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"Just in time for the bicentennial observance of Charles Darwin's birth, a new survey of Louisiana residents shows 40 percent of the respondents believe evolution is not well-supported by evidence or generally accepted within the scientific community," the *Baton Rouge Advocate* (April 14, 2009) [reports](#) [4]. The Louisiana Survey, sponsored by theanship School of Mass Communication's Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs at Louisiana State University, [asked](#) [5] (PDF), "Do you think the scientific theory of evolution is well supported by evidence and widely accepted within the scientific community, or that it is not well supported by evidence and many scientists have serious doubts about it?" Of the respondents, only 38.8% preferred the correct option, with 40.3% thinking that evolution is not well supported and 20.9% listed as saying they don't know. The survey also asked, "When teaching students about human origins, would you generally favor or oppose teaching creationism along with evolution in public schools?"; 57.5% of the respondents said that they favored teaching creationism, 31% said that they opposed teaching creationism, and 11.4% were listed as saying they don't know.

The *Advocate* was editorially appalled, commenting, "The level of belief that evolution is not supported by scientific evidence is startling. Equally amazing is the percentage who believe evolution is not generally accepted within the scientific community," and adding, "Such indifference to basic principles of science doesn't position Louisiana very well to embrace the knowledge-based economy it needs to advance its future." (As Barbara Forrest recently [observed](#) [6] in a post at the Louisiana Coalition for Science's blog, the state is next-to-last in the nation with respect to student educational success and economic prospects.) In a jab at Governor Bobby Jindal, who signed the so-called Louisiana Science

Education Act into law in 2008, thus opening the door for creationism and scientifically unwarranted critiques of evolution to be taught in public school science classes in Louisiana, the *Advocate* also remarked, "How ironic that Jindal's wife, Supriya, has launched a private foundation to promote math and science education in Louisiana's classrooms. We encourage the governor to promote science education by working to keep religion out of science classes in public schools — something he's been unwilling to do so far."

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