

A political science blog called the [Monkey Cage](#) (the name is a reference to an irreverent remark by H.L. Mencken) has an interesting post about education and views about climate change. As you would expect, education is positively correlated with a better understanding of the science — but only for liberals. Educated conservatives are no more convinced, and perhaps less convinced, by the science than less educated conservatives. The following figure tells the story:



Education and Views of Climate Change

The reason could be “epistemic closure” — the more data people get, the more they filter the data to support their preexisting views, so the more confident they are in their views. Thus, the tendency of the more educated to be more politically polarized in general. But it’s also possible that there are confounding variables relating to age, religion, or geography that make educated conservatives different from less educated conservatives, and that these within-group differences among conservatives have effects that counterbalance the general trend for educated people to know more about science. In any event, it’s an odd and interesting pattern.