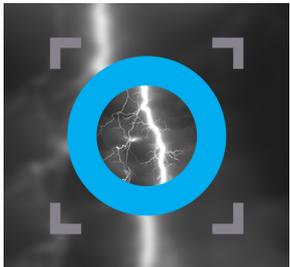




What Canadians Believe: From science and spirituality to conspiracies and the supernatural



pollara
strategic insights

2019

Methodology

- **Methodology/Sample:** Online survey of randomly-selected sample of 2,002 adult (18+) Canadians
- **Field Window:** March 7 to 19, 2019
- **Reliability:**
 - Non-probability samples cannot be assigned a margin of error. *As a comparable guideline, we have provided margins of error for a probability sample of this size.

Region	Number of interviews	Margin of error*
Atlantic Canada	207	± 6.8%
Quebec	300	± 5.7%
Ontario	806	± 3.4%
Manitoba	102	± 9.7%
Saskatchewan	83	± 10.8%
Alberta	251	± 6.2%
British Columbia	253	± 6.2%
Canada	2,002	± 2.2%

Measuring the Beliefs of Canadians

- Pollara Strategic Insights surveyed 2,002 Canadians about their beliefs across a range of serious and not-so-serious subjects that are perennial undercurrents within the zeitgeist or notably popular in today's media and entertainment. The survey covers topics rooted in science, spirituality, physics, conspiracy theories, and the supernatural.
- Throughout the results Canadians exhibit a **very strong allegiance to, and confidence in, science**, whether it be belief in evolution, The Big Bang, climate change, dinosaurs, or the likelihood that artificial intelligence will surpass that of humans.
- Many Canadians are **also spiritual**, expressing belief in a soul and/or a higher power.
- **Despite the prevalence of anti-vaccination activists, flat earth theorists, and zombie fiction in today's headlines and entertainment**, very small proportions of Canadians adhere to these beliefs. Similarly, **few believe in longstanding conspiracy theories** such as the fake moon landing and Elvis being alive.
- Nevertheless, given that Canadians tend to disregard such propositions and generally display a need for evidence, **some of the results may prove surprising** – especially how many Canadians believe in ghosts, dowsing, and psychic powers.

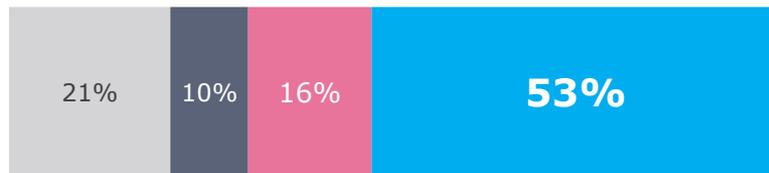
Origins: Three-quarters believe in evolution. Half believe in The Big Bang – although two-in-ten are unsure.

- At least half of Canadians who believe in god(s) or a higher power (62%) and that humans were created by god(s) or a higher power (50%) also believe that humans are the product of evolution.
- Among political supporters, belief in evolution is highest on the left and lowest on the right: NDP voters (89%), Liberal voters (79%), Conservative voters (68%). Also, Conservative (45%) voters are less likely than Liberal (66%) and NDP (62%) voters to believe in The Big Bang.

Humans are the product of evolution – a process of development and change, whereby humans originated from apelike ancestors and developed into anatomically modern humans over a period of approximately 6 million years



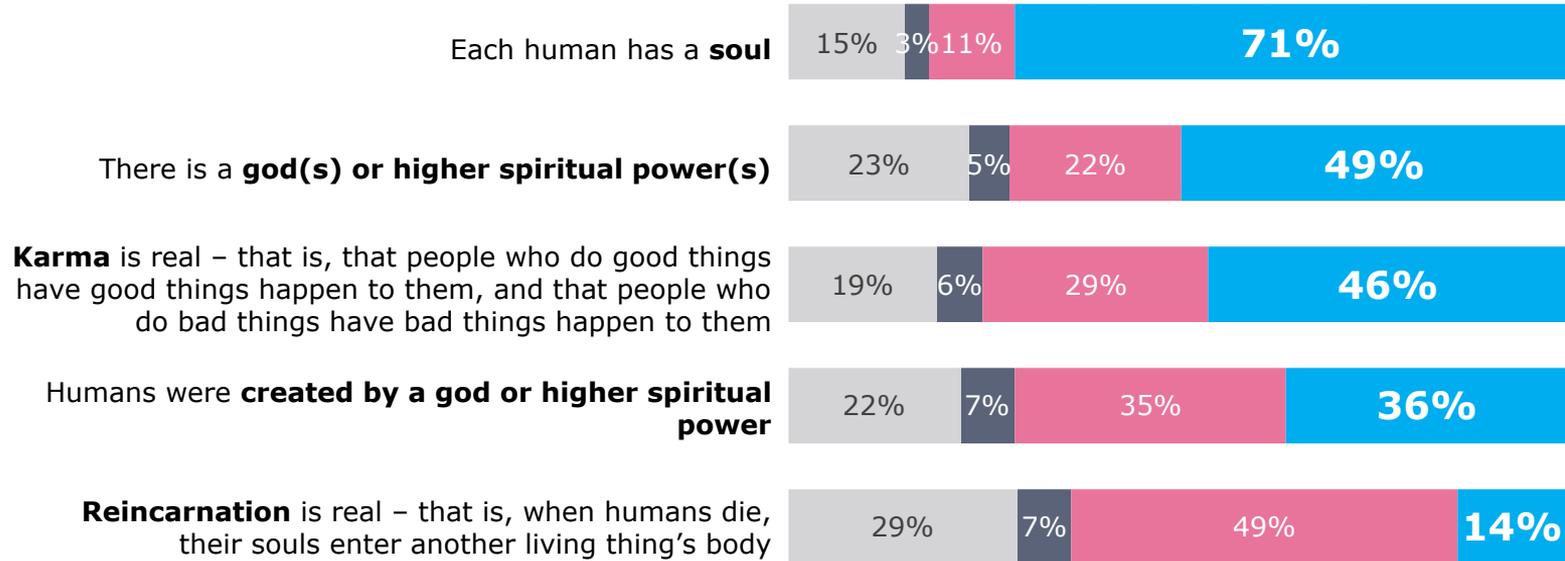
The Big Bang created our universe



■ Don't know/Unsure ■ Unfamiliar/no opinion ■ FALSE ■ TRUE

Spirituality: Almost half believe in a higher power, but notable fewer believe we were created by one

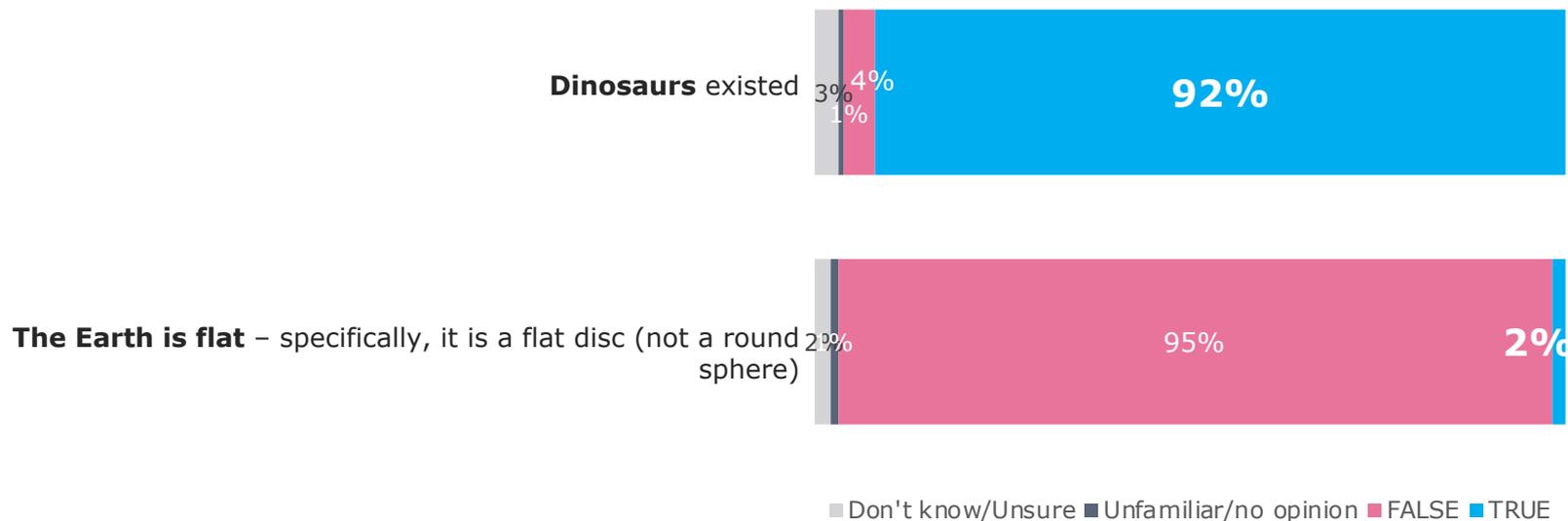
- In our research on spirituality, we have found that three-quarters (74%) of Canadians follow, identify with, or are affiliated with a religion, whereas 49% express a belief in a higher power in this survey. The difference in result may be partially rooted in a difference between membership and belief. Notably, the 22% who express a lack of faith aligns with our findings that 20% Canadians identify as atheist or agnostic.
- Between two-in-ten to a quarter of those who believe in the theory of human evolution (25%) and the Big Bang theory (19%) also believe that humans were created by a god or a higher spiritual power.
- Conservative voters (66%) are more likely than Liberal (47%) and NDP (36%) voters to believe in a god or higher spiritual power.



■ Don't know/Unsure ■ Unfamiliar/no opinion ■ FALSE ■ TRUE

Now, we would like to quickly measure Canadians' beliefs across a range of topics. For each of the following, please indicate if you believe it is true or false.

Earth: Despite recent publicity, just 2% of Canadians believe the planet is flat. Almost all believe dinosaurs existed.



Now, we would like to quickly measure Canadians' beliefs across a range of topics. For each of the following, please indicate if you believe it is true or false.

Climate Change: More than eight-in-ten Canadians believe it is real – regardless of whether it is framed as a consequence of human activity or not

- Among political supporters, current Liberal (94%) and NDP (91%) voters are more likely than Conservative (80%) voters to believe climate change is real – although clear majorities of all three voter segments feel this way. Notably, Liberal (93%) and NDP (95%) voters are far more likely than Conservative (65%) voters to say they believe climate change is real *when accompanied by a statement that it is largely caused by human activity and use of fossil fuels*.

Climate change is real – that is, that a world-wide change in weather and temperature is occurring, resulting in the warming of the Earth’s atmosphere and oceans, rising sea levels, and extreme weather patterns

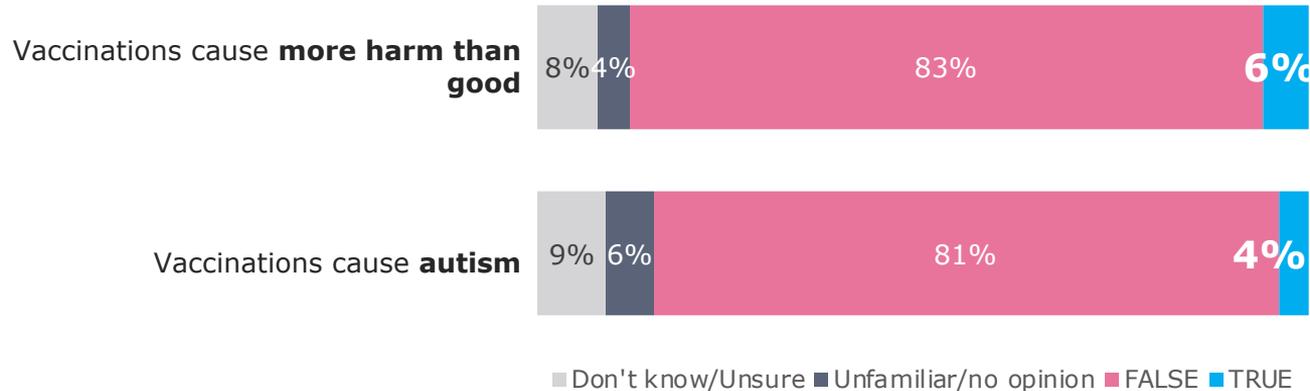


Climate change is real – that is, that a world-wide change in weather and temperature has been occurring – *largely due to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by **human activity** and use of fossil fuels* – resulting in the warming of the Earth’s atmosphere and oceans, rising sea levels, and extreme weather patterns



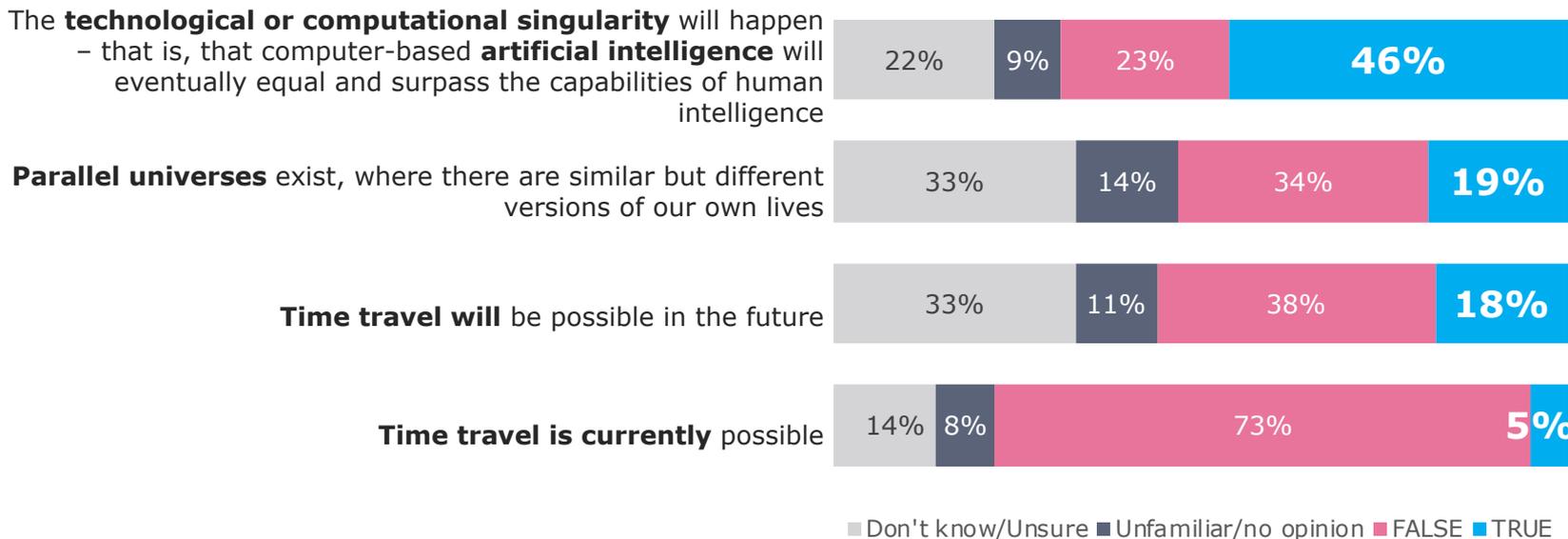
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Vaccinations: Only 6% believe vaccines cause more harm than good – just 4% believe they cause autism.

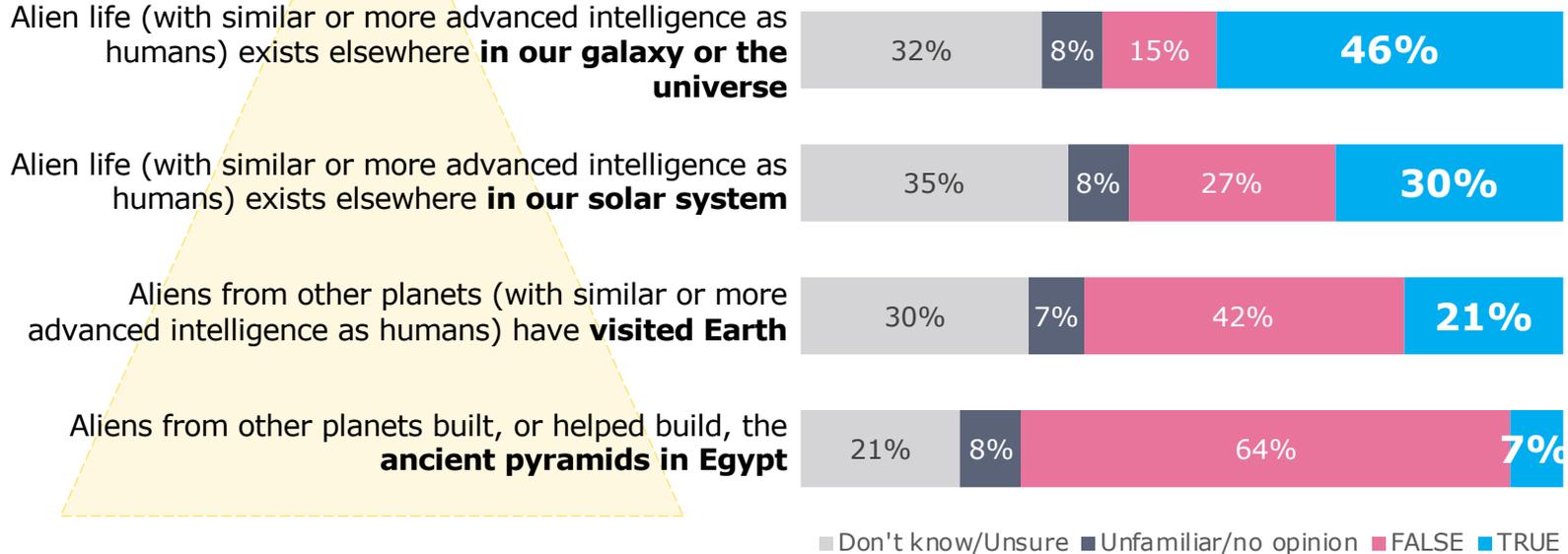


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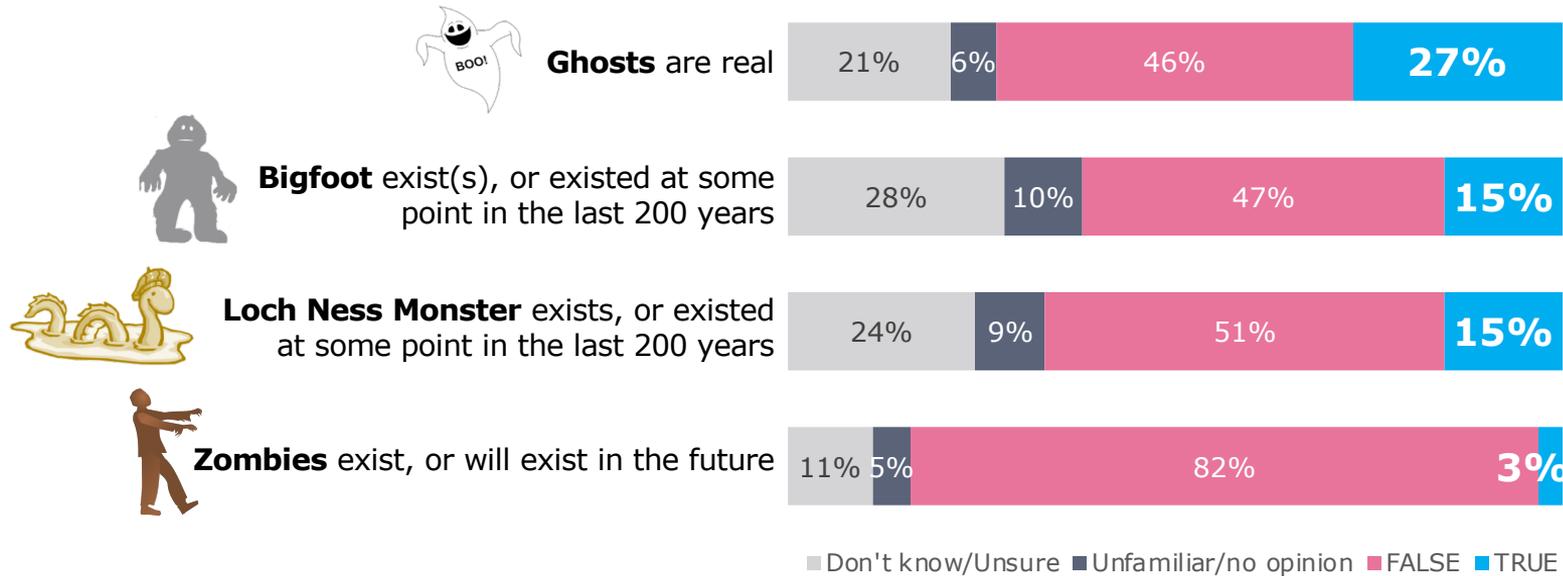
Back to the Future: Almost half believe that AI will eventually surpass human intelligence, whereas two-in-ten accept the concepts of parallel universes and time travel.



Aliens: Almost half believe they are out there, but only 21% believe they've been here – and just 7% believe they helped build the pyramids



Supernatural: A quarter of Canadians believe in ghosts, whereas 15% believe in Bigfoot and Nessie. Despite their prevalence on-screen, just 3% believe in zombies.



Now, we would like to quickly measure Canadians' beliefs across a range of topics. For each of the following, please indicate if you believe it is true or false.

Superpowers: Almost four-in-ten believe in dowsing and between two-in-ten to a quarter believe in various types of advanced mental powers

Some people can find groundwater or objects (metals, gravesites, etc.) through the act of **dowsing, divining, or witching** - that is, holding a Y or L-shaped rod or twig which points downward when held over ground that has the water or other objects beneath it



Some people - often called "**psychics**" - can "see" peoples' past and predict their future



Some people can **speak to spirits and ghosts** of dead people either directly or through seances, Ouija, etc.



Some people can "**read**" **other people's minds** - that is, they can see/hear other people's thoughts



Some people have **telekinetic powers** - that is, they can control and move physical objects with their mind



■ Don't know/Unsure ■ Unfamiliar/no opinion ■ FALSE ■ TRUE



Conspiracies: Just over one-in-ten believe in the Illuminati and the fake moon landing theory, whereas almost no one believes that Tupac and Elvis are alive



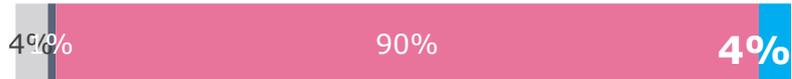
There is a worldwide secret society called the **Illuminati** whose members hold high positions in businesses and governments, and generally run the world and orchestrate world events



The first moon landing of July 20, 1969, when Neil Armstrong took the first human steps on the moon, was fake



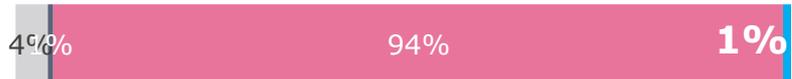
Humans have never landed on the moon



Rapper Tupac Shakur is alive



Singer Elvis Presley is alive



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