

Tactical Question for the Group Re Terminology In Discussing Reason and Logic

Post by "Cassius" of January 21, 2021 at 8:04 PM

[Quote from Elayne](#)

You seem to want explanations which appeal to those with less education or intelligence, whether those explanations are correct or not. But a sturdy philosophy should not repel scientists who note inaccuracies or cling to conclusions that could result in less educated people feeling threatened by published reports about new observations.

This, combined with the nearby and ongoing discussion of the mind-blowing Parmenides assertions, reminds me that I have always identified with this attitude from Thomas Jefferson's letter to Peter Carr. And I have to agree with Jefferson - I would much rather live my life in community of ploughmen than a community of Parmenides fans, and I do think the issue is the "artificial" nature of the professors' rules. Which is not to say that the ploughman doesn't have rules of his own, but that he finds them located in things that are sensible to him. All of this hark's back to Joshua's video early in the thread about Lincoln basing his reasoning on eternal forms. It still seems to me that it is usually not flaws in the reasoning once started, but flaws in the starting point, that seem to be the issue:

Quote

Moral Philosophy. I think it lost time to attend lectures on this branch. He who made us would have been a pitiful bungler, if he had made the rules of our moral conduct a matter of science. For one man of science, there are thousands who are not. What would have become of them? Man was destined for society. His morality, therefore, was to be formed to this object. He was endowed with a sense of right and wrong, merely relative to this. This sense is as much a part of his Nature, as the sense of hearing, seeing, feeling; it is the true foundation of morality, and not the [beautiful], truth, &c., as fanciful writers have imagined. The moral sense, or conscience, is as much a part of man as his leg or arm. It is given to all human beings in a stronger or weaker degree, as force of members is given them in a greater or less degree. It may be strengthened by exercise, as may any particular limb of the body. This sense is submitted, indeed, in some degree, to the guidance of reason; but it is a small stock which is required for this: even a less one than what we call common sense. State a moral case to a ploughman and a professor. The former will decide it as well, & often better than the latter, because he has not been led astray by artificial rules. In this branch, therefore,

read good books, because they will encourage, as well as direct your feelings. The writings of Sterne, particularly, form the best course of morality that ever was written. Besides these, read the books mentioned in the enclosed paper; and, above all things, lose no occasion of exercising your dispositions to be grateful, to be generous, to be charitable, to be humane, to be true, just, firm, orderly, courageous, &c. Consider every act of this kind, as an exercise which will strengthen your moral faculties & increase your worth.