

Re: New subjectline: Valid and invalid arguments; former: Cocaine in ancient Egypt?

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Doug,

You can't use a dictionary to tell you what the Old Greeks knew and what every serious scholar has to have learnt. You see:

Absence of evidence isn't the same as evidence of absence!

That has nothing what so ever to do with this or that language's dictionaries. This is basic knowledge for every single scholar. It's one of the first things you learn reading philosophy and one of the first facts you have to go thru showing yourself to have understand when studying Methods of Science. No matter which subject no matter where and when.

If you can't understand this, then it's easy to understand why you haven't been able to present valid arguments in many of the questions discussed here.

There are a lot of theories/thesis and facts which can't be proven true. But many of those can be falsified since it only takes one single example of the kind which the theory/thesis or 'fact' say isn't true. Following is taking this to next level.

You can only ask the questions you know might be asked to any kind of given strata, observation, documentation and or artifacts found. That's simple.

But how can you be sure that what you observe is what's really there? You can't. Let's take the old traditional chair from the classes of Philosophy.

The tutor/teacher puts a chair in front of you and ask: what's this? you rise your hand and answer: a chair. The tutor/teacher asks: How do you know?

You continue I know that. The tutor/teacher continue Why and how can you prove it? You say 'If I can sit in it and it's not a sofa and not an

armchair, then it's a chair. The tutor/teacher continue: That's not a proof of what it is, it's only a proof that you have used things alike as a chair.

In other word you are using your own, but limited, experience.

How can you be sure that your experience is the only way to interpret what you see? You can't. You can only relate to what you have learnt either orally, from written words or your own experience. That's nothing that say that you are correct.

How can you even be sure that what you see exists?

and so on. I do hope you have had the pleasure of having a good

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philosoph–teacher. Every scholar there is ought to have had one. If you aren't aware of the basic factors to form a valid argument in a discussion, it's then you try to pick on details which aren't important at all to the discussion.

In other word as often been the case from several here who written Ad Hominem or personal attacks or used namecalling. It's a typical phenomena of those who can't form an argument or a contra–argument trying to dismiss a question either by picking on unimportant details, trying to lean to circle–proofs and or stalking to stop valid arguments from being discussed.

In the specific case we are discussing, that absence of evidence never ever can be an evidence of absence, you are trying to change subject to what you from your experience can find from texts in English dictionary's and encyclopedia. The world has seen many languages, but that doesn't matter when it comes to what's in this or that work and or book. You can't know anything what so ever about what's in an unexcavated area 5 meters from your own house, it's even more limited chances for you to know what's in an unexcavated field you never seen yourself.

You may believe that while field A and field C hasn't shown any artifacts of X–type then it's unlikely that field B in between the others can have one. Believing isn't knowing.

As my teacher used to say in discussion like this: Believe you can do in the church, when it comes to science you either know for sure or you don't. If you haven't tested or searched you definitely can't say you know. No matter what.

Thus you can't use the argument that absence of evidence can be used to prove anything but that you haven't been able to form question or to do deeper studies to form a valid evidence. All you have done is shown that you don't know theories of science by heart.

Inger E