

## The Confusion of Kuhn's Paradigm Theory Review (Paper 2)

### \*\*\*Thesis

- The thesis statement appears to be an explanation as to why Kuhn's book was so confusing. You state that "one explanation is rooted in the books' multitude of ambiguities." Your intent here is clear but the only problem that I have with it is that it seems to be more of a suggestion than a thesis statement. I understand that it is important to not be overly forceful in your essay but you must also be a little more persuasive than this.

### 1. First Paragraph (Introduction)

- The second sentence is approaching the status of a run-on. I suggest cutting it apart into to separate sentences. For example:
  - His concept of progress...for several reasons: it could be applied to many academic fields in addition to science, it was controversial, and it questioned the foundation of scientific progress. But it was also severely misinterpreted by some scientific circles.
- I am concerned about the way in which you state Kuhn's definition of a paradigm. Perhaps you could use the word "commonly" rather than "universally." Also, the phrase "view of a concept" seems unnecessary since the paradigm seems to be a concept in and of itself rather than just a view of a concept. Finally, I also suggest that you mention the temporal factor involved in defining a paradigm since the paradigm only exists for a period of time before it is overturned in a paradigm shift.
- It might be stronger and less awkward to put "however" in front of "many of Kuhn's ideas..." so that the sentence reads:
  - "However, many of Kuhn's ideas were misinterpreted and he was dismayed by the reception of his book."
- Maybe a quote from Kuhn himself, portraying his dismay at the reception of his book, would be stronger than the one you use from Hull. Or you could just lose the part about Kuhn's dismay and keep in the quote from Hull since the basic idea of the sentence seems to be how many people misinterpreted Kuhn's work.

### 2. Second Paragraph (Body)

- This is the strongest paragraph in your essay. I especially like the opening sentence which immediately grabbed my attention; it is clever and concise. I also especially liked the last sentence in this paragraph since it very insightfully noted how Kuhn's vagueness became both a strength and a weakness in his writing.
- However, I think that it would make your argument stronger if you gave reasons as to why physicists are not a community in the social sense to which Kuhn refers. Simply citing a statement from Hull does not justify the statement itself. Giving reasons for this statement would be useful since they would poke holes in Kuhn's logic.
- Also, I would advise changing the description of the "world of scientific theory" to "immense and chaotic" as opposed to "immense, chaotic" simply because of the number of commas used in that sentence. I feel it would ensure that the reader does not become confused as to the structure of the sentence.
- Finally, the use of the word "chaotic" in the last sentence is a little disconcerting since that word denotes something ridden with disorder, which is not necessarily

how Kuhn viewed the world of scientific theory. Perhaps you could find a word that fits in better.

### 3. Third Paragraph (Body)

- You might want to double check this sentence:
  - “In defense of the... example in which **is** compares scientific progress to biological evolution.”
- After you state that Kuhn’s denial that he is a relativist “is not completely convincing,” you might want to introduce a quote from the original text of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* that seems to illustrate his relativistic view. This would only strengthen your argument and weaken his statement.
- I am not entirely sure what you mean when you ask “wouldn’t the goal be the branch?” This is most likely because the image of the tree is confusing in and of itself, which is obviously not your fault. It does serve to illustrate your point about Kuhn’s confusing rhetoric but it does not help to fall into that rhetoric and playing into this example. I would advise you to take another approach to pointing the inconsistencies in the tree example.
- You state that Kuhn uses the image of “sporadic upheavals” to represent scientific revolutions. I don’t know where Kuhn uses this image and I don’t think that “sporadic” is necessarily the right word choice here. The diction seems off only because these revolutions are not “random and pattern less” as the word “sporadic” would suggest. If he actually did use these words, you can point out how this is inconsistent with his writing and if these are just your words, I believe that they need to be revised.

### 4. Fourth Paragraph (conclusion)

- You misspelled the word “structure” in the sentence that begins:
  - “Regardless of the negative attention....”
- I am not clear on what exactly you are insinuating when you state that Kuhn’s biggest fault might be that even a general audience failed to comprehend his work. Where is the proof that even a general audience struggled in comprehending Kuhn? Why would that be his biggest fault? I do not believe it was intention in the first place to appeal to the lowest common denominator.
  - Furthermore, using that quote from Hull immediately after the sentence seems to be attempting to justify the idea that Kuhn’s work was difficult for a general audience. But, the quote merely illustrates how easy it is to misinterpret Kuhn’s words. Therefore, I think that it would be better to change the structure of the conclusion a little bit and use that quote in a place that is more appropriate for its meaning.

Overall, I feel that you have a fairly strong essay. It seems to me that your first body paragraph is the strongest while the following paragraph, which uses the example of the tree, is the one that needs the most work in terms of the strength of the argument. Perhaps you could also make your thesis statement a little bit more forceful and you could tighten up the conclusion a bit as well. I think it’s necessary to change the structure of the conclusion. There were a few choices of diction that you might also want to revise.