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"Eroding Evolution," a new article in the July/August 2008 issue of *Church and State*, [addresses](#) [4] the recently enacted "Science Education Act" in Louisiana, which threatens to open the door for creationism and scientifically unwarranted critiques of evolution to be taught in public school science classes. Veteran science teacher Patsye Peebles told *Church and State* that she worries about the scientific literacy of Louisiana's students: "Now this muddies the waters and keeps students from having a really good education," she said. "When they go to college, they will be at a disadvantage because they will not have a good understanding of science."

As *New Scientist* (July 9, 2008) [reported](#) [5], "Supporters of the new law clearly hope that teachers and administrators who wish to raise alternatives to evolution in science classes will feel protected if they do so. The law expressly permits the use of 'supplemental' classroom materials in addition to state-approved textbooks." Creationists have historically often tried to undermine evolution education by proposing supplementary materials: [Of Pandas and People](#) [6] is a notorious example. NCSE's Joshua Rosenau told *Church and State*, "They may not be saying 'Noah's flood' or 'Adam and Eve' anymore, but it is the same creationist argument they are making."

Barbara Forrest, a professor of philosophy at Southeastern Louisiana University, a member of NCSE's board of directors, co-author of [Creationism's Trojan Horse](#) [7] (Oxford University Press, 2007), and a leader in the pro-science grassroots group [Louisiana Coalition for Science](#) [8], put the law in historical context. Referring to the radical religious right organization that engineered the bill, the Louisiana Family

Forum, she explained, "The LFF has been lobbying the legislature for nine years laying this groundwork. They have been waiting for a number of factors to come together -- now the legislature as a whole is conservative and we have a governor who favors creationism."

After observing that a previous antievolution law in Louisiana occasioned the Supreme Court's decision in *Edwards v. Aguillard* (1987) that it is unconstitutional to teach creationism in the public schools, the article observes, "It looks like Louisiana is repeating history, despite concerns from teachers, scientists and legal scholars." And, returning to the perspective of the science teacher, it concludes by quoting Peebles again: "They just aren't even paying attention to what teachers are telling them ... We don't need this, we don't want it." *Church and State* is a publication of [Americans United for Separation of Church and State](#) [9], a non-profit organization that protects separation of church and state by working on a wide range of pressing political and social issues.

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