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Republicans' views on evolution

BY CARY FUNK ([HTTP://WWW.PEWRESEARCH.ORG/STAFF/CARY-FUNK/](http://www.pewresearch.org/staff/cary-funk/))

Significantly fewer Republicans believe in evolution than did so four years ago, setting them apart from Democrats and independents, according to a recent Pew Research Center study (<http://www.pewforum.org/2013/12/30/publics-views-on-human-evolution/>). But behind this finding is a puzzle: If the views of the overall public have remained steady, and there has been little change among people of other political affiliations, how does one account for the Republican numbers? Shouldn't the marked drop in Republican believers cause a decline in the 60% of all adults who say humans have evolved over time?

Trend in Beliefs About Human Evolution, by Party Affiliation

% of U.S. adults in each group

	Humans have evolved over time NET	Due to natural processes	Supreme being guided	Unclear/don't know	Humans have existed in present form	Don't know	N
2013							
All adults	60	32	24	4	33	7	1983
Republican	43	21	20	2	48	9	455
Democrat	67	37	27	4	27	6	705
Independent	65	35	25	5	28	7	674
Other (vol.)/none (vol.)/don't know	50	28	18	5	38	12	149
2009							
All adults	61	32	22	7	31	8	2001
Republican	54	23	26	5	39	7	504
Democrat	64	36	22	6	30	5	747
Independent	67	38	20	9	27	6	579
Other (vol.)/none (vol.)/don't know	46	19	12	14	30	24	171

Source: Pew Research Center survey March 21-April 8, 2013 and April 28-May 12, 2009. Q54/Q55. Figures may not sum to NET due to rounding and net figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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The short answer could be that while the percentages of believers in evolution among Democrats and independents may not have changed much, the overall size of those two groups may have increased, offsetting the impact of the Republican shift.

But the findings of the survey also raise other questions: Were the people who identified as Republicans in the new survey the same as those who called themselves Republican in 2009? Are changes in beliefs occurring broadly among Republicans or are the numbers driven by a subgroup of GOP supporters (such as religious conservatives)? And, although the same questions about evolution were asked in both surveys, could the context in which they were placed have affected the outcome?

Here's a closer look at these questions:

1 How could there be so little change in overall public opinion when there's been a substantial change in opinion among Republicans?

Aggregate Stability, Despite Subgroup Shifts

%

	2013		
	Share of sample 2013	Share saying Humans have evolved 2013	Share of total saying humans have evolved
Republican	22	43	=10
Democrat	32	67	=21
Independent	36	65	=24
Other (vol.)/ none (vol.)/ don't know	10	50	=5
All adults			=60
	2009		
	Share of sample 2009	Share saying Humans have evolved 2009	Share of total saying humans have evolved
Republican	23	54	=12
Democrat	39	64	=25
Independent	29	67	=19
Other (vol.)/ none (vol.)/ don't know	9	46	=4
All adults			61

Source: Pew Research Center survey March 21-April 8, 2013 and April 28-May 12, 2009. Figures in the share of total column sum to the share for all adults, after taking into account rounding.

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When overall public opinion is steady despite opinion shifts among one subgroup, logically there must be at least one other subgroup that shifts in the opposite direction and/or the size of the subgroups must be changing. When it comes to party affiliation, there are four categories of respondents that could be shifting: Republicans, Democrats,

independents and those who volunteer that their party affiliation is either some other party, no party, or do not give a response.

In this case, the shift among Republicans is balanced out by smaller changes in each of the other groups, resulting in stable opinion about evolution in the public overall. For example, the share of independents grew seven points from 2009 to 2013. Even though the percentage of independents saying in 2013 that humans have evolved is two points lower than in 2009, their share of the total sample grew over the four years, while that of the Republicans remained about the same. As a result the share of all adults who say humans have evolved adds to a roughly similar number (60% in 2013 and 61% in 2009).

2 What would explain the change in Republicans' views on evolution? Are they different Republicans today?

Demographic Profile of Republicans and Democrats in Two Surveys

% of U.S. adults in each group

	Republican		Democrat	
	2009	2013	2009	2013
Men	50	47	41	36
Women	50	53	59	64
	100	100	100	100
White, non-Hispanic	87	86	55	52
Black, non-Hispanic	2	5	21	25
Hispanic	5	6	16	16
Other/mixed race/don't know/refused	5	3	8	7
	100	100	100	100
18-29	17	18	23	18
30-49	40	28	35	33
50-64	23	28	25	32
65 and older	21	25	17	17
Refused	*	1	1	1
	100	100	100	100
College grad. or more	30	27	26	29
Some college or less	70	73	73	70
Don't know/Refused	0	*	*	1
	100	100	100	100
N	504	455	747	705

Source: Pew Research Center survey March 21-April 8, 2013 N=1,983 and April 28-May 12, 2009 N=2001.

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A number of astute observers of public opinion have speculated about the possible reasons behind this change. One of the most commonly talked about explanations is the idea that Republicans today must be different from Republicans in the 2009 survey when it comes to characteristics that are particularly relevant to beliefs about evolution. In other words, perhaps it isn't that Republicans have changed their minds on this issue as much as that different people identify as Republican today than in 2009.

Republicans and Democrats are distinctive from each other on a number of characteristics that might be relevant to beliefs about evolution. Compared with Democrats, the Republican Party has higher numbers of men, non-Hispanic whites, and older people. But the demographic profile of Republicans is very similar in 2013 to what it was in the 2009 poll, with the exception that Republicans today are somewhat older, on average.

Profile of Republicans and Democrats in Two Surveys, by Ideology and Religion

% of U.S. adults in each group

	Republican 2009	Republican 2013	Democrat 2009	Democrat 2013
<i>Political ideology</i>				
Conservative	65	69	24	25
Moderate	28	22	39	37
Liberal	5	7	33	34
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Religious affiliation</i>				
White evangelical Prot.	35	37	12	9
White mainline Prot.	19	18	12	15
White Catholic	20	19	13	13
Unaffiliated	8	9	19	20
All other groups/don't know	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>43</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Frequency attend worship services</i>				
At least weekly	47	51	33	33
Monthly/yearly	33	30	35	37
Seldom/never	19	17	31	29
Don't know	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	100	100	100	100
N	504	455	747	705

Source: Pew Research Center survey March 21-April 8, 2013 N=1,983 and April 28-May 12, 2009 N=2001.

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The same is true when it comes to the ideological and religious profile of Republicans and Democrats in the two surveys. Republicans in the 2013 survey are a bit more likely to identify themselves as conservative than did those in the 2009 survey (69% vs. 65% in 2009), and they are a bit more likely to say they attend worship services at least weekly (51% today, 47% in 2009), but neither difference is statistically significant.

Nor are Republicans substantially more likely to be white evangelical Protestants today (37% compared with 35% in the 2009 poll).

Overall, while the GOP may be slightly older and more conservative today, there is no clear evidence that the composition of the party has undergone a fundamental change over this period of time.

3 Are views on evolution different today among all Republicans, or only the most religious?

The idea of a shifting party profile also raises the question of whether the changes in beliefs are occurring among just some Republican subgroups or are broadly occurring among Republicans as a whole. Some observers have speculated that the shift might be exclusively among the most religious Republicans, reflecting a change in the overall religiosity of the party.

In fact, however, the surveys suggest that the change in views on evolution occurred especially among the less religious segments of the GOP. Among Republicans who attend worship services monthly or less often, the share who say humans have evolved over time is down 14 percentage points, from 71% in 2009 to 57% today. Among Republicans who attend services at least weekly the share who believe in evolution has gone from 36% in 2009 to 31% today, a difference that is not statistically significant.

Among Democrats, beliefs in evolution have remained about the same since 2009, irrespective of religiosity. Among Democrats who attend services at least weekly, roughly half say that humans have evolved over time (52% in 2013 vs. 48% in 2009, which is not a statistically significant change). Among Democrats who attend services less often, roughly three-quarters say humans have evolved (75% in 2013, 73% in 2009).

Views about Human Evolution

% of U.S. adults in each group

	Humans have evolved over time NET	Due to natural processes	Supreme being guided	Unclear/ don't know	Humans have existed in present form	Don't know	N
2013							
All adults	60	32	24	4	33	7	1983
Party affiliation by frequency attend services							
Republican, attend weekly+	31	11	18	2	59	9	233
Republican, attend less than weekly	57	32	23	3	35	8	218
Democrat, attend weekly+	52	20	29	2	40	8	279
Democrat, attend less than weekly	75	45	26	5	20	4	421
2009							
All adults	61	32	22	7	31	8	2001
Party affiliation by frequency attend services							
Republican, attend weekly+	36	10	23	2	56	8	255
Republican, attend less than weekly	71	35	29	7	23	7	245
Democrat, attend weekly+	48	18	22	7	44	8	270
Democrat, attend less than weekly	73	46	22	6	23	4	472

Source: Pew Research Center survey March 21-April 8, 2013 and April 28-May 12, 2009. Q54/Q55. Figures may not sum to NET due to rounding and net figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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4 Are there differences between the two surveys that could explain the increased partisan gap?

Another possibility that could explain some or all of the differences between the two surveys stems from what public opinion researchers call survey context effects. The survey conducted in 2009 focused on a range of topics, with the bulk of questions related to science or specific topics in science. The questions immediately preceding those on evolution concerned views about the effects of scientific research for society in each of four topic areas. The 2013 survey included a different set of topics with some overlapping questions on views of scientists and other occupational groups, but also including a range of other questions more closely tied to biomedical issues. The questions just prior to asking beliefs about evolution in 2013 were directly related to religion and religious beliefs.

It's possible that the 2013 survey context "primed" a stronger underpinning of religious beliefs in how respondents thought about evolution, compared with the 2009 survey. Would that kind of context effect influence Republicans more than Democrats? If so, it could help explain the growth in the partisan gap. But we would need to conduct experimental studies to test whether this was the case with views about evolution.

5 What would explain the change in Republicans' views on evolution? Does it have to be just "one" explanation?

The data on this question do not clearly point to any single explanation for the growing partisan gap in beliefs about evolution, and it's possible that a combination of factors underlies this pattern. For example, there could be modest changes over time in who identifies as a Republican, in addition to modest changes in the views of people who were and remain Republicans, together resulting in the rising partisan gap. The two surveys compare cross-sections of U.S. adults over time, but they do not show whether the *individuals* surveyed in 2009 have changed their views. Future Pew Research Center studies will study changing attitudes across a range of other topics so that we can better gauge whether the pattern we observed here is specific to evolution or perhaps related to broader sets of science topics.



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40 Comments



American • 2 years ago (#comment-651343)

A wealth of materials has been written in recent years by scientists, researchers, scholars, and educators whom converted to Christianity and aligned with scientifically testable creation models such as the one developed by Dr. Hugh Ross and Dr. Fazale Rana at RTB with advocates such as Dr. Edgar Andrews and 1996 nobel prize winning geneticist and chemist Dr. Richard Smalley (who upon studying the testable model and reading 'Origins of Life' by Rana converted to Christianity and publicly began proclaiming support for the testable creation model). Additionally, they were exposed to the scientific writings of intelligent design authors and non-scientific sociology and history scholars who converted to Christianity such as Dr. Rodney Stark and many others during this time as well. Old earth progressive Christians can boast some of the very best scientists and scholars on the planet, have a testable model that competes with Neo-Darwinism, and their position with respect to God and His intervention in creating the universe, origin of life on earth, and intervention is fully defended and articulated in their literature. That's why.

**LLH** • 3 years ago (#comment-583976)

One obvious but unmentioned possibility: Republicans may have read more of the so-called “New Atheists” since 2009. The New Atheists like to insist that anyone who believes in ANY kind of divine creation or guidance of evolution does not really accept or understand evolution at all. So perhaps the Republicans who say that they don’t believe in evolution have merely taken the New Atheists at their word and have decided that since they do believe in God, and believe that God has somehow guided or directed the evolutionary process, they are not true believers in evolution as the Dawkins people would understand it.

**Alan LEWIS** • 3 years ago (#comment-649941)

I’m pretty certain Republicans didn’t spend a lot of time reading the New Atheists. Or any time at all.

**Bill Thompson** • 3 years ago (#comment-551539)

Politics is based on speculation, not science. Statistics are not profs. The act of pointing out some Republicans are idiots is done as a distraction and a preventative measure to keep people from learning the the Liberal and Socialistic principles of the Democratic party is demonstratively and incontrovertibly debunked by history and example. The fact that some stupid people are Republicans does not mean Republican principles are stupid. It is shameful that you cannot tell the difference and want the public to ignore the fact that the socialistic principle of the Democratic party really IS stupid. Politics is not science. So even putting biological theories like evolution into a political discussion is itself an act of ignorance.

**Jane** • 3 years ago (#comment-514697)

I find it very interesting that in the cities where ISIS has taken over in the Middle East, the school curriculum is being changed. All scientific classes are being replaced with religious studies. One of the issues to be banned is the Theory of Evolution. HMMMM

**jack512** • 3 years ago (#comment-492248)

The fact that it’s the NON-religious Republicans whose views have shifted supports Krugman’s theory in his Jan 2 blogpost that it’s due to tribal groupthink:

Tribalism, Biology, and Macroeconomics

JANUARY 2, 2014 8:37 AM

I’m a bit late to this party, but Pew has a new report about changing views on evolution. The big takeaway is that a plurality of self-identified Republicans now believe that no evolution whatsoever has taken place since the day of creation — let alone that evolution is driven by natural selection. The move is big: an 11-point decline since 2009.

Obviously there hasn’t been any new scientific evidence driving this rejection of Darwin. And Democrats are slightly more likely to believe in evolution than they were four years ago.

So what happened after 2009 that might be driving Republican views? The answer is obvious, of course: the election of a Democratic president

Wait — is the theory of evolution somehow related to Obama administration policy? Not that I’m aware of, but that’s not the point. The point, instead, is that Republicans are being driven to identify in all ways with their tribe — and the tribal belief system is dominated by anti-science fundamentalists. For some time now it has been impossible to be a good Republican while believing in the reality of climate change; now it’s impossible to be a good Republican while believing in evolution...

krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/0... (http://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/02/tribalism-biology-and-macroeconomics/)



NikM755 • 3 years ago (#comment-339946)

This article is wrong. It shows a majority of Americans believe in evolution when that may not be the case. When the question is asked: Have humans evolved over time? That is microevolution not evolution.

Apparently, the people who come up with these statistics don't understand the difference between microevolution, macroevolution, and the 20,000 different theories that make up evolution.



John • 2 years ago (#comment-656437)

>Apparently, the people who come up with these statistics don't understand the difference between microevolution, macroevolution, and the 20,000 different theories that make up evolution.

In fairness, no one knows what religious people mean when they say "microevolution", just like they don't know what they mean when they say "theory".



Smooth Edward • 4 years ago (#comment-237401)

I think Republicans don't believe in evolution because they look at their own representatives and don't see any.



Louis Roccanova • 4 years ago (#comment-231788)

As a practicing Catholic with a Ph.D. in Biology it appears to me that most people who think there is a conflict between their religion and the Theory of Evolution are either ignorant regarding the theory or their religion.



marly • 4 years ago (#comment-222996)

I have no idea, nor do I see any explanation, about what the column labelled N means in your charts. Also I find your charts very difficult to make sense of even with your printed comments in view. Sorry to be so critical but I feel if I can't get much out of the charts, I'd be very surprised if the majority of your viewers are pleased. I must add that today is my first exposure to any of your surveys or reports. I hope that my opinion becomes more favorable as time goes by!



Cary Funk • 4 years ago (#comment-227370)

Sorry for the confusion. N is commonly used in statistics to denote the "number of observations." In this case, and in most Pew Research reports, N is used to denote the (unweighted) number of respondents on which a percentage is based.

drumcircler • 4 years ago (#comment-221324)

People aren't all that stupid, but they can be misled. Most can learn and understand evolution, but they are being shielded from it. The problem stems strictly from the constant anti-educational messages drummed out by religious nuts and myth-lovers. Not only do these zealots denounce evolution, they also insult and demonize those who teach it.

Political parties are the wrong metric to examine, there is ignorance and confusion across many 'parties'. This regression in human knowledge is attributable solely to religions, making it great reason #31 to be an atheist. Peace to all.



Jason Forson • 4 years ago (#comment-211808)

So it looks like it's not so much that large numbers of republicans are deciding against evolution, as the republicans that do accept evolution are abandoning ship and deciding to not be republicans anymore. A very interesting trend.

Thank you for this article!



Nicholas • 4 years ago (#comment-209622)

If U.S. Republicans can cling on to this belief in the fact of overwhelming scientific evidence, then what hope is there that they will ever accept that pumping more CO2 into the air will be causing significant climate change?



Patrick Jones • 4 years ago (#comment-209304)

Maybe Republicans are getting better educated about the subject than they were before.



Paula • 4 years ago (#comment-207503)

While it appears there is quite a bit of small shifts amongst the demographics, the numbers of women moving political alignment is interesting. I wondered if there were other shifts where gender played a role in the changing numbers?



skeptic4321 • 4 years ago (#comment-207429)

"Significantly fewer Republicans believe in evolution"

The word "believe" is problematic, imo. Do they "believe" in gravity?

Evolution is observable and the evidence for evolution is indisputable (refer to On the Origin of Species, Darwin's Ghost, The Complete World of Human Evolution, the Geographic Project, Berkeley's evolution website, talk origins website, etc.). I am inclined to think the basis for the lack of understanding of evolution is religious in nature. The fact that so many people in America appear not to understand or "believe" in evolution is, imo, quite embarrassing on the world stage. And things will likely not improve if Republicans continue to write and pass laws like those in Tennessee related to science education, evolution, and (un) intelligent design (even against the recommendations of major scientific and educational organizations).



AI • 4 years ago (#comment-208096)

Give me your rock solid proof for evolution and explain to me how people who have not been on this planet except for a few "million" unintelligent years and never saw a dinosaur can draw them all over the caves and rocks we CAN SEE AND DEMONSTRATE this evidence yours is solely based on religion just like the Christian



skeptic4321 • 4 years ago (#comment-208187)

Did you read my post? I gave you some starters – On the Origin of Species, Darwin's Ghost, The Complete World of Human Evolution, the Geographic Project, Berkeley's evolution website, talk origins website – please, read these and/or take some classes in Biology, Genetics, Molecular

Biology, etc., then get back with me/us (and before you ask, yes, I have taken such courses and have undergraduate and graduate degrees in scientific fields and work in a laboratory). Or have you already read these and taken such courses but still just don't understand? I am aware some people may not be able to understand such material, similar to Calculus or Physics, and you may simply be in this group of people (like Republicans, apparently). Evolution, in fact, predicts a spectrum of humans with different capabilities to even comprehend evolution.



AI • 4 years ago (#comment-208335)

You gave plenty of great words and elitist attitude I asked for evidence and by the way I have had the education and I have seen both sides. Where is the evidence.



AI • 4 years ago (#comment-208351)

I also just wanted to add I know all about the Piltdown hoax, the Nebraska man which was really a pig, The Colorado river enters the grand canyon at 2800 feet and the canyon reaches as high as 8000 or more so it could not have carved the canyon unless it carved up. Again I ask where is your evidence?



skeptic4321 • 4 years ago (#comment-209113)

Again, I ask – have you read the books and looked at the links I posted? It appears you have not, as “evidence” is presented in those books and the links. Your other commentary is as relevant as Area 51 and Roswell. And although you claimed to have been educated and see both sides of the story my guess is you are not a scientist nor where your studies based in science – as I said evolution predicts a spectrum of abilities with respect to understanding things – including evolution.



skeptic4321 • 4 years ago (#comment-209156)

Resources:

Lines of evidence: The science of evolution

The theory of evolution is broadly accepted by scientists – and for good reason!

Learn about the diverse and numerous lines of evidence that support the theory of evolution.

15 evolutionary gems

This succinct briefing describes 15 examples drawn from recent research that demonstrate evolutionary theory's power to explain natural phenomena, along with some of their supporting lines of evidence—from whale fossils to the latest in genetics.

This resource is available from Nature magazine.

Darwin's “extreme” imperfection?

Darwin used the words “extreme imperfection” to describe the gappy nature of the fossil record – but is this really such a problem? This article delves into the topic of transitional fossils and explores what we have learned about them since Darwin's time.

This article appears at SpringerLink.

Webcast: Fossils, genes, and embryos

In lecture three of a four part series, evolutionary biologist David Kingsley examines the original objections to Darwin's theory and shows how modern evidence supports the theory.

This lecture is available from Howard Hughes' BioInteractive website.

Evo in the news: What has the head of a crocodile and the gills of a fish?

This news brief, from May 2006, reviews what is likely to be the most important fossil find of the year: Tiktaalik helps us understand how our own ancestors crawled out of the water and began to walk on dry land.

A closer look at a classic ring species: The work of Tom Devitt

The *Ensatina* salamander has been extensively investigated because it is a ring species — a species that demonstrates how geography and the gradual accumulation of genetic differences factor into the process of speciation. Biologist Tom Devitt continues the more than 50 years of *Ensatina* research by applying new genetic techniques and asking new questions about this classic evolutionary example.

Clair Patterson: Radiometric dating

Clair Patterson used radiometric dating to provide evidence that Earth (and the life on it) is ancient.

This article is located within History of Evolutionary Thought

Wallace and Wegener: Biogeography

Alfred Russel Wallace's studies of species ranges and Alfred Wegener's conception of continental drift provide compelling evidence that much of a species' present distribution can be explained by its evolutionary history.

This article is located within History of Evolutionary Thought

These are some of the things on the Berkeley site:



skeptic4321 • 4 years ago (#comment-209163)

Lines of evidence: The science of evolution

At the heart of evolutionary theory is the basic idea that life has existed for billions of years and has changed over time.

Overwhelming evidence supports this fact. Scientists continue to argue about details of evolution, but the question of whether life has a long history or not was answered in the affirmative at least two centuries ago.

The history of living things is documented through multiple lines of evidence that converge to tell the story of life through time. In this section, we will explore the lines of evidence that are used to reconstruct this story.

These lines of evidence include: Fossil evidence

Homologies

Distribution in time and space

Evidence by example

More from the Berkeley website – I will leave the rest for you to explore/read.



Alencon • 4 years ago (#comment-222893)

And all of those errors were identified and corrected by, wait for it, SCIENCE.

That's the strength of the Scientific Method; it tends to be self-correcting.

You're looking for evolutionary evidence? Here's a small list:

1. DNA Evidence – The fact that close relatives in the animal kingdom have very similar DNA. Humans share about 98% of our DNA with our chimpanzee cousins.
2. Human Chromosome #2 – If the 98% number above doesn't impress you let's try the fact that humans 23 chromosome pairs while all other members of the Hominidae family have 24 pairs. Long before we could look closely at individual chromosomes Evolutionary Theory PREDICTED that two human chromosomes had fused. When we could finally look closely we found that human chromosome #2 was in fact a fused chromosome.
3. The study of the Rock Pocket mouse by Dr. Michael Nachman of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute tracing the genetic adaptations to black lava flow in the NM desert.
4. The reams upon reams of similar structures from morphology.
5. The geographic distribution of species.
6. The distribution of fossils within the geologic soil layers.
7. The totality of the fossil record even given the rarity of fossilization.

Now, we don't KNOW what dinosaurs looked like. We're taking educated guesses based upon our understanding of the evidence that exists. Note how occasionally someone revamps that understanding. There's that correcting nature again.

If you have a better explanation of the evidence, feel free to present it. Seriously, we would like to hear it.



Luca • 4 years ago (#comment-203420)

Thanks for the post, but making bar graphs instead of tables that are absolutely horrible to interpret would a great improvement. Please consider that when presenting quantitative values to the public..



Hrafn • 4 years ago (#comment-202683)

The proportion of Republicans, who attend services less than once a week, and accept evolution has tanked (71% to 57%).

Does that mean that:

- (i) Large numbers of Republicans who attend services less than once a week have stopped accepting evolution?
- (ii) Or that large numbers of (former) Republicans, who attend services less than once a week, and accept evolution have abandoned the Republican party?

The second hypothesis would seem to better explain the consistent aggregate acceptance levels (though there are explanations consistent with (i)).

Also, the group in question (those who attend services less than once a week, and accept evolution) would appear likely to be (i) a minority in the Republican party & (ii) those with least to lose by abandoning it.

What we really need is information on any changes in the proportion of Republicans by religiosity over the time period.

Cary Funk • 4 years ago (#comment-204135)



Thanks for raising these questions. I think the data you are looking for on the profile of Republicans over time by measures of religiosity is available in the following table: pewresearch.org/files/2014/01/FT...



Karate Elf • 4 years ago (#comment-202226)

It's becoming absolutely embarrassing to be an American. A handful of crack pot "scientists" claim they have "proof" that there's no evolution or no climate change (in non-peer-reviewed journals, of course) and 40% of Americans are too ignorant to see how stupid it is.

The Theory of Gravity does not say "things fall down when you drop them". It says that the force of attraction between two bodies is proportional to the mass of the bodies and inversely proportional to the distance. Scientists may some day find subtleties in the math, but there is no argument that "stuff doesn't fall down when you drop it".

Similarly, the Theory of Evolution explains HOW man has evolved over time. The fact that man HAS evolved over time is NOT in question (except by ignorant morons)



James F Barry • 4 years ago (#comment-199255)

"What would explain the change in Republicans' views on evolution"

Remember there are two types of Republicans.....Our parents (well educated upper middle class Whites that live in large city's or expensive leafy suburbs) and the Regan Republicans.....America's Peasants.....

Those lower class Southern/Western Whites who only had Jim Crow going for them. Once it ended they began to sink out of view until the early 80's.....

Now let me explain these Peasants aren't defined by their wealth but by their belief systems that keep them rapped in a fog of religious extremism that masked deeply held fears of the modern world and a strong view that there is nothing wrong with past bigoted views which are now seen as unacceptable to be said in public (I'm thinking of the Duck Dynasty incidents). Mix all that together and you get the Tea Party.....The GOP has made a pact with the Devil and we all know how this will play out.....



DJ • 4 years ago (#comment-201031)

To get a better understanding of the possible (even likely) causes for the shift, read science authors who debunk evolution and whose writings are being read by conservatives – for example, Stephen C. Meyer's "Signature in the Cell" and "Darwin's Doubt." Granted it will likely be very difficult for narrow-minded liberals to make themselves read such books, but it could happen. Put simply, those who have shifted in their view are realizing the truth of the matter. The molecules-to-man version of evolution that evolutionists believe and seek to champion is an untenable notion that does not even deserve the status of "theory."



Zen Dog • 4 years ago (#comment-207514)

The phrase "narrow-minded liberals" is an oxymoron. The term liberal means "not narrow in opinion or judgement" (Merriam Webster Dictionary). Conservatives are the ones opposed to change and closed off from altering their views in the face of contradictory evidence. To merely state that something is "an untenable notion" does not make it so. There is plenty of junk science out there trying to dispute evolution.



AI • 4 years ago (#comment-208119)

You honestly believe you came from a rock that somehow turned to soup and somehow turned into a critter. Then somehow the critter finds a mate but even more astounding when they mate they have something totally different from themselves. Show me these things today with the “empirical evidence for this” or that it happens today. Then over “billions of years” magical alchemical changes occur and out pops a human. My advice for such folks is to keep on dreaming.



marly • 4 years ago (#comment-222998)

Oh, and you believe that humans were suddenly created out of thin air by a mythological character in a book written by humans!!! Where is YOUR proof?



Donovan • 4 years ago (#comment-223296)

Regarding Meyer's work: “In a review published by The Skeptics Society titled Stephen Meyer's Fumbling Bumbling Amateur Cambrian Follies,[40] paleontologist Donald Prothero points out the number of errors, cherry-picking, misinterpretation and misinformation in Meyer's book. The center of Meyer's argument for intelligent design, Cambrian Explosion, has been deemed an outdated concept after recent decades of fossil discovery. ‘Cambrian diversification’ is a more consensual term now used in paleontology to describe the 80 million year time frame where the fossil record show the gradual and stepwise emergence of more and more complicated animal life, just as predicted in Darwin's evolution.”

All of Meyer's, and any advocate of ID, uses faith as evidence and justification—a far cry from just being “closed off from altering [our] views in the face of [non] contradictory evidence.



Raymon • 4 years ago (#comment-199074)

Middle of the road centrist Republicans are fed up with the radicalization of the party and are now identifying themselves as Independents. That leaves more super right wing party members that belong to organized religions that believe in the literal translation of the Bible. This separation between so called believers and fact has be an on going battle for centuries.



Zen Dog • 4 years ago (#comment-207529)

Agreed. I find it very interesting that in a separate Pew survey on knowledge of religion Atheists/Agnostics generally scored higher than people who listed themselves as Catholic or Protestant. Draw your own conclusions. My guess would be levels and quality of education.



Gerhard Kratzer • 4 years ago (#comment-194291)

Unbelievable ...



wat • 4 years ago (#comment-194212)

it's going the wrong way? how's that even possible?