

Science is the Belief in the Ignorance of Experts

Richard Feynman, an educator and a Nobel prize-winner in physics stated that “Science is the belief in the ignorance of experts”. He was referring to consensus science, the modern type of political science which determines policies through the weight of expert consensus. It is not empirical science. Real science subjects itself to scrutiny – in fact it welcomes it.

In context, here’s what Freyman wrote:

*“We have many studies in teaching, for example, in which people make observations and they make lists and they do statistics, but they do not thereby become established science, established knowledge. They are merely an imitative form of science...The result of this pseudoscientific imitation is to produce experts, which many of you are – experts. You teachers who are really teaching children at the bottom of the heap, maybe you can doubt the experts once in a while. Learn from science that you must doubt the experts. As a matter of fact, I can also define science another way: **Science is the belief in the ignorance of experts.**”*¹

Here’s Feynman’s continuing thoughts on the matter.

*“Science alone of all the subjects contains within itself the lesson of the danger of belief in the infallibility of the greatest teachers in the preceding generation...When someone says, “Science teaches such and such”, he is using the word incorrectly. Science doesn’t teach anything; experience teaches it. If they say to you, “Science has shown such and such”, you might ask, “How does science show it? How did the scientists find out? How? What? Where?” It should not be “science has shown” but “this experiment, this effect, has shown”. And you have as much right as anyone else, upon hearing about the experiments—but be patient and listen to all the evidence—to judge whether a sensible conclusion has been arrived at...The experts who are leading you may be wrong...I think we live in an unscientific age in which almost all the buffeting of communications and television-words, books, and so on-are unscientific. As a result, there is a considerable amount of intellectual tyranny in the name of science...Science alone of all the subjects contains within itself the lesson of the danger of belief in the infallibility of the greatest teachers of the preceding generation.”*²

Watch these for more information

VIDEO: “Science Is The Belief In The Ignorance Of The Experts” – www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaFDkX3G2GI

VIDEO: “Richard Feynman on Scientific Method (1964)” – www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KmimDq4cSU

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1 – Richard Feynman (1999) “The Pleasure of Finding Things Out” p:187

2 – Quoted in lemire.me/blog/2020/07/12/science-is-the-belief-in-the-ignorance-of-experts