



Evolution Questions

Someone I know asserts that human DNA has more in common with mouse and rat DNA than it does with chimpanzee DNA, and concludes that evolution is a failed theory. Could you provide me with information that would allow me to rebut his argument?

I am unaware of any published findings that support your acquaintance's claim with respect to genome sequence similarity. A thorough study of vertebrate evolution was conducted by S. Kumar and S.B. Hedges in 1998 and reported in the scientific journal, Nature. The [title and abstract for the reference](#) are available through PubMed. If you click in the "Nature" button located above the title of the article, you will be taken to the Nature website where you can view and/or download the entire article.

Figure 3 of the Kumar and Hedges article reports a human/mouse divergence time of 40.7 +/- 0.9 million years, and a much shorter human/chimpanzee divergence time of 5.5 +/- 0.2 million years.

You will find an [explanation of the evolutionary process](#) oriented to a general readership at howstuffworks.com. (2/8/05)