



Political Conservatives Less Receptive to Astrology

Study shows those on the far right of the political spectrum more likely to say astrology is 'not at all scientific'

CHICAGO, IL, May 28, 2014 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- Are political conservatives more likely than other members of the U.S. population to believe in astrology?

The surprising answer is no, says law Professor James Lindgren at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. Lindgren is Director of the Demography of Diversity Project at Northwestern. For more than 60 years, political psychologists have assumed that conservatives are more likely to be counted among believers in astrology, he observes. "Indeed, a belief in astrology has been frequently used as a measure of how conservative you are, as if a belief in rule by the stars was a major tenet of conservatism," he said. Conceivably, this perception was helped along when the public discovered that Ronald Reagan, one of the most conservative U.S. Presidents in the last 50 years, was guided in some of the decisions he made by wife Nancy's personal astrologer. But Prof. Lindgren now says linking astrology and conservatism is not supported by the evidence.

A study by the Demography of Diversity Project equates a belief in astrology to how participants responded to this survey question: would you say that astrology is very scientific, sort of scientific or not at all scientific? Those on the far right of the political spectrum were much more likely to say that astrology is "not at all scientific" than their counterparts on the left, Prof. Lindgren reports.

In the Diversity Project study 70 percent of conservative Republicans believed astrology to be "not at all scientific" compared with less than half of all responding Democrats. Prof. Lindgren says a recent report by the National Science Foundation (NSF) used data from the National Opinion Research Center's General Social Survey (GSS) database to demonstrate that Americans are less skeptical of astrology today than they've been in decades. The Demography of Diversity Project also utilized the GSS database to create its report but focused on 2012, which is the last year for which data is available.

The results of the Diversity Project study were broken down by age, gender, education and region. Lindgren says only half the woman in the survey believed astrology was not at all scientific while 60.2 percent of the men did. Those with advanced degrees were much more likely to say astrology is not at all scientific (72.1 percent) compared with those who failed to finish high school (34.4 percent).

As interesting as all this is, to most astrologers whether people believe astrology is scientific or not is a moot point, British astrologer Robert Currey suggests. Currey is science editor for the Astrology News Service (ANS). He says most astrologers don't consider astrology to be scientific in the way many scientists define the term. "So this demographic trend does not correspond to whether people consider astrology to work or to be of value," he said.

The Astrology News Service (ANS) is jointly sponsored by the American Federation of Astrologers (AFA), the Association for Astrological Networking (AFAN), the International Society for Astrological Research (ISAR), the National Council for Geocosmic Research (NCGR), and the Organization for Professional Astrologers (OPA).

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