Disclosure

of things evolutionists don't want you to know

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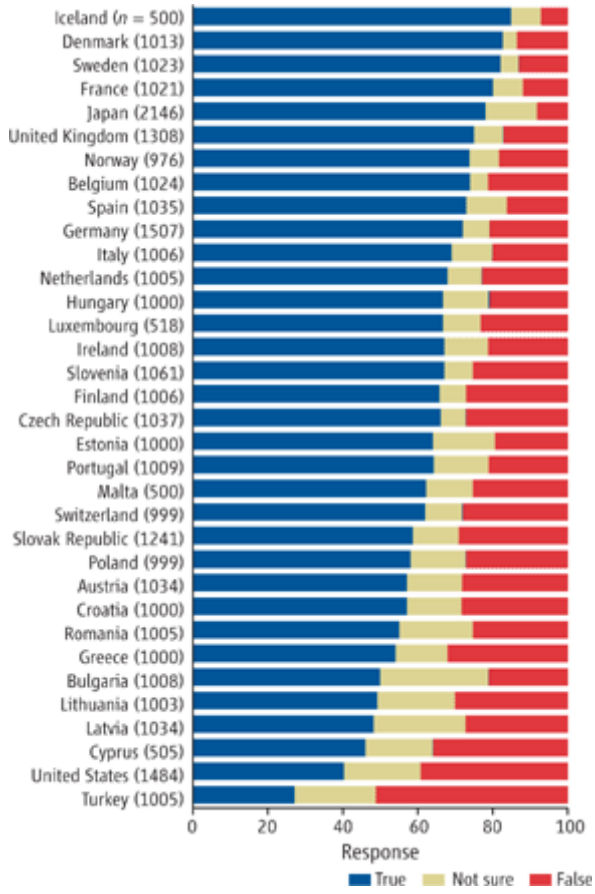
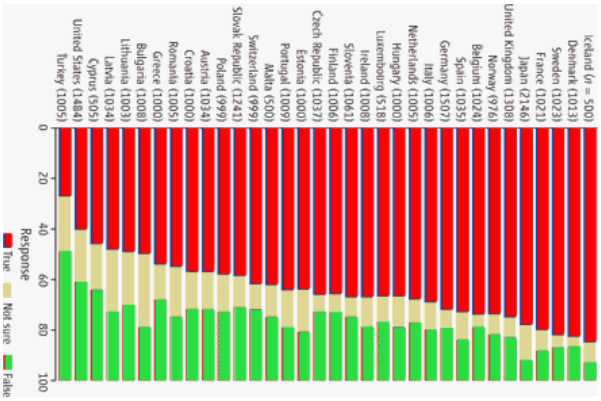
Evolution in Iceland

In a survey of 34 countries, the people of Iceland were most likely to believe man evolved from apes.

You no doubt have seen the results of opinion polls showing that fewer Americans believe the theory of evolution now than several years ago. Now, a study in the journal *Science* shows that a smaller percentage of Americans believe in evolution than nearly every other civilized nation studied. [1]



They used two subtle tricks to make America look bad. They put the United States near the bottom of the heap, and lots of red to imply danger. Simply turning the graph on its side and using different colors makes the United States appear to be the second best country, and Iceland the worst.



The actual numbers differ slightly depending upon how the survey question is phrased, but,

> Regardless of the form of the question, one in three American adults firmly rejects the concept of evolution, a significantly higher proportion than found in any western European country. How can we account for this pattern of American reservations about the concept of evolution in the context of broad acceptance in Europe and Japan? [2]

That's the important question. Why do so few Americans accept evolution when so many people in Iceland do?

It is important to separate fact from opinion. The numbers in the survey are facts. But the reason for the numbers is open to interpretation.

[1] Jon D. Miller, Eugenie C. Scott, Shinji Okamoto, *Science*, 11 August 2006, Vol. 313, "Public Acceptance of Evolution", pp. 765 - 766

[2] *ibid.*

Here is how the study authors interpret the results.

> Religious fundamentalism, bitter partisan politics and poor science education have all contributed to this denial of evolution in the US, says Jon Miller of Michigan State University in East Lansing, who conducted the survey with his colleagues. "The US is the only country in which [the teaching of evolution] has been politicized," he says. "Republicans have clearly adopted this as one of their wedge issues. In most of the world, this is a non-issue." [3]

So, like everything else, it is the Republicans' fault! ☺ But the church is to blame, too.

> The total effect of fundamentalist religious beliefs on attitude toward evolution (using a standardized metric) was nearly twice as much in the United States as in the nine European countries (path coefficients of -0.42 and -0.24, respectively), which indicates that individuals who hold a strong belief in a personal God and who pray frequently were significantly less likely to view evolution as probably or definitely true than adults with less conservative religious views. [4]

Their third conclusion is somewhat puzzling.

> Third, genetic literacy has a moderate positive relationship to the acceptance of evolution in both the United States and the nine European countries. This result indicates that those adults who have acquired some understanding of modern genetics are more likely to hold positive attitudes toward evolution. The total effect of genetic literacy on the acceptance of evolution was similar in the United States and the nine European countries.
>
> Although the mean score on the Index of Genetic Literacy was slightly higher in the United States than the nine European countries combined, results from another 2005 U.S. study show that substantial numbers of American adults are confused about some of the core ideas related to 20th- and 21st-century biology. When presented with a description of natural selection that omits the word evolution, 78% of adults agreed to a description of the evolution of plants and animals (see table S2 in SOM). But, 62% of adults in the same study believed that God created humans as whole persons without any evolutionary development. [5]

They are surprised Americans know more about genetics than Europeans but still reject evolution. Looking at table S3 in the Selected Online Material (SOM), we see the fault was with their questions.

	Yes	Not Sure	No
Over periods of millions of years, some species of plants and animals adjust and survive while other species die and become extinct.	78	16	6

Clearly, the problem with this question is that they asked two unrelated things at once. Effectively, they asked, "Do you believe the earth is millions of years old?" and "Do you believe plants and animals adjust to their environment in order to survive?" Young earth creationists do believe in extinction and adaptation, so they might have said "yes" despite the "millions of years."

The researchers are apparently ignorant of the fact that creationists accept adaptation even more strongly than evolutionists do. They should read the section titled "The Biblical model predicts *rapid* speciation" on pages 79 and 80 of Jonathan Sarfati's Refuting Evolution 2 [italics his].

It is inconceivable to Miller, Scott, and Okamoto that the reason why Americans reject evolution is because they really understand science. Their conclusion is,

> These results should be troubling for science educators at all levels. Basic concepts of evolution should be taught in middle school, high school, and college life sciences courses and the growing number of adults who are uncertain about these ideas suggests that current science instruction is not effective. Because of the rapidly emerging nature of biomedical science, most adults will find it necessary to learn about these new concepts through informal learning opportunities. [6]

This is just fear-mongering. They say that if we don't teach evolution in the public schools, then the American medical industry will go to pot, and we will all die! Perhaps they have never heard of the Loma Linda University Medical Center.

> LLUMC operates some of the largest clinical programs in the United States in areas such as neonatal care and outpatient surgery and is recognized as the international leader in infant heart transplantation and proton treatments for cancer. Each year, the institution admits more than 33,000 inpatients and serves

[3] Jeff Hecht, *New Scientist*, 19 August 2006, "Why doesn't America believe in evolution?" page 11
[4] Miller, *et al.*, *Science*, 11 August 2006, Vol. 313, "Public Acceptance of Evolution", pp. 765 - 766
[5] *ibid.*
[6] *ibid.*

roughly half a million outpatients. As the only tertiary-care hospital in the area, LLUMC is the only Level I regional trauma center for Inyo, Mono, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties [southern California]. [7]

LLUMC is run by a bunch of young Earth creationists! Many of the best hospitals in the world are run by Christians who don't believe in evolution. Medical advances do not depend upon belief in the erroneous theory of evolution.

> The politicization of science in the name of religion and political partisanship is not new to the United States, but transformation of traditional geographically and economically based political parties into religiously oriented ideological coalitions marks the beginning of a new era for science policy. The broad public acceptance of the benefits of science and technology in the second half of the 20th century allowed science to develop a nonpartisan identification that largely protected it from overt partisanship. That era appears to have closed. [8]

They think America has become "anti-science" despite the fact their survey data shows just the opposite. They don't let their data interfere with their desired conclusion!

> **Reservation about science and technology.** A set of seven items was used to estimate the level of reservation held about the impact of science and technology. Using the same zero-to-10 scale (with zero meaning complete disagreement and 10 meaning complete agreement), each respondent was asked to indicate his or her agreement or disagreement with the following statements:
>
> Science and technology destroy people's moral values.
>
> Technological progress creates a completely artificial and inhuman way of life.
>
> Science and technology have created a world that is full of risks for people.
>
> Science and technology make our way of life change too fast.
>
> People would be better off if they lived a simpler life without so much science and technology.
>
> Technological progress is one of the main reasons for the current high levels of unemployment.
>
> One of the negative effects of science and technology is that it destroys people's religious beliefs.
>
> The Index of Reservation about Science and Technology is the mean score from the seven statements and ranges from zero-to-10. Although a majority of both American adults and European adults hold moderate views of the possible risks of science and technology, a higher proportion of European adults hold high levels of reservation than American adults. [9]

So, European adults are more afraid of science than American adults. How can this be if America has so many more anti-science Christian conservatives than Europe has?

Another Interpretation

We don't dispute the facts in question, but we do disagree with the interpretation of those facts.

We agree that America and Turkey reject evolution, while people in Europe, especially Iceland, accept evolution. We also agree that there is a religious reason for the result—but not the same religious reason.

One of the authors of the *Science* article is Eugenie C. Scott, the director of the so-called "National Center for Science Education".

> The ***National Center for Science Education*** (NCSE) defends the teaching of evolution in public schools. We are a nationally-recognized clearinghouse for information and advice to keep evolution in the science classroom and "scientific creationism" out. [10]

The NCSE is actually a political lobbying group that, by their own admission, wants to censor the science curriculum, keeping any evidence against evolution out of the public schools. Here is a portion of their long explanation for why Turkey is the only nation that rejects evolution even more than the United States.

> The aftermath of a military coup in 1980 presented new opportunities for Islamist politics and for creationism. Concerned that secular government allowed too much space for left-wing dissent, risking national fragmentation and social unrest, the military junta and subsequent governments promoted a more religious ideology. This naturally affected education policy. While compulsory religion courses and the teaching of a conservative view of history were its most visible results, natural science did not escape untouched. The 1980s saw the state-sponsored translation and distribution of ICR [Institute for Creation Research] material, explicitly creationist high-school textbooks, and a general anti-evolutionary climate in secondary

[7] http://www.llu.edu/centennial/history.html

[8] Miller, *et al.*, *Science*, 11 August 2006, Vol. 313, "Public Acceptance of Evolution", pp. 765 - 766

[9] *ibid.*

[10] http://www.natcenscied.org/

education (Edis 1994). In 1992, ICR´s Duane Gish and John D Morris appeared at a creationist conference held in Istanbul.

…

In this highly charged environment, 1998 brought a new wave of creationism to Turkey. Unlike previous efforts directly aimed at public education, this wave is much more an exercise in popular propaganda through the media. By producing a series of scientific-appearing meetings and books, creationists organized in the Bilim Arastirma Vakfi (BAV; the Science Research Foundation) caught the public eye — not only through the extensive Islamist media which cheered them on and secularist newspapers which expressed concern, but also through the wider commercial media with a nose for controversy.

…

This media-savvy attention to production details is apparent in the creationist books distributed by BAV as well. Most representative is Harun Yahya´s text The Evolution Deceit. The book comes in 2 versions — a large, attractive 370-page volume notable for its many full-color illustrations and slick appearance (Yahya 1997) and an abridged 128-page booklet with fewer illustrations, which was widely distributed free of charge to the public (Yahya 1998). Especially in light of the sorry state of popular science publishing in an underdeveloped country like Turkey, these lavish productions are very impressive and demonstrate the considerable finances BAV commands.

…

This, then, is the key to why BAV copies ICR. They hail from doctrinally and socially different religions, but they represent constituencies confronting modernity in similar ways. They both answer a need to claim science for the side of old-time social morality, and both correctly see that evolution is a major intellectual obstacle. [11]

Eugenie C. Scott really believes that the people in Turkey have been brainwashed by creationist literature. The brainwashing was especially effective "in light of the sorry state of popular science publishing in an underdeveloped country like Turkey" and government interference in education.

[11] http://www.ncseweb.org/resources/rncse_content/vol19/8371_cloning_creationism_in_turkey_12_30_1899.asp

Iceland is not Turkey

Officially, Iceland is a Lutheran nation, but few people attend church. Since the state pays the minister, and owns the church buildings, the church members aren't obligated to make large financial contributions to keep the faith alive. This tends to decrease commitment to the church. Furthermore, Icelanders are justifiably proud of being a very tolerant people. But there is a fine line that separates "tolerance" from "indifference." Icelanders have become so tolerant of opposing religions that they have become largely indifferent to religious beliefs.

Iceland has essentially 100% literacy. Yes, there is a difference between intelligence, knowledge, and literacy; but there is an undeniable correlation. Literate people tend to be intelligent and knowledgeable.

Presumably Miller, Scott, and Okamoto know this about Iceland. Since Miller, *et al.,* believe an irrational belief in religion is the only obstacle to belief in evolution, they are likely to think that belief in evolution is prevalent in Iceland because evolution does not threaten the rather casual Icelandic religious beliefs. There aren't many crazy Christians and mad Muslims brainwashing the population with their creationist literature.

We think they are only partly right. They are correct in saying that there isn't a lot of creationist literature published in the Icelandic language. Of course, Icelanders can find creationist literature in English on the Internet if they try, but they probably don't try. They probably don't care there is a creation/evolution controversy because they think it is just a religious argument. Since they are so tolerant of religious dissent, they don't care to get involved in the argument. There simply isn't much motivation to read creationist literature in a foreign language.

We think that evolution is accepted by most people in Iceland simply because they are unaware of the many scientific inconsistencies in it. They accept evolution simply because, "everybody knows it is true."

Our Experiment

That's what makes Iceland the perfect place for an experiment. If someone presents evidence against evolution to Icelanders, and they reject evolution, it will not be because of their natural religious bias.

We think that if the Icelandic public is presented with evidence for and against the theory of evolution, they will decide against evolution.

Here is the experiment we would like to do: We would like to go to Iceland and recruit as many people as we can to participate in a study. The study would begin by having the participants answer questions in a survey. These questions would ascertain their attitudes toward science, religion, and the theory of evolution. We expect this initial survey will confirm their low interest in religion, high level of education, high regard for science, and general belief in the theory of evolution.

We would then present a few lectures to them regarding the many difficulties with the theory of evolution. At the conclusion of the lectures, we would ask them to answer the same survey questions again.

If the answers remain basically the same, the logical conclusions are either that the scientific evidence against evolution is not convincing, or we didn't present the evidence very well. We don't expect this to be the case.

We expect the answers to change significantly. In that case, the logical conclusions are either that the scientific evidence against evolution is compelling, or we are amazingly talented orators.

Evolutionists rarely debate creationists because they routinely lose those debates. The evolutionists' usual excuses for losing creation/evolution debates are (1) the audience has a religious bias against evolution and (2) the creationists are worse scientists, but better debaters, than evolutionists.

By doing the experiment in Iceland, we will have eliminated the first excuse. As for the second excuse, we would be flattered to think that any changes in opinion would be due entirely to our unsurpassed rhetorical skills. ☺ We know that isn't the case, but how do we prove it? How can we prove that we aren't simply so incredibly persuasive that we could sell ice cubes to Icelanders?

We will need some time, perhaps six months or so, for our "deceptive charms" to wear off. During that time period, we will encourage the participants in our study to do their own research. We will encourage them to read any books or Internet articles of their choosing written by evolutionists, or listen to any lectures given by evolutionists. Then, at the end of that time period, we will ask them to fill out the same survey for the third and final time.

We expect even greater rejection of the theory of evolution after independent study. We expect that result because people generally assume there is strong evidence for the theory of evolution. They might be skeptical of what we tell them. Once they go looking for that evidence, hear the preposterous tales evolutionists tell, and learn the truth for themselves, they will feel angry at being deceived for so long. Some may even become zealous anti-evolutionists.

Religion

There certainly is a correlation between religious beliefs and evolutionary beliefs; but it isn't clear which is the cause and which is the effect. Evolutionists generally claim that a person's strong religious belief will cause him to doubt evolution. But there are some creationists who say that the scientific impossibility of the theory of evolution caused them to abandon their own atheism and believe in God.

Therefore, we should structure the study in such a way as to test this second hypothesis, too. Will the people who formerly believed in evolution be more inclined to believe in God after they have rejected evolution? This is what the evolutionists apparently fear will happen. Are their fears justified?

Practical Problems

There are some practical problems with this experiment. First and foremost is the fact that Ridgecrest, California, is far away from Iceland. We are going to need some local contacts in Iceland to arrange for a meeting place, do the publicity to recruit participants, *etc*.

Second, the survey and lecture slides will have to be translated in Icelandic, and we will need someone to translate the lectures as we present them. This will be difficult because there is potential confusion about terms. In America, for example, evolutionists use the term "evolution" to refer both to speciation (which really happens) and origin of new families from old families (which does not).

This is a potential problem with the study done by Miller, *et al.* Perhaps the Icelanders said they believe in evolution because they thought the question had to do with speciation instead of evolution. We don't know how the questions were translated into Icelandic, or if the questions were in English, and were easily misunderstood by non-native speakers of English.

Third, there will be travel and housing expenses, but money problems are always the easiest to solve. We aren't too worried about that.

Fourth, it may be difficult to get enough participants. Miller surveyed between 500 and 1500 people in each country studied. We don't know how he did that. Maybe he sent out 10,000 questionnaires and just got 10% back. We want people to do more than just fill out a

questionnaire. We want them to listen to several lectures, do some independent study, and then fill out questionnaires. That's more of an imposition on the participants. We may need to pay participants, or entice them with some token gift of appreciation.

Furthermore, we want to recruit participants without telling them what they are getting into. If we advertise for participants in "a study regarding the plausibility of the theory of evolution," we may unfairly bias the sample. We will probably have to use some vague description such as, "a study of why Icelandic opinions are so different from American opinions on certain important topics."

Fifth, we will have the problem of defending the results against the charge of bias. We know that we will get emails from critics saying, "Your study was biased. Your hypothesis was that if people in Iceland were presented evidence against evolution, then people would reject evolution. You believed the hypothesis before you started the study."

That's a symptom of the sorry state of science education in America today. Of course we believe our hypothesis is correct. If we didn't believe it, we wouldn't do the experiment! Every honest scientist believes the hypothesis is correct. Only a dishonest scientist would conduct an experiment if he did not believe the hypothesis (just to collect the funding). There is nothing wrong with expecting success.

What **is** wrong is fudging the results to make a failed experiment appear to succeed. The classic example is Stanly Miller's origin of life experiments, which showed life could not have evolved from simple chemical compounds, but is generally presented as proof that life did originate this way.

Full Disclosure

If we can do this experiment, we will do it openly. We will make all the data (except for the names of the participants) available to anyone who wants it. Each participant will be given an identifying number, and only that number will appear on the survey results. This will allow you to see how participant #42 answered question 9 the first time, the second time, and the last time he took the survey, but will not tell you who participant #42 is. You will be able to correlate all the answers to question 9 with all the answers to question 37, if you like. We promise to give you all the raw data, regardless of the results.

If there is any way you can help us, please write us a letter (Science Against Evolution, P.O. Box 923, Ridgecrest, CA, 93556-0923) or send us an email (Iceland@ScienceAgainstEvolution.org).

Email

Spontaneous Information

Can bacteria gain information by chance?

We received this email from Michael.

```
   Hello, Your site is awesome and has been
very helpful.
   I soon will be joining, but could you help
me with this link?
http://www.evolutionpages.com/Streptomyces.htm
   From what I can tell a lot of assumptions
are being made from the evolutionists
concerning this bacterium.
   What are your thoughts on this?
   Thanks!
   Michael
```

The web page in question discusses three bacteria, *Streptomyces coelicolor*, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, and *Corynebacterium diptheriae*. The crux of its argument is that the three bacteria

> … have very many genes which show a great deal of similarity. Even more telling, all three genomes (the core of *S coelicolor* and the entire genomes of *M tuberculosis* and *C diptheriae*) show considerable synteny - that means that not only are the same genes present but they are in the same sequence on the genome - they are arranged in the same order. It is therefore likely that the core of *S coelicolor* and the entire genomes of the other two bacteria have a common ancestor.
>
> However, the genes outside the core region of *S coelicolor* (in those arms before 1.5Mb and after 6.4Mb) show no synteny (genes in the same order) with the other bacteria. So for the following reasons, in *S coelicolor*, the leading arm up to 1.5Mb and the trailing arm after 6.4Mb are later additions to the genome:

And the web page concludes,

> So we see that functionality and DNA has been added to genome of *S coelicolor* since its divergence from *M tuberculosis* and *C diphtheriae* [sic]; evidence which stand in contradiction to the claim that information cannot be added to the genome through evolution.

Their conclusion is based on the assumption that *S coelicolor* diverged from *M tuberculosis* and *C diptheriae*. How do they know that? Well, the three bacteria are similar in some ways, and similarity is evidence of evolution from a common ancestor. Furthermore, the three bacteria are different in some ways, and difference is evidence of evolution from a common ancestor. Since they are similar, and different, they must have evolved

from a common ancestor! ☺

Seriously, they looked at the genome and found a lot of similarity, and defined that to be the "core region." The part that wasn't the same they assumed to be "additions." They assume that the core region is the same because the presumed common ancestor had that genetic code, and they assume that the additions are different because they evolved differently. Their "logic" is nothing more that circular reasoning. Evolution caused the changes, and the changes prove that evolution occurred.

Unless *S coelicolor* was observed to have appeared spontaneously in an otherwise sterile laboratory container that originally had only *M tuberculosis* and *C diptheriae*, one can't prove *S coelicolor* is the offspring of either one. *S coelicolor* might be similar to *M tuberculosis* and *C diptheriae* because it was always similar (*i.e.*, it was created that way). They might have similar genes because they live in a similar environment which necessitates similar functionality. Most land vehicles have wheels simply because their designers recognized wheels are useful for terrestrial locomotion. Similarity is just as strong evidence for design as it is for evolution.

But even if *S coelicolor* did descend from *M tuberculosis* or *C diptheriae*, it does not support the conclusion that useful genetic information can arise spontaneously. It is possible that *S coelicolor* assimilated some previously existing genetic information from another source. Asexual exchange of genes actually has been observed, as we discussed in a previous newsletter. [12] If *S coelicolor* assimilated genes from *M tuberculosis* or *C diptheriae*, it does not explain how *M tuberculosis* or *C diptheriae* acquired those genes in the first place.

The fact that three bacteria have similar genetic structure is equally consistent with two different hypotheses: specifically, the similarity may reflect the decisions of a common designer; or it may reflect inheritance from a common ancestor.

The asexual transfer of genetic information from one individual is no more significant than sexual transfer of genetic information from parents to a child. Genetic diversity is either a survival-enhancing ability that was programmed into living things by a designer, or it is a survival-enhancing ability that arose by chance. The fact that genetic diversity is useful and exists in all living things tells nothing about its origin.

[12] *Disclosure*, February 2004, "Sex and the Single Bacterium"

The fact that there is information in an encyclopedia does not prove that information arises spontaneously. Similarity of the information in an encyclopedia with information in other literature could be an indication of a common author, or evidence of plagiarism; but it is not evidence that information can arise spontaneously. Even plagiarized work depends upon previously existing information.

The existence of information in the genome tells nothing about its origin. Information in the genome confirms creationists' prejudice that the information was put there by an intelligent designer, and it confirms the evolutionists' prejudice that the information arose by chance.

Evolutionists need proof that information can arise by chance. Existence of information does not supply that proof.

About Us

Electronic Newsletters

Our information distribution system is gradually evolving.

Last month we started putting the newsletter on the web site in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format, as well as the HTML format we have used for years. We intend to continue the HTML format because the HTML files load faster and can contain hypertext links to other documents. The PDF format, however, is better for printing copies that you can keep in a notebook, or give to friends. The PDF format has asymmetrical side margins, so that there will be room to three-hole-punch (or staple) when the newsletter is printed double-sided.

If you prefer printing the newsletter yourself, please send us an email and we will send you an email telling you the newsletter is available, saving us the printing and postage expense.

Last month we also tried adding an RSS news feed, with limited success. Although it works with some news readers, there apparently is an incompatibility with the Ridgenet server and Netscape 8. We are still working on the problem.

by Lothar Janetzko

Darwin's God

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/04/magazine/04evolution.t.html?ref=magazine

"A scientific exploration of how we come to believe in God"

This month's web site review looks at an article published in the March 4, 2007, *The New York Times Magazine*. The article is based on an interview the writer, Robin Marantz Henig, had with Scott Atran, who is an anthropologist at the National Center for Scientific Research in Paris.

In the introduction, Henig states that Atran, "has been struggling with questions about religion – why he himself no longer believes in God and why so many other people, everywhere in the world, apparently do". Atran has spent a career studying why humans might have evolved to be religious. He is one of a number of scientists searching for an evolutionary explanation for why belief in God exists.

The article points out that the study regarding why belief in God exists is different from the scientific assault on religion being conducted by people like Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and Daniel Dennet.

There is debate over why belief evolved. Is belief in God an evolutionary adaptation or neurological accident? The article goes into great detail explaining the different views of various scientists.

The article concludes with the statement that "No matter how much science can explain, it seems, God fills an emptiness that our big-brained mental architecture interprets as a yearning for the supernatural. The drive to satisfy that yearning might be an inevitable and eternal part of what Atran calls the tragedy of human cognition".

Disclosure

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