

Nature Is Found by Science  
(The Study of What Is)

"Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before the fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses Nature leads or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn contentment and peace of mind since I have resolved at all risks to do this."  
Thomas Huxley

Earlier in this unit we defined science as the study of what is. Below are elaboration's of this statement:

One: "Science is not free, either. It cannot interfere with the course of events" (Skinner, Science and Human Behavior, 1953, p. 446).

Two: Science is a study of obedience, for the scientist must be capable of following what he/she discovers.

Three: Let us say that, as an example, if there were two types of behavior which were being engaged in:

1. scientific behaviors
2. behaviors controlled by statements of authority, tradition, dogma, etc.

When one of these two classes of behavior was reinforced by successful problem solving (adjusting to natural events), that class of behavior would be strengthened and appear more frequently. Those individuals with the most effective techniques would emerge in a predominant position in relation to other individuals. The successful individual may then be in a position, because of success, to influence a number of other people to behave in ways like his/her own. If science is defined as "what is," it is difficult to see how a scientific principle can be defined as ethically or morally bad; it is what is. The following are illustrations of conflicts in the history of science in which attempts were made to restrict findings because they appeared to take away from the dignity of humans:

- \* Darwin's Evolution
- \* Copernicus, notion on the center of the universe
- \* Exploration in the Columbus era
- \* Galileo; notion of the universe

Later, when viewed from hind sight, acceptance of these positions has not decreased the dignity of humans. What is cannot ever be undignified, it can only be what is.

- A. the study of only non-observables
  - B. the changes that take place under observation
  - C. mentalistic concepts
  - D. personal experience
- (B)

27-2 The determination of scientific law is possible only if nature is:

- A. orderly
  - B. chaotic
  - C. capricious
- (A)

One frequently hears "It can't work. Human nature is not that way." The question which is not asked, but must be asked, is "What if people never were to learn these so-called "natural ways." Much of our account of behavior involves putting the cause mysteriously in the organism, because of ignorance or failing to focus on relevant variables.

Science is perpetuated because it completes a task.