

# Analysis of Popular Stereotypes

Popular stereotypes frequently present the scientist and the artist as extreme opposites in their pursuit of understanding - the scientist as being objective, disciplined and rational, and the artist as being subjective, impulsive and imaginative. Yet are they really so very different in the ways they look at the world? To what extent do you consider these stereotypes accurate, and to what extent do you consider them distortions of the ways in which the sciences and the arts give us their knowledge?

Is there a difference between an artist and a scientist, except their profession? Are people born to be professors? Have some people a 'rational' brain? Or is it so that the artist have a bigger right brain-half that the scientist? Has an artist a greater ability to express him- or herself? - Is it a genetic question?

One thing is obvious: people are not the same, everyone is individual with individual interests and hobbies. Some like to paint and some like to play with atoms and molecules. But the question remains; Is there a genetic difference between a scientist and an artist?

Undoubtable is that the public opinion of scientists and artists is as two extremists. One as rational, often alone, thinking, and the other as impulsive, 'flower-power' and poetic and philosophical. How come?

I believe that the human brain works in a way that is similar to a computer's way of storing information on a hard disk, or maybe the other way around, in files and directories, different directories for different kinds of information. That is, if we hear about an artist, we categorize him with quite many attributes; impulsive, subjective, imaginative, etc. etc. But then, why do we have these attributes? And more interesting, why is it a general opinion? Is it based on internal preferences, inborn values, or external impressions, gained from others?

When I first read the question above, I realized that this is my idea of normal scientists and artists. But I also understood that this is only a generalization based on the definition of the two professions. First, let me try to define science, taken from Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English; "knowledge about the world, especially based on examination and testing, and on facts that can be proven". So according to this definition, a scientist must find his knowledge after he has done some kind of observation, either it is on a piece of paper or he has seen something. This is the way he draw conclusions and makes proofs, but that does not make every scientists objective, disciplined and rational. This is a generalization based on the way the scientist draws the conclusions.

If this is true and many people still thinks that the stereotypes are true, how can this be? I believe that persons that work a whole life as a science may develop a skill to see the world with a scientist's eyes. He will automatic draw a conclusion from what he uses to work with, based on logical thinking. Let me take an example. Two people are walking in the forest, one scientist and one artist, when they suddenly observe a stone that is hanging in freely in the air. The scientist quickly walks to the stone and starts to feel and measure how big the probability is for this to occur and later try to reconstruct it home in his laboratory. The artist on the other hand starts to think of what kind of material he will use when he later will paint it home in his studio.

