

The Harmony and Discord of Religion, Science, and Determinism, Review

Introduction:

The first sentence of your essay is a rather broad and generalized statement. Perhaps you could say instead that the study of religion and science seek to explain reasons for.....

Not all human beings do this. The sentences that begin, “several choose...” and “as long as one...” are generalizations that need some supporting information. You are correct that many scientists do not accept religion and many religious followers do not accept science, but that fact needs more, an example perhaps, to add to your argument. The word “narrow-mindedly” is not a good choice for a few reasons. You are stating that believing in just science or just religion is narrow-minded. Are all non-religious scientists narrow-minded? It is impossible to prove this. You could say instead that some scientists, like Collins, have been able to reconcile science and religion by seeing them as complementary instead of contrasting ideas.

Your point about Determinism is interesting. Yes, not all scientists accept Determinism and thus those who do not can be religious. But, your point implies that those scientists who do not accept Determinism can be religious without any other conflicts. I don't think this is true, as there are many other conflicts that put science and religion at odds.

Paragraph 1:

You repeat “belief” twice in your first sentence. Collins is an excellent example that supports your essay well. However, your summary of him could be better and more specific. A direct quote from his interview would help. The sentence that begins “For Collins,” contains “hand in hand.” This a cliché. Instead you could say science and

religion complement each other and do not clash (not clashing). The rest of this sentence is grammatically incorrect and could be easily reworked. The quotation, “a hint of God’s mind” is good. More quotations from Collins would be great. In the sentence that begins, “President Clinton...” you say “back up.” I think support is a more formal and accurate word choice. Clinton’s support of Collins is an excellent point! You should add another sentence after Clinton’s quotation to conclude better. Just stating the significance of the former president’s support would be a good last sentence.

Paragraph 2:

You do not need the phrase “the reason” at the beginning of the first sentence. The phrase “net to catch God in” should be replaced with “net in which to catch God.” You use many examples in this paragraph that are good evidence, but that don’t exactly connect/ you do not explain their connection. Dawkin’s idea about the existence of God and Russell’s point go well together, but Collins’ idea does not connect. Is your point that humans must prove God’s existence and thus science cannot? Or do you want to argue that science has no way of explaining “human’s free will and sense of morality”? These points are not synonymous, so I think that your argument would be clearer if you removed “and that science has no way of explaining human’s free will and sense of morality,” and left the “net” phrase, as this supports Dawkin’s and Russell’s ideas.

You seem to switch ideas quickly to the “reason so many Christians find science and religion incompatible.” Clearly, this is an important point, but it does not belong in the same paragraph about why science cannot prove God. You should explain Dawkins’, Russell’s, and Collins’ quotations you just mentioned instead of changing ideas so

quickly. You should remove the word “ones” before “who were born into...” because it is unnecessary. Also the phrase “a number” at the beginning of this sentence is vague and fairly inaccurate. Do “a number of the most devout Christians” develop their faith later in life? Collins is the only example we have of this idea, so you don’t want to generalize that it is very common. The phrase “hand in hand” is a cliché and too casual for a paper. Instead, you could say “supporting this idea...”

The concluding sentence of this paragraph could be improved:

“Too narrow of an interpretation of science or religion can cause them to appear disjunctive, but if one remains open-minded to all ideas and understands that Genesis shouldn’t be taken as a literal reading, Collins believes that science and religion can be complementary.”

The phrase “open-minded” seems like it makes sense with your argument, but your examples really are not about open-mindedness. Do you really mean someone being “open minded to ALL ideas”? Also, you haven’t mentioned Genesis once before this sentence. You could weave the contrasting parts of Genesis with the ideas of evolution into your essay so that this idea is supported, because it is a potentially good point. Also, I don’t think you meant to write the last phrase about Collins because it does not fit with “one” or the rest of the sentence.

Paragraph 3:

Your opening sentence is strong. I think you are forgetting that Christianity also believes in an all-mighty God. We see God act against peoples’ free will many, many times in the Bible. In fact, God seems to have complete control over the actions of men. The “sphere”

example about determinism really has nothing to do with your essay. Yes, it helps to explain the idea, but it does not help your essay be more persuasive. The word “basically” is too casual and could be removed. The last sentence of this paragraph is a run-on, but is very interesting and could become a strong argument if developed more. You really need to think about what this paragraph has to do with scientists being religious, though. Try to always connect back to your introduction/ thesis statement. I feel like you are trying to fit points together without actually connecting them with your own ideas.

Paragraph 4:

The phrase “religious folk” is casual and slightly derogative towards religious people. You could remove the phrase “on scientific grounds” because I don’t think it is meaningful. I am confused by this paragraph. You are trying to prove that determinism not only goes against religion (previous paragraph), but that it also is not supported by religion. This is a very good argument, but where is your support? Your examples are valid but do not explain this idea at all. For example, you quote Russell saying that we do not have “any strong reason to believe in determinism.” If he were a Christian, then this quotation would support your argument, but he is not. He is a scientist and does not state that determinism and religion are contrasting.

Conclusion:

Your conclusion seems too short and doesn’t make a concluding point that you haven’t already written. Include more about “the scripture” and how it goes against science if you want to use this in your conclusion/ essay. You also need to be more clear about who

determinism is not consistent with religious views in your essay if you want to end the entire essay with this sentence.