

Re: The Anti Science Art Of Evasion

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- *From:* "John Edser" <edser@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 27 Jun 2005 22:40:33 -0400 (EDT)
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"Malcolm" regniztar@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:-

>> JE:-

>> I have no problem with just a zero status position. In fact, I argue
can
>> be bonus because it removes the overpowering stresses of tribal
>> conformity.

> M:-

> You do have the advantage that you can express the truth as you see
it.
> You
> do have to be sensitive to the pressures on another poster. Let's say
> someone has an academic post at a university, a mortgage to pay and
wife
> and
> children to support. he is now accused of taking a certain position
because
> of "stupidity". If the accusation is false it is merely irritating. If
> there
> is any grain of truth in it, it may be deeply damaging. There goes the
> house.
> So if someone does identify himself as a professional you must be very
> sensitive to these matters.

JE:-

To my knowledge I have never employed the word "stupid". I argue that
this and similar words are almost entirely subjective so they remain
useless. However, I do employ more meaningful terms such as "non
sensible", "absurd", "incompetent" etc within informal sbe type
discussion because they are objective terms, e.g. "absurd" means an
absolute self contradiction. I do not agree that any of these terms
constitute terms of abuse.

If a professional does not wish to risk their professional status
position then they should not post here or more simply, not use their
real name. I only post using my actual name because I am happy stand or
fall by what I write. The fact that non professionals risk less than

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professionals is balanced by the fact that non professionals are mostly not remunerated.

A Popperian would reply to Malcolm that a researcher cannot lose any status by being refuted within any rational system simply because the aim of a scientist is to refute a theory by replacing it with a better one. The fact that some professionals feel that refutation represents a personal risk to themselves only provides evidence that the system that employs them may not be reasonable. It seems to me evasion is based on the misconception that refutation is "bad for you" and should be avoided at any cost. All this achieves is a stagnant system providing anomalies like "Haldane's Dilemma". AFAIK the incorrect/misused assumptions that allowed Haldane's false dilemma have never been corrected.

I argue that sbe type discourse is invaluable to the sciences because anybody can become "a fly on the wall"