

# Faith and Darwin:

## Harmony, Conflict, or Confusion?

by Caroline Lawes



## **Faith and Darwin**

is part of *Rescuing Darwin*, a wide-ranging project exploring the extent and nature of evolutionary and non-evolutionary beliefs in the UK today and their perceived relationship with theism and atheism.

The project is managed and run by Theos, the public theology think tank, in partnership with the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion.

It includes an essay on Darwinism and theism in modern Britain, an extended interview with the philosopher Mary Midgley, and two major independent research studies, conducted by the polling company ComRes, and by the ethnographic social research agency ESRO.

*Rescuing Darwin* was made possible by a generous grant from the John Templeton Foundation.

For more details visit [www.theosthinktank.co.uk](http://www.theosthinktank.co.uk)

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## what Theos is

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by Caroline Lawes

Published by Theos in 2009

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ISBN: 978-0-9554453-6-1

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# foreword

The debate around Darwinism is dogged by uncertainty and confusion. How many people are evolutionists? How many creationists? How many advocates of Intelligent Design? What are the characteristics of each group? Is Intelligent Design a religious phenomenon? Are the majority of creationists Christians? Are they Muslims? Have they any religious affiliations? Do any of these groups have distinctive demographic, political or educational characteristics that might help us understand better the present intellectual landscape?

Research into these questions, at least in the UK, has been very limited. In January 2006, Ipsos/MORI asked the general public whether they believed in the “evolution theory”, the “creationism theory” or the “intelligent design theory”. Six months later OpinionPanel asked university students the same question.

Useful as such questions can be, they force respondents into distinct, pre-existing categories, assuming that everyone who ticks evolution or creationism or ID does so with the same degree of conviction and consistency.

The survey that forms the basis of this report is different. Commissioned by Theos and conducted by ComRes it asked over 2,000 UK respondents more than 25 questions: about Darwin, Darwinism, creationism, Intelligent Design, science, science education, purpose, design, God, prayer, humanity – and a range of other topics. The idea was to probe respondents from a number of different angles, exploring not only what they believed but how consistently they believed it and whether or not it correlated to other beliefs.

In particular, the survey focused on the perceived relationship between theistic belief and evolution. Were the two linked in people’s minds and, if so, in what way? Were they deemed compatible or incompatible, in tension or in harmony?

The results, which are précised in the Executive Summary and detailed in the body of the report, are interesting and, as one might expect, complex. The manner in which people engage with, adopt or reject evolution is varied, and people are not as consistent in their opinions as earlier single-question-based surveys had suggested.



Sizeable minorities were committed and coherent in their adherence to evolution, creationism or ID, but many more were uncertain and inclined to hedge their bets. The fact that people are more willing to state that a particular position is untrue rather than true, and more willing to designate a position as probable than definite, is telling.

Theos is grateful to the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion for its help in drafting and redrafting (and redrafting) the original questionnaire, and to ComRes for its participation in this process, for carrying out the research with typical professionalism and for conducting such a thorough analysis of the data.

It is worth noting that all the analysis within this report was conducted by Caroline Lawes and her colleagues at ComRes as it was deemed inappropriate for Theos, whose own advocacy of theistic evolution is well-known, to scrutinise the figures or draw conclusions from them.

We hope that the data and the analysis in this report will be of interest and use to those engaged in the debate, and that it will, in some small way, help to clear up the uncertainty and confusion that dogs discussion of evolution and creationism in the UK today.

**Nick Spencer**

Director of Studies, Theos

# methodology

ComRes interviewed 2,060 UK adults between 14 October and 21 November 2008. The data were weighted to be demographically representative of all UK adults. ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

Specific steps were taken in order to verify the results and findings were confirmed. This was done by running a verification of the question on overall opinions on the origins of human life with a separate random sample of 1,000 UK adults surveyed between 28 and 30 November 2008. These findings confirmed the robustness and accuracy of the poll.

# executive summary

## chapter 1 – “evolutionists” v “creationists”: defining the UK population

- 70% of people questioned knew that Darwin is most strongly identified with evolution, yet only 54% were able to correctly identify *The Origin of Species* as written by him. Only 11% knew that he also wrote *The Descent of Man*.
- Just 37% of respondents agree that Darwinian evolution is a theory so well established it is beyond reasonable doubt, with nearly a fifth (19%) believing it has little or no supporting evidence. 36% state that the theory is still waiting to be proved or disproved.
- An overwhelming majority of people (75%) believe that science can explain many things, but not everything.
- Only 10% consider science and religious belief to be completely incompatible.
- More than half of the population (53%) believes in God. Interestingly, while 8% of people say they used to believe in God but no longer do so, this is equalled by the number of people who believe in God but have not always.
- People were asked to choose between four possible positions as described in the questionnaire (see pages 26-27): Young Earth Creationism (YEC), Intelligent Design (ID), Theistic Evolution (TE) and Atheistic Evolution (AE). When asked which position they considered most likely, 17% chose the YEC position, 11% chose ID, 28% chose TE and 37% chose AE.
- Two thirds of people (65%) consider evolution (TE or AE) to be the most likely explanation for the origins of human life.
- Opinion was often confused and contradictory, however. For example:
  - While only 17% of the sample think YEC is the most likely explanation for the origins of human life, when asked a follow-up question, 32% stated that it is either definitely or probably true.

- 11% say ID is the most likely explanation, yet 51% say it is either definitely or probably true.
  - 28% say TE is the most likely explanation, yet 44% say it is either definitely or probably true.
  - 37% say AE is the most likely explanation, yet only 34% say it is either definitely or probably true.
- People were more confident in saying that something is untrue than saying it is true. For example:
- People are more willing to state that a position is definitely untrue than that it is definitely true (for each position, on average 28% of respondents said it was definitely untrue vs. 12.5% who said it was definitely true).
  - They are also more willing to state that each position is untrue rather than true (50% v 40%).
- Respondents were also more hesitant than sure in their views, more willing to designate a position as probable than definite (50% v 41%).
- As a result of the respondents' contradictory responses, the research sample was classified into different levels relating to how consistently and coherently they expressed their opinions based on data from a number of different questions. These clusters are defined on pages 35-41. Just over half of the sample (1,128 people) fall into one of these classifications (the rest being too inconsistent in their opinions, or simply not stating them).

## chapter 2 – demographic trends: describing “creationists” and “evolutionists”

The following figures are drawn from the analysis of the 1,128 people who aligned themselves with each position with a degree of consistency as described above.

### Young Earth Creationists (YEC):

- 11% of the total sample are YECs, meaning they favoured Young Earth Creationism over other options and also judged it definitely or probably true.
- Women are more likely than men to be YECs (62% compared with 38%).

- People aged 65 or older are more likely to be YECs than any other age group (30% compared with 12-17% of each other age group).
- Over a third of YECs (34%) fall into socio-economic group DE (defined on page 47), compared to 23% of the whole population that falls into this group. Accordingly, groups AB, C1 and C2 are all slightly underrepresented.
- While a fifth (21%) of the population is educated to graduate degree or higher, only 11% of YECs are thus qualified. In contrast, while 13% of the whole sample has no qualifications, almost a quarter (24%) of YECs have no qualifications.
- YECs are more likely to align themselves with a religion than the population as a whole (92% compared with 72%).
- A third (32%) of all practising Christians (defined on page 28) are YECs.

*A third of all practising Christians are Young Earth Creationists.*

### Intelligent Design (ID):

- 8% of the total sample are IDs, meaning they favoured Intelligent Design over other options and also judged it definitely or probably true.
- ID is the only category whose adherents are equally likely to be male or female.
- IDs are slightly more likely than the population as a whole to be below 45 years of age (57% compared with 47% of the total sample).
- There is broad correspondence with the social class representation of the whole population. However, 30% of IDs are in social group AB and 23% are in social group C1, this is in comparison to 25% and 28% respectively for the whole population.
- 28% of IDs have graduate degrees or higher compared with 21% of the population.
- 21% of IDs are people of other religions (than Christianity), in contrast to 12% of the sample as a whole. They are slightly less likely to be self-defined Christians than the whole sample (57% against 60%), and less likely to have no religion (21% against 28%).

### Theistic Evolution (TE):

- 18% of the total sample are TEs, meaning they favoured Theistic Evolution over other options and also judged it definitely or probably true.
- Women are more likely than men to be TEs (59% compared with 41%).

- The age spread of TEs is similar to the whole sample, with an average age of 47 years compared to 46.
- Similarly, the spread of socio-economic groups is similar to the whole sample, although TEs are slightly more likely to fall into group C1 (34% against 28%).
- TEs are slightly more likely than the sample as a whole to be educated to graduate degree or higher (25% compared to 21%).
- 82% of TEs are self-defined Christians (compared with 60% of the total sample). Only 9% are of no religion compared to 28% of the sample.

### **Atheistic Evolution (AE):**

- 18% of the total sample are AEs, meaning they favoured Atheistic Evolution over other options and also judged it definitely or probably true.
- Men are more likely than women to be AEs (58% compared with 42%).
- AEs are on average younger than the sample as a whole, with an average age of 44 compared with 46. A significantly lower proportion of AEs are aged 65 or over (14% compared with 20% of the total sample).
- 30% of the AE sample is from socio-economic group AB and 34% from group C1, in comparison to 25% and 28% of the total sample respectively.
- AEs are more likely than the total sample to have a bachelor's degree or higher (41% compared to 31%), just 9% have no qualifications, compared to 13% of all respondents.
- Unsurprisingly, AEs are more likely to be of no religion than the sample as a whole (58% compared with 28%). It is noteworthy, however, that 36% of AEs are self-defined Christians, though only 1% are practising Christians. Although this is significantly lower than the total sample, 60% of whom are Christians, it does demonstrate that a significant proportion of people who would identify themselves as Christian believe in evolution which they say makes belief in God absurd and unnecessary.

### **Muslims:**

- The sample size of Muslim respondents was too low (124) to allow a statistically robust analysis of the state of evolutionary and non-evolutionary beliefs amongst Muslims in Britain, so the results should be taken as indicative rather than definitive.

- Within the total Muslim sample respondents were most likely to think that YEC is the best explanation for the origin of human life (35% compared with 17% of the total sample).
- 24% of the sample think that ‘humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of a God or higher power at key stages’, in comparison to 11% of the whole sample.
- Significantly more of the Muslims questioned believe that evolution has been disproved by the evidence than the population as a whole (28% compared with 9%).
- 23% of Muslim respondents were YECs, 16% IDs, 6% TEs and 5% AEs.
- Similarly to the sample as a whole, 50% of Muslims questioned did not give consistent enough answers to be considered as fitting one of the above categories.

## chapter 3: “creationists” and “evolutionists” – opinions and attitudes

### Views on evolution

- Unsurprisingly, YECs and IDs are most sceptical of the scientific evidence for evolution.
- YECs are least likely to consider it established beyond doubt, with only 12% taking this position, compared with 37% of the total sample. 41% say that there is little evidence for it or that it has been disproved by the evidence – this is more than double the percentage of the total sample who believe this.
- Half of IDs (51%) consider that evolution is waiting to be proved or disproved, compared with 36% of the total sample.
- AEs are very likely to state that evolution is established beyond reasonable doubt, with 65% doing so. Only 7% say that it has little evidence or that it has been disproved by the evidence.
- YECs are more likely than any other group to be open to the idea that other positions may be true. 68% say that TE is probably or definitely true, and 67% that ID is probably or definitely true.
- 60% of IDs consider that TE is probably or definitely true, though only 32% say the same of AE.

- AEs are the least likely to consider any of the other positions to be definitely or probably true (14% say this of YEC, 24% of TE and 33% of ID). Nevertheless, these numbers are all higher than we might expect, considering all the other positions incorporate the need for a God or higher power.
- 57% of YECs think that evolution does not involve chance as it is a process directed by God or some other force. This is higher than any other group (45% of IDs, 40% of TEs, 7% of AEs and 28% of the total sample).

### Science and religion

- 83% of TEs, 84% of YECs and 86% of IDs think that there are some things that science will never be able to explain. This compares with 75% of the total population and 63% of AEs.

**31% of AEs believe that science will one day explain everything.**

- A third of AEs (31%) believe that science will one day explain everything, compared with 15% of TEs, 13% of YECs and just 10% of IDs.
- Over twice as many AEs as the total population consider that science undermines religion (21% compared with 10%).
- 30% of YECs, compared with 42% of the population, think that evolution presents some challenges to Christianity but it is possible to believe in both. 36% consider evolution and Christianity to be totally disconnected subjects (compared with 24% of the total sample).
- Nearly a third (31%) of AEs consider Christianity and evolution to be totally incompatible.

### Purpose and meaning

- AEs were the only group who were more likely than the total sample to state that evolution tells us there is no ultimate purpose to life (22% compared with 13%).
- The most marked variation from the norm was among TEs, 58% of whom state that evolution fits well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose in life, compared with 37% of the population.
- 61% of all YECs consider that we have purpose and meaning because we are uniquely different from all other living things. 40% of the total sample say this, compared with 45% of IDs, 46% of TEs and just 22% of AEs.



## God and the Bible

- Most YECs (83%) have always believed in God. This is significantly higher than the 45% of the total sample who say this.
- Most IDs and TEs (71% and 78% respectively) believe in God. 14% of AEs believe in God, despite having chosen the position which explicitly renders belief in God 'unnecessary and absurd'.
- 71% of YECs believe that God is still involved in the universe, more than twice the total sample (34%). Notably, a significantly smaller percentage of IDs (43%) believe this than YECs.
- Three quarters of AEs, 73%, think that God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe (31% of the total sample say this).
- 60% of all YECs say that the Bible is the divinely inspired word of God, compared with 26% of the total population and 8% of AEs.
- 39% of TEs subscribe to this view, while 43% say it is a useful book of guidance and advice, but not the word of God.
- 47% of YECs and 22% of TEs think that the Bible's creation account is a literal and accurate account of the origins of everything (compared with 18% of the total sample). AEs are most likely (41%) to consider it an ancient myth which has historical, but no scientific interest.

## Other views

- Unsurprisingly, YECs, IDs and TEs are all more likely than the total sample to believe in other spiritual ideas, with those mentioned in the Bible (human soul, heaven, life after death) receiving the greatest support.
- AEs are less likely to believe in any of these things, with the widest differences being in the belief in heaven (19% compared with 55% of the total sample) and life after death (24% compared with 53%).
- Although IDs are more likely than the total sample to think that ID should be taught alongside evolution in school science lessons – 35% compared with 27% - these figures are not as high as we might expect. YECs, TEs and AEs broadly agree with the total sample on whether or not to teach or discuss it in schools.

## conclusion: “creationists” and “evolutionists” – an overview

In order to summarise these findings, it is helpful to explore what a “typical” proponent of each position looks like, recognising that each of these pen-portraits is a caricature, and that there is much more nuance and uncertainty in actual opinions than is reflected in the following examples. We might fruitfully place each individual as a member of the same family:

Grandma is a **Young Earth Creationist**. Aged 75, she has been a Christian all her life, and still attends church, reads her Bible and prays regularly. She left school with no qualifications and devoted much of her working life to raising her family. She would be the first to admit that she is no scientist, but she believes the jury is still out on the question of whether it is scientifically verifiable that humans evolved from simpler life-forms. Science can't explain everything, though, as she often tells her son; some things just have to be taken on faith. She firmly believes that God exists, that he takes an active interest in the world, and that he created human beings in their present form within the last 10,000 years. It is this fact which gives us unique value and significance and, for her, evolution just can't answer that.

Despite being brought up in a Christian home, Dad, the **Atheistic Evolutionist**, lost his faith, partly because of a perception that science has rendered belief in God unnecessary and absurd. Dad is educated to degree level and is a successful businessman. He puts his business acumen down to a reliance on verifiable facts, and doesn't see why his personal life should be any different. He is firmly convinced that Darwin's theory of evolution has been scientifically proven beyond reasonable doubt, and that this poses a serious challenge to Christian belief. In fact, he would say that our advances in scientific understanding in many areas present religion generally with some insuperably difficult questions. He believes that there is nothing after death. The fact that evolution, to his mind, suggests that there is no ultimate purpose in life, does not bother him.

It bothers Mum, though. She too believes that evolution has a lot of supporting scientific evidence, but as a **Theistic Evolutionist** she sees the hand of God directing it and therefore considers that it is totally compatible with ideas of purpose and human significance. Like her husband, she has a bachelor's degree, but while scientific discovery undermined his faith, she found it perfectly compatible with hers. The Biblical creation account in the first chapters of Genesis is, she believes, to be taken as a theological account, illustrating God's supremacy over creation and his special relationship with humans, the highest form of that creation. It was never intended as a literal and scientifically accurate explanation of how the complexity of life on earth came to be. Like her mother-in-law, Mum thinks there are some things that science will never be able to explain, and heaven, the human soul and life after death fit into this category.

Their son, who at 25 has just completed a master's degree, believes that the complexity of life on earth can only be explained by **Intelligent Design**. He believes there is a God or higher power of some sort, though is unwilling to be drawn on whether that is the God his grandmother believes in or some other force. Evolution, he says, is still just a theory that is waiting to be proved or disproved by the evidence. It doesn't offer a serious challenge to the question of ultimate purpose in life, and does not contradict his view that humans have unique value and significance. He thinks science challenges religious faith, but is happy to live with this tension and remains open-minded about how evolutionary theory and Christianity relate to each other. Unlike his father, he thinks children should be introduced to Intelligent Design in school, but while his grandmother would like to see it taught in science lessons as an alternative to evolution, he agrees with his mother that it is a more appropriate subject for discussion in subjects such as RE.

# “evolutionists” vs “creationists”: defining the UK population

Chapter One paints the backdrop for the rest of the study. It demonstrates how people believe that science can explain many things, but not everything. It shows that more than half of the population believes in God and that there are widely varied opinions on the origins of life. While the majority of people consider evolutionary theory more likely than other options, many people still consider Young Earth Creationism to be true.

## 1.1 introduction

The first chapter of this report addresses the overall opinions held in the UK about evolution, science and faith. It highlights that there is an element of confusion, and suggests that many people hold contradictory views. There is also evidence of significant variation in how people form their opinions and how much engagement with the topic they have previously had. We begin by addressing the opinions held in general terms and proceed to offer further analysis of specific areas of importance, in order to determine views held by specific clusters of people.

Where helpful, we define groups together and in later chapters we shall examine common attributes held by each of these groups. At the end of the first chapter we identify four of the most important of these groups: Those who hold to Atheistic Evolution; those who hold to Theistic Evolution; those who believe in Intelligent Design; and those who are Young Earth Creationists. However, not all members of the public fit into these four subsets. There are those who hold contradictory views and therefore would not fit into any of the groups above, and analysis is given on this “cluster” too.

## 1.2 knowledge of Darwin

This research was conducted ahead of the 200th anniversary of Charles Darwin’s birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species*. To introduce the topics of science and evolution it is interesting to discuss how aware, or otherwise, people are of Charles Darwin and his work.

Most people were not aware of these anniversaries at the time of polling, although there was greater awareness of Darwin’s work. 70% of people know that Charles Darwin is most strongly associated with his work on evolution. In general, there is greater awareness

among older age groups that Darwin worked on evolution. While 61% of 18-24 year olds associate Darwin with evolution, this increases to 78% among those aged 55-64 years old.

Over 85% of people who have done a bachelor’s degree or higher associate Charles Darwin with evolution, in comparison to 54% of people with no educational qualifications.

People are generally familiar with Darwin’s association with evolution but less familiar with his writings. 54% of people correctly recognise *The Origin of Species* as written by him but just 11% recognise that *The Descent of Man* is written by Darwin. 12% of people incorrectly suggest that he wrote *The Theory of Relativity*.

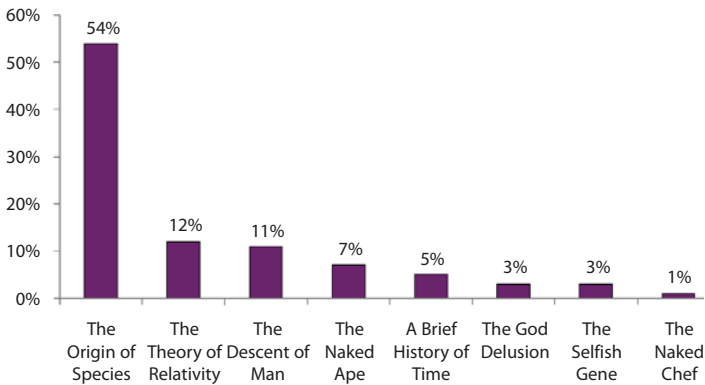


Figure 1.2.1 Opinion on what books Darwin wrote (Question 3)  
Base: All respondents (2060)

There is some variation by religion. People of no religion are most likely to know that *The Origin of Species* is written by Charles Darwin (58% do so). Half of all people who are non-practising Christians or of other religions (51%) know that Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*. The report will later explain how people who practise different religions are defined.

Finally in this section looking at the life of Charles Darwin, we asked about perceptions of his religious views. Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is little awareness among the public about how Charles Darwin described his religious beliefs. 26% of people say that they do not know, 21% say that he would have called himself a Christian and 20% say he called himself an atheist. Only 15% of people correctly say he called himself agnostic.

## 1.3 overall views on science and faith

In examining people’s views on evolutionary theory and the origin of life, it is important to explore the context in which these views are expressed. We therefore begin by looking at other fundamental areas of science and faith to paint the backdrop of what we shall proceed to examine at greater depth.

Participants in the research were asked to consider their beliefs on a wide range of scientific and theological issues. These included their view on the nature of science and the existence of God. In addition to providing important context, these results help to drill down into the public’s reasoning across all of our results.

Focusing on people’s views on science in general, just 3% of the UK population believe that ‘science can explain everything’. There is therefore a widespread view that science does not have all the answers. Interestingly, one in five people, 20%, say that ‘science can’t explain everything yet but it will do one day’. There is some confidence among the public that the breadth of explanations provided by science is increasing and that, as further scientific discoveries are made, more is explained. Three quarters of all people, however, think that while science explains many things, there are some things that it will never be able to explain. Most people acknowledge the importance of science in explaining much of what we see around us but consider that there are some things which are beyond their perceived limitations of what science can explain to us.

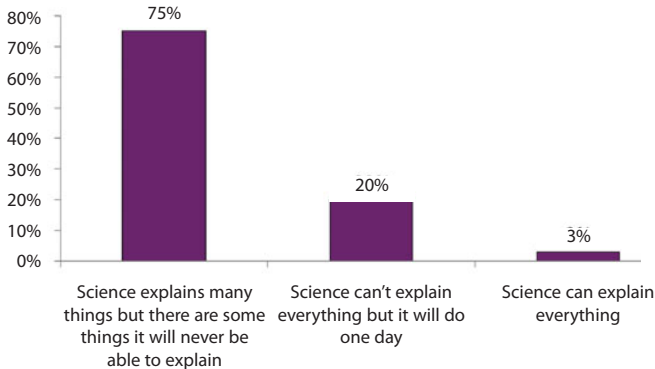


Figure 1.3.1 Opinions of science (Question 16)  
Base: All respondents (2060)

We continued by exploring how people hold their view of science and faith together, and whether these have a supporting or opposing relationship. Figure 1.3.2 below shows how people perceive the relationship between science and religious belief.

Figure 1.3.2 shows that the majority of people think that science and religion can co-exist. This could be either because the challenges science raises do not undermine religious belief, or because the relationship between science and religious belief neither exclusively supports one nor opposes the other. Almost half, 47%, of all people think that science challenges religious beliefs but they can co-exist. A quarter, 26%, of people think that science neither supports nor undermines religious belief.

Interestingly, 12% of people say that science positively supports religious belief while 10% say that science totally undermines it. One might expect that this is strongly correlated to people's views on religion and faith, and this is examined later on.

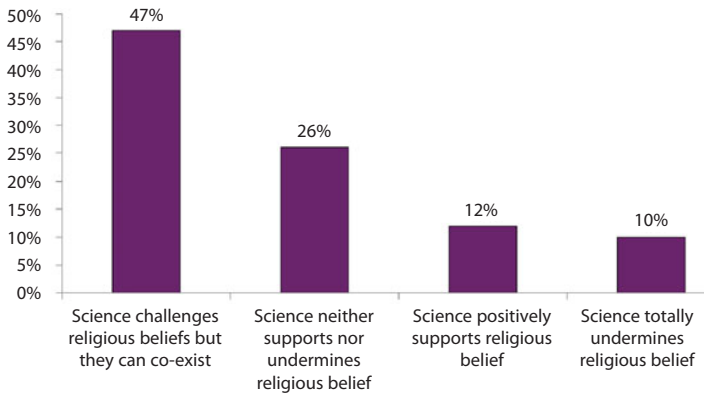


Figure 1.3.2 Views on science and faith (Question 17)  
Base: All respondents (2060)

Having explored people's opinions on science, we move on to address their views on God. Opinion is divided, but in the UK more people believe in God or in a higher power than do not (Question 18). 53% of people believe in God, 45% saying they have always done so and 8% saying they have not always done so but do now. In contrast 26% of people told us they do not believe in God or a higher power (this breaks down as 9% of people who have never believed in God, 8% who used to believe in God but no longer do so and 9% of people who would describe themselves as spiritual people but who do not believe in God). The remaining people fall into two categories, 12% of people say that they do not know whether there is a God and 10% of people do not believe in God but do believe in a higher power. Many people, 72%, do perceive a spiritual element in the universe, whether within themselves, or in an external God or higher power. It is interesting to note that the same proportion of people is finding faith in God as is losing it.

Examining these views of God in more depth, Question 19 asked people about how they would describe their view of God and in particular how, if at all, God is related to the universe. Figure 1.3.3 shows the split of opinion among people about how they would describe God. Opinion is divided, with 34% of people thinking that ‘God designed and created the universe and remains involved with it’. This is theism as classically defined. In contrast, 31% of people think that ‘God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe.’ In between these two poles there are other opinions. 11% of people think that ‘God is like an impersonal force within the universe’ and 9% think that ‘God and the universe are really the same.’ This view is pantheism. 8% of people hold to the view that God designed and created the universe but has no further involvement with it, a deistic view point. These results are summarised in the chart below (Figure 1.3.3).

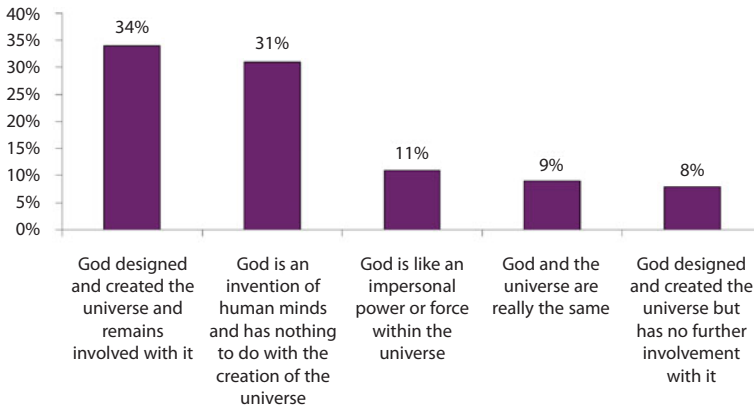


Figure 1.3.3 Views on God (Question 19)  
 Base: All respondents (2060)

We see that there are similar proportions who do not believe in a God (Question 18) and who think that God is an invention of the human mind (Question 19), 26% and 31% respectively. It is particularly interesting to note that people are willing to nail their colours to the mast, and that 65% of people will choose one of the options at either extreme of the scale.

As mentioned above, 53% of people believe in God. The table below (Table 1.3.1) shows that they are most likely to believe in a theistic God, who designed and created the universe and remains involved with it. Two thirds of people who have always believed in God believe in a theistic God and 39% of people who have not always believed in God but do now believe in a theistic God. It is interesting to note that people who have not always believed in God are more likely to have a deistic or pantheistic view of God than those who have always believed in God.



50% or more of each group of people who say that they do not believe in God think that 'God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe'. Three quarters of people who have never believed in God think that God is an invention of human minds. The full break down is summarised in Table 1.3.1, below. It is evident from the results that we do encounter some inconsistencies among people's views which need to be addressed when looking at attitudes towards the origins of life. For example, 4% of people who say that they have never believed in God also say that they think God designed and created the universe and remains involved in it.

	I have always believed in God	I believe in God now but have not always done so	I used to believe in God but I no longer do so	I have never believed in God	I don't know whether there is a God	I do not believe in God but I do believe in a higher power	I do not believe in God but I am a spiritual person
God designed and created the universe and remains involved with it (theism)	66%	39%	5%	4%	6%	4%	7%
God designed and created the universe but has no further involvement with it (deism)	8%	14%	9%	3%	5%	8%	4%
God is like an impersonal power or force within the universe	11%	17%	7%	6%	9%	18%	9%
God and the universe are really the same (pantheism)	8%	12%	6%	5%	12%	14%	10%
God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe (atheism)	4%	11%	67%	74%	50%	50%	62%
Don't know	3%	7%	5%	8%	20%	5%	9%
<b>Total (allow for rounding)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>102%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>101%</b>

Table 1.3.1 Views on type of God that people believe in (Questions 18 & 19)  
Base: All respondents (2060)

## 1.4 views on evolution

Moving on to people's opinions of evolution, since we asked about some complex and difficult issues the questions were designed to approach the subject from a number of different angles. This helps to avoid miscomprehension or confusion and also helps us to identify any contradictions within respondents' opinions. The results below work through the findings of these different questions and highlight the apparent inconsistencies as well as the trends.

There are five questions in particular that were asked to address people's views on evolution. Firstly, Question Five looked at the most likely explanation for the origin of human life:

**5. I am going to read out four statements about the origin of human life. Please listen to each one and tell me which one you think is most likely to be true:**

- 1. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God*
- 2. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God's plan*
- 3. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages*
- 4. Humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years*

Later in the survey respondents were asked about each of the distinct positions in turn using Questions 9, 10, 11 and 12 outlined below:

**9. Young Earth Creationism is the idea that God created the world sometime in the last 10,000 years. In your opinion is Young Earth Creationism:**

- 1. definitely true*
- 2. probably true*
- 3. probably untrue*
- 4. definitely untrue*

**10. Theistic Evolution is the idea that evolution is the means that God used for the creation of all living things on earth. In your opinion is Theistic Evolution:**

- 1. definitely true*
- 2. probably true*
- 3. probably untrue*
- 4. definitely untrue*

**11. Atheistic Evolution is the idea that evolution makes belief in God unnecessary and absurd. In your opinion is Atheistic Evolution:**

- 1. definitely true*
- 2. probably true*
- 3. probably untrue*
- 4. definitely untrue*

**12. Intelligent Design is the idea that evolution alone is not enough to explain the complex structures of some living things, so the intervention of a designer is needed at key stages. In your opinion is Intelligent Design:**

1. *definitely true*
2. *probably true*
3. *probably untrue*
4. *definitely untrue*

This approach allowed us to test respondents’ opinions and ascertain whether they were consistent or not in holding them.

***There are mixed opinions among the public about where human life originated from.***

As mentioned earlier, there is an element of confusion among people on the issue of evolution and origins of human life. There is a continuous distribution of views rather than four distinct set positions and, therefore, many people fall between the recognised categories of Young Earth Creationism, Intelligent Design, Theistic Evolution and Atheistic Evolution. In addition to this, there may be confusion in people’s thinking about what the different viewpoints imply and therefore where they stand.

This section examines the topline results describing people’s views about the origins of life and, in particular, identifies people who accept or reject evolutionary theory. Subsequent chapters unpack this in greater detail.

Below we look at the percentages of the population who hold to four particular views relating to the origin and development of life. Following on from this, clusters of opinion are identified and grouped together. These four positions are: Young Earth Creationism (YEC), Intelligent Design (ID), Atheistic Evolution (AE) and Theistic Evolution (TE), and can be defined as follows:

- Young Earth Creationism is the idea that God created the world sometime in the last 10,000 years.
- Theistic Evolution is the idea that evolution is the means that God used for the creation of all living things on earth.
- Atheistic Evolution is the idea that evolution makes belief in God unnecessary and absurd.
- Intelligent Design is the idea that evolution alone is not enough to explain the complex structures of some living things, so the intervention of a designer is needed at key stages.

There are mixed opinions among the public about where human life originated from and a number of questions within the research address the issue. Firstly, the topline results from Question Five are summarised looking at the most likely explanation for the origins of human life. Two thirds of people think that humans originated through some kind of evolution. This is split with about a third (37%) of all people thinking that it is most likely that ‘humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God’. Following this 28% of people state that ‘humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God’s plan’.

Seventeen percent of people in the UK say that it is most likely that ‘humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years’, this corresponds to the Young Earth Creationist position, and just 11% of people think that ‘humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages’. This is a summary of the Intelligent Design position. Figure 1.4.1 shows how opinion is divided.

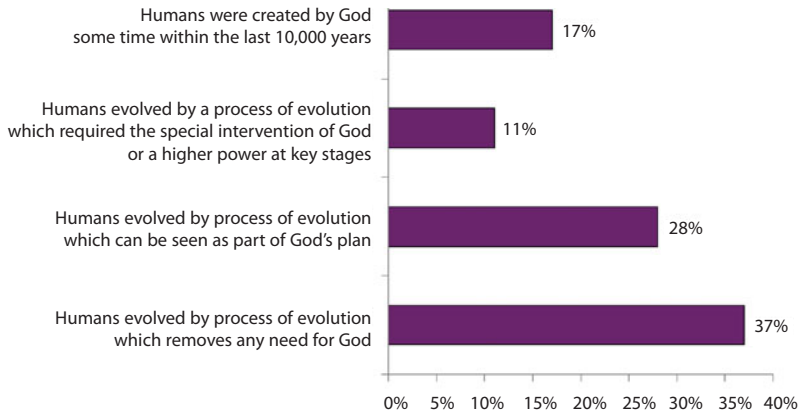


Figure 1.4.1 Views on the origins of human life (Question 5)  
 Base: All respondents (2060)

Already we can see that there are some apparent inconsistencies emerging. For example, 5% of practising Christians (who define themselves as Christians and show that they practice their beliefs by reading the Bible at least several times a month, attending a religious service or meeting at least several times a month and praying at least once a week) think that Atheistic Evolution is most likely, while 8% of people of no religion, atheists and agnostics, believe in Young Earth Creationism, and therefore in the existence of a God. This is examined later in the report.

It is worth drawing attention to the fact that among practising Christians opinion is divided over Theistic Evolution and Young Earth Creationism. 37% of practising Christians broadly hold to each of these views as being the most likely explanation for the origins of human life. The results point to the fact that it is possible for a practising Christian to hold to either viewpoint; evolution or creationism. The report addresses the perceived contradictions between Christianity and evolution later on.

While respondents gave their views on what is most likely to be true in Question Five, their opinions were interrogated further using Questions 9, 10, 11 and 12. In the research we tested each of the options that we are examining in turn to determine how strongly respondents hold their views and also how consistent they are. The study examined

whether people think that each position on the origin of life – Young Earth Creationism, Intelligent Design, Theistic Evolution or Atheistic Evolution – should be considered to be 'definitely true', 'probably true', 'probably untrue' or 'definitely untrue'. The definitions of each position used are those that were outlined above.

Figure 1.4.2, below, shows how people view each of the four identified groups. When given a definition of each in turn they were asked to consider whether they thought this was 'definitely true', 'probably true', 'probably untrue' or 'definitely untrue'.

Interestingly, in comparison to the four statements discussed above, there were similar percentages of people who thought each was definitely true. 14% of people say that Intelligent Design is definitely true, 13% of people say that Atheistic Evolution is definitely true, 12% say that Theistic Evolution is definitely true and 11% of people say that Young Earth Creationism is definitely true. Since the previous question noted that Intelligent Design is considered least likely to be true and Atheistic Evolution is considered most likely to be true there are some differences which are significant in this further analysis.

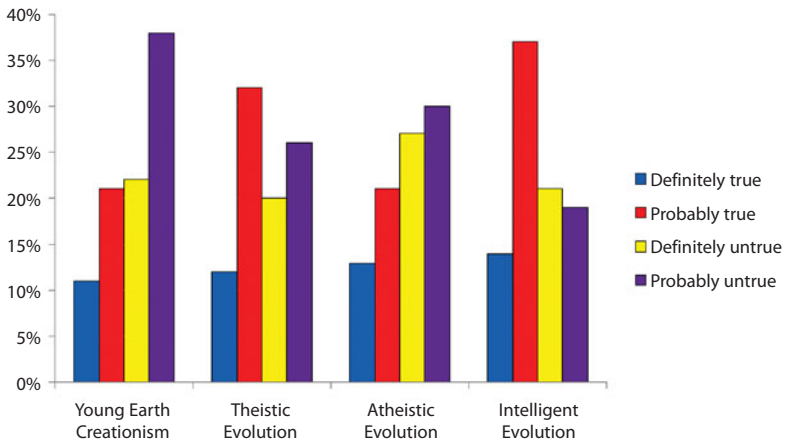


Figure 1.4.2 Views on Young Earth Creationism, Theistic Evolution, Atheistic Evolution and Intelligent Design (Questions 9-12)  
Base: All respondents (2060)

In order to aid analysis, for each statement a mean score was calculated where 2=definitely true, 1=probably true, -1=probably untrue and -2=definitely untrue. These scores provide an indication of how opinion falls on each of the categories as defined above. It is important to bear in mind that, while explanations of each position were used in the questions, there may still have been confusion from respondents about what the terms mean and there are differences in people's understanding and knowledge of the topics covered.

The chart below (Figure 1.4.3) shows the mean scores for each of the positions that this study addresses. The blue line indicates the overall average score.

It is significant that the results show that generally people are more likely to consider a position untrue than true. Intelligent Design is the only position which people are slightly more likely to consider to be true than untrue. This suggests that people are more confident in saying that something is untrue but perhaps less decided on their opinions of what is actually true when considering the origins of human life.

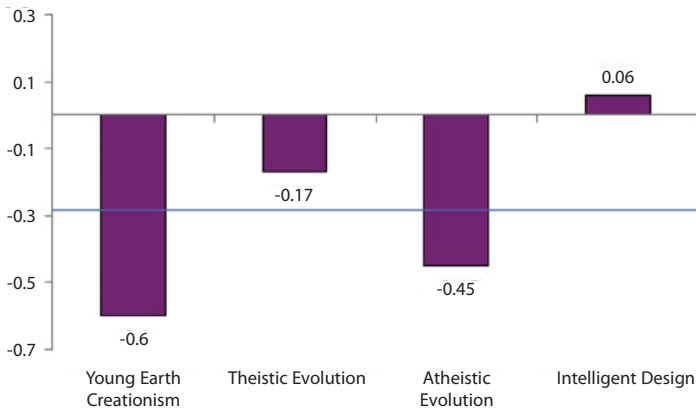


Figure 1.4.3 Mean scores for each position on human origins  
Base: All respondents (2060)

Table 1.4.1, below, shows that on average people are more likely to think that a position is untrue than true, only an average of one in eight people think that any position is definitely true.

	YEC	TE	AE	ID	Average
Definitely true	11%	12%	13%	14%	<b>12.5%</b>
Probably true	21%	32%	21%	37%	<b>27.8%</b>
Probably untrue	22%	20%	27%	21%	<b>22.5%</b>
Definitely untrue	38%	26%	30%	19%	<b>28.3%</b>

Table 1.4.1 Views towards each position and average scores of belief in each position  
Base: All respondents (2060)

When asked about Young Earth Creationism, 32% of people say that it is true. This is split as 11% of people who say that Young Earth Creationism is definitely true and 21% who state that it is probably true. 60% of people say that Young Earth Creationism is untrue; 22% saying it is probably untrue and 38% saying it is definitely untrue. These results give a mean score of -0.6 which demonstrates that more of the population consider Young Earth Creationism to be untrue than true.

Moving on to Theistic Evolution, 44% of people say that it is true. Breaking this down, 12% of people say that it is definitely true, 32% say that it is probably true. In contrast, 46% of people say that Theistic Evolution is untrue, split by 20% who say that it is probably untrue and 26% who say that it is definitely untrue. This gives a mean score of -0.17 showing a small skew among the public towards it being considered untrue.

Again there is mixed opinion on whether or not Atheistic Evolution is considered to be true. A third of people (34%) say that Atheistic Evolution is true, which is split by 13% of people who say it is definitely true and 21% who say it is probably true. However, almost 60% say that Atheistic Evolution is untrue, 27% say it is probably untrue and 30% definitely untrue. Atheistic Evolution receives a mean score of -0.45 which also shows that people are likely to consider that it is untrue. This 34% (who think it is true) may be correlated with the 26% of people who do not think that there is a God (see Question 18 above). The high proportion of people who believe Atheistic Evolution to be definitely untrue is likely to be linked to the high percentage of people who believe in a God.

Finally, it is interesting to see that while there are still mixed opinions on Intelligent Design, 51% of people think that Intelligent Design is true. This is split by 14% of people saying that it is definitely true, and 37% saying that it is probably true. In contrast, 40% of people say that Intelligent Design is untrue. 21% say that it is probably untrue and 19% of people say that it is definitely untrue. Notably, Intelligent Design is the only one of the four positions that receives a positive mean score, 0.06. This is surprising given that it receives the lowest percentage thinking it is most likely. This may be explained if Intelligent Design were perceived as the middle ground between evolutionary theory and Young Earth Creationism. It seems to suggest that there are people who generally believe in evolution but perhaps are sceptical to some extent and Intelligent Design gives them the option to hold this position.

Drawing these results together it is clear that people may hold contradictory views. The charts below highlight the varying opinions among people. The first, Figure 1.4.4, shows how people who think that Young Earth Creationism is most likely to be true (according to Question 5) view the other positions. It is followed by similar charts outlining the views of people who think Theistic Evolution is most likely to be true (Figure 1.4.5); the views of people who think Atheistic Evolution is most likely to be true (Figure 1.4.6); and the views of people who think Intelligent Design is most likely to be true (Figure 1.4.7). The mean scores for each position are shown in the charts. These raise some intriguing differences which help us identify both contradictions and people who hold consistent views.

It is clear, looking at each group in turn, that people are likely to show some consistency in how they view evolution and human origin. In general the option that people say is most likely to be true in Question Five (when asked to select just one) is also viewed as definitely or probably true, when asked about the specific position in Question 9, 10, 11 or 12. However, among the groups, people frequently say that other positions may be true, even if not the most likely. The Atheistic Evolutionists appear to be more convinced in their opinions than creationists. Those who identified from their answer to Question 5 that they were Atheistic Evolutionists are least likely to think that any other position could be true.

When the other groups are addressed, those who hold to a Theistic Evolutionary position or an Intelligent Design position both think that the other could also be true. While they both score Atheistic Evolutionism and Young Earth Creationism negatively they both score the other position positively (as can be seen in the charts below).

It is particularly interesting to examine the views of those who are Young Earth Creationists. Of those who answered that ‘humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years’ in Question Five, 67% say that Young Earth Creationism is true in Question Nine. However, interestingly, 60% also say that Intelligent Design is probably or definitely true, and 55% say that Theistic Evolution is probably or definitely true. It is clear from this that among the group who appear to be Young Earth Creationists there is consistency that they believe that God had some role in creation but there seems to be considerable inconsistency as to what this role was.

The charts below show the mean scores given for each of the four positions broken down by a chart for people who think each position is most likely.

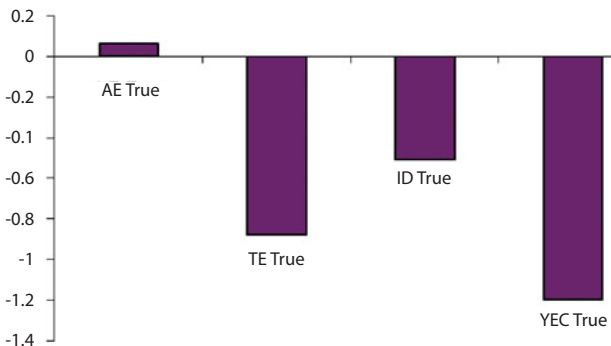


Figure 1.4.4 Mean scores for each position on human origins  
 Base: ‘Atheistic Evolutionists’, i.e. all who say it is most likely that ‘Humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God’ (761)



People who think that it is most likely that 'Humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God' score Atheistic Evolution positively and the other positions negatively, suggesting that they think all other positions are untrue. In comparison to the other groups they are more consistent holding only Atheistic Evolution positively; however they are not very confident in this view.

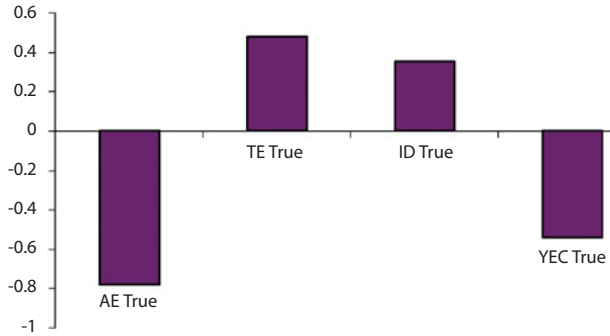


Figure 1.4.5 Mean scores for each position on human origins  
 Base: 'Theistic Evolutionists', i.e. all who say it is most likely that 'Humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God's plan' (584)

People who think that it is most likely that 'Humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God's plan' score Theistic Evolution highest and interestingly score Intelligent Design positively as well. Both Young Earth Creationism and Atheistic Evolution are given negative scores implying they are considered by this group to be untrue.

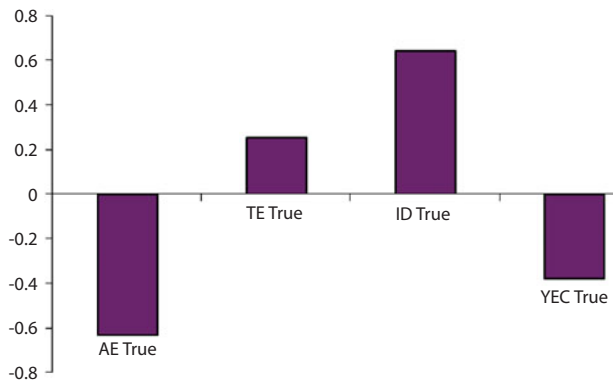


Figure 1.4.6 Mean scores for each position on human origins  
 Base: 'Intelligent Design adherents', i.e. all who say it is most likely that 'Humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages' (216)

People who think that it is most likely that ‘Humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages’ score Intelligent Design highest and Theistic Evolution also positively. This is a similar trend to those who think that evolution as part of God’s plan is the most likely explanation for the origins of human life. Both Young Earth Creationism and Atheistic Evolution are given negative scores implying they are considered to be untrue by Intelligent Design proponents.

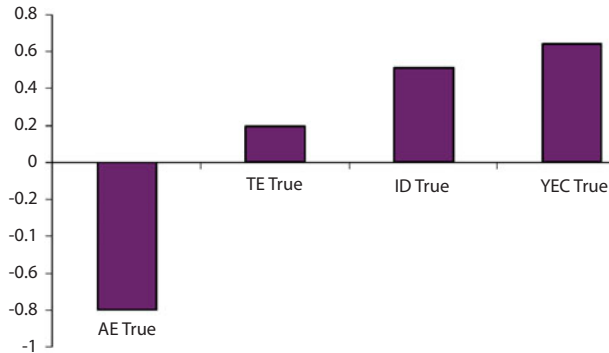


Figure 1.4.7 Mean scores for each position on human origins  
 Base: ‘Young Earth Creationists’, i.e. all who say it is most likely that ‘Humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years’ (342)

Finally, people who think that it is most likely that ‘Humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years’ consistently score Young Earth Creationism highest but interestingly also score Intelligent Design and Theistic Evolution positively. Atheistic Evolution receives a negative mean score.

## evolution: proven or unproven?

Before breaking down the clusters of groups that people are classified into regarding their views on evolution and the origins of human life, we first look at people’s general attitudes towards evolution. The results are shown in the chart below (Figure 1.4.8). There is divided opinion on whether the theory of evolution is beyond reasonable doubt or still waiting to be proved or disproved.

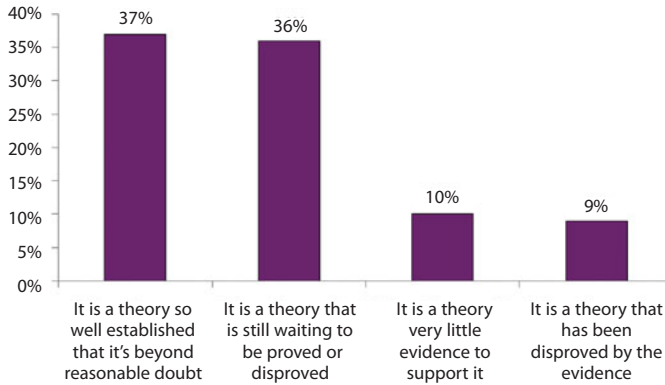


Figure 1.4.8 Views on evolution  
Base: All respondents (2060)

37% of people say that Darwinian evolution is a theory so well established that it is beyond reasonable doubt and 36% say that it is a theory that is still waiting to be proved or disproved.

One in ten people (10%) say that evolution is a theory with very little evidence to support it and 9% of people say that it is a theory that has been disproved by the evidence. The small percentage of those who say that it has been disproved by the evidence we would therefore expect to fall into those categories of considering both Theistic and Atheistic Evolution to be untrue. These relationships are explored later on.

These questions about evolution demonstrate that there are different strengths of opinion held. In order to understand how people form their opinions, what independent variables contribute to their view points and how other opinions are impacted we need to identify subsets of the sample who *consistently* hold to one of the four positions that have been identified. In order to do this we examined the data and tested a number of combinations of clusters based on respondents' answers to the questions related to evolutionary theory and the origins of life.

## 1.5 defining clusters

In order to provide more in-depth analysis respondents were categorised into clusters. These clusters help define the different positions held and also how consistently they are held. People were grouped into Young Earth Creationists, Intelligent Design believers, Theistic Evolutionists or Atheistic Evolutionists. Each of these groups was further split into a convinced hard core, hard core or soft core cluster depending on how consistently they expressed their views over five different questions. Historically, analysis has tended to rely on one definition or question to categorise people but due to the complex nature of the

issues this study addresses, and the different levels of certainty, coherence and consistency demonstrated, we have created very specific definitions.

We first considered people's answers to Question 5:

**Which one do you think is most likely to be true?**

1. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God
2. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God's plan
3. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages
4. Humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years

The four options in Question 5 represent the view of Atheistic Evolution, Theistic Evolution, Intelligent Design and Young Earth Creationism respectively.<sup>1</sup>

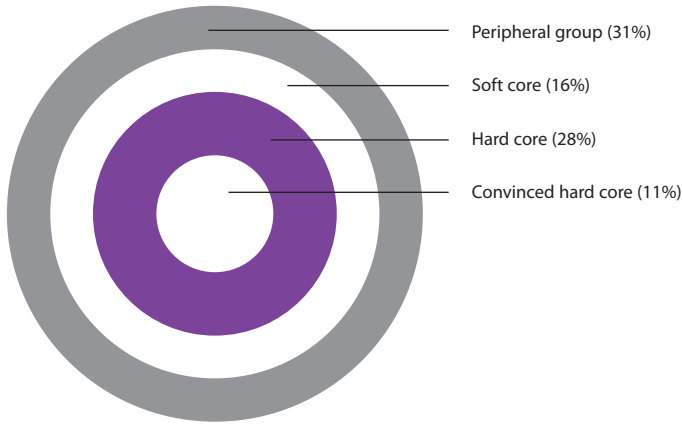
In order to verify responses and to determine levels of consistency and comprehension we also made use of four other Questions (9, 10, 11 and 12) which, as noted above, addressed whether respondents thought each position as defined in the statements below was 'definitely true', 'probably true', 'probably untrue' or 'definitely untrue'.

- Young Earth Creationism is the idea that God created the world sometime in the last 10,000 years.
- Theistic Evolution is the idea that evolution is the means that God used for the creation of all living things on earth.
- Atheistic Evolution is the idea that evolution makes belief in God unnecessary and absurd.
- Intelligent Design is the idea that evolution alone is not enough to explain the complex structures of some living things, so the intervention of a designer is needed at key stages.

The classification of different levels of consistency and certainty is explained below for each group, allowing us to examine separate subsets of the sample in distinct groups. The following diagram shows how the overall sample broke down according to those with the highest level of certainty and consistency moving out to those on the periphery demonstrating lesser certainty and consistency or even total confusion.

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1. We acknowledge that no categorisation is perfect but these definitions were chosen following extensive discussion and design. These definitions simply outline the core views of people of these positions.



The sample sizes of people who fit into each of these groups for any belief are identified in Table 1.5.1 below. This shows that 11% of the total sample are convinced and very consistent in their opinions, 28% are fairly convinced and consistent and 16% are still less convinced and consistent. 31% are openly contradictory in their opinions.

Consistency Group	Sample Size	Percentage of sample
Convinced Hard Core	228	11%
Hard Core	574	28%
Soft Core	326	16%
Periphery	637	31%
Unclassified	296	14%

Table 1.5.1 Overall summary of people who are in hard core, soft core or periphery clusters  
Base: All respondents (2060)

Now we explain below how each of the groups is defined and what percentage of the sample fits into each distinct category.

## convinced hard core:

We asked the series of questions on evolution and the origins of human life as outlined above. The 'convinced hard core' group, with the highest level of certainty and consistency, is made up of those who:

- Chose the position they think is most likely in Question 5
- Went on to say that this position is 'definitely true' in the relevant question in Questions 9-12
- And did not say that any of the other three positions is 'definitely true' in Questions 9-12

For example, a convinced hard core Intelligent Design adherent would say that it is most likely that 'humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages' in Question 5. They would also say that Intelligent Design is definitely true and they would not say that any of Young Earth Creationism, Atheistic Evolution or Theistic Evolution is definitely true.

The sample sizes of each of the four convinced hard core groups are given below (Table 1.5.2).

Viewpoint	Sample Size	Percentage of sample
Young Earth Creationists	39	1.9%
Intelligent Design	21	1.0%
Theistic Evolutionists	44	2.1%
Atheistic Evolutionists	124	6.0%
People who did not fall into the convinced hard core classification	1832	88.9%

Table 1.5.2 Groupings of Convinced hard core group  
Base: All respondents (2060)

## hard core:

The next level of consistency and certainty is called the 'hard core' group. This is made up of those who:

- Chose the position they think is most likely in Question 5
- Went on to say that this position is 'probably true' in the relevant question in Questions 9-12
- And did not say that any of the other three positions is 'definitely true' in Questions 9-12

For example, a hard core Atheistic Evolutionist would say that it is most likely that 'humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God'. They would also say

that Atheistic Evolution is probably true and they would not say that any of Young Earth Creationism, Atheistic Evolution or Theistic Evolution is definitely true.

This group demonstrates consistency of view but less certainty than the convinced hard core group. The sample sizes are given in the table below (Table 1.5.3).

Viewpoint	Sample Size	Percentage of sample
Young Earth Creationists	79	3.8%
Intelligent Design	100	4.9%
Theistic Evolutionists	209	10.1%
Atheistic Evolutionists	186	9.0%
People who did not fall into the convinced hard core or hard core classification	1258	61.1%

Table 1.5.3 Groupings of hard core group  
Base: All respondents (2060)

For most of the subsequent analysis, unless specifically indicated, we have grouped together the convinced hard core and the hard core together, under the general name 'hard core'. This is because they form a relatively homogenous group, both showing consistent viewpoints, and because the larger sample size gives us greater opportunity for analysis.

## soft core:

Using the same series of questions on evolution and the origins of human life as outlined above, the third group is called the 'soft core' group. This is made up of those who:

- Chose the position they think is most likely in the Question 5
- Went on to say that this position is 'probably true' or 'definitely true' in Questions 9-12
- But also said another position is 'definitely true'

For example, a soft core Young Earth Creationist would say that it is most likely that 'humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years' and that Young Earth Creationism is definitely or probably true. However, they would not be filtered out for saying that another of the four positions is also definitely true and thus will have some inconsistency in their opinion.

The sample sizes for these groups are indicated below (Table 1.5.4).

Viewpoint	Sample Size	Percentage of sample
Young Earth Creationists	110	5.3%
Intelligent Design	39	1.9%
Theistic Evolutionists	121	5.9%
Atheistic Evolutionists	56	2.7%
People who did not fall into the convinced hard core, hard core or soft core classification	932	45.2%

Table 1.5.4 Groupings of soft core group  
Base: All respondents (2060)

Throughout the later analysis the hard core group and the soft core group are considered and when there are not significant differences between the two they are referred to simply as ‘all’ Young Earth Creationists or ‘all’ Theistic Evolutionists etc.

Grouping together those who are convinced hard core, hard core or soft core, the following broader definitions and sample sizes can be given for each of the groups we are examining when we speak about ‘all’ people in one of the four classifications. In Chapter Two these groups will be examined for the key trends: what characterises the “IDs” or “Atheistic Evolutionists” in Britain? Where relevant those in the two hard core groups will be examined separately.

Viewpoint	Sample Size	Percentage of sample
‘All’ Young Earth Creationists	228	11.1%
‘All’ Intelligent Design	160	7.8%
‘All’ Theistic Evolutionists	374	18.2%
‘All’ Atheistic Evolutionists	366	17.8%
People who did not fall into the convinced hard core, hard core or soft core classification	932	45.2%

Table 1.5.5 Groupings of broad clusters (convinced hard, hard and soft core)  
Base: All respondents (2060)



Table 1.5.6 below summarises the make up of the people in the sample who are classified as Young Earth Creationists, Intelligent Design believers, Theistic Evolutionists and Atheistic Evolutionists. It is interesting to note that almost half of all Young Earth Creationists are 'soft core' Young Earth Creationists. However, in contrast, less than a fifth of all Atheistic Evolutionists are 'soft core' Atheistic Evolutionists.

<b>% of whole sample</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Convinced hard core</b>	<b>Hard core</b>	<b>Soft core</b>
Young Earth Creationism	11.1%	1.9%	3.8%	5.3%
Intelligent Design	7.8%	1.0%	4.9%	1.9%
Theistic Evolution	18.2%	2.1%	10.1%	5.9%
Atheistic Evolution	17.8%	6.0%	9.0%	2.7%

Table 1.5.6 Summary of groupings  
Base: All respondents (2060)

## peripheral and unclassified groups

There are 932 people remaining (45% of the sample) who do not belong to the convinced hard core, hard core or soft core groups. This remaining group is split into two parts. The first group is the peripheral. These people are those who select an option for being most likely in Question 5 but then go on to say that this is probably or definitely untrue. This group of peripheral people is made up of 87 peripheral YECs, 51 peripheral IDs, 163 peripheral TEs and 336 peripheral AEs. The inconsistency of thinking that a position is most likely and yet untrue highlights the high level of confusion on this issue.

These periphery people do not have consistency within their views. There is a lack of certainty in the fact that they say their chosen position is both most likely and yet probably or definitely untrue. The table below shows the sample sizes who fall into this.

<b>Viewpoint</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Percentage of sample</b>
Young Earth Creationists	87	4.2%
Intelligent Design	51	2.5%
Theistic Evolutionists	163	7.9%
Atheistic Evolutionists	336	16.3%

Table 1.5.7 Groupings of periphery clusters  
Base: All respondents (2060)

The remaining 295 people are unclassified. This is because they did not state an answer or stated 'don't know' for the questions we examine. Half (49%) of people in this group are unclassified as they respond that they 'don't know' which statement about the origins of human life is most likely to be true. We do not have enough detail to classify them as outlined above and so we do not examine the views of these people.

## 1.6 cognitive dissonance

In Chapters Two and Three there is in-depth analysis of the hard core and soft core groups that have been defined. Before approaching that detailed analysis, though, it is important to make some broader observations.

This study clearly demonstrates that people's opinions are not necessarily dogmatic, but that in fact there is a great deal of confusion, contradiction or uncertainty about these issues. People, in general, are more likely to be sceptical about positions regarding the origins of human life than they are to think that any one idea is true. As is highlighted, there are differing levels of consistency and people do demonstrate contradictory views.

The different core groups that have been defined above help address the inconsistencies held by some people but even then there are some surprising views held among those who in general show consistency. There may be a number of reasons for the tensions within people's viewpoints. When issues are not very important to people they may show cognitive dissonance or even contradictory views since they have not necessarily taken the time to form well thought-out opinions.

There is further analysis below of the people who are in the periphery groups defined above. Chapters Two and Three analyse the hard and soft core groups in depth and therefore an overview analysis of the periphery groups is covered here. While examining these groups it is interesting to see that people on the periphery do demonstrate some level of agreement with people holding that view more consistently in the hard or soft core groups (which is discussed in Chapter Two).

In general among all the people who are in the periphery group the sample of men and women is similar to that of the whole population. Interestingly, people who are on the periphery of Atheistic Evolution are more likely to be male and people who are on the periphery of being Theistic Evolutionists are more likely to be female than the rest of the population, as is shown below. This reflects the trend within theism and atheism more broadly that women are more likely to be theists and men more likely to be atheists. This is a similar trend to that of all people grouped in the hard and soft core groups in each of the four positions in Chapter Two.

	<b>Total</b>	<b>YEC Periphery</b>	<b>ID Periphery</b>	<b>TE Periphery</b>	<b>AE Periphery</b>
Male	49%	50%	46%	42%	58%
Female	51%	50%	54%	58%	42%

Table 1.6.1 Sex of people on the periphery or unclassified  
Base: All respondents (2060)

With regards to age group, the people on the periphery are frequently younger than the average age of the whole population indicating that older people are more likely to hold consistent and certain views than younger people. This is particularly notable for periphery Young Earth Creationists and Intelligent Design believers, over 40% of whom are under 35.

	<b>Total</b>	<b>YEC Periphery</b>	<b>ID Periphery</b>	<b>TE Periphery</b>	<b>AE Periphery</b>
18-24	12%	21%	19%	16%	10%
25-34	16%	20%	26%	12%	13%
35-44	19%	15%	13%	26%	26%
45-54	17%	10%	12%	18%	19%
55-64	15%	17%	18%	12%	15%
65+	20%	17%	12%	17%	17%
<b>Average age (years)</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 1.6.2 Age groups of people on the periphery or unclassified  
Base: All respondents (2060)

Examining people who are in the periphery groups it is clear that they generally hold similar views on evolution to those in the respective hard core or soft core group for each of the four positions. So, for example, peripheral YECs are more likely to think that evolution has been disproved than the total population and peripheral AEs are more likely to think that evolution is beyond reasonable doubt. This indicates that while peripheral groups are less inconsistent than all the others, they are not wholly inconsistent in their views. The views of each group compared to the whole sample are summarised in Table 1.6.3 below.

<b>Question 6: Evolution is...</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>YEC Periphery</b>	<b>ID Periphery</b>	<b>TE Periphery</b>	<b>AE Periphery</b>	<b>Unclassified</b>
Established beyond reasonable doubt	37%	13%	22%	32%	49%	26%
Still waiting to be proved or disproved	36%	30%	45%	43%	39%	29%
A theory with very little evidence to support it	10%	22%	16%	12%	6%	9%
A theory which has been disproved by the evidence	9%	28%	13%	7%	6%	9%

*Table 1.6.3 Views on evolution of people on the periphery or unclassified.  
Base: All respondents (2060)*

Overall these data indicate that, although people in peripheral groups do not show sufficient consistency to conduct the in-depth analysis that is conducted on the hard and soft core groups, they do show an inclination towards the positions of which they are on the periphery. They are not free from any correlation but show a tendency towards the position they think is most likely.

The rest of the study will focus on all the people who are classified as soft core, hard core or convinced hard core, addressing each of the four positions in turn. Chapter Two interrogates the data to determine what attributes describe each of the groups of Young Earth Creationists, Intelligent Design believers, Theistic Evolutionists and Atheistic Evolutionists. It describes the common attributes of people in each of these categories and looks at the significant correlations.

# demographic trends: describing “creationists” and “evolutionists”

This chapter examines what correlates with people’s wide and varied views about evolution and the origins of human life. It shows that in particular people’s religious views, their age, sex and their level of education impact upon their opinions. However, other demographic attributes do not have a significantly strong impact on whether or not someone believes in evolution.

## 2.1 introduction

As we have seen in Chapter One, there are wide and varied views held among people about evolution and the origins of human life. There are some shared trends within the clusters identified in Chapter One and other attributes which are not significant in determining which groups people fall into. This chapter examines how the independent demographic variables characterise each of these groups of people. We identify who these people are in each of the categories defined. This chapter will look at all people in each of the four defined groups (Young Earth Creationists, Intelligent Design, Theistic Evolution and Atheistic Evolution). In general we analyse all people in this group (this includes soft core<sup>1</sup>, hard core<sup>2</sup> and convinced hard core<sup>3</sup>) but where relevant and statistically significant we address the hard core group and soft core group separately. Chapter Three will address the hard and soft core groups more distinctly.

This chapter addresses how age, religion, socio-economic group, education and political identification relate to people’s views on evolution and the origins of human life. In order to aid the analysis in this chapter we have defined certain religious groups. To distinguish between people who would identify themselves as Christians but would have different practices we used a number of measures to define these groups.

- 
1. The soft core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that this position is either definitely or probably true and are not in the ‘hard core’ group (and so may say in Questions 9-12 that one of the other positions is ‘definitely true’).
  2. The hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that this position is probably true; also say (in Questions 9-12) that none of the other positions is definitely true.
  3. The convinced hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four opinions they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that this position is definitely true and say no other position is definitely true.

The group called 'practising Christians' are those who identify themselves as Christians and who also read the Bible at least several times a month, attend a religious service or meeting at least several times a month and who pray at least once a week. Those people who describe themselves as Christians but do not fit into this category we have called 'non-practising Christians' since they do not show the habits of regularly practising Christians and this appears to have an impact on their views on issues of science and faith. We have further grouped together people of other religions, because sample sizes are usually too low to permit separate analysis (although where relevant we have analysed these groups separately). Additionally some people classified themselves as having no religion. These people have been grouped together but we also look at atheists specifically where useful.

This chapter describes the make up of Young Earth Creationists, Intelligent Design believers, Theistic Evolutionists and Atheistic Evolutionists, in comparison to the whole population. Trends and conclusions are drawn to determine what distinguishes each of these groups from the population as a whole.

## 2.2 Young Earth Creationists

Who are the Young Earth Creationists? What common attributes do they have? This section examines the demographic, social, educational, political and religious characteristics of all Young Earth Creationists, as defined above. By our definitions highlighted at the close of Chapter One, 11% of the population are broadly Young Earth Creationists. Where relevant we shall also distinguish between hard core<sup>4</sup> and soft core<sup>5</sup> Young Earth Creationists.

Significantly, it is worth noting that women are more likely to be Young Earth Creationists than men. 62% of Young Earth Creationists are women and just 38% are men. In contrast the whole sample is made up of 49% men and 51% women.

There is also a trend with age. People over 64 years old are more likely to be Young Earth Creationists than other age groups. 30% of the subset of all Young Earth Creationists is made up of people who are 65 or over, in comparison to 20% of people in the whole population. Each of the other age groups comprise between 12% and 17% of the sample of Young Earth Creationists. Unsurprisingly, putting these two pieces of information together it is interesting to see that among those who are over 64 and Young Earth Creationists, 70% of them are women and 30% of them are men. The average age of a Young Earth Creationist is 49, compared to 46 in the whole population.

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4. The hard core YEC group are those who consider YEC most likely and say it is definitely or probably true and no other position to be definitely true.
  5. The soft core YEC group are those who consider YEC to be most likely and say it is definitely or probably true but do not belong to the hard core group and can hold another position to be 'definitely true'.

When examining whether socio-economic level has any impact on whether people are Young Earth Creationists or not, we can see that in general there are no dramatic differences in the look of the subset of Young Earth Creationists compared with the whole population. Socio-economic groups<sup>6</sup> AB, C1 and C2 are all slightly underrepresented within the subset of Young Earth Creationists and social groups D and E are more heavily represented. The whole population has approximately 23% of people in socio-economic group DE. However, over a third of Young Earth Creationists (34%) fall into social group DE.

There is clearly some correlation between educational levels and belief in Young Earth Creationism. While a fifth (21%) of the population has a graduate degree or higher level of qualification, only 11% of people who are Young Earth Creationists have a graduate level degree or above. In contrast while 13% of the whole sample have no qualifications, almost a quarter (24%) of people who are Young Earth Creationists have no qualifications.

It is worth noting that the differences between the make up of the sample for the middle-levels of education is not as significant as the differences highlighted above. However, it is clear that at either end of the spectrum (highest qualifications and no qualifications) there is notable diversion from national trends. Looking at the whole sample again, 6% of people with graduate degrees or higher are Young Earth Creationists whereas 20% of people with no qualifications are Young Earth Creationists, highlighting the dissimilarity.

If we look at the political affiliation of Young Earth Creationists it is not dissimilar to that of the whole sample. There is a lower percentage of people who are Liberal Democrats and Conservatives but since these differences are small it is not a significant characteristic of this group. There is generally viewed to be a relationship between political identification and social group, although here this does not imply a special relationship between political identification and views on the origins of life.

One would expect religious beliefs have some role to play in forming people's opinions in this area but how significant is this? In the make up of the total sample 60% of people described themselves as Christians, with 9% falling into ‘practising Christians’ and 51% falling into ‘non-practising Christians’. A third (32%) of all practising Christians are Young Earth Creationists while just a tenth (10%) of non-practising Christians would fall into the same category, which translates into 3% and 5% of the overall national population.

Three quarters of soft core<sup>7</sup> Young Earth Creationists (which makes up 5% of the total population) describe themselves as Christians (compared with 60% of the total sample),

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6. Socio-economic groups are defined based on the occupational status of the head of the household of a respondent. Social group A is the highest including people in professional and high managerial occupations and social group E is the lowest including people who rely on the state for their income.
  7. The soft core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true; are not in the ‘hard core’ group (and so may say in Questions 9-12 that one of the other positions is ‘definitely true’).

with the remaining 26% made up largely of people from other religions. Of this group of Christians (i.e. the three quarters of soft core Young Earth Creationists who call themselves Christians), a third are ‘practising Christians’ and the rest ‘non-practising Christians’.

Moving on from the above analysis of *all* Young Earth Creationists (i.e. both hard and soft core), we focus on just the hard core’ group. The table below shows the percentage of the hard core YECs who are in each religious group. A fifth of the sample of hard core YECs (which comprises 6% of the population) are practising Christians (compared with 9% of the total sample) and just less than a fifth are people of other religions. Interestingly, half of the subset comprises *non*-practising Christians which is the same as the percentage of the whole population. This suggests that people with a stronger commitment to Christian faith are more likely to be Young Earth Creationists and those who are non-practising are no more likely than the whole population to be a Young Earth Creationist. That recognised, people of no religion are considerably less likely to believe in Young Earth Creationism, just 6% of hard core YECs are people of no religion.

	Total	Hard core YECs
Practising Christian	9%	23%
Non-practising Christian	51%	52%
Other religion	12%	18%
No religion	28%	6%

Table 2.2.1 Hard core Young Earth Creationists split by religious group  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with hard core YECs (118)

## Young Earth Creationism summary

To summarise the findings from this section, the chart below, Table 2.2.2, shows the main characteristics of the group in comparison to the whole population. The significant differences are highlighted in bold.

- The hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true; also say (in Questions 9-12) that none of the other positions is definitely true.



Demographic summary	National population	YEC	% difference
<b>Male</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>-22%</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>+22%</b>
18-24	12%	12%	+0%
25-34	16%	15%	-6%
35-44	19%	17%	-11%
45-54	17%	12%	-29%
55-64	15%	14%	-7%
<b>65+</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>+50%</b>
AB	25%	21%	-16%
C1	28%	26%	-7%
C2	20%	16%	-20%
<b>DE</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>+48%</b>
<b>Practising Christian</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>+189%</b>
Non-practising Christian	51%	48%	-6%
Other religion	12%	18%	+50%
<b>No religion</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>-75%</b>
<b>Graduate degree or above</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>-48%</b>
Bachelor's degree	10%	9%	-10%
AS/A Level	16%	12%	-25%
GCSE (or equivalent)	23%	23%	0%
BTEC	2%	1%	-50%
NVQ	6%	7%	+17%
<b>No qualifications</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>+85%</b>

Table 2.2.2 Summary attributes of Young Earth Creationists  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

In summary, Young Earth Creationists are different from the general population in that they are more likely to be older and more likely to be female. They are most likely to be in social group DE and they also are more likely to practise Christianity or another religion than the rest of the population. There is no significant difference between the political affiliation of the whole sample and the sample of Young Earth Creationists.

## 2.3 Intelligent Design

The same process of analysis was conducted on people who are classified into the category of 'Intelligent Design' (ID), which is 8% of the population. Where relevant we shall also separately examine the hard core IDs. As a perceived middle-ground between creationism and evolutionary theory we have seen in Chapter One that it was the only category to receive a positive mean score for being viewed as probably true by a large proportion of the sample. Here we examine those who are consistently Intelligent Design believers rather than those who appear to hedge their bets by saying it is definitely or probably true, but holding to a different position elsewhere.

The results demonstrate that, uniquely among the four positions, people's sex is not a significant characteristic of those who believe in Intelligent Design. 50% of people who believe in Intelligent Design are men and 50% are women.

*The average age of someone who believes in Intelligent Design is lower than that of the whole population.*

The trend among age groups is less stark than it is among Young Earth Creationists. However, it is notable that the average age of someone who believes in Intelligent Design is lower than that of the whole population. Between the ages of 18 and 44 there are greater percentages of people in each age band who make up the sample of people who believe in Intelligent Design than in the whole

population. However, there is a lower representation of people in the three age bands over 45 among Intelligent Design believers than the whole population. The average age of an Intelligent Design believer is 43, compared to the national average of 46.

Within the sample of people who believe in Intelligent Design, there is broad correspondence with the social class representation of the whole population. However, it is notable that there is a higher proportion of people in socio-economic group AB and a lower proportion of people in socio-economic group C1 among Intelligent Design believers compared to the whole population. 30% of people who believe in Intelligent Design are in social group AB and 23% are in social group C1, this is in comparison to 25% and 28% respectively for the whole population.

Educational level again is an interesting area to assess. While 21% of the whole sample have graduate degree or higher qualifications, 28% of people who believe in Intelligent Design have a graduate degree or higher. As before, political identification is similar among people who believe in Intelligent Design to that within the whole sample, so this has no noteworthy significance.

When we examine the religious beliefs of people who believe in Intelligent Design, unsurprisingly it is dominated by those who believe in a God or a higher power. 57% of the sample of people who believe in Intelligent Design call themselves Christians, with 11% being practising Christians and 46% being non-practising Christians. This is a similar representation to that of the whole sample.

A fifth (20%) of those who believe in ID are people of other religions, in contrast to just more than a tenth of the whole sample being made up of this group (11%). 21% of the sample is made up of people of no religion, in general this is made up of agnostics and atheists, this is a little lower than for the whole population, 27% of whom describe themselves as having no religion. For this category it may be that agnostics and those who have not fully formed their opinions on God and religion may consider Intelligent Design to be the most likely explanation for the origins of life.

Moving on from the broad group of IDs who are either hard or soft core we shall focus on those who are just hard core (meaning both hard core<sup>9</sup> and convinced hard core<sup>10</sup>). Table 2.3.1 below shows the percentage of hard core IDs who are in each religious group. There is a higher percentage of people who are non-practising Christians in the hard core group than in “all” Intelligent Design adherents. Non-practising Christians are represented more heavily among the hard core Intelligent Design believers than all Intelligent Design believers, 49% and 46% respectively. This suggests that perhaps strong religious views do not necessarily imply holding to a more convinced position in this case.

	Total	Hard core IDs
Practising Christian	9%	12%
Non-practising Christian	51%	49%
Other religion	12%	15%
No religion	28%	23%

Table 2.3.1 Hard core Intelligent Design believers split by religious group  
Base: All respondents (2060) with hard core IDs (121)

9. The hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is probably true; also say (in Questions 9-12) that none of the other positions is definitely true.
10. The convinced hard core group is those who hold the position they consider most likely to be definitely true and no other position to be definitely true.

## Intelligent Design summary

To summarise the findings from this section, Table 2.3.2 below shows the main characteristics of the group in comparison to the whole population. The significant differences are highlighted in bold.

Demographic summary	National population	ID	% difference
Male	49%	50%	+2%
Female	51%	50%	-2%
18-24	12%	14%	+17%
<b>25-34</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>+38%</b>
35-44	19%	21%	+11%
45-54	17%	13%	-24%
55-64	15%	16%	+7%
<b>65+</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>-30%</b>
<b>AB</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>+20%</b>
C1	28%	23%	-18%
C2	20%	18%	-10%
DE	23%	23%	+0%
<b>Practising Christian</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>+22%</b>
Non-practising Christian	51%	46%	-10%
<b>Other religion</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>+67%</b>
<b>No religion</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>-25%</b>
<b>Graduate degree or above</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>+33%</b>
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>-20%</b>
AS/A Level	16%	15%	-6%
GCSE (or equivalent)	23%	19%	-17%
<b>BTEC</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>-50%</b>
NVQ	6%	7%	+17%
No qualifications	13%	13%	0%

Table 2.3.2 Summary attributes of Intelligent Design believers  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

In summary, people who believe in Intelligent Design are more likely to be religious people than people of no religion, compared to the whole population. They are more likely to be in social group AB and have a higher level of education. They are on average younger than the general population. People who believe in Intelligent Design are just as likely to be male as female and there is little difference by political affiliation with the whole sample.

Table 2.3.2 (above) also shows that people who believe in Intelligent Design are less different from the national population than Young Earth Creationists are. While there are some differences they are not as stark as the differences in the make up of the YEC group.

## 2.4 Theistic Evolution

The analysis moves on to examine the two evolutionary positions that this research addresses. It begins with Theistic Evolution and moves on to Atheistic Evolutionary theory. 18% of the whole population fall into the “all” Theistic Evolutionists group and these people are analysed below. Where relevant we shall also look at the hard core<sup>11</sup> Theistic Evolutionists specifically.

As with Young Earth Creationism, women are more likely than men to believe in Theistic Evolution. The sample of those who are Theistic Evolutionists comprises 59% women and 41% men. Since women are more likely than men to believe in God this may explain why this is so.

When examining socio-economic groups it is interesting to see that most of the subsets reflect a similar proportion of people in each socio-economic group as in the whole population. For people who are Theistic Evolutionists, socio-economic group C1 takes up a larger proportion of the sub-sample than in the population. Interestingly, while the other groups are represented by a smaller proportion, we can see that 34% of people who are Theistic Evolutionists are in social group C1, compared to 28% in the whole population. However, these differences are not large.

Education level does not appear to have a strong impact on whether someone is a Theistic Evolutionist or not. However, it is interesting to note that a higher than average proportion of the sample is made up of people with graduate degrees or higher, and a lower than average proportion of the sample is made up of people with AS/A levels as their highest qualification.

11. The hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true; also say (in Questions 9-12) that none of the other positions is definitely true.

The age spread is fairly similar within the sample of Theistic Evolutionists in comparison to the whole sample, with an average age of 47 years old for this group compared to 46 for the whole population. Political identification does not play a large role in indentifying the types of people who are within this classification.

82% of people who are Theistic Evolutionists are Christian, with 14% identified as ‘practising Christians’ and 68% classed as ‘non-practising Christians’, figures that are, not surprisingly, rather higher than the population as a whole. The other 18% of the sample of Theistic Evolutionists are split evenly between those who are of another religion and those who are of no religion. This is interesting as Theistic Evolutionary theory implies that there is a God and therefore there must be a proportion of people who are not of any religion but have some belief in God.

Not surprisingly, a higher percentage of practising Christians are represented in the hard core<sup>11</sup> group than in the whole population (see Table 2.4.1 below). However, counter-intuitively, this is a lower percentage than among ‘all’ Theistic Evolutionists.

	Total	Hard core TEs
Practising Christian	9%	11%
Non-practising Christian	51%	73%
Other religion	12%	6%
No religion	28%	9%

Table 2.4.1 Hard core Theistic Evolutionists split by religious group  
Base: All respondents (2060) with hard core TEs (253)

## Theistic Evolution summary

To summarise the findings from this section the chart below shows the main characteristics of each of the group in comparison to the whole population. The significant differences are highlighted in bold.

12. The hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true; also say (in Questions 9-12) that none of the other positions is definitely true.

Demographic summary	National population	TE	% difference
Male	49%	41%	-16%
Female	51%	59%	+16%
<b>18-24</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>-25%</b>
25-34	16%	19%	+19%
35-44	19%	17%	-11%
45-54	17%	19%	+12%
55-64	15%	15%	+0%
65+	20%	21%	+5%
AB	25%	24%	-4%
<b>C1</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>+21%</b>
C2	20%	19%	-5%
DE	23%	22%	-4%
<b>Practising Christian</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>+56%</b>
<b>Non-practising Christian</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>+33%</b>
<b>Other religion</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>-33%</b>
<b>No religion</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>-71%</b>
<b>Graduate degree or above</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>+19%</b>
Bachelor's degree	10%	9%	-10%
<b>AS/A Level</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>-25%</b>
GCSE (or equivalent)	23%	24%	+4%
<b>BTEC</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>-50%</b>
NVQ	6%	7%	+17%
No qualifications	13%	12%	-8%

Table 2.4.2 Summary attributes of Theistic Evolutionists  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

The group of all Theistic Evolutionists differs from the general population in that they are more likely to be women and they are more likely to be in social group C1. It is also more likely that Theistic Evolutionists are Christians, with 14% and 68% of them being practising or non-practising Christians respectively, compared with 9% and 51% of the national sample.

There is little difference between the whole population and Theistic Evolutionists when it comes to age spread, political affiliation and educational level achieved.

## 2.5 Atheistic Evolution

Finally, we look at the sample of all Atheistic Evolutionists who make up 18% of the whole population. There are notable differences between people who hold to the Atheistic Evolutionary point of view and those who hold to a theistic or design viewpoint as covered in the first three clusters. Where it is helpful we shall also touch on the hard core<sup>13</sup> Atheistic Evolutionists.

In contrast to Theistic Evolution and Young Earth Creationism, men are more likely to be Atheistic Evolutionists than women. 58% of 'all' Atheistic Evolutionists are men and 42% women. It is interesting to see that people's sex does appear to play a fairly significant role in whether people are Atheistic or Theistic Evolutionists. Examining people's views of God demonstrates that since 58% of women believe in God in contrast to 47% of men this may explain this notable difference.

*People who are Atheistic Evolutionists are more likely than people in other groups to have a bachelor's degree or higher.*

The age spread of people who are Atheistic Evolutionists is fairly representative of the whole population. Interestingly however, there is a significantly lower proportion of people aged 65 or over. While 20% of people in the population are over 64, just 14% of Atheistic Evolutionists are over 64. As with the male-female balance, this is because people in this age group are more likely to be religious and less likely to be atheists. This is a

significantly smaller proportion than the 30% of Young Earth Creationists who are over 65 and 21% of Theistic Evolutionists aged 65 or over. The average age of an Atheistic Evolutionist is 44, lower than the national average of 46.

The make-up of the sample of Atheistic Evolutionists heavily features those in socio-economic groups AB and C1. 30% of the AE sample is from social group AB and 34% of the sample is from socio-economic group C1, in comparison to 25% and 28% of the national population respectively. There appear to be different trends arising in each of the four subsets when it comes to the representation of the four social groups – AB, C1, C2, DE. Particularly YECs are more likely to be in social group DE and AEs are more likely to be in social groups AB and C1.

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13. The hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true; also say (in Questions 9-12) that none of the other positions is definitely true.



People who are Atheistic Evolutionists are more likely than people in other groups to have a bachelor’s degree or higher. More than a quarter, 26%, have a graduate degree (or higher) and 15% have a bachelor’s degree. Just 9% of people within the sample of Atheistic Evolutionists have no qualifications.

Finally, the make up of the sample of Atheistic Evolutionists by religious belief is interesting. More than a third, 35%, of the sample are ‘non-practising Christians’. This demonstrates that there is a large proportion of people who would identify themselves as Christians, rather than of any other religion or belief or none but also inclined to believe that evolution makes belief in God absurd and unnecessary. 58% of people who are Atheistic Evolutionists have no religious beliefs, in general being atheists and agnostics. The trends among the hard core group only are very similar to that of the broader group. There are no practising Christians who fall into the hard core group of Atheistic Evolutionists. This demonstrates the consistency of those who are hard core Atheistic Evolutionists and the strong correlation with religious beliefs. These are shown in Table 2.5.1 below.

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Hard core AEs</b>
Practising Christian	9%	0%
Non-practising Christian	51%	36%
Other religion	12%	8%
No religion	28%	56%

Table 2.5.1 Hard core Atheistic Evolutionists split by religious group  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with hard core AEs (310)

## Atheistic Evolution summary

To summarise the findings from this section, the chart below (Table 2.5.2) shows the main characteristics of the group in comparison to the whole population. The significant differences are highlighted in bold.

Demographic summary	National population	AE	% difference
Male	49%	58%	+18%
Female	51%	42%	-18%
18-24	12%	14%	+17%
25-34	16%	15%	-6%
35-44	19%	21%	+11%
45-54	17%	20%	+18%
55-64	15%	15%	+0%
<b>65+</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>-30%</b>
<b>AB</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>+20%</b>
<b>C1</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>+21%</b>
C2	20%	19%	-5%
<b>DE</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>-30%</b>
<b>Practising Christian</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>-89%</b>
<b>Non-practising Christian</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>-31%</b>
<b>Other religion</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>-25%</b>
<b>No religion</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>+96%</b>
<b>Graduate degree or above</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>+24%</b>
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>+50%</b>
AS/A Level	16%	15%	+50%
GCSE (or equivalent)	23%	20%	-13%
<b>BTEC</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>+50%</b>
<b>NVQ</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>-33%</b>
<b>No qualifications</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>-31%</b>

Table 2.5.2 Summary attributes of Atheistic Evolutionists  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

Atheistic Evolutionists are more likely than the whole population to be male and more likely to be younger. Notably, the group is made-up mainly of people in social group AB and C1 and people who have no religion.

## 2.6 analysis of Muslims

There has been much discussion about how different religions view evolution and the origins of human life. The pattern of this chapter is briefly interrupted now to examine in detail the views of Muslims. The analysis of the groups above show how each of the four positions that we address is broken down by religious groups. This section examines the views of Muslims specifically. The sample is made up of 124 Muslims therefore the results are indicative but not definitive due to the sample size.

Looking at the groupings of all Young Earth Creationists, all Intelligent Design believers, all Theistic Evolutionists and all Atheistic Evolutionists, as defined earlier in the chapter, the Muslim sample is split as follows: 50% of the Muslim sample was unclassified, 23% were Young Earth Creationists and 16% believed in Intelligent Design. Only 11% of the Muslim sample were evolutionists – 6% who are Theistic Evolutionists and 5%, bizarrely, Atheistic Evolutionists.

It is useful to compare the answers of the entire Muslim sample (rather than just those classified) in their responses to Question 5 which asked:

### Which one do you think is most likely to be true?

1. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God.
2. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God’s plan.
3. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages.
4. Humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years.

Within the total Muslim sample, both classified and unclassified, respondents were most likely to think that Young Earth Creationism is the most likely explanation for the origin of human life. 35% of all Muslims think that it is most likely that ‘humans were created by God some time in the last 10,000 years’ compared to 17% of the population. A further 24% of the Muslim sample think that ‘humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages’, in comparison to 11% of the whole population. 14% of the Muslim sample believe that ‘Humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God’s plan’, half the proportion of that of the whole population, 28% of whom hold this view. Finally there are 12% of the Muslim sample who think that ‘Humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God’, which is just a third of the proportion of the whole population.

The low percentage of Muslims who believe in evolution is clearly linked to the fact that 28% of Muslims think that evolution has been disproved by the evidence, from Question 6.

Overall, although the sample size of Muslim respondents is too low to give a statistically robust picture of the state of evolutionary and non-evolutionary beliefs amongst Muslims in Britain, the clear indication is that British Muslims are strongly inclined towards creationism and Intelligent Design rather than evolution in either its theistic or atheistic forms.

	Whole population	Muslim sample	% difference
<b>Question 5</b>			
Humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God	9%	9%	9%
Humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God's plan	28%	14%	-50%
<b>Humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>118%</b>
<b>Humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>106%</b>
<b>Question 6: Evolution is...</b>			
So well established that it's beyond reasonable doubt	37%	12%	-68%
Still waiting to be proved or disproved	36%	28%	-22%
<b>A theory with very little evidence to support it</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>140%</b>
<b>A theory which has been disproved by the evidence</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>211%</b>

Table 2.6.1 Summary attributes of Muslims  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with Muslims (124)

## 2.7 conclusion

It is clear from the cluster analysis in this chapter that there are defining attributes of each of the groups identified.

Young Earth Creationists are most clearly distinguished by being more likely to be Christians, in particular practising Christians, and also more likely to be women or older people. They are also more likely to be from a lower level of social group and less likely to have a high level of education.

Atheistic Evolutionists are more likely to have no religion and have higher educational levels. They are also predominantly in social groups AB and C1 and are male.

Theistic Evolutionists and Intelligent Design believers hold the middle ground. Theistic Evolutionists are more likely to be women and Intelligent Design is considered true by a greater proportion of young people than older people.

### Type Casts

A typical YEC is a 70 year old woman who is a Christian and in socio-economic group DE.

A typical ID is a 30 year old religious person who is in social group AB and well educated.

A typical TE is a middle aged woman who is a Christian in social group C1.

A typical AE is a middle aged man in social group AB or C1 who does not practise any religion.

# basis for belief: why are these opinions held?

Chapter Three looks at the correlation between beliefs about the origin of life and views on other issues. There are strong correlations between belief in God and origins of life, and also with people's views on the Bible. People who are Young Earth Creationists or Theistic Evolutionists are more likely to think that there is unique human significance and meaning to life than Atheistic Evolutionists. Young Earth Creationists are also more likely than the other clusters to believe in life after death, the human soul and heaven.

## 3.1 introduction

The final chapter of this study examines the attitudes and opinions of the four groups we have been discussing throughout the report. While Chapter Two discussed who each of these groups are, Chapter Three attempts to understand why people hold the views that they have. It moves on to go beyond the demographic correlated attributes and assess the attitudinal correlated attributes. For example, we address what the relationship is between people who hold to each position and their views on the purpose and meaning of life, and on the compatibility of science and religion. We also determine what attributes are correlated to each other – but have to be careful as correlation does not necessarily imply causality.

The chapter looks at what attitudinal correlations that there are with being Young Earth Creationists (YECs), Atheistic Evolutionists (AEs), Theistic Evolutionists (TEs) or Intelligent Design believers (IDs), comparing both the 'hard' and 'soft core' groups within each position with the general population.

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1. The hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true; also say (in Questions 9-12) that none of the other positions is definitely true.
  2. The soft core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true) and say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true are not in the 'hard core' group (and so may say in Questions 9-12 that one of the other positions is 'definitely true').

## 3.2 Young Earth Creationists

Having seen in Chapter Two the demographic make up of each of the subsets that we are addressing, we now analyse the attitudes and opinions of each in turn. Firstly, we draw together the views of people who are Young Earth Creationists.

### views on evolution

Even among people who are Young Earth Creationists there are still some who believe in some form of evolution. 12% of all YECs (hard and soft core together) think that evolution is a theory so well established that it is beyond reasonable doubt, again pointing towards the contradiction within people's opinions. This is in contrast to 37% of the whole population.

More than a third, 35%, of all YECs think that evolution is a theory still waiting to be proved or disproved which is similar to that of the whole population (36%). 18% of all Young Earth Creationists think that it is a theory with very little evidence to support it and a quarter, 23%, think that it is a theory which has been disproved by the evidence (in comparison to 9% of the whole population). The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.1 below.

	Total	Hard core <sup>3</sup> YEC	% Difference	Soft core <sup>4</sup> YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 6: Evolution is...</b>					
Established beyond reasonable doubt	37%	11%	<b>-70%</b>	14%	<b>-62%</b>
Still waiting to be proved or disproved	36%	36%	0%	33%	-8%
A theory with very little evidence to support it	10%	13%	30%	24%	<b>140%</b>
A theory which has been disproved by the evidence	9%	25%	<b>178%</b>	20%	<b>122%</b>

Table 3.2.1 YEC views on evolutionary theory  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

- The hard core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true; also say (in Questions 9-12) that none of the other positions is definitely true.
- The soft core group comprises those who give an opinion in Question 5 (which of the four options they think is most likely to be true); say (in Questions 9-12) that they think this position is either definitely or probably true; are not in the 'hard core' group (and so may say in Questions 9-12 that one of the other positions is 'definitely true').

At the close of Chapter One we looked at different ways of defining the clusters and for this project chose to focus on the hard and soft core definitions of each. The analysis below looks at how Young Earth Creationists view each of the other positions on the origins of life. It is notable, focusing on Theistic Evolution or Intelligent Design, where a belief in a God (or some designer or higher power) is required, that Young Earth Creationists hold positive opinions towards these positions with the majority thinking they are definitely or probably true. Young Earth Creationists are more likely than people who are Intelligent Design believers, Theistic Evolutionists or Atheistic Evolutionists to be positive towards the other each of the other three positions respectively.

YECs	Views on Theistic Evolution		Views on Atheistic Evolution		Views on Intelligent Design	
	Definitely true	Probably true	Definitely true	Probably true	Definitely true	Probably true
Hard Core YECs	0%	63%	0%	25%	0%	52%
Soft Core YECs	53%	21%	19%	15%	61%	21%
Total YECs	25%	43%	9%	20%	30%	37%

Table 3.2.2 YEC views on the other positions  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

While the Young Earth Creationist position holds that the earth was created in the last 10,000 years, and that humans were not created by means of evolution, a large proportion of Young Earth Creationists think that Theistic Evolution could also be true. 25% of all YECs think that Theistic Evolution is definitely true and 43% say that it is probably true. 63% of hard core YECs think that TE is probably true and 74% of soft core YECs think that TE is definitely or probably true.

Surprisingly, and rather inconsistently, 19% of soft core YECs say that Atheistic Evolution is definitely true and 15% of them say that it is probably true. Indeed, 25% of hard core YECs say that Atheistic Evolution is probably true. This highlights again that there are significant grey areas which cannot be distinctly described. Most Young Earth Creationists clearly do not think that this position is mutually exclusive of the other positions. Once again, this demonstrates that care should be taken when using these definitions since even those showing a level of consistency can hold some conflicting opinions.

It is interesting that hard core YECs do think that Theistic Evolution or Intelligent Design are probably true, with 63% and 52% respectively saying this is the case. At the same time,



48% of Young Earth Creationists do say that Atheistic Evolution is definitely untrue, showing that most are consistent in this view at least. The cognitive dissonance among YECs comes from the fact that they are reasonably likely to be open-minded about evolution in some form.

Because Intelligent Design is the position closest to Young Earth Creationism, it is not surprising that a number of YECs, while holding to YEC, are quite likely to consider that ID is definitely or probably true. 30% of all YECs think that ID is definitely true and 37% think that it is probably true. Fully 82% of soft core YECs think that ID is definitely or probably true. It appears that many people can hold these two viewpoints alongside each other and apparently view this as being consistent. There is variation by religious views and interestingly 38% of practising Christians who are YECs say that ID is definitely true.

Regardless of their view on evolution, people were asked to consider whether they thought evolution is a directed process or a chance process. Opinion among Young Earth Creationists is split. 57% of all YECs think that evolution does not involve chance as it is a process directed by God or some other force. However, 36% of all Young Earth Creationists think that evolution is a chance process. This is broken down to 19% who think that evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose and 17% who think it is chance but this does not disprove an ultimate purpose or direction. It is important to bear in mind that this is irrespective of whether they actually believe in evolution or not, which for YECs we have seen to be fairly unlikely. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.3 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 6:</b>					
Evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose	27%	19%	-30%	18%	-33%
Evolution involves chance without disproving ultimate direction or purpose	39%	19%	<b>-51%</b>	16%	<b>-59%</b>
Evolution doesn't involve chance as it is directed by God	28%	56%	<b>100%</b>	59%	<b>111%</b>

Table 3.2.3 YEC views on the process of evolution  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

The fact that a disproportionately high percentage of YECs believe that evolution is directed by God (and a disproportionately low percentage see it as a wholly or partially chance process) is difficult to interpret, not least seeing as many of those YECs responding to this question will have been doing so hypothetically. The data suggest, however, that because a large proportion of YECs are *a priori* theists, when asked to speculate about evolution (irrespective of whether they deem it true or not) they reason that if it is true, it must be directed by God; in other words, they accommodate evolution within their pre-existing intellectual framework. This may once again seem like a sign of cognitive dissonance but it is perhaps better to see it as an indication that the potential to reconcile theism and evolution is there, even within that section of the population (YECs) which is most antagonistic towards evolution.

## science and religion

A majority of all Young Earth Creationists, 84%, think that science does explain many things but there are some things that it will never be able to explain. This is higher than the proportion in the whole population (75%). 15% of Young Earth Creationists think that science will explain all things either now or in the future, with 13% saying that they think that science will be able to explain everything in the future and just 2% thinking that it can explain everything now. This compares to 23% of the whole population who think that science will be able to explain everything – either now (3%) or in the future (20%). There is the same spread of opinion among the hard core and soft core groups of Young Earth Creationists in this case. The large proportion of YECs who think that science can't explain everything highlights their perception that there is more "out there" than science can account for. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.4 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 16:</b>					
Science can explain everything	3%	3%	0%	2%	-33%
Science can't explain everything yet, but will do one day	20%	12%	<b>-40%</b>	14%	<b>-30%</b>
Science explains some things but will never be able to explain all	75%	84%	12%	84%	12%

Table 3.2.4 YEC views on science  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

One in seven Young Earth Creationists (14%) think that science ‘totally undermines religious belief’, which is higher than the average of 10% for the whole population. Others do not think that it undermines it – a third (34%) of all YECs think that science challenges religious belief, without undermining it, 19% of all Young Earth Creationists say that science supports religious belief and 28% say that it neither supports nor opposes religious belief.

Soft core Young Earth Creationists are more likely to think science supports religious belief than the hard core group, 26% and 12% respectively. Most Young Earth Creationists do not appear to think that science causes significant problems in the way they form their religious beliefs. Science is not viewed as undermining religious belief but perhaps, as indicated above, it is seen to be unable to provide an answer to everything. It may be that YECs and others who believe in a creator find the answers in this position instead. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.5 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 17:</b>					
Science undermines religious belief	10%	15%	<b>50%</b>	12%	20%
Science challenges religious belief but they can co-exist	47%	36%	-23%	33%	-30%
Science positively supports religious belief	12%	12%	<b>0%</b>	26%	<b>117%</b>
Science neither supports nor undermines religious belief	26%	29%	12%	27%	4%

Table 3.2.5 YEC views on science and religion  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

Bearing this in mind, and looking more specifically at Christianity, one in five (19%) YECs think that evolution and Christianity are totally incompatible and that one can't believe in both, in comparison to 16% of all people. In contrast, 30% of all YECs think that evolution presents some challenges to Christianity but it is possible to believe in both. Although this is notably lower than the whole population, 42% of whom think that there are reconcilable tensions between Christianity and evolution, it still points to the possibility of rapprochement between the theory of evolution and many of those most keenly opposed to it.

13% think that evolution and Christianity are wholly compatible and over a third, 36%, of YECs think that evolution and Christianity are totally disconnected subjects and have nothing to do with one another. This is higher than the proportion of the population (24%) who think that they are disconnected.

It is worth noting that there are significant differences between the hard and soft core groups too. 43% of hard core Young Earth Creationists think that evolution and Christianity are totally disconnected and 27% of soft core Young Earth Creationists also hold this view. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.6 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 7:</b>					
Evolution and Christianity are totally incompatible	16%	17%	6%	21%	31%
Evolution presents challenges to Christianity but it is possible to believe in both	42%	27%	-36%	34%	<b>-19%</b>
Evolution and Christianity are wholly compatible	14%	11%	-21%	15%	7%
Evolution and Christianity are totally disconnected subjects	24%	43%	<b>79%</b>	27%	13%

Table 3.2.6 YEC views on Christianity and evolution  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

## purpose & meaning

Half (46%) of all YECs say that evolution has nothing to say on the subject of whether there is an ultimate meaning and purpose to life or not. However, a further 40% think that evolution fits very well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life, saying that it complements this belief rather than contradicts it. YECs are most likely to think that evolution, if true, is directed by God (57%). They are also likely to think that evolution is either disconnected from meaning or purpose or fits well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life. It seems that Young Earth Creationists may link their view of God’s direction in evolution with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life. Just 8% of YECs think that evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life. These results are similar to the results for the whole sample. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.7 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 15:</b>					
Evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life	13%	6%	<b>-54%</b>	9%	-31%
Evolution fits well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life	37%	38%	3%	42%	14%
Evolution tells us nothing about whether there is an ultimate purpose to life or not	45%	50%	11%	42%	-7%

Table 3.2.7 YEC views on evolution, meaning and purpose  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

The majority (61%) of YECs think that humans are unique which gives them special value and significance. This is a significant increase from the proportion of the whole sample (40%). When we analyse the breaks by different grades of consistency, 81% of convinced hard core YECs think this is the case, 49% of hard core YECs and 64% of soft core YECs do. Those with greatest confidence in YEC hold human significance most highly. Interestingly, while YECs' rejection of evolution does not appear to be based on whether or not it implies there is purpose to life it does appear that they reject it because they think that it implies that humans are not uniquely significant.

28% of all YECs think that human significance comes from being particularly complex and only 7% think that humans have no unique value or significance. This is in contrast to the whole population: 43% of all people think that human significance comes from particular complexity and 14% think that humans have no unique value or significance. The correlation suggests that YECs find their significance from being uniquely different from other animals which perhaps links with their view of being created by God directly. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.8 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 14:</b>					
Humans are just another species of animal and have no unique value or significance	14%	8%	<b>-43%</b>	7%	<b>-50%</b>
Humans are like other animals but are particularly complex which gives humans value and significance	43%	30%	-30%	27%	-37%
Humans are uniquely different from other living things and so have a unique value and significance	<b>40%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>60%</b>

Table 3.2.8 YEC views on human significance  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

## God and the Bible

We touched on the religious beliefs of Young Earth Creationists in Chapter Two. We saw that the sample was made up primarily of people who call themselves Christians. Most Young Earth Creationists, 83%, have always believed in God and a further 8% have not always done so but do now. This is significantly higher than among the whole population, 45% of whom have always believed in God. 100% of convinced hard core<sup>5</sup> Young Earth Creationists believe in God (94% have always done so and 6% have not always done so but do now). The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.9 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 18:</b>					
Always believed in God	45%	82%	<b>82%</b>	84%	<b>87%</b>
Believe now but have not always	8%	8%	0%	7%	-13%
Used to believe but not now	8%	4%	<b>-50%</b>	3%	<b>-63%</b>
Never believed	9%	0%	<b>-100%</b>	1%	<b>-89%</b>
Don't know whether there is a God	12%	3%	<b>-75%</b>	1%	<b>-92%</b>
Don't believe in God but in a higher power	10%	1%	<b>-90%</b>	3%	<b>-70%</b>
Don't believe in God but am spiritual	9%	3%	<b>-67%</b>	1%	<b>-89%</b>

Table 3.2.9 YEC views on God  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

There are different opinions among Young Earth Creationists about whether God is still involved in the universe or not. Almost three quarters of all YECs (71%) think that God designed the universe and remains involved with it and this increases to 92% of convinced hard core YECs, holding to a theistic point of view. In contrast, a third of the whole population believe in a theistic God, who is still involved in creation. 9% of all Young Earth Creationists think that God has no further involvement with the universe after creation and, interestingly, 10% think that God and the universe are the same thing, holding to a pantheistic view point. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.10 below.

5. The convinced hard core group is those who hold the position they consider most likely to be definitely true and no other position to be definitely true.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 19:</b>					
God designed and created the universe and remains involved with it	34%	65%	<b>91%</b>	77%	<b>126%</b>
God designed and created the universe but has no further involvement with it	8%	10%	25%	9%	13%
God is like an impersonal power or force within the universe	11%	7%	-36%	3%	<b>-73%</b>
God and the universe are really the same	9%	13%	44%	8%	-11%
God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe	31%	3%	<b>-90%</b>	3%	<b>-90%</b>

Table 3.2.10 YEC views on God and the universe  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

Perhaps as we may expect, most Young Earth Creationists view the Bible as important. 60% of all YECs (81% of convinced hard core YECs) say that the Bible is the divinely inspired word of God and 23% say that it is a useful book of guidance and advice for our lives but not the word of God. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.11 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 23: The Bible is...</b>					
Divinely inspired Word of God	26%	59%	<b>127%</b>	61%	<b>135%</b>
A useful book for guidance but not the Word of God	37%	20%	-46%	26%	-30%
Beautiful literature but otherwise irrelevant	19%	9%	<b>-53%</b>	6%	<b>-68%</b>
An irrelevant and dangerous collection of ancient myths	11%	8%	-27%	3%	<b>-73%</b>

Table 3.2.11 YEC views on the Bible  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

When asked specifically about the creation account in the Bible, almost half of all Young Earth Creationists (47%) think that the Bible’s creation account is literal and an accurate account of the origins of everything. There is significant variation between people of different grades of consistency. 60% of convinced hard core YECs think that the Bible’s creation account is literal and 35% of hard core YECs and 51% of soft core YECs share this view. This variation, as identified earlier, implies that those who say that YEC is ‘definitely true’ are more likely than those who say it is ‘probably true’ to take the Genesis account literally. However, interestingly, almost a quarter of Young Earth Creationists say that the Bible’s account of creation in Genesis should be taken as a theological account which explains the meaning and purpose of the universe but is not intended to be science. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.12 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 24: The creation account in the Bible is...</b>					
A literal and accurate account of the origins of everything	18%	43%	<b>139%</b>	51%	<b>183%</b>
An ancient attempt at a scientific explanation which has been disproved	17%	6%	-65%	12%	-29%
An ancient myth with historical interest but no scientific basis	26%	11%	<b>-58%</b>	8%	<b>-69%</b>
A theological account which explains the meaning and purpose of the universe, not intended as science	27%	27%	0%	19%	-30%

Table 3.2.12 YEC views on the Bible’s creation account  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

## other views

Participants in the survey were also asked about their views on a number of other issues including life after death and other spiritual considerations. There are strong links between each of the clusters of people and their views on these issues. These are summarised below. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.13 below.



	Total population	All YECs	+/- difference	All IDs	+/- difference	All TEs	+/- difference	All AEs	+/- difference
Human soul	70%	84%	20%	75%	7%	88%	26%	49%	-30%
Heaven	55%	89%	<b>62%</b>	71%	29%	80%	<b>45%</b>	19%	<b>-65%</b>
Life after death	53%	78%	<b>47%</b>	70%	32%	71%	34%	24%	<b>-55%</b>
Ghosts	39%	43%	10%	48%	23%	43%	10%	30%	-23%
Reincarnation	27%	36%	33%	36%	33%	34%	26%	17%	-37%
Astrology/ Horoscopes	22%	28%	27%	30%	<b>36%</b>	25%	14%	15%	-32%
Fortune telling/ Tarot	15%	19%	27%	19%	27%	14%	-7%	13%	-13%

Table 3.2.13 Views on other spiritual issues  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228), all IDs (160), all TEs (374), all AEs (366)

89% of people who believe that God created the universe at some point in the last 10,000 years also believe that there is a heaven and 84% believe that humans have souls. Young Earth Creationists are more likely than the whole population to believe in astrology, horoscopes and fortune telling or tarot. These results differ significantly from the overall views of the population as is shown in Table 3.2.13 above.

Finally, we asked about whether or not Intelligent Design should be taught, discussed or ignored in schools. The table below summarises the views of Young Earth Creationists. In general YECs are more likely than the whole population to think that ID should be taught alongside evolution in science lessons. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.2.14 below.

	Total	Hard core YEC	% Difference	Soft core YEC	% Difference
<b>Question 13:</b>					
ID should be taught alongside evolution in science lessons	27%	27%	0%	38%	<b>41%</b>
ID should be discussed in other lessons	50%	45%	-10%	46%	-8%
ID should not be taught/discussed	18%	19%	6%	12%	-33%

Table 3.2.14 YEC views on Intelligent Design in schools  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all YECs (228)

*Young Earth Creationists find significant meaning in the belief that humans are uniquely different from other species and therefore significant.*

In summary, Young Earth Creationists consider that there is little or no scientific evidence for evolution. They do, however, consider that if it were true it would be a process directed by God, indicating at least the possibility of a rapprochement between YECs and evolution. It is notable that Young Earth Creationists are more likely than all other groups to believe in “spiritual” matters and in general are likely to have always believed in God.

While Young Earth Creationists do seem to be able to reconcile the idea of evolution with God and with the idea that there is purpose to life, there is a strong resistance to the idea that humans are just another species, with nothing different or special about them, an idea they seem to associate with evolution. Young Earth Creationists find significant meaning in the belief that humans are uniquely different from other species and therefore significant. It appears that this significance is closely tied to believing that God created humans uniquely. It may well be that the belief that evolution implies human insignificance fuels much of their resistance towards evolution.

### 3.3 Intelligent Design believers

Intelligent Design is the idea that evolution alone is not enough to explain the complex structures of some living things, so the intervention of a designer is needed at key stages. The following analysis demonstrates the views and attributes of people who believe in Intelligent Design. It explores the most relevant areas and most statistically significant findings.

#### views on evolution

Since Intelligent Design sits in the ‘middle’ of the spectrum of views on the origins of life tested here, it is interesting to examine the spread of how people view evolution. A quarter of all IDs think that evolution is a theory so well established that it is beyond reasonable doubt. This is a lower proportion than the whole population, 37% of whom hold this view. Half of all people who believe in Intelligent Design, 51%, think that evolution is a theory still waiting to be proved or disproved. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.1 below.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 6: Evolution is...</b>					
Established beyond reasonable doubt	37%	24%	-35%	26%	-30%
Still waiting to be proved or disproved	36%	56%	<b>56%</b>	36%	0%
A theory with very little evidence to support it	10%	10%	0%	9%	-10%
A theory which has been disproved by the evidence	9%	9%	0%	18%	<b>100%</b>

Table 3.3.1 ID views on evolutionary theory  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

Looking at the hard and soft core groups there are big differences: 56% of hard core IDs and 36% of soft core IDs think that it is a theory still waiting to be proved or disproved. Those holding most tightly to ID indicate a high level of uncertainty or scepticism towards evolution. 10% of all IDs think that it is a theory with very little evidence to support it and one in ten, 11%, think that it is a theory which has been disproved by the evidence. These are similar proportions to the whole population. The differences between hard and soft core IDs are notable – 11% of hard core IDs and 18% of soft core IDs think that evolution has been disproved by the evidence.

There does appear to be some overlap when considering if other viewpoints on the origins of life are true or not. In particular there is overlap with those who believe in Intelligent Design and those who believe in Young Earth Creationism and Theistic Evolution. 38% of all people who hold to the Intelligent Design position think that Young Earth Creationism is either definitely true (12%) or probably true (26%). Similarly with Theistic Evolution, a majority of 60% think that Theistic Evolution is definitely true or probably true (9% and 51% respectively). Since Intelligent Design is the idea that there is a need for a God or a higher being at key stages in creation then it is plausible to hold this together with either of these positions, although not without tension. It is less likely that Intelligent Design believers hold to Atheistic Evolution, although 9% of IDs say that Atheistic Evolution is definitely true and 23% say that it is probably true. The results are summarised in Table 3.3.2 below.

IDs	Views on Young Earth Creationism		Views on Theistic Evolution		Views on Atheistic Evolution	
	Definitely true	Probably true	Definitely true	Probably true	Definitely true	Probably true
Hard Core IDs	0%	30%	0%	55%	0%	26%
Soft Core IDs	50%	15%	39%	37%	36%	9%
Total IDs	12%	26%	9%	51%	9%	23%

Table 3.3.2 ID views on the other positions  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

Opinion is divided among people who believe in Intelligent Design about whether there is chance or not within evolution. 45% of people who believe in Intelligent Design think that evolution does not involve chance as it is a process directed by God or some other force, rather more than the whole population (28%).

Additionally, 37% of people think that evolution does involve chance but this does not disprove an ultimate purpose or direction, this is similar to the whole population (39%). 17% of IDs say that they think that evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose, this is significantly lower than the whole population, 27% of whom hold this view.

People who are hard core IDs are least likely to think this: just 15% of them hold that evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose in contrast to 21% of soft core IDs and 27% of all people. Those who hold most firmly to Intelligent Design are least inclined to say that evolution has no ultimate direction or purpose (irrespective of whether or not people believe in evolution). The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.3 below.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 8:</b>					
Evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose	27%	15%	<b>-44%</b>	21%	-22%
Evolution involves chance without disproving ultimate direction or purpose	39%	40%	3%	24%	-38%
Evolution doesn't involve chance as it is directed by God	28%	42%	<b>50%</b>	55%	<b>96%</b>

Table 3.3.3 ID views on evolution  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

## science and religion

As examined for Young Earth Creationists earlier, this next section looks at the opinions of science and religion held by people who believe in Intelligent Design. People who believe in Intelligent Design reflect similar views to the whole population on whether science and religion are compatible or not. The large majority of people who believe in Intelligent Design, 86%, think that science explains many things but there are some things it will never be able to explain. This fits well with the notion of Intelligent Design that evolution cannot fully explain the creation of the world and that in fact a designer is needed at certain stages. Only 14% of IDs think that science will explain everything now or in the future (4% and 10% respectively). The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.4 below.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 16:</b>					
Science can explain everything	3%	4%	33%	0%	-100%
Science can't explain everything but will do one day	20%	7%	<b>-65%</b>	19%	-5%
Science explains some things but will never be able to explain all	75%	86%	15%	81%	8%

Table 3.3.4 ID views on science  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 17:</b>					
Science undermines religious belief	10%	6%	<b>-40%</b>	3%	<b>-70%</b>
Science challenges religious belief but they can co-exist	47%	54%	15%	45%	-4%
Science positively supports religious belief	12%	11%	-8%	22%	84%
Science neither supports nor undermines religious belief	26%	28%	8%	27%	4%

Table 3.3.5 ID views on science and religion  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

People who believe in Intelligent Design are considerably less likely than the rest of the population to think that science undermines religion. Indeed, as Table 3.3.5 shows, just 6% of hard core IDs and 3% of soft core IDs agree that science undermines religion. There are also some differences between the hard core group and the soft core group. In particular while 11% of hard core IDs think that science positively supports religious belief, double this proportion of soft core IDs agree.

Table 3.3.6, below, shows that a fifth of Intelligent Design believers think that evolution and Christianity are wholly compatible. This is considerably greater than the proportion of the whole population.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 7:</b>					
Evolution and Christianity are totally incompatible	16%	14%	-13%	16%	0%
Evolution presents challenges to Christianity but it is possible to believe in both	42%	44%	-5%	40%	-5%
Evolution and Christianity are wholly compatible	14%	<b>21%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>64%</b>
Evolution and Christianity are totally disconnected subjects	24%	20%	-17%	19%	-21%

Table 3.3.6 ID views on evolution and Christianity  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

## purpose & meaning

The majority of IDs think that evolution does not imply that there is no direction or purpose, or indeed that it is a process directed by God. Instead, 54% of soft core IDs and 38% of hard core IDs say that evolution has nothing to say on the subject of whether there is an ultimate meaning or purpose to life or not, in contrast to 45% of the general population.

Almost half of IDs, 46%, think that evolution fits very well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life, a similar trend to what is seen among Young Earth Creationists. However, hard core IDs are almost twice as likely as soft core IDs to think that evolution fits very well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life, 54% and 28% respectively. Indeed only 9% of IDs think that evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life. Again, as with Young Earth Creationists, it appears that Intelligent Design

advocates are able, at least in theory, to accommodate evolution into their existing intellectual framework that emphasises the fact that there is a purpose to life. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.7 below.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 15:</b>					
Evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life	13%	7%	<b>-46%</b>	17%	31%
Evolution fits well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life	37%	54%	<b>46%</b>	28%	-24%
Evolution tells us nothing about whether there is an ultimate purpose to life or not	45%	38%	-16%	54%	20%

Table 3.3.7 ID views on evolution, meaning and purpose  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

IDs are half as likely as the total population to think that humans have no value or significance (7% and 14% respectively). Hard core IDs are both more likely than the whole population to think that evolution fits well with the idea that there is meaning and purpose to life and less likely to think that humans have no value or significance (5%). Those who are most consistent in their opinions towards Intelligent Design, the hard core group, think that there is purpose and meaning; 54% of hard core IDs think that evolution fits very well with the idea of purpose. ID may be a popular view for those who, while believing in evolution, dislike its apparent nihilism and therefore reconcile this belief by holding both together and believing in Intelligent Design. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.8 below.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 14:</b>					
Humans are just another species of animal and have no unique value or significance	14%	5%	<b>-64%</b>	6%	<b>-57%</b>
Humans are like other animals but are particularly complex which gives humans value and significance	43%	51%	19%	35%	-19%
Humans are uniquely different from other living things and so have a unique value and significance	40%	41%	3%	57%	43%

Table 3.3.8 ID views on human significance  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

## God and the Bible

People who believe in ID are more likely to believe in God than not. 58% of IDs have always believed in God and 13% have not always done so but do now. Soft core IDs are more likely than hard core IDs to have always believed in God (73% and 53% respectively). It is interesting that those with the most consistent views are less likely to believe in God. There are a further 12% of people who believe in ID who do not know whether there is a God or not. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.9 below.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 18:</b>					
Always believed in God	45%	53%	18%	73%	<b>62%</b>
Believe now but have not always	8%	12%	<b>50%</b>	15%	<b>88%</b>
Used to believe but not now	8%	4%	<b>-50%</b>	7%	-13%
Never believed	9%	0%	-100%	0%	-100%
Don't know whether there is a God	12%	17%	<b>42%</b>	0%	-100%
Don't believe in God but in a higher power	10%	11%	10%	0%	-100%
Don't believe in God but am spiritual	9%	3%	<b>-67%</b>	5%	<b>-44%</b>

Table 3.3.9 ID views on God  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

It is notable that a significantly smaller percentage of IDs compared to Young Earth Creationists believe that God is still involved in creation. 43% think that God designed the universe and remains involved with it, in comparison to 71% of Young Earth Creationists who think that God is still involved with the universe, whereas 12% think that God has no further involvement in the universe. People who are consistent IDs, in the hard core group, are less likely still to think that God is still involved in creation (35% in comparison to 68% of soft core IDs). 17% say that God is like an impersonal force within the universe and 11% think that God and the universe are really the same. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.10 below.



	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 19:</b>					
God designed and created the universe and remains involved with it	34%	35%	3%	68%	<b>100%</b>
God designed and created the universe but has no further involvement with it	8%	10%	25%	16%	<b>100%</b>
God is like an impersonal power or force within the universe	11%	21%	<b>91%</b>	7%	-36%
God and the universe are really the same	9%	13%	<b>44%</b>	5%	<b>-44%</b>
God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe	31%	12%	<b>-61%</b>	4%	<b>-87%</b>

Table 3.3.10 ID views on God and the universe  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

People who believe in Intelligent Design have similar views on the Bible and the creation account to the rest of the population. They are more likely to think that the Bible is divinely inspired (31% of all IDs vs. 26% of all people). However, they are half as likely as YECs to think that the Bible is divinely inspired; 60% of all YECs hold this view. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.11 below.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 19:</b>					
Divinely inspired Word of God	26%	31%	19%	28%	8%
A useful book for guidance but not the Word of God	37%	40%	8%	35%	-5%
Beautiful literature but otherwise irrelevant	19%	14%	-26%	7%	<b>-63%</b>
An irrelevant and dangerous collection of ancient myths	11%	5%	-55%	24%	<b>118%</b>

Table 3.3.11 ID views on the Bible  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

40% of Intelligent Design believers think that the creation account in the Bible is a theological account which explains the meaning and purpose of the universe rather than giving a scientific account. Soft core IDs are more likely than hard core IDs to think that the Bible is a literal account of the origins of everything. The results are summarised in Table 3.3.12 below.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 24: The creation account in the Bible is...</b>					
A literal and accurate account of the origins of everything	18%	17%	-6%	26%	44%
An ancient attempt at a scientific explanation which has been disproved	17%	11%	-35%	19%	12%
An ancient myth with historical interest but no scientific basis	26%	21%	-19%	10%	<b>-62%</b>
A theological account which explains the meaning and purpose of the universe, not intended as science	27%	<b>40%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>44%</b>

Table 3.3.12 ID views on the creation account in the Bible  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

## other views

Table 3.3.13 summarises how people who believe in Intelligent Design view different spiritual beliefs and ideas. The percentage difference between IDs and the whole population is given in the table. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.3.13 below.

	Total	All IDs	+/- difference
Human soul	70%	75%	+7%
Heaven	55%	71%	+29%
Life after death	53%	70%	+32%
Ghosts	39%	48%	+23%
Reincarnation	27%	36%	+33%
Astrology/ Horoscopes	22%	30%	<b>+36%</b>
Fortune telling/ Tarot	15%	14%	-7%

Table 3.3.13 ID views on other spiritual issues  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

A number of these trends are similar to those found with Young Earth Creationists. The same proportion of IDs and YECs believe in reincarnation and fortune telling/tarot. People who believe in ID are less likely than those who believe in Young Earth Creationism to believe in heaven. In comparison to the whole population all IDs are more likely to believe in life after death and heaven. Indeed, IDs are more likely to believe in all the areas tested (apart from fortune telling/tarot) than the population as a whole.

Finally, we asked about whether or not Intelligent Design should be taught, discussed or ignored in schools. Unsurprisingly, people who believe in Intelligent Design are more likely than others to think that Intelligent Design should be taught in schools. A third of IDs (35%) think that Intelligent Design should be taught in schools alongside science, and a further 53% think that it should be discussed in other lessons, such as religious education. 38% of hard core IDs think that it should be taught in science lessons as do 26% of soft core IDs. In contrast 27% of the population think that this should be the case and 50% of the whole population think that it should be taught in lessons such as religious education. Interestingly, 11% of people who believe in ID think that it should not be discussed in schools, which is less than the whole population (18%).

Table 3.3.14 below summarises the views of hard and soft core clusters on whether or not ID should be taught in school. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold.

	Total	Hard core ID	% Difference	Soft core ID	% Difference
<b>Question 13:</b>					
ID should be taught alongside evolution in science lessons	27%	38%	<b>41%</b>	26%	-4%
ID should be discussed in other lessons	50%	53%	6%	55%	10%
ID should not be taught/discussed	18%	8%	<b>-56%</b>	17%	-6%

Table 3.3.14 ID views on Intelligent Design in schools  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all IDs (160)

In summary, Intelligent Design believers share some similar attributes to evolutionists and creationists. They are most likely to believe in a God or a higher power. There is some scepticism and uncertainty about evolution, which (leaving aside whether or not it is true) is generally considered to be directed by God or a higher power (at least in comparison to the rest of the sample).

This combination of belief in God or a higher power and the lack of certainty about evolution appears to give rise to mixed opinions among the hard and soft core IDs about the purpose and meaning of life. Opinion is divided as to whether evolution is compatible with an ultimate direction or purpose, or whether it has nothing to say on the matter.

However, there is a clear sense that IDs do consider humans to be significant. Also, unsurprisingly, they are the strongest proponents of teaching Intelligent Design in school science lessons, although the difference is not as marked as we might have expected.

### 3.4 Theistic Evolutionists

This next section provides analysis of the views held by Theistic Evolutionists in relation to evolution, science and faith, God and the Bible and other spiritual beliefs. The most statistically significant areas are discussed to examine the views held by Theistic Evolutionists.

#### views on evolution

Given the definition of Theistic Evolution it is clear that people who hold to this opinion consider evolution to be a plausible belief. We examine how strongly they hold these views and how it guides their opinions about the origins of human life.

More than a third (35%) of all TEs think that evolution is a theory so well established that it is beyond reasonable doubt. 44% think that it is a theory still waiting to be proved or disproved and only 11% think that it is a theory with very little evidence to support it. The hard core group is more likely than the soft core group to show confidence that evolution is beyond reasonable doubt (39% vs. 29% respectively). Since they are generally more consistent in holding to one viewpoint then this may be expected.

We can, however, see an inconsistency that while this group thinks that Theistic Evolution is most likely to be true there is a small group (3%) that thinks that evolution is a theory which has been disproved by the evidence. It is notable that the majority of TEs, while believing in evolution, do consider it still as a theory waiting to be proved or disproved. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.4.1 below.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 6:</b>					
Established beyond reasonable doubt	37%	39%	5%	29%	-22%
Still waiting to be proved or disproved	36%	44%	22%	45%	25%
A theory with very little evidence to support it	10%	9%	-10%	15%	<b>50%</b>
A theory which has been disproved by the evidence	9%	2%	<b>-78%</b>	4%	<b>-56%</b>

Table 3.4.1 TE views on evolutionary theory  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

As has been demonstrated earlier within the report, Young Earth Creationists and Intelligent Design believers think they share some common ground with Theistic Evolutionists, often saying these other positions hold some truth. While not as strong as the comparisons we have seen earlier there is still some overlap from the position of Theistic Evolution. 12% of all TEs think that YEC is definitely true and 31% say that it is probably true. This is similar to what was seen in the trends among IDs.

Even if there is a belief in a God, there is still an element of confusion about evolution and creation. 8% of all TEs think that Atheistic Evolution is definitely true and 16% say that it is probably true. This may be explained by people who are agnostic in their belief in God and therefore do not fall into either the Theistic or Atheistic Evolutionary position easily. 19% of all TEs say that ID is definitely true and 51% of them say that it is probably true.

Again there is some overlap between the positions of Intelligent Design and Theistic Evolution, for example 65% of hard core TEs think that ID is probably true. It identifies that many people are open-minded towards whether God controlled evolution or whether God intervened in the process (the ID position). Table 3.4.2 below shows how hard core, soft core and all TEs consider each of the alternative positions.

TEs	Views on Young Earth Creationism		Views on Atheistic Evolution		Views on Intelligent Design	
	Definitely true	Probably true	Definitely true	Probably true	Definitely true	Probably true
Hard Core TEs	0%	38%	0%	18%	0%	65%
Soft Core TEs	37%	18%	24%	14%	57%	21%
Total TEs	12%	31%	8%	16%	19%	51%

Table 3.4.2 TE views on the other positions  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

Theistic Evolutionists are divided on whether they think evolution was directed by God or is a chance process. 43% of all TEs think it is chance but that this does not disprove an ultimate purpose or direction. 40% of all TEs think that evolution does not involve chance as it is a process directed by God or some other force (in contrast this view is held by just 28% of the population). Theistic Evolutionists are least likely to think that evolution is completely a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose. 13% of TEs think that this is the case which is less than half the proportion of the whole population who do so (27%). The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.4.3, below.

Those who are most convinced that Theistic Evolution is 'definitely true' are most likely to think that it is a process directed by God. More than half (51%) of those who are in the convinced hard core group of Theistic Evolutionists think that evolution is a process

directed by God, which backs up the consistency with the view of Theistic Evolutionists. Of those who are hard core, who are consistent in thinking that Theistic Evolution is most likely and probably true, there is a third (35%) who would say that evolution is a process directed by God.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 8:</b>					
Evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose	27%	13%	<b>-52%</b>	14%	<b>-48%</b>
Evolution involves chance without disproving ultimate direction or purpose	39%	48%	23%	33%	-15%
Evolution doesn't involve chance as it is directed by God	28%	35%	25%	49%	<b>75%</b>

Table 3.4.3 TE views on evolution  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

## science and religion

A majority of people who are TEs (83%) think that science explains many things but there are some things it will never be able to explain. This is a little higher than the whole population, three quarters of whom hold this view. Only 17% of TEs think that science will explain everything either now or in the future (2% and 15% respectively). The most significant differences are highlighted in bold (Table 3.4.4 below).

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 16:</b>					
Science can explain everything	3%	2%	-33%	1%	<b>-67%</b>
Science can't explain everything but will do one day	20%	15%	-25%	15%	-25%
Science explains some things but will never be able to explain all	75%	83%	11%	84%	12%

Table 3.4.4 TE views on science  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

The vast majority of Theistic Evolutionists do not have a problem holding scientific and religious belief together and just 6% think that evolution and Christianity are totally incompatible. The results from these two questions are summarised in Tables 3.4.5 and 3.4.6. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 17:</b>					
Science undermines religious belief	10%	5%	<b>-50%</b>	5%	<b>-50%</b>
Science challenges religious belief but they can co-exist	47%	59%	26%	50%	6%
Science positively supports religious belief	12%	14%	17%	24%	<b>100%</b>
Science neither supports nor undermines religious belief	26%	21%	-19%	20%	-23%

Table 3.4.5 TE views on science and religion  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 7:</b>					
Evolution and Christianity are totally incompatible	16%	4%	<b>-75%</b>	10%	-38%
Evolution presents challenges to Christianity but it is possible to believe in both	42%	62%	48%	44%	5%
Evolution and Christianity are wholly compatible	14%	21%	50%	36%	<b>157%</b>
Evolution and Christianity are totally disconnected subjects	24%	12%	-50%	8%	<b>-67%</b>

Table 3.4.6 TE views on evolution and Christianity  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

## purpose & meaning

Theistic Evolutionists are more likely to consider that evolution points towards a degree of meaning and purpose than is the national population. However, their views on human

significance are not dissimilar to those of the whole sample. Addressing whether or not there is meaning and purpose to life, a third (31%) of TEs say that evolution has nothing to say on the subject in comparison to 45% of all people. 58% of all TEs think that evolution fits very well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life; the highest of all four clusters analysed. 8% of all TEs think that evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life, in comparison to 13% of all people. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.4.7 below.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 15:</b>					
Evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life	13%	7%	<b>-46%</b>	11%	-15%
Evolution fits well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life	37%	59%	<b>59%</b>	56%	<b>51%</b>
Evolution tells us nothing about whether there is an ultimate purpose to life or not	45%	30%	-33%	32%	-29%

Table 3.4.7 TE views on evolution, meaning and purpose  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

Similarly to IDs, most TEs consider humans to have particular significance. However, opinion is divided on whether this is due to ‘uniqueness’ or ‘complexity’: 48% of TEs think that humans are uniquely different from other living things and so have value and significance. 43% think that human significance comes from being particularly complex in comparison to other animals. Only 9% think that humans have no unique value or significance. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.4.8 below.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 14:</b>					
Humans are just another species of animal and have no unique value or significance	14%	8%	<b>-43%</b>	12%	-14%
Humans are like other animals but are particularly complex which gives humans value and significance	43%	47%	9%	34%	-21%
Humans are uniquely different from other living things and so have a unique value and significance	40%	43%	8%	52%	30%

Table 3.4.8 TE views on human significance  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)



## God and the Bible

More than three quarters of TEs (78%) believe in God (67% having always believed in God and 11% having not always done so but doing so now). Interestingly, soft core TEs are more likely than hard core to believe in God (89% of soft core in comparison to 72% of hard core – this is broken down to 84% of convinced hard core and 69% of hard core (excluding convinced hard core)). 7% of TEs do not know if there is a God or not. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.4.9 below.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 18:</b>					
Always believed in God	45%	61%	36%	78%	<b>73%</b>
Believe now but have not always	8%	11%	38%	11%	<b>38%</b>
Used to believe but not now	8%	2%	<b>-75%</b>	4%	<b>-50%</b>
Never believed	9%	3%	<b>-67%</b>	2%	<b>-78%</b>
Don't know whether there is a God	12%	9%	-25%	1%	<b>-92%</b>
Don't believe in God but in a higher power	10%	9%	-10%	4%	<b>-60%</b>
Don't believe in God but am spiritual	9%	5%	-44%	1%	<b>-89%</b>

Table 3.4.9 TE views on God  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

Given that this group hold to Theistic Evolution it is interesting to explore whether or not people view God as still involved in the universe. 41% of hard core TEs (56% convinced hard core and 37% hard core) and 66% of soft core TEs think that God designed the universe and remains involved with it, holding to a theistic view of God. 12% think that he has no further involvement and 12% think that God and the universe are the same thing. 16% say that God is like an impersonal force within the universe. There is very varied opinion among Theistic Evolutionists as to how God relates to the universe, with 49% of all TEs actually taking a theistic view of God. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.4.10 below.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 19:</b>					
God designed and created the universe and remains involved with it	34%	41%	21%	66%	<b>94%</b>
God designed and created the universe but has no further involvement with it	8%	11%	38%	14%	<b>75%</b>
God is like an impersonal power or force within the universe	11%	18%	<b>64%</b>	11%	0%
God and the universe are really the same	9%	16%	<b>78%</b>	5%	-44%
God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe	31%	8%	<b>-74%</b>	3%	<b>-90%</b>

Table 3.4.10 TE views on God and the universe  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

The majority of Theistic Evolutionists consider the Bible as important. However, opinion is divided over whether it is the word of God or not. 43% of TEs think that it is a useful book of guidance and advice for our lives but not the word of God, and 39% of TEs say that the Bible is the divinely inspired word of God. This is in comparison to 37% and 26% of the whole population respectively. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.4.11 below.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 23: The Bible is...</b>					
Divinely inspired Word of God	26%	36%	38%	48%	<b>85%</b>
A useful book for guidance but not the Word of God	37%	45%	22%	38%	3%
Beautiful literature but otherwise irrelevant	19%	11%	-42%	7%	<b>-63%</b>
An irrelevant and dangerous collection of ancient myths	11%	3%	<b>-73%</b>	2%	<b>-82%</b>

Table 3.4.11 TE views on the Bible  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

This view probably impacts how TEs view the creation account in the Bible in turn. One in five TEs (22%) think that the biblical creation account is literal. 37% think that it is just a theological account, not a scientific account. 17% say that it is an ancient myth that has been disproved by science. This is in comparison to the whole population, of whom 18% think that the Genesis creation account is literal, 27% think it is theological and 26% think that it is a myth. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.4.12 below.

	Total	Hard core TEs	% Difference	Soft core TEs	% Difference
<b>Question 24: The creation account in the Bible is...</b>					
A literal and accurate account of the origins of everything	18%	17%	-6%	34%	<b>89%</b>
An ancient attempt at a scientific explanation which has been disproved	17%	15%	-12%	21%	24%
An ancient myth with historical interest but no scientific basis	26%	17%	-35%	8%	<b>-69%</b>
A theological account which explains the meaning and purpose of the universe, not intended as science	27%	40%	<b>48%</b>	29%	7%

Table 3.4.12 TE views on the Bible's account of creation  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

## other views

Table 3.4.13 shows how all TEs view other spiritual beliefs in comparison to the whole population. Most Theistic Evolutionists believe in the human soul, life after death and heaven. The results are summarised below. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold.

	Total	All TEs	+/- difference
Human soul	70%	88%	+26%
Heaven	55%	80%	<b>+45%</b>
Life after death	53%	71%	+34%
Ghosts	39%	43%	+10%
Reincarnation	27%	34%	+26%
Astrology/ Horoscopes	22%	25%	+14%
Fortune telling/ Tarot	15%	14%	-7%

Table 3.4.13 TE views on other spiritual issues  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

Theistic Evolutionists are considerably more likely than the rest of the population to believe in heaven, life after death and the human soul (similar to Young Earth Creationists and Intelligent Design believers).

Finally, we asked about whether or not Intelligent Design should be taught, discussed or ignored in schools. Table 3.4.14 below summarises the views of Theistic Evolutionists. In general Theistic Evolutionists think that ID should be discussed in lessons other than science for example in religious education. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold.

	Total	Hard core TE	% Difference	Soft core TE	% Difference
<b>Question 13:</b>					
ID should be taught alongside evolution in science lessons	27%	23%	-15%	31%	15%
ID should be discussed in other lessons	50%	64%	28%	53%	6%
ID should not be taught/discussed	18%	8%	<b>-56%</b>	15%	-17%

Table 3.4.14 TE views on Intelligent Design in schools  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all TEs (374)

Theistic Evolutionists are confident in both their belief in God and their belief in evolution. They consider that evolution is not a chance process but is directed by God. In general they consider that there may be some challenges between religious belief and science and they acknowledge this. However, there is agreement that science cannot explain everything. TEs think that evolution fits very well with the idea that there is purpose and meaning and happily hold this together with evolutionary belief. Finally, they have a high view of the Bible but are most likely to see Genesis as a theological account rather than a literal account of creation.

### 3.5 Atheistic Evolutionists

Finally, the last cluster, Atheistic Evolutionists, is examined below. The results are in contrast to the other view points which are generally held by theists and deists. The trends are discussed in the following analysis. The most significant areas are discussed and it is clear that there are a number of areas which have a strong impact on the views of Atheistic Evolutionists.

## views on evolution

Unsurprisingly, Atheistic Evolutionists do show very different results from the other groups. 65% of AEs think that evolution is a theory so well established that it is beyond reasonable doubt. Three quarters of convinced hard core AEs think that evolution is beyond reasonable doubt, compared to 59% of the hard core and 67% of the soft core. In general, Atheistic Evolutionists are likely to be certain of their views. Only 24% think that it is a theory still waiting to be proved or disproved and 7% think that it has little evidence or has been disproved by the evidence. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.1 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 6: Evolution is...</b>					
Established beyond reasonable doubt	37%	65%	<b>76%</b>	67%	<b>81%</b>
Still waiting to be proved or disproved	36%	25%	-31%	18%	<b>-50%</b>
A theory with very little evidence to support it	10%	5%	<b>-50%</b>	6%	-40%
A theory which has been disproved by the evidence	9%	2%	<b>-78%</b>	9%	0%

Table 3.5.1 AE views on evolutionary theory  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

We might expect that AEs do not think that any of the possibly Theistic positions could be true. Surprisingly, 6% of all AEs think YEC is definitely true and 8% think it is probably true. 8% think TE is definitely true and 16% probably true and 8% think ID is definitely true and 25% probably true. Since 53% of soft core AEs think that TE is definitely true, it suggests that some soft core Atheistic Evolutionists may be sure of evolution but unsure of whether this involved a God or not. Atheistic Evolutionists are more sure than others of their views, however they can still be inconsistent as to their views on the role of a God in evolution.

AEs	Views on Young Earth Creationism		Views on Theistic Evolution		Views on Intelligent Design	
	Definitely true	Probably true	Definitely true	Probably true	Definitely true	Probably true
Hard Core AEs	0%	8%	0%	15%	0%	26%
Soft Core AEs	38%	12%	53%	22%	51%	22%
Total AEs	6%	8%	8%	16%	8%	25%

Table 3.5.2 AE views on other positions  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

Not surprisingly, more than 90% of AEs think that evolution is a process that has happened by chance, rather than being directed by God or some other force. 47% think that evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose and 44% think it is chance but this does not disprove an ultimate purpose or direction. Only 7% of AEs think that evolution does not involve chance as it is a process directed by God or some other force. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.3 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 8:</b>					
Evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose	27%	48%	<b>78%</b>	40%	48%
Evolution involves chance without disproving ultimate direction or purpose	39%	44%	13%	42%	8%
Evolution doesn't involve chance as it is directed by God	28%	5%	<b>-82%</b>	17%	-39%

Table 3.5.3 AE views on evolution  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

## science and religion

Atheistic Evolutionists are most likely to think that science has all the answers. More than a third, 36%, of AEs think that science will explain everything now or in the future (5% and 31% respectively). While 34% of hard core AEs hold this view, almost half (48%) of all soft core AEs think that this is the case. In contrast to the other groups a lower percentage, 63%, of AEs think that science explains many things but there are some things it will never

be able to explain. Atheistic Evolutionists are more likely to think that science can explain everything and have more confidence that in the future it will provide answers. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.4 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 16:</b>					
Science can explain everything	3%	3%	0%	18%	500%
Science can't explain everything but will do one day	20%	31%	<b>55%</b>	30%	<b>50%</b>
Science explains some things but will never be able to explain all	75%	65%	-13%	52%	-31%

Table 3.5.4 AE views on science  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

One in five of all AEs (21%) think that science totally undermines religious belief, considerably higher than the national population. Half of AEs (49%) think that science challenges religious belief but does not completely undermine it and 25% say that it neither supports nor opposes religious belief. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.5 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 17:</b>					
Science undermines religious belief	10%	19%	<b>90%</b>	34%	<b>240%</b>
Science challenges religious belief but they can co-exist	47%	51%	9%	37%	-21%
Science positively supports religious belief	12%	4%	<b>-67%</b>	4%	<b>-67%</b>
Science neither supports nor undermines religious belief	26%	25%	-4%	23%	-12%

Table 3.5.5 AE views on science and religion  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

Interestingly, Atheistic Evolutionists are more likely to think that evolution undermines Christianity than they are to think that science undermines religious belief broadly. A third, 31%, of AEs think that evolution and Christianity are totally incompatible and that you can't believe in both, in comparison to 16% of the whole population. This is split by 29% of hard core AEs and 42% of soft core AEs. 39% think that evolution presents some challenges to Christianity but it is possible to believe in both. Just 6% think that evolution and Christianity are wholly compatible and 23% think that evolution and Christianity are totally disconnected subjects and have nothing to do with one another. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.6 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 7:</b>					
Evolution and Christianity incompatible	16%	29%	<b>81%</b>	42%	<b>163%</b>
Evolution presents challenges	42%	42%	0%	27%	-36%
Wholly compatible	14%	5%	-64%	10%	-29%
Totally disconnected subjects	24%	23%	-4%	19%	-21%

Table 3.5.6 AE views on Christianity and evolution  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

## purpose & meaning

As has been seen as we analyse the Young Earth Creationists', Theistic Evolutionists' and Intelligent Design believers' views there is a general feel that evolution does not necessarily imply that there is no meaning. That recognised, although there is no perceived tension between evolution and purpose or meaning in life, YECs, TEs and IDs consider human significance to come from uniqueness which has the potential for tension with evolutionary belief.

While a fifth of all AEs think that evolution tells us that there is no purpose to life, half (49%) of all AEs say that evolution has nothing to say on whether or not there is a purpose to life. Within the 49%, 27% think that evolution fits very well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life, whereas 22% think that evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life. Atheistic Evolutionists are more likely than others to think evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.7 below.



	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 15:</b>					
Evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life	13%	22%	<b>69%</b>	23%	<b>77%</b>
Evolution fits well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life	37%	25%	-32%	36%	-3%
Evolution tells us nothing about whether there is an ultimate purpose to life or not	45%	51%	13%	37%	-18%

Table 3.5.7 AE views on evolution, meaning and purpose  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

Notably, half of all AEs think that humans are particularly complex and that this complexity gives rise to their value and significance. The rest of the group fall into two categories; 22% of all AEs think that humans are uniquely different from other living things and so have a unique value and significance (in comparison to 40% of the whole population) and 27% think that humans have no unique value or significance. Indeed 37% of soft core AEs and 25% of hard core AEs think that humans have no unique value or significance. This is in sharp contrast to the other positions. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.8 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 14:</b>					
Humans are just another species of animal and have no unique value or significance	14%	25%	<b>79%</b>	37%	<b>164%</b>
Humans are like other animals but are particularly complex which gives humans value and significance	43%	52%	21%	37%	-14%
Humans are uniquely different from other living things and so have a unique value and significance	40%	22%	<b>-45%</b>	24%	<b>-40%</b>

Table 3.5.8 AE views on human significance  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

## God and the Bible

Looking at the broader group of AEs, we see that, somewhat inconsistently, 14% of AEs believe in God. A quarter of AEs (23%) used to believe in God but don't now and a further 20% have never believed in God. This is a considerably higher proportion than the population, 8% of whom used to believe in God but now do not and 9% who have never believed in God. The hard core group are least likely to believe in God. A quarter (24%) used to believe in God but no longer do so and one in five (21%) have never believed in God. 14% of all AEs don't know if there is a God or not and 13% think there is a higher power. 15% of all AEs say they are spiritual but there is no God, this is broken down to 16% of hard core AEs and 10% of soft core AEs. It is interesting to note that there is a mixture of opinion about God among Atheistic Evolutionists, pointing out that cognitive dissonance is not restricted to the other sub-groups. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.9 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 18:</b>					
Always believed in God	45%	7%	<b>-84%</b>	32%	-29%
Believe now but have not always	8%	3%	<b>-63%</b>	9%	13%
Used to believe but not now	8%	24%	<b>200%</b>	19%	<b>140%</b>
Never believed	9%	21%	<b>133%</b>	19%	<b>111%</b>
Don't know whether there is a God	12%	15%	25%	8%	-33%
Don't believe in God but in a higher power	10%	15%	<b>50%</b>	3%	<b>-70%</b>
Don't believe in God but am spiritual	9%	16%	<b>78%</b>	10%	11%

Table 3.5.9 AE views on God  
 Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

Perhaps surprisingly, given these mixed views on the existence of God, three quarters of AEs, 73%, consistently think that God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe. 12% of AEs think that God was involved in designing the universe in some way, this breaks down to 8% thinking that God designed the universe and remains involved with it and 4% thinking that God designed the universe but has no further involvement. 6% think that God and the universe are the same thing. 79% of hard core AEs think that God is an invention of human minds but less than half of this proportion (36%) of soft core AEs think this. This is particularly notable and shows that the higher levels of consistency are strongly related to people's view that there is no God. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.10 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 19:</b>					
God designed and created the universe and remains involved with it	34%	4%	<b>-88%</b>	32%	-6%
God designed and created the universe but has no further involvement with it	8%	3%	<b>-63%</b>	5%	-38%
God is like an impersonal power or force within the universe	11%	5%	<b>-55%</b>	11%	0%
God and the universe are really the same	9%	5%	-44%	8%	-11%
God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe	31%	79%	<b>155%</b>	36%	16%

Table 3.5.10 AE views on God and the universe  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

50% of AEs think that the Bible is irrelevant, breaking up into 30% who view the Bible as beautiful literature but otherwise irrelevant and 20% viewing it as an irrelevant and dangerous collection of ancient myths. 38% say that it is a useful book of guidance and advice for our lives but not the word of God. A fifth (21%) of hard core AEs view the Bible as irrelevant and dangerous in comparison to 17% of soft core AEs. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.11 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 23: The Bible is...</b>					
Divinely inspired Word of God	26%	4%	<b>-85%</b>	30%	15%
A useful book for guidance but not the Word of God	37%	39%	5%	30%	-19%
Beautiful literature but otherwise irrelevant	19%	33%	<b>74%</b>	18%	-5%
An irrelevant and dangerous collection of ancient myths	11%	21%	<b>91%</b>	17%	<b>55%</b>

Table 3.5.11 AE views on the Bible  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

22% of AEs think that the Bible’s creation account is a theological account not a scientific account. 41% of AEs think that it is an ancient myth with no scientific basis today and 21% think that it is an ancient attempt at science which has been disproved. 21% of hard core AEs say that the Bible’s creation account has been disproved and 46% of hard core AEs say that it has no scientific basis today. This is in contrast to 17% and 26% of the whole population. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.12 below.

	Total	Hard core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 24: The creation account in the Bible is...</b>					
A literal and accurate account of the origins of everything	18%	4%	<b>-78%</b>	32%	<b>78%</b>
An ancient attempt at a scientific explanation which has been disproved	17%	21%	24%	21%	24%
An ancient myth with historical interest but no scientific basis	26%	46%	<b>77%</b>	17%	-35%
A theological account which explains the meaning and purpose of the universe, not intended as science	27%	22%	-19%	21%	-22%

Table 3.5.12 AE views on the Bible  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

## other views

Atheistic Evolutionists are less likely than the other three clusters to believe in each of the following spiritual beliefs. Just half of Atheistic Evolutionists believe in the human soul and a quarter believe in life after death. As can be seen in Table 3.5.13 below, the difference between all AEs and the general population is stark.

	Total	All AEs	+/- difference
Human soul	70%	49%	-30%
Heaven	55%	19%	<b>-65%</b>
Life after death	53%	24%	<b>-55%</b>
Ghosts	39%	30%	-23%
Reincarnation	27%	17%	-37%
Astrology/ Horoscopes	22%	15%	-32%
Fortune telling/ Tarot	15%	13%	-13%

Table 3.5.13 AE views on other spiritual issues  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

Finally, we asked about whether or not Intelligent Design should be taught, discussed or ignored in schools. While other groups were more likely to think that it should be taught or discussed in schools, more than one in five Atheistic Evolutionists think that ID should not be taught or discussed in schools. The table below summarises the views of Atheistic Evolutionists. Given the public rhetoric of some Atheistic Evolutionists, it is perhaps surprising that they are not more strongly opposed to mentioning Intelligent Design, especially in science lessons. The most significant differences are highlighted in bold in Table 3.5.14 below.

	Total	Hard Core AE	% Difference	Soft core AE	% Difference
<b>Question 13:</b>					
ID should be taught alongside evolution in science lessons	27%	21%	-22%	30%	11%
ID should be discussed in other lessons	50%	54%	8%	46%	-8%
ID should not be taught/discussed	18%	23%	<b>28%</b>	21%	17%

Table 3.5.14 AE views on Intelligent Design in schools  
Base: All respondents (2060) with all AEs (366)

In summary, Atheistic Evolutionists are in the starkest contrast to any other group. There are strong convictions that evolution is well-established and beyond reasonable doubt and that there is no need for God. This is backed up by the fact that most Atheistic Evolutionists think that God is an invention of the human mind and that evolution is a chance process without any intervention of God or a higher power. There is greater confidence among Atheistic Evolutionists that science will explain things in the future in comparison to other groups. Many AEs consider evolution and Christianity to be completely incompatible, perhaps through a perceived contradiction in holding religious and evolutionary belief together. While all other groups link human significance and the meaning of life to their views in some way, AEs are more likely consider that evolution suggests that there is no ultimate purpose to life.

# conclusion

So as the birth of Charles Darwin is celebrated, has his work had any impact on the views of the British public 200 years on? Clearly a large proportion of the population believe in evolution, indeed more than a third think that evolution is a theory so well established that it is beyond reasonable doubt. However there is still some uncertainty, with people being more likely to think that both Atheistic Evolution and Theistic Evolution are untrue than true.

Despite the decrease of religious practice in the UK and the recent media coverage of issues of science and faith, there is still a core of people who hold to Young Earth Creationism. However, interestingly, the youngest generations and highest educated people show inclinations towards believing in Intelligent Design. Could this be a pointer towards the dominant trend of tomorrow?

We cannot classify all of the population into these finite groups though, partly because there is widespread cognitive dissonance and many people sit on the periphery of these established groups. Whether this is down to apathy, inconsistency or lack of knowledge is unclear.

So, what picture do we have of the UK population's thoughts on evolution and faith in 2009?

To give an overly simplistic illustration of the typical demographic profile of people who believe in Atheistic Evolution, Theistic Evolution, Intelligent Design and Young Earth Creationism, imagine this:

A family sits down together to mark the anniversary of Darwin's birth and the publication of the *Origin of Species*. According to our research, we might find that grandma would represent a typical Young Earth Creationist. She believes in a theistic God and finds her meaning in the unique significance of being created by God.

Then we would have mum and dad, they are middle aged and in social group C1. Both believe in evolution but have slightly different views. Mum is a Theistic Evolutionist, believing that there is a God who controlled evolution, but dad is an Atheistic Evolutionist. Mum has always believed there is a God and takes the opening chapters of the Bible as a theological but not a literal account. Dad, on the other hand, used to believe in God but no longer does, he thinks that science has challenged

religious belief and is more convinced by science. He doesn't believe there is life after death or in spiritual things.

Finally there is the 25 year old son, he is a young graduate and open-minded. He thinks that evolution is a theory that is still waiting to be proved or disproved and as a result believes in Intelligent Design. He is not convinced by any supposed nihilistic implications of evolution and he thinks that human origins are best explained by a combination of science and the intervention of a higher power.

Considering the context of the wider *Rescuing Darwin* project (examining the relationship between Darwin's theory of evolution and people's beliefs about science and faith) this research shows that there is less dogmatism than may be expected. It has been considered by some that Darwin's theory of evolution has been abused by 'extremists' of two very different philosophical positions. From an atheistic position, some suggest that evolutionary belief must disprove belief in God and from a creationist point of view, considering evolution and Christianity to be incompatible has led to suggestions that evolution contradicts a theistic view of God and so theists cannot hold an omnipotent view of God together with evolutionary theory.

This research challenges both the extreme atheists and theists, who frequently join in this debate. In general people do not subscribe to such polarised views, but rather happily hold a spectrum of beliefs reconciling scientific theory and religious belief.

This study has demonstrated how different groups hold different opinions and on what these are founded, shedding light on the public's views of what is often considered an academic debate. Darwin's ground breaking study has unquestionably affected public opinion to some extent. As 2009 brings the discussions about evolution into the spotlight again during this significant anniversary, there is still no consensus among the British public. As the majority of people currently fall in between the two stalls of Atheistic Evolution and Young Earth Creationism it would be fascinating to repeat this study to see what effect the next 200 years of debate has on the popular view of these vital questions!

## about ComRes

ComRes is the leading research consultancy for the communications sector. It is unique as a provider of research that is designed and conducted by experts in both polling and communications. ComRes has a strong track record of conducting bespoke, large-scale, quantitative research that has been used in conjunction with high profile thought-leadership work, campaigns and academic studies. They have also developed a strong expertise in assessing opinion within hard-to-reach groups.



# appendix b:

## research questionnaire

### questions for Darwin Project

1. 2009 is the anniversary of the birth of a famous British scientist.  
Do you know who it is?

1. Charles Darwin
2. Other (perhaps code out top 5 mentions)
3. Don't know

2. Which one of the following is Charles Darwin most strongly associated with?

1. genetics
2. electricity
3. evolution
4. penicillin
5. relativity

3. Which of the following, if any, are books by Charles Darwin?

1. A Brief History of Time
2. The God Delusion
3. The Descent of Man
4. The Origin of Species
5. The Selfish Gene
6. The Theory of Relativity
7. The Naked Ape
8. The Naked Chef

4. On the subject of religion, how do you think Charles Darwin described himself at the end of his life?

1. A Christian
2. A deist
3. An agnostic
4. An atheist
5. A non-believer
6. Don't know

5. I am going to read out four statements about the origin of human life. Please listen to each one and tell me which one you think is most likely to be true:

1. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which removes any need for God
2. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which can be seen as part of God's plan
3. Humans evolved by a process of evolution which required the special intervention of God or a higher power at key stages
4. Humans were created by God some time within the last 10,000 years

6. Darwinian evolution is the idea that life today, including human life, developed over millions of years from earlier species, by a process of natural selection. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your opinion of Darwinian evolution?

1. It is a theory so well established that it's beyond reasonable doubt
2. It is a theory that is still waiting to be proved or disproved
3. It is a theory with very little evidence to support it
4. It is a theory which has been disproved by the evidence

7. Different people have different opinions on the relationship between evolution and Christianity. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your opinion (irrespective of whether or not you are a Christian)?

1. Evolution and Christianity are totally incompatible: you can't believe in both
2. Evolution presents some challenges to Christianity but it is possible to believe in both

3. Evolution and Christianity are wholly compatible and there is no tension at all between the two
4. Evolution and Christianity are totally disconnected subjects and have nothing to do with one another

**8. Some people think there is a purpose behind evolution whereas others do not. Which one of the following statements best describes your opinion (irrespective of whether or not you believe in evolution)?**

1. Evolution is a chance process with no ultimate direction or purpose
2. Evolution involves chance but this doesn't disprove an ultimate direction or purpose
3. Evolution does not involve chance as it is a process directed by God or some other force.

**9. Young Earth Creationism is the idea that God created the world sometime in the last 10,000 years. In your opinion is Young Earth Creationism:**

1. definitely true
2. probably true
3. probably untrue
4. definitely untrue

**10. Theistic Evolution is the idea that evolution is the means that God used for the creation of all living things on earth. In your opinion is Theistic Evolution:**

1. definitely true
2. probably true
3. probably untrue
4. definitely untrue

**11. Atheistic Evolution is the idea that evolution makes belief in God unnecessary and absurd. In your opinion is Atheistic Evolution:**

1. definitely true
2. probably true
3. probably untrue
4. definitely untrue

12. Intelligent Design is the idea that evolution alone is not enough to explain the complex structures of some living things, so the intervention of a designer is needed at key stages. In your opinion is Intelligent Design:

1. definitely true
2. probably true
3. probably untrue
4. definitely untrue

13. Some people believe that Intelligent Design should be taught alongside evolution in schools, whereas others disagree. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your opinion?

1. Intelligent Design should be taught alongside evolution in science lessons
2. Intelligent Design should be discussed in other lessons, such as Religious Education
3. Intelligent Design should not be taught or discussed in schools at all

14. Which one of the following statements best describes your opinion of the relationship between human beings and other living things?

1. Human beings are just another species of animal and have no unique value or significance
2. Human beings are like other animals but are particularly complex and this complexity gives humans value and significance
3. Human beings are uniquely different from other living things and so have a unique value and significance

15. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your opinion regarding what evolution tells us about the purpose of life?

1. Evolution tells us that there is no ultimate purpose to life.
2. Evolution fits well with the idea that there is an ultimate purpose to life
3. Evolution tells us nothing about whether there is an ultimate purpose to life or not

**16. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your opinion about science?**

1. Science can explain everything
2. Science can't explain everything yet but it will do one day
3. Science explains many things but there are some things it will never be able to explain

**17. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your opinion about the relationship between science and religious belief?**

1. Science totally undermines religious belief
2. Science challenges religious beliefs but they can co-exist
3. Science positively supports religious belief
4. Science neither supports nor undermines religious belief

**18. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your own view about God?**

1. I have always believed in God
2. I believe in God now but have not always done so
3. I used to believe in God but I no longer do so
4. I have never believed in God
5. I don't know whether there is a God
6. I do not believe in God but I do believe in a higher power
7. I do not believe in God but I am a spiritual person

**19. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your view about the universe?**

1. God designed and created the universe and remains involved with it
2. God designed and created the universe but has no further involvement with it
3. God is like an impersonal power or force within the universe
4. God and the universe are really the same
5. God is an invention of human minds and has nothing to do with the creation of the universe

20. Apart from such special occasions as weddings, funerals and baptisms, roughly how often nowadays do you attend a religious service or meeting?

1. Never
2. Once a year
3. Several times a year
4. About once a month
5. Several times a month
6. Once a week
7. Several times a week
8. Every day

21. Roughly how often do you pray?

1. Never
2. Once a year
3. Several times a year
4. About once a month
5. Several times a month
6. Once a week
7. Several times a week
8. Every day
9. Several times a day

22. Roughly how often do you read the Bible?

1. Never
2. Once a year
3. Several times a year
4. About once a month
5. Several times a month
6. Once a week
7. Several times a week
8. Every day
9. Several times a day

**23. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your view of the Bible?  
The Bible is...**

1. The divinely inspired Word of God
2. A useful book of guidance and advice for our lives but not the Word of God
3. Beautiful literature but otherwise irrelevant to us today
4. An irrelevant and dangerous collection of ancient myths

**24. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your view of the  
creation account at the start of the Bible?**

1. It is a literal and accurate account of the origins of everything
2. It is an ancient attempt at a scientific explanation which has now been disproved
3. It is an ancient myth of real historical interest but with no scientific basis today
4. It is a theological account which explains the meaning and purpose of the universe, not intended as science
5. Don't know [DON'T GIVE THIS AS AN OPTION]

**25. Which, if any, of the things I'm going to read out do you believe in?**

1. Life after death
2. The human soul
3. Heaven
4. Astrology/ Horoscopes
5. Ghosts
6. Fortune Telling / Tarot
7. Reincarnation

## Demographics

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Region
4. Social Class
5. Presence & age of children
6. Final level of education
7. Ethnicity
8. Political identification

## What is your religion?

1. None
2. Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)
3. Buddhist
4. Hindu
5. Jewish
6. Muslim
7. Sikh
8. Any other religion (please write in)

If answer Christian

## What "denomination" do you belong to?

1. Church of England
2. Roman Catholic
3. Church of Scotland
4. Baptist
5. Independent
6. Methodist
7. New churches
8. Orthodox
9. Pentecostal
10. United Reformed

Other



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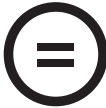
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# Faith and Darwin:

## Harmony, Conflict, or Confusion?

150 years after the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, his theory of evolution still provokes debate and controversy.

Up until recently, research into the UK's attitude to evolution (and its rival theories) has been limited, often based only on a single question with three pre-selected answers.

Commissioned by Theos and conducted and analysed by ComRes, *Faith in Darwin* is different. The study asked over 2,000 UK adults a range of questions on topics as wide-ranging as evolution, creationism, Intelligent Design, religion, purpose, humanity, design, and the nature and purpose of science.

The results paint a fascinating picture of the breadth and depth of public opinion around these linked issues.

Caroline Lawes' in-depth and wide-ranging analysis of the findings explores how well-formed public opinion is (or is not) and highlights some of the key factors influencing that opinion.

The report examines, among other issues, the perceived strength of the scientific evidence for evolution, the influence of religious faith on people's opinions of evolution; and the extent to which people believe that science can explain everything in life. It also shows that public opinion is not as confident or settled as previous research has assumed, revealing that in the land of his birth, there remains a very significant number of people who are more or less sceptical about Darwin's theory of evolution.

*Faith in Darwin* sheds light on a complex topic and constitutes an invaluable resource for anyone seeking to understand the intellectual landscape of the UK for years to come.



£10

ISBN: 978-0-9554453-6-1

