

Anti-GMO Beliefs Correspond to Lower Education



By Hank Campbell — April 19, 2016



A recent poll found that in defiance of what marketing claims are about

organic food, [anti-GMO beliefs are actually a sign of being less educated](#) [1]. This is a big blow to Organic Consumers Association and the attack groups they fund to say just the opposite, such as U.S. Right To Know and SourceWatch.

How was it ever otherwise? It's the magic of statistics coupled with positive spin. On average a higher education corresponds to higher income(1) and Whole Foods puts its stores where the rich people are, so it was safe to say those areas are better educated. And then they had demographic data to affirm it. In the 2008 election, for example, Senator Obama claimed he was going to be "scientist-in-chief," an appeal to why smart people should vote for him. And in that election [80 percent of counties with a Whole Foods store did vote for him](#) [2], which affirmed the self-identification of people who felt like they were smarter for buying organic.

But there were already serious problems in that self-identification. It was also evident that the most pro-organic groups also showed a high propensity for anti-science beliefs about vaccines, energy and many other things that have benefited the modern world.

How could they be both self-reportedly smarter than those who bought normal food and gave their kids vaccines yet still be so clearly anti-science?

We may have the answer: They actually aren't smarter, and they simply adopt a veil of seeming to be smarter, by embracing science when it matches their ideological beliefs. It provides the veneer of intellectualism to people who think skeptical buzzwords correspond to critical thinking. For example, it has become popular for anti-science people to claim they are not anti-science, they are *anti-corporation*. Oooh, *nuance*. Smart people love that too.

Obviously it fails simple logic, like someone saying they are not anti-iPhone, they are just anti-Apple. Without corporations, there is no science. Academia produces six times as many Ph.D.s as can be employed by taxpayer-funding so most scientists recognize that working at a corporation does not mean less credibility, [even if bizarre IARC panels suggest just that](#) [3]. Corporations do 60 percent of basic science in America and almost 100 percent of applied science. The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2015 went to Omura and Campbell for a parasite medication, but [that really means it went to Merck](#)

[4]. The genetically modified food that was created for the public domain and solely guided by academics -- Golden Rice -- can't get approved because anti-science groups promote fear and doubt and use lawyers to block the regulatory process. Monsanto, meanwhile, has safely fed hundreds of millions of people and billions of animals with their GMOs, all while being vilified by the political science majors who get senior science titles at Natural Resources Defense Council.

Anyone claiming to be anti-corporation instead of anti-science is still anti-poor-people, plain and simple. It is the kind of hypocrisy only available to those lucky enough to be born part of the Agricultural 1 percent, where food is so easy to grow the organic process can be lucrative. They are also, as surveys now show, just plain dumber than scientists and all of the people who accept science, who overwhelmingly accept that food, vaccines and energy are vital aspects of what has made America great.

Of course, one more survey won't be the end of it. People rationalizing this issue in the past have tried to contend that anti-science beliefs don't fall into easy cultural spheres, like drawing a circle around a Whole Foods or looking at voting numbers, and they also used surveys to show it, but in the real world behavior is what counts, not survey results. If you ask people if they are racist or sexist on surveys, almost no one admits to it, but clearly racism and sexism happen. Likewise, if you go to the coast of California, you are going to find a hotbed of anti-science beliefs, while in states like Alabama they have a lot more confidence in evidence and reason. Despite that, Californians will claim to be more evidence-based than those hicks in the South, and that will show up in surveys.

NOTES:

(1) Though there are obviously lots of dumb, rich people just like there are educated hobos. That is the problem with taking an average for everything.

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[1] <https://today.yougov.com/news/2016/04/13/poll-results-science/>

[2] http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1610391640/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=funnierthanyo-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1610391640

[3] <http://acsh.org/news/2016/04/18/whats-ailing-iarc-another-round-of-criticism-ensues/>

[4] <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdf/10.1021/bk-1984-0255.ch001>