

Answer the questions
about a

Philosophy



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Book Report/Review, Philosophy Ch. 10 Dr. Sagan begins this chapter with an anecdote about invisible, incorporeal, fire-breathing dragons. Give an example of a pseudoscience or belief in our actual world today that can be analogized to the dragons. You may certainly choose a religious example in your answer, but as always in my class, this is not necessary; there are many pseudoscience in the world today that do not involve theology. How does your example relate to Dr. Sagan's allegory? What is the problem with the fire-breathing dragon hypothesis (i. e. what is the issue that Dr. Sagan is trying to raise with this anecdote?)

An example of a pseudoscience believe which can be analogized to the dragons is that 2012 was expected to be characterized with large-scale disasters which would have proceeded the end of the world. Both, the latter claim and Dr. Sagan's allegory are portray events perceived and advocated for by some specific clique pseudoscientific thinkers either to be exists without necessarily providing publicly credible evidence to support the alleged existence. He demonstrates that psychologists will make several trials to find evidence that best explains their hypothesis (Sagan, p. 161). Dr. Sagan is trying to analyze and investigate the role and significance of scientific research in exposing different dimensions of objects and/or phenomena which experienced in the lives of human beings or in the environment. He is using several examples and case studies to relate the role of psychologists and psychiatric victims.

2. Dr. Sagan discusses in this chapter a book that he had read by Robert Lindner, a psychoanalyst. In the book, Lindner shares a story of a patient that he had tended to, using the name Kirk Allen. Who was Kirk Allen (occupationally)? What was Lindner treating him for? What does this say

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about the relationship between intelligence and susceptibility to delusion?

What ended up happening to Lindner as a result of his treatment of Allen?

What does this say about the relationship between education and experience with psychological diagnosis/treatment and susceptibility to delusion?

Kirk Allen was a brilliant young nuclear physicist who was involved

government research that enabled the country to make nuclear weapons.

Kirk Allen is a pseudonym for the purpose of this book. The physicist had a delusional system which projected mind into the far future where he thought to pilot interstellar spacecraft. Intelligence is a unique and rare characteristic among individuals which enables them to discern life phenomena in very different perspectives not common to really life situations. According to health care practitioners or psychologists, such people are said to be psychotics and this behavior is associated with insanity. Lyndner, the psychologist did not succeed in treating his client but turned out to be a co-conspirator in the delusion of the patient. He rejected the explanations he had to justify and address Allen's story and supported the notion that another life should exist in the far future This live can become actual through simple effort of a will. Education is simply information which transforms the way the mind perceives information and undergoes auto-transformation. Therefore, both the psychotic such as Kirk Allen, the victim first affected by extraterrestrial intelligence and the psychologist and psychiatrist, Lyndner, who is affected are products of the education they received. They were therefore vulnerable to delusion as a result of their exposure to extraterrestrial intelligence (p. 167).

3. Dr. Sagan talks in this chapter about CTA-102. What is CTA-102? What was CTA-102 believed to be at the time that it was originally discovered? What

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evidence did scientists have at the time of CTA-102s which supposedly was interfering with his government research original discovery for their hypothesis? What do we now know CTA-102 to be today? (answer with more than just the word... what IS it? A simple Google search will help here). What is Dr. Sagan's point with regard to scientific discovery and the danger of jumping to premature conclusions?

CTA-102 is said to be a mysterious distant object discovered by the Soviet astronomers in the 1960s. It was said to have been releasing intense radio emission which varying regularly. The astronomers thought that they had this new discovery bore immense powers which would have characterized extraterrestrial civilization. The scientists had found out that CTA-102 produced emissions which like a sine wave, varied regularly with a period of 100 days (p. 167). Also, that there had never before been found. CTA-102, also known today as a distant quasar is believed to be the brightest objects in the universe named after quasi-Stella-objects. These are known to be the most energetic members of a class of objects referred to as galactic nuclei (AGN). The author's point is that discoveries may have alternative explanations which may be consistent with already established physical laws (p. 168).

4. Dr. Sagan talks in this chapter about methods for properly vetting scientific discoveries and minimizing the possibility of error. He alludes to an idea known in the research world as "peer review". What is peer review? (again, Google will be helpful since Dr. Sagan does not specifically use the term). What specific example does Dr. Sagan give for how a discoverer in the field of astronomy might use peer review to properly authenticate findings? (hint: p. 169). Why is peer review so important to the scientific pursuit of

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knowledge? Do researchers in hospitality use peer review?

Peer-review is studying a material with a view of critiquing it so as to ensure it contains only authentic information. Dr. Sagan denounces the claim that the available “ thousands” of cases of soil that disturbed as a result of the UFOs landing there. He says this is not enough evidence to support the claim that aliens in UFOs caused the disturbance since the information was never analyzed and the results recorded in a peer-reviewed journal. Peer-reviewed journals contain authenticated findings or information. For instance, a material that has not been peer-reviewed may not contain sufficient evidence to support a claim, for example that aliens have been found, whereas there – signal. Peer-review is important in pursuit of knowledge since it ensures that discoveries and other information are proven facts supported by the best evidence (P. 169).

5. Toward the end of this chapter, Dr. Sagan makes reference to another very famous " Carl": Carl Gustav Jung. jjkobl? (Yep... Google it). What does Jung have to say about people who believe in the testimony of alleged UFO abductees without any physical and/or testable evidence? What do you think of Jungs opinion on this issue? Is he too harsh in his convictions? Why or why not?

Carl Gustav Jung is a pioneering Psychoanalyst who argued explicitly that UFOs resulted from a kind of projection of the unconscious mind. Jung thought of those who accept testimony at face value as lacking the most elementary knowledge of psychology Lachman, p. 453. They refuse to learn better but naively go on believing presumptions arising from human failings such as that involving the alien abduction case. I support his opinion that UFOs, just as dreams, are a projection of the mind which though must be

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challenged by seeking compelling evidence and not just believing blindly. He is not too harsh because according to critical thinking, evidence helps to differentiate facts and truth from constantly changing claims and falsehood (p. 178).

Works Cited

Sagan, Carl. *The demon-haunted world: science as a candle in the dark*. New York: Random House, 1996. Print.

Lachman, Gary. *Jung the mystic: the esoteric dimensions of Carl Jungs life and teachings : a new biography*. New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2010.