

## Re: Some Simple Questions

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**From:** David C. Ullrich ([ullrich\\_at\\_math.okstate.edu](mailto:ullrich_at_math.okstate.edu))

**Date:** 03/18/05

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 2005 05:36:35 -0600

On 17 Mar 2005 20:01:17 -0800, "Charlie-Boo" <[chvol@aol.com](mailto:chvol@aol.com)> wrote:

>

>David C. Ullrich wrote:

>> On 17 Mar 2005 13:59:20 -0800, "Charlie-Boo" <[chvol@aol.com](mailto:chvol@aol.com)> wrote:

>> >David C. Ullrich wrote:

>> >> On 17 Mar 2005 06:02:30 -0800, "Charlie-Boo" <[chvol@aol.com](mailto:chvol@aol.com)>  
>wrote:

>

>> >> >1. If someone says "I have a system that produces X" and in their

>> >> >paper that introduces and explains the system there are no

>examples

>> >of

>> >> >an X that is produced, does that demonstrate that the system

>cannot

>> >> >produce X and the statement that it produces X is false?

>> >>

>> >> Of course not. What a stupid question.

>> >

>> >Why leave out a demonstration of the system actually working? Why

>> >believe something that hasn't been shown to be true (speaking of

>> >"stupid")? That seems to me to violate fundamental principles of

>> >science.

>>

>> Supposing for the sake of argument that my answers to those questions

>> were

>>

>> >Why leave out a demonstration of the system actually working?

>>

>> "Who knows? Bad idea = bad, bad, bad!"

>>

>> >Why

>> >believe something that hasn't been shown to be true (speaking of

>> >"stupid")?

>>

>> "no possible good reason, none whatever"

>>

>> >That seems to me to violate fundamental principles of

>> >science.  
>>  
>> "Absolutely, it certainly does",  
>>  
>> my answer to your first question would *\_still\_ be*  
>> "Of course not. What a stupid question."  
>>  
>> Why don't you read the question you asked again?  
>> You asked whether omitting a demonstration of  
>> something demonstrates that the something is false.  
>  
>Not so. You're the one who didn't read the question (or are  
>intentionally misrepresenting it.) You are misquoting me. The  
>question was actually,  
>  
>"If someone says "I have a system that produces X" and in their paper  
>that introduces and explains the system there are no examples of an X  
>that is produced, does that demonstrate that the system cannot produce  
>X and the statement that it produces X is false?"

Uh, right. Let's assume that the previous paragraph is an accurate quotation.

Now pay attention for a second. That's an utterly stupid question. Let us suppose that someone says "I have a system that produces X" and in their paper that introduces and explains the system there are no examples of an X that is produced. I hope that quotation was accurate enough. Asking whether this demonstrates that the system cannot produce X and the statement that it produces X is false is hilariously stupid.

Look. Here's a claim:

(\*) The 'system' "take finite sequences of primes and multiply them" can 'produce' every integer  $n \geq 2$ .

Now note that there is no proof of that claim anywhere in this post. And no examples of producing *\_any\_* positive integers by multiplying primes. How could anyone possibly imagine that the fact that the claim is not proved in this post implies that the claim *\_is false\_*? This is ludicrous.

As I suggested: Why don't you re-read the question? It's *\_such\_* a stupid question that it can't be what you actually meant to ask.

>Of course what you quoted is stupid. Since journals typically don't  
>publish the same result twice, for any result that has been referred to  
>more than once there will be at least one reference that doesn't  
>prove it within the same paper. But that's not what I said.  
>

## sci.logic: Re: Some Simple Questions

>I specifically referred to "in their paper that introduces and  
>explains the system" (which you conveniently omitted), and for good  
>reason. The implications of this phrase include:

>

>1. Being the paper "that introduces" the result, it will generally  
>be the one referenced most when that result is discussed, since (a) it  
>is the seminal paper, and (b) other papers are not likely to have a  
>complete proof (as alluded to above.) Furthermore, the first paper is  
>likely to be the one most difficult to get accepted for publication,  
>since subsequent papers have the acceptance of the earlier papers to  
>bolster their attempts to publish follow up reports.

>

>Thus there is all the reason in the world for the authors to give as  
>complete and convincing an exposition as they can. It makes no sense  
>for them to be skimpy.

>

>2. Since it is "their paper" (the originators of the system), they  
>are in the best position to be able to utilize the system to its  
>fullest. If they can't get it to produce anything, who can?

>

>Or maybe you left out "in their paper that introduces and explains  
>the system" because you didn't realize the implications (above)?  
>That is, did you actually think that your quote was equivalent to what  
>I said?

>

>Yes ==> you didn't realize the significance of the phrase you left  
>out. You were just being a bit dumb. ("I hadn't drank my coffee  
>yet." as you say.)

>

>No ==> you intentionally presented a quote different from the actual  
>one. Shame on you.

>

>> That's an awesomely stupid question, and nothing  
>> you say above has any relevance to that whatever.

>

>(1) "Why leave out a demonstration of the system actually working?"  
>: If they give no examples, then they are not demonstrating that the  
>system is actually working. Thus I asked why they were leaving that  
>out.

>

>(2) "Why believe something that hasn't been shown to be true  
>(speaking of 'stupid')? " : Since they haven't demonstrated  
>that the system can in fact produce X, they are suggesting that the  
>reader believe something that hasn't been shown to be true (which I  
>think one could reasonably characterize as being "stupid".)

>

>(3) "That seems to me to violate fundamental principles of  
>science." : I think it's fair to say that in science one doesn't  
>believe claims without their being substantiated.

>

>"Unproven statements carry little weight in the world of

>mathematics." – Amir D. Aczel  
>  
>C-B  
>  
>> \*\*\*\*\*  
>>  
>> David C. Ullrich

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David C. Ullrich