

Study: Evolution losing favor in U.S.

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The United States ranks near the bottom, just ahead of Turkey, in a new survey measuring public acceptance of evolution in 34 countries.

The study, led by University of Michigan researcher Jon Miller, found that 40 percent of Americans accept evolution, down from 45 percent over the past 20 years. Among the nations examined, only Turkey had a lower rate of acceptance of evolution, with 25 percent accepting it and 75 percent rejecting it.

The percentage of U.S. adults who overtly reject evolution also declined over the past 20 years, from 48 percent to 39 percent. The percentage of those who were unsure increased from 7 percent to 21 percent.

Miller said contributing factors to Americans' attitudes toward evolution include poor understanding of biology, especially genetics, the politicization of science and the literal interpretation of the Bible by a small but vocal group of American Christians, livescience.com reported.

"American Protestantism is more fundamentalist than anybody except perhaps the Islamic fundamentalist, which is why Turkey and we are so close," said Miller.

In Iceland, Denmark, Sweden and France, 80 percent or more of adults accepted evolution. In Japan, 78 percent of adults did.

The study is reported in the Aug. 11 issue of *Science*.

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