General Identification of the Argument in "On Methods of Inference"

Post by “Elayne” of October 28, 2020 at 11:04 PM

> Quote from Cassius
> I think that's really the issue here, that of grasping a workable understanding of the issues involved that can be understood by a normal person and applied in real life -- because if all we come up with is a hugely complicated formula with a lot of variables, our result isn't usable in real life, and we are left back with a "faith" issue of how to pick those scientists whose methods we don't understand, but whom we decide to trust.

I think a quote commonly attributed to Einstein but which has an unknown source is relevant: everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler. Part of our difficulty showing modern humans that the universe is material is that so many people lack adequate science and math education. To get the evidence they need, now that we know more, people are going to need to put in some effort. Fortunately, there are many excellent popular physics books out there, very readable, such as Vic Stenger's work.

To try and reassure people with explanations we know are outdated and not accurate is a bad idea, because it erodes trust and leaves them with no good arguments against supernaturalists. Giving people reassuring sounding but incorrect information is no better than false religion. It leaves them open to believing in things like ESP type images of gods and so on.

People who are not able or willing to learn some physics are likely not going to be able to withstand supernaturalists anyway, I suspect, because a savvy supernaturalist can give arguments against the outdated details in Epicurean philosophy and cause the person to lose confidence. But that is a hypothesis which could be tested-- what approach provides the most resistance to supernatural fears and to further incorrect ideas about material reality? What inoculates people against woo that could backfire on their pleasure? That's a social science question to study-- not something to guess at with logic. Sometimes the answers to that kind of question are surprising!