdrawn by the publisher.

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