

Epicurean substitute for prayer

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 12, 2022 at 2:36 PM

[Quote from Martin](#)

Epicurean non-belief creed

First draft:

I do not have any beliefs.

I know some stuff.

I know that some of my knowledge may be wrong.

I know that there is a lot more stuff which I do not know.

I know that there is stuff of which I do not even know that I do not know of it.

This very partial knowledge does not compel me to any belief, because so far, I have acquired any knowledge needed to enable a pleasurable life, and I am confident to keep this attitude until death terminates my existence.

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Possible re-phrasing:

Epicurean Creed

Knowledge and faith in that knowledge must be backed by observation by the senses (or as augmented by trustworthy tools which can accurately take measurements).

And if someone else is making the observations we must have adequate trust that they know how to correctly make observations. The correct way to make observations is: 1) to make sure that we are not confusing our observations with any opinions about what we wish to be true and so we must have the ability to separate our observations from our opinions 2) we make sure we have gathered enough evidence before drawing a conclusion. When making conclusions: 1) we understand that correlation does not imply causation 2) we cannot put our faith in something unless we know that the observations were correct and that the conclusion drawn is sound.

I think this is worthwhile to do, and this may still need adjustment or more added.

Quote

We've all been told that correlation does not imply causation. Yet many business leaders, elected officials, and media outlets still make causal claims based on misleading correlations. These claims are too often unscrutinized, amplified, and mistakenly used to guide decisions.

Examples abound: Consider a recent health study that set out to understand whether taking baths can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. The analysis found that people who took baths regularly were less likely to have cardiovascular disease or suffer strokes. The authors conclude that the data suggests "a beneficial effect" of baths. Without a controlled experiment, or a natural experiment, one in which subjects are chosen randomly and without variable manipulation, it's hard to know whether this relationship is causal. For example, it's possible that regular bath takers are generally less stressed and have more free time to relax, which could be the real reason they have lower rates of heart disease. Still, these findings were widely circulated, with headlines like, "Taking a bath isn't just relaxing. It could also be good for your heart."

A large body of research in behavioral economics and psychology has highlighted systematic mistakes we can make when looking at data. We tend to seek evidence that confirms our preconceived notions and ignore data that might go against our hypotheses. We neglect important aspects of the way that data was generated. More broadly, it's easy to focus on the data in front of you, even when the most important data is missing. As Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman has said, it can be as if "what you see is all there is."

This can lead to mistakes and avoidable disasters, whether it's an individual, a company, or a government that's making the decision. The world is increasingly filled with data, and we are regularly bombarded with facts and figures. We must learn to analyze data and assess causal claims — a skill that is increasingly important for business and government leaders.

<https://hbr.org/2021/11/leader...-with-causation>