

The Salt Lake Tribune

Dismissing science

September 1, 2012

Conservative trust in science has dropped dramatically since the mid-1970s, according to a study by Gordon Gauchat in *American Sociological Review*. Over the same period, liberal high trust in science has remained unchanged.

The Gauchat study supports the theme of Chris Money's New York Times bestselling book, *The Republican War on Science*. Money argues that the political right generated its own version of reality with help from conservative think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute. Conservatives created their own media universe with Fox News and Rush Limbaugh.

In their book *Authoritarianism and Polarization in American Politics*, Marc Hetherington and Jonathan Weiler argue that authoritarians have an intolerance of uncertainty, and scientific conclusions tend to be moderated by uncertainty and probability.

The tea party dismisses the science of global warming, and its members are certain that their opinions are correct. Discussion and compromise become impossible when dealing with such rigidity.

Science has played a major role in shaping the modern world. Look around. The evidence is everywhere. If we turn our back on science, it is bound to have devastating consequences.

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