

Re: Free Will FWIW

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From: Lester Zick (lesterDELzick_at_worldnet.att.net)

Date: 10/14/04

Date: Thu, 14 Oct 2004 14:41:54 GMT

On Thu, 14 Oct 2004 13:31:02 +0200, "JPL Verhey"
<matterDELMinds@hotmail.com> in comp.ai.philosophy wrote:

>
> *"Lester Zick" <lesterDELzick@worldnet.att.net> wrote in message*
> *news:416dd5b5.85130071@netnews.att.net...*
>> *On Wed, 13 Oct 2004 23:59:40 +0200, "JPL Verhey"*
>> *<matterDELMinds@hotmail.com> in comp.ai.philosophy wrote:*
>>
>>>
>>> *"Lester Zick" <lesterDELzick@worldnet.att.net> wrote in message*
>>> *news:416d93b2.82422121@netnews.att.net...*
>>>>
>>>> *Free Will FWIW*
>>>> -----
>>>>
>>>> *Let's put the issue of free will to rest once and for all. It*
>>>> *doesn't*
>>>> *really matter what people think they mean in using the term, nor*
>>>> *does*
>>>> *it matter very much what people have thought they meant in using the*
>>>> *term. It only matters what people can demonstrate of the term*
>>>> *itself.*
>>>>
>>>> *What justifies putting the two words together, "free" and "will"?*
>>>> *This*
>>>> *is only justifiable if "free will" represents a subspecies of*
>>>> *"will".*
>>>> *Otherwise, we're dealing with "free, will" or some kind of "willful*
>>>> *freedom", the meaning of which would be anybody's guess.*
>>>>
>>>> *Well, I don't think there is much to this issue – "free will" is*
>>>> *simply*
>>>> *what it means to most people when they use the term, and this can be*
>>>> *investigated by polling enough people. Then you probably get a fairly*
>>>> *accurate picture of what "free will" means.*
>>>>
>>>> *Apart from behaviorism science rarely solicits popular opinion to*

>> *define its subject matter. Me, I deal in explanations and not majority*
>> *logic. Free will is not simply what anybody or everybody thinks it is,*
>> *at least as a matter of science.*
>
>*Perhaps – but science has, unfortunately, one down side: it negates the*
>*way things are by "explaining them" in other terms where the explanation*
>*is *believed* to be ontologically of higher ranking than the phenomena*
>*itself. A simple example, but the list is endless:*

>*Green. That's how we name a certain visual experience of color. Now*
>*comes in science that offers different explanations, negating the*
>*original:*
>
>*"Green"??*
>- *No! It's an EM wavelength that we just "experience" as green.*
>- *No! It's just a word we learned to attach to a visual experience in*
>*which there is no "green" at all.*
>- *No! It's brain activity.*
>- *No! "Green" is the result of non-Green differences due to paralel*
>*mechanics in the brain and elsewhere.*
>- *No! It's just brainphysiology that mediates *behavior*.*
>
>*In the mean time, of course, Green has died. Not officially, and*
>*scientist will probably acknowledge that Green is still there, but the*
>*effect of this obsession with science, which you appear to have too,*
>*mesmerizes the eye of the beholder into the "hypnosis of knowlegde"*
>*resulting in a loss of ability to just see.. Green.*

My obsession is with life, JPL. Science is just a means to an end.
What would you prefer then, the philosopher stone? Then we could just
talk on forever about life's little mysteries that we couldn't quite
be bothered to solve.

This is the age old controversy between knowledge and mystery, JPL.
Some prefer to know and some prefer ignorance. Those who prefer to
know become scientists and those who don't become mystics.

>>
>>>*I am getting a bit sceptical, Lester, on the efforts here to "look*
>>>*behind the curtain" hoping to know what things "really are"*
>>>*behaviorally, mechanically or otherwise.*
>>
>> *What would you have science do instead? Fiddle with its experimental*
>> *apparatus, mope along with the status quo, and faint echoes of "better*
>> *luck next time, old boy"? The British disease.*
>
>*I'm against the obsession with science and knowledge.*

Then you're a mystic.

> *It is not*
> *different from a religious obsession.*

So, knowledge and religious belief are functionally equivalent? Hoey!
Anyone can make up quaint little stories and analogize to their hearts
content. Not so many people can answer questions unambiguously.

> *Science is about creating tools*
> *that solve some of our problems and serve our basic needs.*

Knowledge is a basic need. Perhaps the basic need. And science is
about the knowledge that allows us to create tools to solve problems
and serve our basic needs.

> *Obsession*
> *leads to analysing to death and negating into nothingness the facts and*
> *quality of our lives – it becomes a religion.*

So, you prefer endless philosophizing? Seems to me philosophy morphs
into religion much faster than science because it doesn't even know
how to address questions definitively much less answer them. Philosophy
just makes up answers as it goes along and pretends it's done the job.
Science can be held accountable for its answers. Philosophy can't.
Witness behaviorism, platonism, and a host of mystic philosophies.

>>> *All that happens, it appears to me, is that something–else is created,*
>>> *supposedly serving as an explanation for A, or A in mechanical terms..*
>>> *but there is no proof that A and "something–else" are any more related*
>>> *than, say, the price of milk and the sound of a cow.*

>>
>> *Something else is created. However the point of the something else is*
>> *to explain things in terms of one another mechanically by means of the*
>> *something else. Otherwise we're just going round in circles. Of course*
>> *nothing is proved if one ignores explanations. When we get around to*
>> *using majority logic to establish scientific meanings and significance*
>> *we just abdicate the role and purpose of science.*

>>
>> *Regards – Lester*

>
>

Regards – Lester