So much in life is unpredictable. It is oddly comforting and miraculous to know that we can, in this country, still generate an enormous amount of heat with so little light being shed.

Missouri, Indiana, and New Hampshire are the latest places to have played footsie with bills getting Creationism jammed into public schools for instruction and review, on the same footing as Evolutionary sciences do, as just one more menu choice for the kids.

This stuff's all muddled and mucked up in the UK, too -- but, microscopic signs of hope there. A poll showed a thin majority of Christians surveyed in Britain opposing the teaching of Creationism in the science classroom: 38% agreed it should not be taught, 31% disagreed.

Incredibly, tying the stats at 31% were those who could not locate their own opinions: 24% were undecided, 5% didn't know, 2% would not say. This latter, second-largest group may also be unable to locate items of personal anatomy in a bona fide emergency, but that is pure speculative humor on our part.

Still, this stuff keeps coming up, endlessly so: Push down two idiotic bills about religion being mandatory in public, secular schools, just in time to see three or four more pop up elsewhere. It's the religious version of Whac-a-Mole, with wispy public opinion the occasional mallet and irrepressible superstition the pop-up-again version of moles.

So, we're all stuck, come menus and ordering time: *"What'll it be today folks -- the hand-me-down stories, Yesteryear's Blue Plate Special, topped off with a side of Old-Testament-style, Liquid Smote... or, let's see now, Today's Evolutionary Catch, fresh-off-the-grill, science, slathered in a piquant, fact sauce?"*

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The good news is that Evolution continues to make its random gestures without any of us placing an order. It is constantly experimenting, always trying out something new, to see if it will

work out at all, or perhaps work even better than what was around before. That's all Evolution does: randomizes, hiccups away, is a *tryer-outer* of ideas.

Seems hardly so terrifying a thing as to cause such mayhem and such wretched, panicky fear. But, then, the exposure of Truth to the surrounding air has a weird way of getting some people defensive and crazy -- the response of Denial getting its prehistoric tootsies bumped.

Evolution has not given up on us yet -- that's the up side -- but, you should know, Evolution doesn't much care who or what ends up running this show.

The bad news is that Evolution is not guiding or veering us to some perfect or ultimate ideal. It also acts too slowly by half, It could do with more out-of-the-box thinking and creativity, and besides all that, once again, It doesn't much care who or what ends up running this show.

Evolution tinkers and strolls in winding park lanes, lost in thought, dilly-dallying here and there -- *beaks for the elephants?* -- *polka dots for zebras?* -- *fur for the fishes?*

Evolution is not a shaped explosive charge that continues to hurl us down a specific and mostly-certain path toward the best possible future or landing. It is about possibilities. What on Earth is so intimidating, terrifying, panic-inducing, threatening, and monstrous about that?

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Evolution, we should explain to our jumpy religious friends, is simply a bunch of kids on your lawn, on the side and out front, all summer and winter long, 24-seven, tossing around firecrackers, banging on garbage can lids, shouting back and forth, scaring the cats, making all the dogs bark, shouting for Uncle Harry to lean on the horn driving past -- just to see what might happen, when you're trying to sleep, trying to read.

Evolution can be irritating, playful, and woefully dense -- but it's no cause for all this uproar, no

reason to tramp religion into public schools. There's no reason to be spooked into scratching out our secular and scientific lesson-plans to accommodate a jittery gaggle of sectarian, sanctimonious showboaters.

As superstitions go, it would be bad luck -- along with bad form, bad precedent, bad science.

Points of interest: National Center for Science Foundation - Defending the Teaching of Evolution and Climate Science, http://ncse.com/