

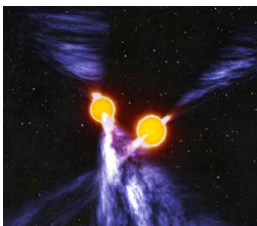
The Spiritual Scientist

An ezine for those who think!

Science And Faith

Question: Isn't scientific knowledge preferable to spiritual knowledge because it doesn't depend on faith?

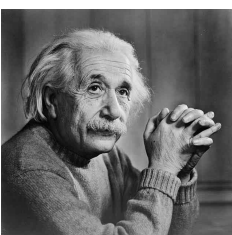
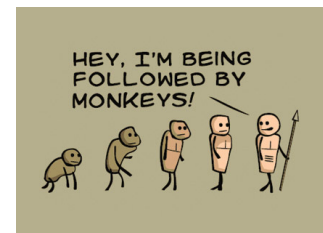
Answer: You will be surprised to know that the whole scientific enterprise is founded in faith – inescapably. Let's see how.



Consider the statement of physicist Gerald't Hooft, "We [physicists] are trying to uncover more of that [the universality of our scientific theories]. It is our belief that there is more." Obviously, "our belief" means "our faith." Scientific research is based on the implicit faith that nature behaves according to laws that can be uncovered by human intelligence. This implicit faith is just an assumption without any actual proof or without even any theoretical possibility of proof. In fact, the behavior of many of the fundamental particles in atomic physics defies description by any scientific laws. Nonetheless, physicists toil on hoping to find out some such laws in the future. To hope for the existence of unseen and unproven things: isn't that what faith is all about?

Moreover, most scientific knowledge is acquired using the inductive method, in which patterns discerned from finite observations are extrapolated into universal laws. The 18th century Scottish philosopher David Hume argued powerfully that the use of induction can never be rationally justified, and his arguments have never been persuasively refuted. Inductive reasoning is thus a fundamental, indispensable article of faith in science.

Further, when scientists propose a specific hypothesis to explain a set of observations, they have faith that their hypothesis is correct and that it will be verified by future observations. Often, even when subsequent observations don't support the hypothesis, they continue to believe it, hoping that future observations will. For example, evolutionists believe that all species have evolved from a common ancestor, but the fossil record doesn't show any evidence of transitional links (intermediate species that are supposed to have existed in the past and that formed the evolutionary link between two existing species). So, some evolutionists claim that evolution occurs too slowly to be seen by the human , and too fast to be seen in the fossil record. Even the most dull-witted person can understand what this claim boils down to: faith – faith despite the absence of supporting evidence.



Far greater than the faith that scientists require in their research is the faith that common people have in the findings of scientists. The extent of unquestioning faith that scientific findings command is seen in the following observation of Einstein: "Tell a man that there are 300 billion stars in the universe, and he'll believe you.... Tell him that a bench has wet paint upon it and he'll have to touch it to be sure."

