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**2 Weeks Essay # 4**

It is really impressive how sometimes we have so many different views on things, different perspectives. Each person has a personal view on the world. And it is because of this that it is hard to realize which one of these views is the truth, that is if we can ever realize it. These past two weeks have had various examples on how different perspectives affect everything around us.

One of these examples is the Fire in the Equations dialogue that we had. In this dialogue we could see how people can have different ideas and believe that their idea is the one that is true. On one had we had those who believed that objective truth is real and on the other that no objective truth existed. Both sides were passionate on what they believed.

Another of these examples is in the book The Fire in the Equations, chapter 4. This chapter tells us about the origins of the universe, and it gives us many theories about it. But how do we know which one of these theories is the correct one? Some people believe in one theory, while others in another.

One can also see this in The Copernican Revolution. Before Copernicus had given us his theory, most people based themselves on the Ptolemaic system. But even though they based themselves in the same system, they all believed in different modifications.

In Gödel, Escher, Bach there is another example. In chapter 12 there is an example of a map, one had to draw a map of their own country and them compare it to the maps that others drew of the same country. We tried this exercise in class, we all had to draw a map of Guatemala, with the departments, rivers highways, etcetera. This made me realize that even though we all live in the same country we all have a different perspective of it, we all know different parts of it.

On the over all, this perspective issue reminds me most of all of Difficult Conversations. This book, on the most part, has been giving us examples and giving us tips on how to solve the problems that arise out of the different perspectives of people. So in order to avoid these kinds of problems we must be able to try to understand the other people. We must try and understand their perspectives on things, instead of criticizing them. We should try to understand that all of these perspectives come from somewhere, perhaps something that affected them before, like a past experience. A clear example of this is in chapter 3 of Difficult Conversations between Toby and his wife Eng-An, who are both fighting because they fail to understand each other, and their past experiences.

We can’t expect to understand people right away; it is a process of trial and error. Kind of like the process we had with the rubrics. We built them at the beginning and over time we have been adding or taking some away. The more we experience in dialogue the more we know what we need and where we need to improve. The same can be said with this process of understanding people, but a great way to start this is by suspending assumptions.

In order to suspend assumptions I believe that there is a complication to this: our mind. It can be hard because sometimes (at least in my case) there are occasions in which we know that our opinions are just assumptions, but still we can’t change the way we think and we end up believing our assumptions. I find it extremely interesting how know something is not true and yet we believe it is. This leads me to think about the power of the mind.

How powerful can our mind be? How powerful does this make us? These are some of the things that we discussed in class and shocked me when coming to talk about the mind: How come we don't ever run out of memory space? Will there ever be a limit to how much we can learn, kind of like a USB which has a certain capacity of memory? It is amazing how we can store so much. Another thing is how the mind is powerful enough to make us believe in things that are not there. An example of this is when some of our classmates were trying out Google Nose, and how they actually believe they were smelling something when really it was all a joke. This just shows that we can imagine what we want, and sometimes we are not aware of when we are imagining or if it is real.

Probably we will never know all of these answers to these questions about the mind. Maybe for this we would need to pop-out to another level, in order to see the big picture and be able to understand many of the things we don't.

Seeing the big picture reminds me of another subject that was discussed a lot these last couple of weeks, reductionism versus holism. Reductionism understands all of the small parts, the details in order to understand the big picture. Holism understands the big picture in order to move next to understanding the parts.

I believe this affects societies, because when a group of people is united it can become something much greater that just an individual person. But at the same time each one of us affects the group individually. We have to consider that having just a group of people together, like in a doctor’s waiting room, is not the same thing as having a group of people together with a purpose.

In the end, there is holism in everything and there is also reductionism in everything. And this takes us right back to perspective, it all depends on how you want to look at things, in a holistic way or in a reductionist way, but it doesn't mean that one is right and the other one isn’t.