

Religion and Science

We often hear historical and contemporary accounts of an alleged fundamental conflict between religion and science. When thinking of these topics, we often think of names such as Galileo or Darwin and events such as the Scopes Monkey Trial. Even more recently we hear of school boards struggling with what to teach in the classroom concerning issues such as evolution and creationism. Let's use the ARDA's website to examine some empirical data on people's beliefs on the relationship between religion and science.

Open your web browser and go to the homepage for the Association of Religion Data Archives (www.theARDA.com).

First, let's see how people perceive the relationship between religion and science.

The *General Social Survey, 2010, Cross-Section and Panel Combined, (Inapplicable Responses Coded as Missing)* asked a series of questions concerning faith, science, and technology. Find the dataset for this file in the "Data Archive" section of the ARDA's website, and choose the file that recodes inapplicable responses as missing. For assistance locating a data file on the ARDA, click [here](#).

Now, let's search for variables that might relate to the topic of religion and science. Using the grey "Search" tab, look for the word "science" in the survey. For assistance navigating datasets on the ARDA, click [here](#).

One of the variables that you should find is #845. This variable makes a statement that might be useful. Respondents were asked to respond to the statement: "We believe too often in science, and not enough in feelings and faith."

1. What is this variable's name?

2. How many people responded to this question? (Hint: Be careful here. There is a difference between how many people are in the survey and how many responded to this specific question. Click on the variable name to find this information.)



3. What **percent** of respondents “Strongly agree” with this variable’s statement?

4. Now, since you are good at asking sociological questions, you think to yourself, “I bet a person’s response to this question would vary depending on their [insert other variable here]...” What variables (i.e. other factors) might lead a person to answer one way or another on this question?

Let’s use the ARDA’s online data analyzer to look at some other variables that could be affecting responses. (Hint: Click on “Analyze results”.)

5. What **percent** of Protestants strongly agree with the variable’s statement?

6. What **percent** of non-religious individuals strongly agree with the variable’s statement?

7. How does religious attendance relate with responses to the variable SCIFAITH? Describe:

8. Are there any regional differences in the responses to this question (it may help to combine the numbers for the “strongly agree” and “agree” categories so you aren’t just looking at the responses of two people)?

Now let’s look at another dataset that also deals with religion and science. Go back to the ARDA Data Archive and find the *Baylor Religion Survey, Wave II (2007) - Instructional Dataset*. Using the grey “Search” tab, look for the word “science” in the survey, and scroll down to variable #196 HUMNEVOL.

9. What does this variable measure?

10. Click “Analyze results” for HUMNEVOL. People of which religion are most likely to agree or strongly agree that humans evolved from primates billions of years ago? (Hint: It may help to add the percentage of agree and strongly agree responses for each religious group).

- a. Evangelical Protestants b. Black Protestants c. Mainline Protestants d. Catholics

Now scroll down to variable #198 SCIRELIG.

11. What does this variable measure?

12. Click “Analyze results” and fill out the below table based on data for religious groups’ answers (Hint: Combine the frequencies (percentages) for Agree and Strongly Agree, and Disagree and Strongly Disagree):

	Evangelical Protestant	Black Protestant	Mainline Protestant	Catholic	None	Other
Strongly agree + Agree	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly disagree + Disagree	%	%	%	%	%	%

13. Overall, what have you learned about the relationship between science and religion?
