

Chapter 3
Topic 3 Sociology and science
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Activity: Discussion
The case of Dr. Velikovsky

Learning objectives

At the end of this activity, you should be able to:

- Illustrate features of scientific paradigms using the Velikovsky affair.
- Explain how the scientific community defends its paradigm against challenges.

'Worlds in Collision' was the first book written by Immanuel Velikovsky and was first published in April 1950, topping the best-seller charts for eleven weeks and remaining in the top ten for twenty-seven straight weeks. Despite this popularity, overwhelming rejection of Velikovsky's thesis by the scientific community led his publishers, Macmillan, to stop publishing it.

In groups of three or four, carry out the following tasks:

- A. Read Box 1.4 on *The case of Dr. Velikovsky* and the section on *Science as a closed system* in the Topic on Ideology and Science in Chapter 1 of your textbook (page 61).
- B. What features of scientific paradigms does the Velikovsky case illustrate?

*please note that this activity has been amended from a Media activity to a Discussion activity because the associated YouTube video clip is no longer available.