

## Are humans still evolving?

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

That human evolution has continued into modern times was, until recently, a mostly theoretical idea debated among experts because there simply was no data. But as an evolutionary biologist, I had my own perspective.

In 2011, I read a study suggesting that small evolutionary changes had taken place among people living as recently as the 19th and 20th centuries. I decided that I had to go see the evidence for myself, so I arranged to visit the tiny Quebec island of Ile aux Coudres in the St. Lawrence River.

The study leader, Emmanuel Milot, had previously worked with long-lived species got him thinking about issues that don't affect animals with shorter lives, like how long it takes for a young bird to reach maturity and begin to reproduce, and how the body begins to break down with old age. It wasn't long before Milot would make the connection between his birds and another long-lived species—humans.

In this he was helped by his colleague and former supervisor Francine Mayer, whom we visited the next morning. Mayer explained how, as a graduate student, she became interested in the demographic and genetic structure of human populations and how they change through time. In the 1960s, she was part of a research group that started to search for isolated communities where records were available on a fairly small population over multiple generations.

**Read full, original post:** [The Rhythm of the Tide](#)