

REVIEW # 2

The first sentence, which states the basic information on which you build your argument is unclear to me, specifically, the phrase “improving its quality of life.” First, the “it” refers back to humanity (which is not a living thing), but more importantly, you should define the meaning of the “quality of life.” How does either science or religion make life better? You use this phrase throughout the paper, and it is never clear exactly what you mean. Your thesis relates synthesis, opposition, and partnership, but you don’t define what these are either. While the concept of synthesis is clear, I don’t understand what the difference between opposition and partnership mean. By partnership, do you mean that *some* ideas from both science and religion are combined (isn’t that synthesis?) or that *all* the ideas from both are combined (isn’t that impossible?) or that the two don’t combine but merely coexist (isn’t that opposition?)? Also, the last sentence of the first paragraph starts with “yet,” which implies a future contradiction, but none follows.

Your topic sentence of the second paragraph is that “attempting to synthesize science and religion fails to increase human understanding of the world or improve the quality of life,” but your examples show that a synthesis cannot even successfully exist. If that is your point, state it, don’t lead the reader in the wrong direction.

You also need to explain the first sentence of the third paragraph. When/how does the allowance of the opposition of science and religion increase knowledge and improve the quality of life? You just state that it does allow it and move on even though it is a slightly controversial claim. Perhaps, once you define what improving the quality of life means, this will be clearer; however, you use these terms loosely, which makes your

argument vague. White's quotation at the bottom of page two confused me, especially because you introduce it with "science, too..." I'm not sure how this idea fits with the previous example of stem cell research, but my lack of understanding could stem from the fact that I didn't really understand the quotation itself. Your point that scientific discoveries strengthen religion because it induces the reexamination of faith is interesting insight, but if the "faithful" no longer "blindly accept a particular dogma," what are they now basing their faith on? What changes the way religious people see their beliefs? Is your point that their faith is stronger just because it must defend itself against an opposition?

Your concept of "partnership" does not make sense to me. Is the only difference between partnership and opposition that in opposition people admit that they only believe either science *or* religion, and in a partnership, they only believe one but don't argue with the other side? Are you just advocating a peaceful opposition ("sciences and religion should become allies")? I don't know if that is a practical solution. Your statement that "while science is better able to describe natural phenomenon, religion proves a basic moral code..." is well taken, but your overall advice is just that "discussions remain reasoned and respectful."

Overall, I am a bit unconvinced by your argument but that is may be because I don't understand its foundation. Are you suggesting a partial opposition in which religion stops trying to answer scientific questions and stick to moral issues? That people should stop questioning the relationship between science and religion even though you admit they share a common goal? That seems to be your conclusion, but not a focus of your paper until the last paragraph.

There are several places in this paper where you use words and phrases that do not denote what you mean to say. You write about the quality of life being “increased,” the battle of religion and science as “destructive,” Gosse’s theory “confirms” the scientific age of the earth and “advances” faith while it “diminishes” science and religion as belief systems. The phrase “yet in the end” does not refer to the end of anything, and the cost of conflicts are dealt in human “life and suffering,” but I think you mean death and suffering.

There are also some places your writing could be more concise. Wordy phrases like “appearing to produce less” “at too many points in history” “this in turn played a part in” and “less ethically ambiguous” could be revised for a tighter, stronger paper. In the second paragraph, there are a few inconsistent tenses and a few typos later on. The organization of the paper is clear and assists the progression of your argument. You make some strong points, but clearer definitions upfront would support them better.