Darwinism, Dominance, And Democracy: The Biological Bases Of Authoritarianism

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A neo-Darwinian approach can help make sense of these observations. Humans—social primates—have an inborn bias toward authoritarian life, based on their tendency to engage in dominance behavior and the formation of dominance hierarchies. Reinforcing this bias is an impulse toward obedience. These factors are associated with the propensity of humans to accept authoritarian systems. Nonetheless, the authors argue, conditions of material abundance combined with another human characteristic—indoctrinability—can foster the emergence and maintenance of democracies. Somit and Peterson assert that