

# Debates between science and religion



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Science studies the physical world which is interpreted through observation, theory, and facts, while religion is based on a person's faith, worship and a sense of purpose within the universe. Although science and religion can collectively exist, both are marginally separated because religion relies on belief without evidence. The "rationalia proposal" seeded by Neil deGrasse Tyson, assumes that every idea or thought must be evaluated for proof in order for it to be made policy. This rationalia was compromised of ten points, almost as if he is creating his own ten commandments, Old Testament. His use of irony as a teaching point can be humors perhaps for his followers and maybe seen as a dig for those who are his opponents.

A smart clause from the list of rationalia that Tyson references to is, "data collecting and experimenting that would be happening all the time in this proposed country, leading the world in discovery (Tyson deGrasse, Neil, 2016)." Science is interwoven in everyday life and as it progresses so does society. For example, medical advances in drug therapy have been applied to fight fatal diseases, leading to medical advancements in the world. This idea of constant scientific discoveries is influenced by strong convictions in finding a solution to an answer. Therefore, to commit to this way of thinking is to require an unwavering belief in the application of scientific laws.

Two other prerequisites that are interestingly recorded on Tyson's rationalia list are in regard to religion and morality. For religion it states, "You are free to practice religion. You would just have a hard time basing policy (Tyson deGrasse, Neil, 2016)." Whereas for morality it reads, "You could create an Office for Morality, where moral codes are proposed and debated (Tyson deGrasse, Neil, 2016)." Many individuals have religious views that are closely

related to their morality when it comes to ethics, and that can be an unfair predisposition. Take the case of U. S foreign policy being biased in this regard when rationalizing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, furthering the discourse between both states. The Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stated in a CBN news interview, “ The task that I have is informed by my understanding of my faith, my belief in Jesus Christ as the savior... (Brody, David, cbnnews. com)” The problem here is; who decides a religious belief to be right or wrong and what direct backing will the office of morality (if ever implemented) give to an individual that has a firm religious belief that is endorsed by their biblical laws?

One detractor that views the “ weight of evidence” as defective, is professor and science columnist Jeffery Guhn. In his response to Tyson in the article, “ A Nation Ruled by Science is a Terrible Idea” Guhn states, “ Science may give us data, but that doesn’t mean that data points to truth- it just means that’s what we currently understand as truth (Guhn, Jefferey slate. com)” To illustrate this point, we must understand that science based on data alone cannot determine right from wrong when making moral decisions. This debate is further argued when ethical issues such as “ pulling the plug” on a person who is in a state of coma is being analyzed by those same scientific minds. How can any evidence determine the life expectancy of a person who is still living?

So where does this leave the debate between science and religion and their relevance in the free world? Stephen Jay Gould attempts to tackle this debate in his archive “ Nonoverlapping Magisteria” where he states, “ science covers facts and theories, while religion questions moral meaning  
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and value (Gould, J. Stephen, blc. arizona. edu)” To clarify, these two entities teach separate views and therefore do not overlap and instead, coexist. Why is it then that one area of study would be more reliable than the other? There are scientific minds that base their faith in physics and mathematical laws believing it will help solve the answer to the universe, and that religion has no role in the matter. However, others view religion as driven by faith and follow religious laws that are believed to place them closer to their higher power. Neither entity can claim dominance over the other because in all fairness, truth is what the believer deems to be true.

It is evident that there are no clear cut winners in this debate, but some will continue the argument. It is important to realize that both the spiritual and natural laws of the universe can teach society about the how(science) and why(religion) of life and all its mysteries. Each body has principles based on a system of reason and faith. Under these circumstances, science and religion can enhance one another and tell a truth that each proponent believes is undeniable.

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