

Dorothy and the tree



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Gonzalez, Sophie Period 6 December 3, 2012 Dorothy and the Tree: A Lesson in Epistemology Stanley Fish discusses how we in society base our lives off of assumptions. Using the example of Dorothy and the tree, Fish is able to show how with our assumptions, we as people categorize others and things into what we believe to be correct. Whether or not we have actually taken the time to figure out if we are right is irrelevant.

He notes that we should just “ keep trying to expand our sense of ‘ us’ as far as we can”, so we can avoid judgments and isolating ourselves from the rest of society. Even though Dorothy realizes her mistake, she doesn’t realize that it is not a failure, but her consciousness assuming the classification of things in the world. Fish later on defines thought as the “ structure that at once enables perception”, meaning that within categories things emerge, limiting perception and nothing can allow one to see everything because that is God’s job.

Fish uses many Bible allusions to create justification for his assertions. He uses Genesis 1: 26, and Paul’s road to Damascus to show that people can be persuaded to change their placement of things in society. Despite all of his valid points, Fish states that it is nearly impossible for one to change just on realizations. He believes it takes practice to accept the fact that there are things that we cannot comprehend because there is no limit on the conceptual trappings of society.