

Science and society

Science



Science and Society Is life fact or fiction? One could look at science and society in the same manner. Meaning that there is an ideal subject, one subject could be the truth and one could be deception. Science, in my opinion, is the truth. For example, science is based on facts and numbers and figures, these never deter from the truth if correctly applied in their own fields of study. The term for society states that it is a group of people who shape their lives in aggregated and patterned ways that distinguish their group from other groups.

Society can take a number of shapes and forms and it is never the same in any place in the world, politics and economy differ yet society is unified as a whole in the larger spectrum. Lewis Thomas (“ Alchemy”), George Orwell (“ What Is Science? ”), Carl Sagan (“ Why We Need to Understand Science”), and Lawrence Krauss (“ School Boards Want to ‘ Teach to the Controversy. ’ What Controversy? ”) have different points of views in each of their understandings of science and society, yet one thing that sticks out in their essays as a related is that society in some way, shape, or form should be informed and open to more knowledge of the sciences.

Carl Sagan’s (“ Why We Need to Understand Science”) was one of my favorite pieces due to the fact that he did in his own opinions and views yet what stuck out in my mind is that he added data and facts into his piece. I believe his piece best describes science as his primary term because he is trying to get people to understand the importance of why society should look at science this way and why. People like numbers because they are either comforting or they make people realize something that was never really thought of before because it wasn’t as solid or tangible in their minds.

He wrote his delved more into the root of the problem with society and science on both aspects. He also concluded with a suggestion to the solution of the problem of our society's lack of knowledge in science. Sagan preaches his point and is very to the point in all aspects of his writing although it wasn't as logical as the other essays I think the emotion he put into his piece was what won me over because of the passion of wanted to get his point across to the readers is usually the same difference of what gets people interested in the knowledge of science.

Lewis Thomas ("Alchemy"), primarily states in his essay that of the work of alchemists. He indicates that their seemingly today's silly work of trying to turn metal into gold or their secret society of alchemist did not go wasted. They actually set a lot of today's sciences up for advancement and great lengths of achievement. Thomas made a clear and concise history of the Alchemists such as the origins being traced back to the ancient time of the Arabic, Latin, and Greek.

He added the meaning of the work that Alchemists were trying to achieve such as there only being one particle in the universe that was the true meaning of existence in all shapes or forms. He also argued to downfalls of the Alchemist such as the time they spent on dead ends in their pursuit of science, all the writing and work they proposed that was written in secretive language, the bans of their work due to it being related to black magic.

Yet, in many positive aspects the Alchemists did pave the way for other sciences to be studied successfully, such as physics or chemistry. This got people interested and helped to spur conversation, debate, and helped bring questions to one another to spur thought. On a very low level this work did

get science in society started yet it was only amongst the scientist community. None of the work can be understood by people of normal or medial knowledge.

Yet again one could argue that among certain interested parties for instance student, the subject of alchemy could be seen as an interesting subject, therefore the student would want to read about alchemist and then possibly see what the fuss is about and want to take a look at what works interested alchemist and would try to learn to study aspects of their work such as physics and chemistry in a broad sense. Thomas does make certain valid points yet the downfall is that this type of science would not be relatable to the masses it is above their heads.

This type of science in society can almost always be only attainable to those in the field of science and only reel in a few of outsiders in society. George Orwell (“ What Is Science? ”), writes an essay of very profound aspects of science. For instance in his piece he defines what science is and also argues the differences between sciences in my opinion for his readers to get both sides of what he is trying to describe so one can form an opinion of their own.

This is the point he is trying to get across to his readers, to be able for one to form his own opinion about science. Therefore they are learning and gain knowledge of the subject of science in some way shape or form. I agree with many facts of Orwell’s piece, for instance he states that anyone educated can describe to you what science may mean to them whether it’s a specific or broad term. Does the knowledge of science make one smarter than the next, not necessarily?

Vice versa in the sense that someone who was less knowledgeable on science then became knowledgeable could have less intelligence about the subject than “ an illiterate peasant”, or that this knowledge may do more harm than good. After this seemingly contradictory argument he contradicts himself more by stating that society should be educated in science to be able to grasp the concept of being able to possess a “ rational, skeptical, experimental habit of mind. This to me means that one should have a firm grasp on the knowledge of science and be able to carry a conversation of facts data and look at science in broad and insightful aspects. I don't think this work is as strong as Carl Sagan's work because he is trying to please the masses and preach about two things at the same time which I feel is untruthful because he is trying to reel in a larger crowd so to speak, which I lost interest in. Lawrence Krauss (“ School Boards Want to ‘ Teach to the Controversy. What Controversy? ”) describes how schools across the board should teach other methods of science in order for one to search for their own truth or the whole truth of their meaning of science. He relates his main subject on religion vs. science and how the church and science is constantly arguing about the fact of who is right and who is wrong about evolution, in depth the Big Bang theory or that every human is genetically related from the first organism.

As interesting as Krauss's point about science were I found his points to more centered only around the church and sciences point of view in the matter, I only dismissed it because it didn't relate to the masses and it was a very limited piece to give readers much knowledge beyond what was stated and I could not personally gather anything out of it for my own purposes

other than the ending quote which if he wrote around this subject I probably would have chosen it, To search thoroughly for the truth involves a searching of souls as well as of spectra. Then again souls are not an indefinite thing, science because it is based on facts and numbers, so in theory this does not make sense and is weaker than Carl Sagan's piece in general because it does not really evoke thought to the reader. I think the most relatable thing between all the pieces was that amongst specific likeminded people there will always be debate and conclusions will be drawn based on their facts and that these certain societies can communicate efficiently with each other. On a larger scale society as a whole should learn more about science in order to attain basic understanding of knowledge of science.

Personally I think that basic understanding of the knowledge of science is attainable and should be learned amongst society because education in America is lacking while others are racing ahead in almost every aspect of education, reading, writing, math, and science. Education should be important to everyone for the simple fact that science has gotten our society to the point it is today. Some aspects may be good and some bad for instance the good may include being able to function in an advanced society with buildings and cars, advancements in medicine allowing humans to live longer and healthier.

Yet again with our advancement we also have made negative aspects for ourselves such as being able to genetically mass produce beef that goes into fast food restaurants all over the country that has made 70% of Americans obese, or the fact that because of our advancement in medicine which allow most humans to live longer or cure them from most ailments,

natural selection has come to a stop and has allowed the weaker of humans to spawn and created other like humans.

I envision that I would prefer to live in a world with science rather than a primitive society, my answer is pure and simple there is nothing profound about it, this world with science is what I am used to and I wouldn't want to change this.

Perhaps in a positive light I would want to change science to further advancement science as we know it, for example finding a cure for cancer, or better yet finding out what in the brain or body creates mental illness or to add or subtract DNA from fetuses in order to create a “ perfect” human one free from disease. I believe my ideas towards science would actually better society because it would benefits them in ways that would make them possibly more interest in science due to the controversy and debates it may cause.