

How is the idea of science explored in the short story, "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment..."

[Science](#)



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The timeless classic “ Dr Heidegger’s Experiment“, written by Nathaniel Hawthorne, explores the idea of science, or even science fiction, in a number of different ways. He uses themes such as the supernatural, and the transformation of old to young, to further investigate the topic of science. Hawthorne also uses the characterisation of Dr Heidegger to also make evident the idea being explored throughout short story.

Hawthorne also uses a number of language forms and features, such as imagery, diction and the dialogue, to enter into a deeper exploration of the topic ‘ science’ Nathaniel Hawthorne cleverly uses the themes of the supernatural, and the transformation of old to young, to further investigate the idea of science, or science fiction. “ Over the central bookcase was a bronze bust of Hippocrates, with which, according to some authorities, Dr. Heidegger was accustomed to hold consultations in all difficult cases of his practice. ” This quote was used to perhaps help bring the element of science fiction into this text.

As Hippocrates was famous for separating religion and superstition from the realm of medicine, it persuades the audience to consider Dr Heidegger as a fan of his work. This automatically links Dr Heidegger to a scientific explorer, always trying to push the boundaries of what is acceptable. This quote is also linked to the supernatural side of the themes. The theme, the transformation of young to old, also helps explore the idea of science into the story. By using a scientific theory, even though it may be considered to be supernatural, is the idea of a fountain of youth.

This automatically persuades the audience into relating the short story to one of the scientific genre. By creating this link between the text and <https://assignbuster.com/how-is-the-idea-of-science-explored-in-the-short-story-dr-heideggers-experiment/>

science, the reader can now fully understand how the author intended the story to be read. The quote, " " That is certainly a very pretty deception," said the doctor's friends; carelessly, however, for they had witnessed greater miracles at a conjurer's show; " pray how was it effected? " " , clearly shows that the doctor's friends were sceptics of the miracle they had just seen. This was, perhaps, used to mimic the world around us, as people will always be sceptics of new scientific theories.

This intelligently helps explore the idea of science. Hawthorne also uses the characterisation of Dr Heidegger to extend the text's exploration into the idea of science. The doctor is portrayed as a cryptic fellow, but that is also part of his charm. At the beginning of the story, the author cleverly creates suspense for the reader, as we don't yet know whether Dr Heidegger is a kind old doctor, or a seriously cynical scientist testing experiments on his friends. By doing this he helps keep the audience interested and wanting more.

As the author uses the main character as a doctor, the reader automatically links the story to a scientific novel, once again to help investigate the package of ' science'. In conclusion, Nathaniel Hawthorne explores the idea of science in his short story, " Dr Heidegger's Experiment", in a number of ways. He cleverly uses the themes of the supernatural, and the transformation of old too young to further explore the topic at hand. Hawthorne also intelligently links the characterisation of Dr Heidegger, to a science background. In turn, this also explores the idea of science.