

## Re: Lizard engines and rat engines

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- *From:* "John Edser" <edser@xxxxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Fri, 15 Jul 2005 12:02:48 -0400 (EDT)
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"Perplexed in Peoria" jimmenegay@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:–

>> JE:–

>> It is just a self contradiction to argue "a closed system does interact with its environment" IF "its environment" is NOT a part of the closed system.  
>> As Tim has correctly pointed out only ISOLATED systems and NOT closed systems can interact with an environment that is not a part of the isolated system. An isolated system does not have to be a closed system because it is only required to have a minimal and not a zero interaction with other systems where the degree of minimal interaction is open to definition. Please note: all arguments based only on authority (just textbooks) are invalid.

> JM:–

> Thank you, John. I will count you as the twentieth data point.  
> The score is now 10 (for the textbook standard) to 8 (for something else) with two abstentions. It is becoming clear that many people who consider themselves knowledgeable regarding thermodynamics gained their expertise by a process not involving textbooks. I'm curious as to what that process was.

JE:–

Textbooks are only as good as their reader! The main job of such a book is to provide the basic assumptions, something like the main job of the news is to provide the salient facts and NOT just a journalists biased interpretation of them.

Reasoning from VERY 1st principles is what starts ANY rational argument including those light years away from these principles. All rational arguments remain based on inductive guesses (acts of imagination). Among

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these many guesses must be at least ONE absolute assumption. This will be able to become mathematically employed as a constant allowing some sort of reasoning process to actually proceed. Like putting a jigsaw together becomes easier once the key piece has been located all the rest of an argument follows in just a deductive way once the key piece has been located. The only rule is that contradictions are not allowed, including of course, absolute self contradictions because they produce hopeless Nihilism whenever they are applied.

> JM:–

- > I'm curious because I'd like to develop some expertise
- > in quantitative genetics (so that I can talk about "heritability"
- > without looking like a complete idiot). But the textbooks in that
- > field are expensive and not an easy read. If there is an easier
- > way, I would like to know about it.

JE:–

A possible start of an answer was provided in the part of my reply that you snipped because you \*MUST FIRSTLY\* distinguish between a simplified/over simplified model of "heritability" and the theory these models were simplified/oversimplified from. Unless you allow nature to be your only authority on this subject and not just a textbook you will fail to separate them. I find it curious that you choose to ignore the more important part of my reply.

Take heart in what Popper proposed. It does not matter how outrageous anything that you argue may appear to others (including your errors) as long as what you argue remains refutable. Progress in science within a tribally and thus biased culture like our own may be entirely dependent on you/me or somebody else "looking like a complete idiot". Such a status event does not matter a fig to myself. All I care about is the quality of an argument and its empirically based verification/refutation and this is what I argue any supposed scientist should care about.

Regards,

John Edser  
Independent Researcher

Po Box 266  
Church Pt  
NSW 2105  
Australia

edser@xxxxxxxxxx

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