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## Biology Text Illustrations More Fiction Than Fact

By JAMES GLANZ

**T**he anti-evolution movement called intelligent design has helped its cause by publicizing some embarrassing mistakes in leading biology textbooks.

Biologists attribute them to inattention, but design proponents say the errors show that Darwinists are more than willing to accept shoddy evidence if it supports evolution.

In particular, design proponents cite the 19th-century drawings of the German biologist Ernst Haeckel, who asserted that the early embryonic stages of many animals, including humans, were virtually identical and diverged only later. He said that the resemblance proved that all animals had a common ancestor.

The drawings were reproduced in textbook after textbook for more than a century.

Several years ago, though, biologists discovered that many of the drawings were fraudulent and that the true resemblances were not nearly so striking. Nevertheless, some textbooks still contain them.

One of the texts that includes the faulty drawings is the third edition of "Molecular Biology of the Cell," the bedrock text of the field. Its authors include Dr. Bruce Alberts, a biochemist who is president of the National Academy of Sciences, and Dr. James D. Watson, the geneticist who shared a Nobel Prize for unraveling the structure of DNA.

In an interview, Dr. Alberts said he believed Haeckel's drawings were "overinterpreted," or highly idealized, rather than outright fakes. But he said they would be removed from the fourth edition of the textbook, to appear at the end of this year.

Biologists say the findings do not shake their confidence in the theory of evolution.

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