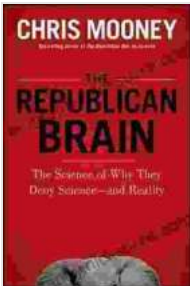


# The Science of Why They Deny Science and Reality



## The Republican Brain: The Science of Why They Deny Science--and Reality by Chris Mooney

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1011 KB  
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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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Print length : 336 pages



In an age of unprecedented scientific progress, it may seem puzzling that some people continue to deny the overwhelming consensus of scientists on issues like climate change, evolution, and the safety of vaccines. This phenomenon, known as science denial, is a complex and multifaceted issue with a variety of causes.

In this article, we will explore the science behind science denial. We will examine the psychological, social, and political factors that contribute to this phenomenon, and discuss the implications of science denial for society.

## The Psychological Factors of Science Denial

One of the most important factors that contribute to science denial is psychological. People are more likely to deny scientific evidence that

contradicts their existing beliefs, values, and identities. This is because science denial can serve as a way to protect our self-concept and maintain our sense of belonging to a particular group.

For example, people who identify as conservatives are more likely to deny climate change, even when presented with overwhelming evidence of its existence. This is because climate change is often seen as a threat to conservative values, such as individualism and free-market capitalism.

Similarly, people who are religious are more likely to deny evolution, even though evolution is a well-supported scientific theory. This is because evolution is often seen as a threat to religious beliefs, such as the belief in a divine creator.

In addition to these group-level factors, there are also individual-level psychological factors that can contribute to science denial. For example, people who are high in need for cognition are more likely to be open to new information and to accept scientific evidence. Conversely, people who are low in need for cognition are more likely to be closed-minded and to reject scientific evidence that contradicts their existing beliefs.

## **The Social Factors of Science Denial**

In addition to psychological factors, social factors can also play a role in science denial. People are more likely to deny scientific evidence if they are surrounded by others who also deny it. This is because social support can make it easier to maintain our beliefs, even when they are not supported by evidence.

For example, people who live in communities where climate change is not widely accepted are more likely to deny climate change themselves. This is because they are surrounded by others who share their beliefs, which makes it easier for them to dismiss the evidence that contradicts those beliefs.

Similarly, people who work in fields where science is not widely respected are more likely to deny scientific evidence. This is because they are surrounded by others who do not value science, which makes it easier for them to dismiss scientific evidence that contradicts their own beliefs.

### **The Political Factors of Science Denial**

Political factors can also play a role in science denial. Politicians and other public figures often use science denial to advance their own agendas. For example, some politicians have denied climate change in order to avoid taking action on this issue. Similarly, some religious leaders have denied evolution in order to maintain their authority over their followers.

Political science denial can have a devastating impact on society. When politicians and other public figures deny scientific evidence, it undermines public trust in science and makes it more difficult to address important issues like climate change and public health.

### **The Implications of Science Denial**

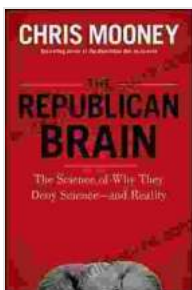
Science denial has a number of negative consequences for society. First, it can lead to poor decision-making. When people deny scientific evidence, they are more likely to make decisions that are not in their best interests. For example, people who deny climate change are more likely to support

policies that will exacerbate climate change, such as increased reliance on fossil fuels.

Second, science denial can lead to social division. When people deny scientific evidence, they are more likely to disagree with others who accept that evidence. This can lead to social conflict and division.

Third, science denial can undermine public trust in science. When people see that scientific evidence is being denied by politicians and other public figures, they are more likely to lose trust in science. This can make it more difficult for scientists to communicate their findings to the public, and it can make it more difficult for the public to make informed decisions about important issues.

Science denial is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon with a variety of causes. Psychological, social, and political factors can all contribute to this phenomenon. Science denial has a number of negative consequences for society, including poor decision-making, social division, and undermined public trust in science. It is important to understand the science behind science denial in order to address this phenomenon and its negative consequences.



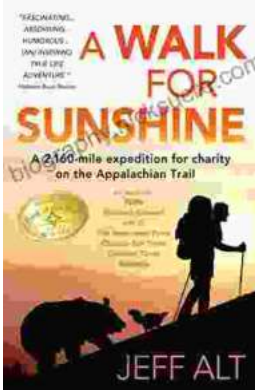
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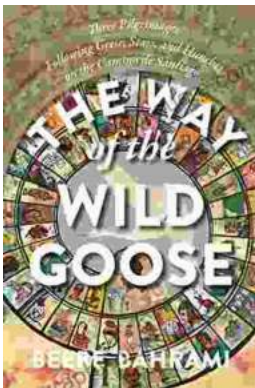
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