

Existentialism, Nihilism

A Parable



We Must Begin with Certain Assumptions

Assumption

- This existence is reality and not a simulation.
- I think therefore I am actually means something
- As opposed to I think therefore I am an Avatar in a simulation-video game.

Assumption

- Modern cosmology has something meaningful to say.
- The universe started with a Big Bang.
- Modern cosmology assumes that there is no Universal Intelligence: that would be unscientific. Existence is based upon mathematics. Unfortunately, today's mathematics is not up to the challenge. Modern cosmology requires a “fix”.
- To make all this work we need an M Universe. There are multiple universes that we can never see or visit. But they must exist in order for the math to work.
- Current cosmology theory violates Occam's razor, one of the fundamental principles of science.

Assumption

- We must accept or be prepared to accept the garbage theory of existence, reincarnation. Reincarnation represents the ultimate form of recycling.
- Somehow this planet is populated with 8 billion human beings.
- Their sole purpose of existence appears to be to learn a lesson.
- These poor souls are recycled indefinitely until they understand the truth. This truth appears to be that nothing really matters. Having achieved this state the reward is to disappear.
- Humans must endure an unending amount of pain and suffering in order to learn that nothing matters.
- What is the purpose of all of this pain and suffering especially when we return in an imperfect state, such a schizophrenic.
- The Starship Enterprise puzzle.



 CARTOONSTOCK

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*'How can you not know if your cat
is alive or dead, Mr Schrodinger?'*

Assumption

- Christian and Islamic doctrine with respect to the existence of a life after death which may include a Heaven and Hell is a possibility
- Hebrew theology is ambivalent with respect to an afterlife with or without a Heaven and Hell.
- God as Daddy: the Timea paradox
- The concept of a Day Of Judgment must assume that perfect human entities have populated the Earth and, with an exercise of free will, have chosen a path which leads to Heaven or Hell.
- Alternatively, salvation may be attained by choosing-convertng to the correct religion (excluding Judaism which does not proselytize).

Assumption

- Modern biology/psychology is correct with respect to the fact that humans make Us/Them dichotomies along lines of race, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, age, socioeconomic status, and so on.
- Us-Them is deeply hard-wired in our brains, with an ancient evolutionary legacy.

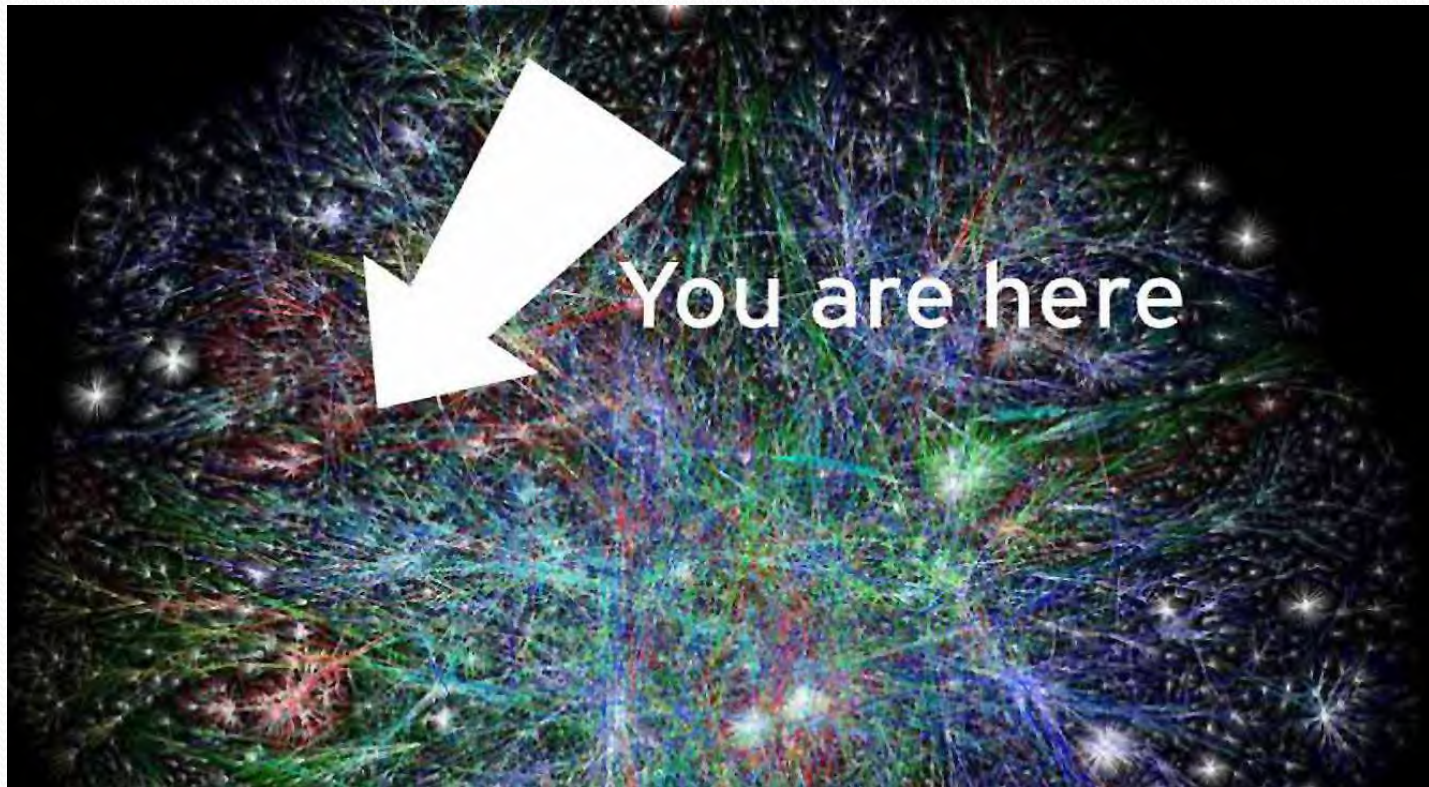
Assumption

- Empirically the elimination of inequality is impossible.
- In 1573, Tusser observed: “A foole and his monie be soone at debate, which after with sorrow repents him too late”. This is the earliest known version of the proverb: A fool and his money are soon parted.
- Two great American philosophers noted:
 1. Never Give a Sucker an Even Break (W. C. Fields)
 2. There's a sucker born every minute (P.T. Barnum)

Assumption

- The numbers do not work.
- The Pareto distribution is a power-law probability distribution that is used to describe a number of social, scientific, geophysical and actuarial observations.
- With respect to the distribution of wealth in a society, the fitted trend indicates that a large portion of wealth is held by a small fraction of the population.
- This Pareto distribution has become known as the Pareto Principle, or 80-20 rule. This rule states that 80% of the wealth of a society is, generally, held by 20% of its population.
- Income can be redistribute: not wealth

The Known Universe



Earth in the Known Universe

The Observable Universe

- Modern cosmology has no concept of what, if anything exists beyond the known Universe.
- Observable does not refer to the capability of modern technology to detect light or other information from an object, or whether there is anything to be detected.
- Observable refers to the physical limit created by the speed of light itself. No signal can travel faster than light; therefore, any object farther away from Earth than light cannot be detected.
- The distance from Earth to the edge of the observable universe is about 46.5 billion light-years in any direction. The observable universe is thus a sphere with a diameter of about 93 billion light-years. Note that one light-year is a unit of length used to express astronomical distances and measures about 9.46 trillion kilometers or 5.88 trillion miles. As defined by the International Astronomical Union, a light-year is the distance that light travels in a vacuum in one Julian year.
- The Universe is estimated to be 13.8 billion years in existence. The human animal may soon live to be 100 years old, on average. Therefore, the percentage of the average life span of the human animal to the age of the known universe is $100/13,800,000,000$, or $7.24637681\text{e-}9$.

No Lives Matter

- Eight billion human animals populate the planet Earth. The lifespan of the human animal is insignificant with respect to the age of the known universe. The Earth is insignificant with respect to the size the known universe. I, therefore, conclude that No Lives Matter.

Relevant Isms

Nihilism" is the belief that nothing matters.

Existentialism is the attempt to confront and deal with meaninglessness...to not succumb to nihilism or despair: to not give up or avoid responsibility as in waiting for Godot. As a nihilist: Every concept of “good and bad”, “God” and “morality” is nothing more than a social construction, the program made by the strong.

Nihilism is essentially a negative approach, one that denies that there is any greater meaning to the things we experience in life.

Stoicism is just the opposite, a positive attempt to find the most meaningful (in accordance with our 'nature') way to live.

Moral Nihilism. Nihilism comes from the Latin word "nihil" -- which means, nothing. Nihilists assert that there are no moral values, principles, truths.

Optimistic nihilism is the belief that there is no underlying meaning to life from a perspective of hope. ... The optimistic nihilist looks at a world lacking meaning and purpose and sees the opportunity to create their own. Optimistic nihilism can be an incredibly empowering belief.

What to Do

- The bourgeois Golden Rule-Kant's Categorical Imperative
- Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.
 1. One source: The Great Beast 666, Aleister Crowley the wickedest man in the world,
 2. Another source: St. Augustine of Hippo

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

- The theory holds that moral reasoning, a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for ethical behavior, has six developmental stages,
- The process of moral development is principally concerned with Justice and that it continues throughout the individual's life,
- Values are a critical component of “The Right.” The Right must be universally valid across societies (a position known as “moral universalism”): there can be no relativism.
- Morals are not natural features of the world; they are prescriptive. Nevertheless, moral judgments can be evaluated in logical terms of truth and falsity.
- Someone progressing to a higher stage of moral reasoning cannot skip stages.
- On encountering a moral dilemma and finding their current level of moral reasoning unsatisfactory an individual will look to the next level. Realizing the limitations of the current stage of thinking is the driving force behind moral development, as each progressive stage is more adequate than the last. The process is therefore considered to be constructive, as it is initiated by the conscious construction of the individual, and is not in any meaningful sense a component of the individual's innate dispositions, or a result of past inductions.

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development



Heinz Dilemma

•A woman was on her deathbed. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to produce. He paid \$200 for the radium and charged \$2,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about \$1,000 which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said: "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's laboratory to steal the drug for his wife. Should Heinz have broken into the laboratory to steal the drug for his wife? Why or why not?

•Kohlberg's theory states that the Justification the participant offers is what is significant.

Options

Level	Stage	Heinz should steal the drug, because	Heinz should <i>not</i> steal the drug, because
Pre-Conventional	Obedience	It is only worth \$200 and not how much the druggist wanted for it; Heinz had even offered to pay for it and was not stealing anything else.	He will consequently be put in prison which will mean he is a bad person.
	Self-interest	He will be much happier if he saves his wife, even if he has to serve a prison sentence.	Prison is an awful place, and he would more likely languish in a jail cell than over his wife's death.
Conventional	Conformity	His wife expects it; he wants to be a good husband.	Stealing is bad and he is not a criminal; he has tried to do everything he can without breaking the law, you cannot blame him.
	Law-and-order	His wife will benefit, but he should also take the prescribed punishment for the crime as well as paying the druggist what he is owed. Criminals cannot just run around without regard for the law; actions have consequences.	The law prohibits stealing.
Post-Conventional	Social contract orientation	Everyone has a right to choose life, regardless of the law.	The scientist has a right to fair compensation. Even if his wife is sick, it does not make his actions right.
	Universal human ethics	Saving a human life is a more fundamental value than the property rights of another person.	Others may need the medicine just as badly, and their lives are equally significant.



Seven Moral Rules Found Around The World

Anthropologists at the University of Oxford have discovered what they believe to be seven universal moral rules: based upon a survey of 60 cultures from around the world.


- Help your family
- Help your group
- Return favours
- Be brave
- Defer to superiors
- Divide resources fairly
- Respect others' property

Who Knew: a Parable

- I was teaching at the SP Jain School of Global Management in Sydney Australia. The curriculum was devoted, almost entirely, to international business management. I was teaching international business strategy and international business to MBA students. The students were predominantly from India. One of the main attractions of the program was that the students spent a semester at each of the three SP Jain campuses in Sydney, Dubai and Singapore. Almost all of the students were from India. Many of the MBA students were very young. They received their bachelor's degree in their early 20s and then entered directly into the MBA program. Needless to say their life experiences were limited.
- My office door and walls were made of glass. Everyone saw everything that I did. The door had no lock so the students could enter at any time, which they did. They would enter unannounced, sit down and begin to talk. It did not matter if I was on the phone or working at my computer. One day one of my students entered my office unannounced, without an appointment, and began her discussion. She was one of my younger students, in her early twenties.
- “Dave what should I do with my life?”

- It was a question that I was faced with during my years of teaching. Obviously, I could not take the responsibility of telling her what to do so I started my usual approach.
- “Okay, it is 10 years from now. please describe your life in great detail: where will you live, what kind of work will you do, will you be married, will you have children, is money very important to you, what kind of Lifestyle do you require, where and how do you get your joy.
- “ I don't know. Dave I want you to tell me”
- I have never experienced that response before. Students have always said something that I could build on.
- “This is a very big responsibility. Give me a bit of time to think about it and we will get together again.”

- It was the middle of the semester record and her cohort would be leaving soon for Singapore. I simply had to wait her out and she would be gone. I did not think any more of our conversation.
- I had not seen her for a week or two and so I asked some of the students where she was.
- “Oh, did you not hear. We were on an excursion to the Blue Mountains and she fell off the mountain”.
- “Is she dead!!!”
- “No, she survived. Her mother came and took her back to India.”
- A week later I was sitting in my office and the student walked in, sat down and began to talk. She looked awful. She had major facial damage and her right arm was in a sling.

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- Oh my God are you okay?”
 - “Dave it was the most wonderful experience”
 - “A wonderful experience! Did you land on your head?”
 - “I was walking along thinking about what I should do with my life and all of a sudden I slipped and fell off the mountain. It was wonderful. It felt as if I was floating in the air. I never felt so free! Although it wasn't much fun when I hit the ground.”
 - “They took me to the hospital in an ambulance. I wanted to go back to the residence but the Doctors would not let me. So, I discharged myself. What a wonderful feeling. I never thought that I could do such a thing. I am so proud of myself!”
 - Falling off a mountain is a transformative experience.
 - Who knew?!
 - Without Tears the Soul cannot see the Rainbow.