

the United States, Dr. C. Everett Koop, as an excellent role model. He took on difficult issues such as those revolving around condoms and AIDS head on. He spoke the truth, unmoved by the political left or right and earned the respect of nearly everyone.

C. Maffet
High School Biology Teacher
D.C.C.S.
Newtown Square, PA 19073

Dear Editor:

Congratulations on publishing "Suicide & Homosexual Teens: What Can Biology Teachers Do To Help?" in the March 2001 issue of *The American Biology Teacher*. Adolescent homosexuality is an issue which must be addressed promptly in all secondary education schools before we lose a whole generation of teens. The article was thorough, incorporated extensive research, and had many fantastic suggestions for teachers.

Thank you,

Helen de la Maza

Dear Editor:

Congratulations to Mike U. Smith and Mary Ann Drake for their excellent article, "Suicide and Homosexual Teens," and to *The American Biology Teacher* for publishing it!

As a retired educator and current school board member, I understand the need for this information; for the past two years I have been meeting with administrators, guidance counselors and teachers to share just this kind of information. In fact, it has taken me over four years to collect the facts and the resources

that they included! Once people are aware of the problems, almost all of them want to be part of the solution. This article will give them the background and tools to do that.

Thank you so much for printing this valuable piece; it will surely save lives.

Mary Rodriguez
100 Tintern Court
Charlottesville, VA 22901

Evolutionary Model Can Represent the Culture of Biology

Dear Editor:

After over 30 years of teaching biology to high school students and living through an array of "changes" in approaches to teaching biology, I still have hope that we'll get it right.

I agree with Paul Dehart Hurd ("The Changing Image of Biology," *ABT*, April, 2001) when he states that in the world our students are entering, biology has become "fractionated" into a myriad of disciplines. As he says, "Today, more than 50% of all research scientists are employed by industry rather than university." But when he says, "The fractionation of biology into thousands of research fields means that the evolutionary model is a view of biology limited to the physical evolution of living organisms, no longer adequate to represent the culture of biology," I disagree.

How do we know the evolutionary model is inadequate to prepare students, when it has never been tried at the high school level? I've taught the phylogenetic approach, the biochem-

ical approach, the ecological approach, the systems approach – but never an evolution approach. I'm not talking about a week or two on Darwin's contribution to biology. I'm talking about a textbook that presents Darwin's ideas as a foundation for understanding not only the physical evolution of living organisms but evolution as related to genetics, biochemistry, DNA, communities, ecosystems and, in fact, all of the fields of biology listed in Dr. Hurd's article.

Why has such a universal theme been ignored by book companies? That is a question I have asked book salespersons and executives through the years, and I'm absolutely certain that their answer is correct. A textbook based on evolution was never produced because, "It would never sell."

Book companies have to have their books approved by state book committees, and all too often these committees are dominated by creationists or people who look on the teaching of evolution as suspect, or worse. Interestingly enough, the state mentioned most frequently to me as obstructionist has been Texas.

It is my fervent hope that a good text will appear relating evolution to everyday observations of life on this planet and presenting a unifying theme that makes sense of specialized publications and the various narrow investigations carried on by industry that dominate modern biology today.

Sincerely,

James V. Bradley
Nature Walk Magazine