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Kevin Padian

Kevin Padian, who serves as president of NCSE's board of directors, is continuing to speak and write in enthusiastic defense of the teaching of evolution. To inaugurate Evolution '09, San Francisco's celebration of the bicentennial of Darwin's birth and the sesquicentennial of the publication of the *Origin of Species*, Padian spent about sixty minutes in a spirited and lively discussion of evolution and religion with Alan Jones, the dean of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, on November 22, 2008. [Video](#) [4] of a similar event, held on November 4, 2007, is available on-line from Fora.tv. Then, discussing the challenge of educating the public about evolution, Padian suggested that scientists need to talk about the major transitions in evolution — his specialty as a vertebrate paleontologist — "faster, harder, and more often." For specifics, see his [commentary](#) [5] in the February 2008 issue of *Geotimes* and his [article](#) [6] (subscription required) in *Integrative and Comparative Biology* 2008; 48 (2): 175-188.

Additionally, Padian discusses "The evolution of creationists in the United States: Where are they now, and where are they going?" in a forthcoming [paper](#) [7] (subscription required) in *Comptes Rendus Biologies*, the proceedings of the French Academy of Sciences for life sciences. There he writes, "As evolutionary biology in all its forms continues to bring forth amazing new insights from the origin of whales to the evolution of microbial resistance, one would think that the anti-evolutionists would have less to cling to each year, and that they would give up their arguments as disproven misapprehensions.

They will not, despite recent victories against ID as science and the lunacy of 'creation science'. Creationists reject the notion of a rational universe because they believe that evolution depends upon the dominance of 'random processes' that allow no divine direction or teleological goal. This is the core of the resistance to evolution in America, and it will not go away anytime soon."

In addition to serving as president of NCSE's board of directors, Padian is Professor of Integrative Biology at the University of California at Berkeley and also Curator of Paleontology at the University of California's Museum of Paleontology. He recently received the 2008 Western Evolutionary Biologist of the Year award from the [Network for Experimental Research on Evolution](#) [8]. He [testified](#) [9] for the plaintiffs in *Kitzmiller v. Dover*, the 2005 case establishing the unconstitutionality of teaching "intelligent design" in the public schools. In his [decision](#) [10] (PDF), Judge John E. Jones III wrote, "Padian's demonstrative slides, prepared on the basis of peer-review[ed] scientific literature, illustrate how Pandas systematically distorts and misrepresents established, important evolutionary principles." He also noted that "Padian bluntly and effectively stated that in confusing students about science generally and evolution in particular, the disclaimer makes students 'stupid.'"

Edited December 11, 2008, to correct the description of the link to the video.

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