

Logic

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Sample of Content:

The philosophical argument about how we know things -- and an even deeper look into it.

Content:

Concerning the rules of Logic and Reason the evidence of evidence and proof of the system for logical and reasonable belief.

In a recent conversation with a companion of mine, we discussed ethics and morality. My opposition made the claim that anything that was done for the sole sake of pleasure was immoral, on the grounds that it -- inevitably -- would lead to unhappiness. Since I am a Free Lover, and whole-heartedly believing that consensual and promiscuous can be

happy and desirable, I disagreed with his thesis. I searched for contradictions in his theory, asking if he agreed that buying a music CD, for example, solely for pleasure was immoral, or getting intoxicated. However, I decided to ignore contradictions, because someone surely can be entirely self-contained in their theory, and still be fallacious in their assertions. I asked them, instead, why they believed that pleasure (for the sole sake of pleasure) was immoral. They told me that it was their thesis, and that it was axiomatic. By this, they meant that it was unnecessary for them to prove such a thesis true. After stifling my laughter, I told them that nothing could be accepted as true without evidence. They then asked me something I could not answer, and I was knowing that I could not answer. They asked me, "How do you know, then, that your method for knowing, such as requiring evidence, is true?" Their statement here was not entirely false.

After all, to take something as truth, I was using the system of understanding and knowledge called Reason, as well as Logic. If something was consistent, and if something had evidence for it, I would take it into consideration as truth. But this system, this system of gathering evidence and examining claims, how did I know that this would lead me to truth? I am sure that the commoner would exclaim that such a system yields good results. At least, this is what I have been believing and claiming for some years: I believe in the ways of Reason and Logic, demonstration and observation, because such ways of knowledge have always been capable of demonstrating truth. However, how do we know that this is truth? For example, if we were explorers, and it was a rumor that inside every snow covered mountain, it is colored orange, and we were to discover -- by drilling -- that it was indeed orange on every snow covered mountain, how would we know that this is true? It may certainly seem absurd to even ask this question, but how do we know that our minds -- the tools used specifically for thought -- are not dilluted? It could be caused by drug, or perhaps a chemical in the air in close proximity to mountains that penetrates even the most powerful lead suit, or it could be our passions altered our own vision as we desired to see the color orange. There are so many explanations, but those few previously mentioned are small, detectable possibilities.

What if, for example, a Solipsism was true? Solipsism is the belief that the believer of such a theory is the only conscious being in the Universe, and all of the physical matter surrounding them was simply created by their imagination. There is the possibility that we are in a dream that this life of ours is simply a dream. What if, upon discovering this orange material in the snow-covered mountain, it was truly only our imagination in our dream that produced such an orange material? But even beyond that, how can be sure that our own physical reality is not a dream? Or perhaps a state similar to a coma? Of course, the idea of a dream or a coma is quite prevalent in our Universe. Maybe, we are all playing a futuristic game and we take control of bodies to play, and our memories were destroyed before it started, to prevent us from remembering that it is a game.

There are a great deal of possibilities of what this world could be. However, this may be going off on a tangent. By explaining what a Solipsism is, I can further demonstrate the claim of the system of Reason and Logic being unevidenced themselves. After all, though it could be some alteration from an outside force that makes us think we see orange on the inside of the snow-covered mountain, but it could just be purple, blue, red, or black. What if we heard another rumor that snow at the top of snow-covered mountains tastes like ice cream, and then we can verifiably demonstrate this? And after confirming rumor after rumor, we might make the conclusion that rumors are indefinitely true, and we can hold that this is true based on all of the previous rumors holding their worth. And what if one day someone were to come up to us and say, "How do you know that every rumor is true?" We could simply and quite satisfactorily (at least to us) say, "Well, every rumor has previously been true. They have demonstrated quite clearly the truth." And then this person could tell us what exactly is being told to followers of Reason and Logic, "But as you examined for proof of every rumor, for demonstrable evidence that rumors are true, you still fall victim to the same problem. How do you know that searching for evidence and proof is enough to claim that your theory is true? How do you know that evidence and proof hold something to be true? You may find the results you are looking for, but finding and judging results is also judging on Reason and Logic, judging on evidence and proof. You may find orange on the inside of snow-covered mountains, but you are basing that on your vision, an

evidence of itself. And as you looked at the orange color, you saw the orange color, but what have you to say that your vision is correct? The fact that it has never failed you before? Perhaps it always has failed you before. And even if it did, how would you know otherwise? For when you see something orange, you are basing that on your vision, and if your vision is wrong, there is no way to check that. You may rely on your other senses, but they also could be wrong, and there would be no way to check them.... so, by what right can you honestly say that following rumors is true, when you base that on evidence, when such evidence is judged solely on evidence, and when there is nothing to support that evidence can obtain truth?"

Before proceeding with answering such arguments, I should make a few points clear. Nowhere in this essay do I wish to relieve the reader's mind that this life is possibly a dream. Such a worry, concern, or (better put) possibility may never be relieved, no matter how far sciences of any type advance. There is always the chance that we are living a fake life, still in a dream, or a simulation, or something that we could not possibly detect. This is something I will not address, though I will later reflect on. What I am going to address is the claim, or the individuals making the claim, that evidence, Reason, demonstration, Logic, and observation -- all methods of knowledge which have been used by every holder of the scientific ethic for all of history -- I am going to address those who have made the claim that Reason and Logic are unsupported in themselves as manners of collecting truth.

First, it is necessary that I evaluate exactly what is implied by such terms as Reason and Logic. Logic can be defined as a method of investigation based on three principles. The first principle of Logic is the principle of Non-Contradiction. This concept of Non-Contradiction states that -- for something to be logical -- it must not contradict itself. By this, I mean that it cannot be A, and then be the opposite of A. An example of this would be someone who is married, but also unmarried. This would be a contradiction. If someone is married, then they are not unmarried, and if someone is unmarried, then they are not married. This brings us to the second principle of Logic: the principle of Excluded Middle. Something is either A, or it is not A. An example of this would be that someone is either married, or they are not married. The third principle of Logic is rather simple it is the principle of Identity. It means that A is A and B is B. A human is a human and a home is a home. Reason differs slightly from Logic. The rules of Logic, as easily observed, are used in describing not the possibility of something being true, but in allowing the possibility. By the rules of Logic, it is impossible for a married bachelor or a square circle to exist, as such things break the laws of reality and cannot possibly exist.

Reason differs from Logic: it helps us understand the actual possibility of something being true, once such a possibility has been allowed. Reason is based on three things: (1) self-consistency, or agreement with the rules of Logic, (2) consistency with previous facts, (3) evidence. As to the first principle of Reason, self consistency, it simply means that for something to be reasonable, it must first be self-consistent and abide by the rules of Logic (as previously discussed). As to the second principle of Reason, consistency with previous facts, this means that something cannot be true that contradicts other proven knowledge. An example would be if someone discovered that the world was flat, long after it was proven that the world was round. This does not mean that someone cannot disprove previously supported ideas, but that two contradictory facts cannot exist. The last part of Reason is evidence: the proof, or things which lead us to believe that something is true. This can occur in any number of forms. For a crime scene, it may be forensic evidence, finger prints, foot prints, or an item used to commit the crime. For history, it may be records, ancient texts, or geography. Any previously established knowledge, such as a finger print, that can be used in conjunction with other established knowledge to lead to a logical conclusion -- these forms of established knowledge are evidence.

I understand that there are others who may disagree with my defining of the principles of Logic or Reason, but the definition of these ideas that I have offered shall be the one

used for the use of this paper. I doubt, however, that the idea of Logic or Reason -- as others perceive of it -- would differ greatly from how I defined it in the previous two paragraphs. However, now that I have defined Logic and Reason with objective standards, now I can go back to the original question of the evidence of Logic and Reason.

If someone were to ask me, "What is your evidence of evidence? By what means do you claim that Logic and Reason are accurate methods of obtaining truth? And, by identifying facts and results, these means of detecting the validity of Logic and Reason are based on Logic and Reason." An example of this would be if scientists were examining ashes they found near a lake area, and they claimed that such ashes were the result of magma. And, along with these scientists examining ash, there were geologists that examined surrounding mountains and made the conclusion that a volcano erupted at least 10,000 years ago, and that it was definitely very possible that it would erupt again. From these evidences, we might conclude that there is indeed a volcano to be erupting. By using evidence and Reason, we made this deduction. However, once the volcano erupts, and we observe this, we then discover that what evidence and Reason have told us was true. Yet, when we observe these results, and we see the volcano erupt, we are still relying on evidence. We are still relying on the fact that our eyes are not lying to us as we see the volcano erupt. We are still basely our observations on Reason and evidence -- our senses provide to us the proof that such results are the actual results. So, we are relying on proof, which is based on the validity of Reason and Logic, to prove that Reason and Logic are true -- a seemingly unreasonable and illogical deduction.

I do not believe right now, though, that I can honestly defend the position that Reason or Logic are, by their nature, axiomatic, or self-proven. I am not going to offer reasons or evidences as to why Reason or Logic should be trusted when their proofs are also based on Reason or Logic. The only response I can offer, though, to those who make the argument that we cannot trust Reason or Logic is that -- by using the spoken language, by using vocal chords to produce sound and words, by communicating, expressing ideas and receiving ideas -- by making an actual argument against Reason and Logic, an individual is thus relying on Reason and Logic. They are expecting that, as they look at the person they are arguing with, their eyes are not lying to them. They are expecting that, as they speak with the person they are arguing with, their ears are not lying to them when they hear the arguments of their opponent. They are using their sensory perception -- a very Reason-based method of obtaining knowledge -- and thus, the individual who is arguing against Reason is making their claims against Reason by using sensory perception, which is (in itself), one of the very vital institutions of Reason. It is, in a way, a type of hypocrisy. As to claim that Reason is inaccurate is to rely on the very principles of Reason to make that statement, as one is expecting that their senses are not lying to them when they make that statement. In fact, to make any statement or any claim, is to rely on sensory perception (thus, also Reason). When you hear or see something, there is the possibility of dilluted senses, but by relying on your senses, you are relying on evidence and proof. So, if one is to make the statement that Reason (or sensory perception) is inaccurate, they are hypocritical by default, as to make any statement is to rely on the principle of sensory perception, and thus the idea of Reason.

I understand how it may seem like an annoying, almost irrelevant detail to point out the contradiction in denying Reason. However, though a detail, I do think it is vitally important to the discussion of Logic and Reason.

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For Life,

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