

The public actually gets a discussion of core values of science!

[Topic #3](#) in our [topic model](#) of WE1S's [Collection21](#) (consisting of 28,957 articles in top U.S. newspapers mentioning the “humanities” or “science[s]”) is the rare exception in how contemporary science is presented in the media. It actually discusses the core paradigms and values of science.

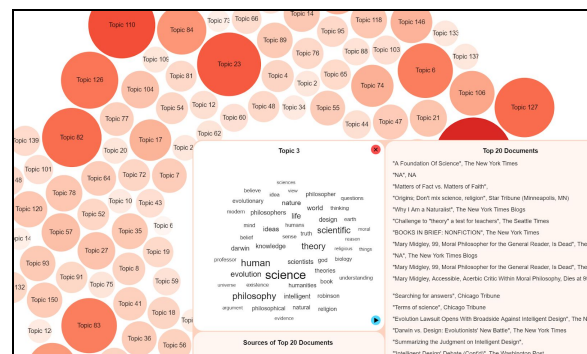
Often, media discussion of science hides agreements and disagreements about the underlying basis of science--e.g., about the nature or value of empirical observation, experimentation, validation, and theorization. It veils it behind an opaque “data-speak.” (See our key finding [KF-5-5](#) on this phenomenon.) In data-speak, it's as if just using words like *studies*, *reports*, *findings*, *surveys*, or *averages*, alongside descriptors like *increasing* or *decreasing*, is the same as talking about what science is and why we value or question it.

Topic #3 thus stands out. It is a moderately important topic (proportional weight of .5) that we label “science philosophy and belief.” Articles associated with it say things like: *Naturalism is the philosophical theory that treats science as our most reliable source of knowledge... or [legislators] do not seem to understand the differences among the subjects of science, philosophy and religion....* (See articles [a](#), [b](#))

This makes topic #3 one of the most important in our model for understanding how core understandings of science bridge to other areas of public concern. In articles touching on this topic, scientific approaches to reality, truth, evidence, and meaning join up with or collide against other meaningful

paradigms of truth and belief--ones in which the humanities, along with politics and other perspectives, also have a stake. Topic #3 makes visible knowledge and value propositions of science relative to those of other approaches to life, nature, humanity, and truth.

Topics such as #3 may be the key to joining the humanities and science in public awareness. This is the kind of discussion about science that the public can see through multiple lenses of judgement. It is an overlap zone where what C. P. Snow famously called the “[two cultures](#)” of science and humanities can trade views of what is true and why it matters.



Topic #3 “science philosophy and belief” viewed in [TopicBubbles](#).

Document collection studied: [Collection21](#): U.S. Top Newspapers, 2000-2018 (articles mentioning humanities or science)
Topic model of this collection: [150 topics](#)
Interesting sample topics in the model: [#3](#)
Representative articles: [a](#), [b](#).
Evidentiary documentation for this key finding: [WE1S report](#)