
Subject: Re: Protests over a cartoon... wtf.
Posted by [Javaxcx](#) on Thu, 01 Jun 2006 03:30:10 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

JohnDoe wrote on Tue, 30 May 2006 05:40: Sorry, I must've read "science" instead of "philosophy" the first time...that doesn't change, however, that you have no reason to bring philosophy into this when we're talking about science vs religion.

I've intentionally held back posting so you and warranto could continue your exchange unhindered. But this is a pretty outstanding point regardless of what is written on pages 6/7.

Philosophy literally is the unsung root of ALL epistemological discussions; especially this one. You can bring a priest and a biologist into the same room, and give them the one big philosophical question (the likes of which have been discussed in one form or another throughout this thread): "How do you know what you know?"

The problem is, neither the biologist or the priest can answer this question in its entirety. If you ask the biologist how he knows that DNA is comprised of phosphate groups, ribose sugars, and millions of amino acid combinations, he'll tell you that he knows this through evidence. Well, that's all well and good, but ask the question again. "How do you know that evidence is accurate"? The answer of course, is more evidence. The regression is pretty obvious. Eventually you'll get to a point where the biologist needs to prove the so-called "laws" that govern the universe. This is where science fails in lieu of agnostic philosophy. I'll come back to this in a moment.

Similarly, if you ask the priest how he knows that God exists, he'll use a similar but less reliable logic. He might tell you that he knows that God exists because "the watch must have a watchmaker". Or he might say that God must exist because, by definition God is the highest possible idea; of perfection. Thus, because we are able to consider the idea, the form must exist. He might even say he knows God exists based entirely on intuition and sensorial feelings. Compared to science, these proofs are pretty fleeting. But if you keep asking the big question "why", the priest hits the same road block; however clearly a lot faster than the biologist.

The point I'm trying to make here is that what you think you know is not necessarily what is truth. Your integrated knowledge, and mine, and warranto's, are all the byproducts of a combination of consistency and potential rational predictions. We say that there is a world outside our front doors because it was there before. But is it? Science, and not necessarily religion are both in the absolute dark when it comes to predicting the future with 100% certainty. David Hume was the guy who took this to the extreme. You exist in the absolute present. Therefore what happens now is knowable. But this is a contradiction. The past tense "happens" suggests that there is an ability of the mind to comprehend what has happened to it in the past and accurately predict the future in relation to that event. Well, science has been doing this for the... existence of science. And they've almost always been wrong. We thought that quantum mechanics was absolutely predictable based on mathematic models. Turns out, the very premise is ludicrous. What happens in the not-now is absolutely 100% INDEPENDENT of the immediate-now. That means that even though the sun rose today, we have no real evidence suggesting it will tomorrow. The only reason we say that it will, is because it has every day beforehand. This is technically an incorrect statement. We ASSUME the sun will rise tomorrow because it rose today, and supposedly yesterday and so on. The point is, in the same scale science does the same thing.

These "laws" of science that define reality are not laws. They're consistent theories. For example, in 2D space a triangle, in theory, has 180 degrees and three side; "Angle Side Triangle Theorem". It's an idea that is demonstratable consistent, so we call it "proved" so we don't have to say that it's only "99.9999999999% probable". Turns out though, according to just about every modern epistemologist (and some ancient ones) that technically, such a thing that says a triangle is to be 180 degrees and 3 sided is not necessarily true for the not-now. However, it's so unlikely that we don't even consider it an option. That does NOT mean, however, that it is impossible. This is extremely important, because epistemologically speaking, science and religion are precisely the same.

For every proposition stated by a biologist or priest, there is a basis extrapolated from reality. Neither man has the ability to prove his position absolutely. To science, we might call them laws of the universe, to religion, it might be God. Point is, neither are provable. They're only "likely". Thankfully, thanks to both science and religion, the "law of causality" and "law of conservation of energy" suggest that the universe has not existed forever, but began at one point.

Interesting enough, the concept of an infinite number of bangs and crunches has no demonstratable scientific probability attached to it. Mostly because the nature of such an event is untestable; like most of string theory. So while it is certainly possible that such an event could take place, it is also possible that the universe merely started once. We have more conclusive evidence to suggest this then not based on science's "laws". This, interestingly enough, provides us with more of rational and probable reason to suggest that something caused our universe to exist in the first place. Just so happens some people call this God. That's about as far as we can go though, because I'd sure like to know how it is a priest or a cleric knows what they claim to know came from God in terms of morality or ritual worship criteria. Also for the record, I'm 23.