Name: Date:
Period:

Warfare: The Natural Sciences and the Advancement of Atheism, Part I

From: Alister McGrath, *The Twilight of Atheism: The Rise and Fall of Disbelief in the Modern World*, Doubleday, 2006. pp.79-111

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1. What are the two "historical vignettes" that are commonly cited as examples of the supposed war between religion and science? Briefly, explain why McGrath thinks that both are ultimately inaccurate ("myths"?).

2. Briefly explain the "three major aspects of the growing cultural acceptance of the sciences throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."

3. Explain the significance and impact of the histories of Draper and White, and how each was ultimately a product of the cultural context in which it was produced.

4. McGrath suggests that Darwin's theory of Evolution was not only significant as an alternative explanation for the existence of life, but as a model through which the relationship between religion and science came to be understood. What is the significance of this observation in terms of (1) how scientific models are applied outside the specific areas in/for which they are developed, and (2) how such application becomes foundational to the way reality is understood regardless of the apparent appropriateness of its applicability.

5. McGrath argues that the specific historical instances in which science and religion appear to have been in conflict are generally, upon closer inspection, better explained as the result of what sorts of factors.

6. McGrath quotes Clifford's famous claim that "it is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence." Explain the significance of Clifford's shipwreck story to this claim, explain why McGrath thinks Clifford's claim is ultimately untenable, and if you are so inclined, take a shot at explaining the significance of the fact that McGrath thinks the claim's power to persuade is ultimately moral, not intellectual.

7. Explain Tennyson's paradox, especially as revealed by the last three lines of the quote from *Ancient Sage*.

8. Why does McGrath think that science is not free from the "vice" of faith as scientists like Dawkins have often argued? How does he use Darwin and Einstein to make his point?

9. Explain William Paley's "Argument from Design" and the relevance of the watch/watchmaker analogy. What did Darwin discover that raised doubts about Paley's argument?