

SCIENCE AND RELIGION
GRADED PAPER 2 REVIEWS
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Paper 1

This review is thoughtfully written and easily accessible to the original author. You have read the paper with some care, and have some substantive insights for the thesis, the content of the arguments, and some of the mechanics of writing.

I believe that you should have been somewhat more assertive with your objections, since the problems that you raised were more critical than you suggested. For example, that *fate* is not a central tenant of Christianity is a critical observation that potentially undermines the foundation of the paper. Trust your author's ability to receive criticism, and be assertively frank.

Grade: A-

Paper 2

Like your other review, this one is well written and thorough. It does, however, lack a clear structure in which various kinds of errors of differing importance can easily be found and identified.

Again, I think you should have been more assertive about the weaknesses of this paper. While you rightly praised some aspects of it, the paper's lack of a clearly identified thesis, as well as its rampant claims without justification, were substantial weaknesses to which the author should have been more forcefully alerted.

Grade: A-

Paper # 1

Modifying the Christian View of Determinism

The concept of this paper is an interesting one, and while the thesis is clear, I think it would be a good idea to modify it to better fit the paper's message. Notice the difference between the title of the paper ~~and~~ and the thesis. Instead of talking about how determinism does not prevent someone from being a Christian, you instead talking about non-conventional interpretations of determinism that fit in with Christianity. For the last sentence in the opening paragraph maybe say "When it comes down to it, however, a Christian scientist does not have to suspend disbelief about determinism in order to properly do his or her job because a nonconventional view of determinism fits into Christian faith," ~~or something to that effect.~~

WC
too conversational
too informal

The strength of your arguments varies at different points in the paper. Some of them are very good and are conveyed well to the reader. ~~On the other hand,~~ some of the arguments are confusing, such as in the third paragraph. The example for ~~for~~ *OK* why some Christians do not need to suspend disbelief about the doctrine of determinism is that if determinism were proved as a fact, some would believe it. If determinism was proven as a fact, then there would be no argument in the first place, and people who didn't change their beliefs would be ignorant. If God was *proven* to exist, then former atheists may accept that belief. However, we would not say that belief in God does not prevent someone from being an atheist.

Due to the nature of this topic, many of the arguments have to be speculative rather than based on fact and the reader would *should* understand this. However, a few speculative ideas were presented in a way that looks like purported fact. For example, you say that "One of the most widely held beliefs in Christianity is that of

fate." While many Christians may believe in this, fate is certainly not one of the most widely held beliefs of Christianity in general. Another issue you may want to consider is your argument in your final paragraph. This is all speculative, but still verb? very valid points. However, if you presented it in a more formal way, instead of saying "what if?" maybe say "it is oxymoron? definitely possible that..." or in some other way. Your arguments are ~~very~~ insightful, and will appear even more impressive if presented in a slightly more formal way.

The flow of the paper is good, and it is structured in a way to build up your evidence before making your main arguments. My main suggestion would be to add a concluding paragraph to really wrap up the paper. The current final paragraph gets the reader thinking, and before you know it, the paper is over. A concluding paragraph may be a nice way to re-summarize all your arguments and add to the paper.

Terms and concepts are defined excellently in the paper. For the main topic, Not true. Definition of determinism is flawed. determinism, you define the idea two separate times and your arguments are much easier to understand as a result.

Language and diction are for the most part ~~very~~ appropriate. I would advise, however to, ~~on some occasions~~, replace informal phrases with more formal ones. Instead of saying "to-the-Book" maybe say the "literal believer category" or something similar. Also, I would consider limiting your use of ellipses (...) again ✓ because sometimes it may appear informal.

On another note, unless I am mistaken, I believe Jesus predicted that Peter (also one of His apostles) not Judas would *deny* him three times. This is minor but

again, unless I am wrong, this change could only improve the credibility of your paper.

Overall, this is a ~~very~~ interesting paper with novel ideas and arguments and a few minor changes will make it even better. 1?

Paper #2: *On Gosse's Good Ideas and Bad Methods*

It is a little hard to identify the thesis in this paper. In the introduction, several different points are made in successive sentences, but it is hard to tell which is the main argument of the paper. After the reader sees the title, pick one he/she expects the thesis to match up to that title, but I was not able to identify it as such. As a suggestion, I would try to unify and concisely state your argument in one sentence or two in order to make it more clear for the reader.

For the arguments of the paper, there is a rational argument behind many of them; however, the evocative language used in presenting the arguments may insult readers. This is especially true in the first few pages of the paper, and readers may be insulted and stop reading before they get to the more neutral latter half of the paper. In the first sentence, Gosse's ideas were "conceived on an outlandish notion" already shows a strong bias you may have against Gosse's ideas. In general, it is a good idea to stay away from appearing that you as the author have any personal feelings on the topic that may impede your ability to properly analyze it.

As for the logic of the paper, there are some sections with very good logic, but some others where the arguments could use some fine-tuning. For example, the second paragraph contains very good arguments. The third paragraph, however, over-exaggerates some arguments and is rather susceptible to counterarguments. Be more specific. rational Gosse's ideas only deal with a small part of science, and only indirectly. Readers of his ideas could draw the conclusion that some portions of scientific research are nullified; however, Gosse does not infer "that science shouldn't even be in practice."

If you tone down some of your statements, and go further with acknowledging possible counterarguments, you will be far more persuasive.

In this topic, it is hard to avoid making speculative arguments and that is understood. However, it would be wise to acknowledge these places in the paper. In the sixth paragraph, for example, you make the argument that without religion, the morality of people would decrease drastically. Since it is hard to prove this statement, try not to present these speculative arguments as facts. Instead of, "crime rates **would** be much higher," maybe try "crime rates could increase noticeably" or the like.

// Emphasize this problem more.

For the majority of the time, the paper flows very well and you transition nicely between paragraphs and arguments. The one exception to this is in the fourth paragraph, where it is a little confusing because the argument drastically shifts at one point. The paragraph starts out talking about the feasibility of a synthesis of religion and science, but in the middle switches over to the effect of religion on people. After reading it a couple times, I understood your train of thought, but it would be much clearer to read if the paragraphs were separated at some point. Also, I would avoid the use of "I" if possible in order to make the work seem more academic and less informal.

| ✓

In the second paragraph, you present one of your trickier arguments. For the most part it deals with inferring and speculation, and is easy to argue against. So, I would recommend that you maybe define "science" to better be able to prove why Gosse nullifies it.

Your word choice and syntax are very good and the paper is very readable. In terms of writing mechanics, I think it is very solid. For argumentative sake however, I would really recommend examining the language that you use in many of your arguments. Before using absolute adjectives such as “completely” and “impossible,” really think if that is technically true. It is much easier to argue points when not dealing in absolutes and thus from a philosophical standpoint, your arguments will be much easier to believe.

Overall, great work, and I’m sure that with a few modifications this paper will turn out to be even better.