

The Dangers of Misdirected Increase of Knowledge

Post by "Susan Hill" of October 12, 2020 at 11:17 AM

Thank you for returning to this, Cassius. I agree we do not need or want to make topics off-limits, and I understand the arguments against complete skepticism.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

- we ought to be able to articulate, even if the precise imposture of quantum woo escapes us, why it is we are confident that the whole thing is a lie and an impossibility.

I am thinking that the general description of the answer is going to involve affirming how the senses (the three legs of the canon, actually) are really what the meaning of "truth" and "reality" is all about to us, and that any impactful claims which cannot be validated using that method is in fact, for us, a "lie and an impossibility" and to be treated as such. I think also that this is closely related to the direct argument in Lucretius that he who asserts that knowledge is impossible is in a way "upside down" and has to be rejected out of hand.

I think this is where I am getting stuck, and even anxious!

I feel acutely aware of serious limitations in human senses and perceptions. We barely even know our own psyches, since so much of our mind is subconscious, and our inability to hold great quantities of information in full consciousness at one time, makes it impossible to form certain connections or calculations (like a computer with limited RAM).

As for sense perceptions being the test of truth, these perceptions are designed to measure only very limited spectrums of sensory information. Like Martin said, there is verifiably something very unlike classical physics going on in quantum mechanics. Now, Roger Penrose would say that the woo factor becomes a problem when you extrapolate anything from the quantum level to the macro level, but that we are still missing a huge piece of the puzzle in interpreting why classical physics breaks down at the quantum level. Do we not have to admit to a little agnosticism, therefore? It is like we have found in the quantum world, a smoking gun, that demonstrates that we simply do not have the big picture. Furthermore, we might not even have the computational power in our heads to see it.

What do you think? Perhaps it will just become more clear to me as I keep reading.