

31 Aug 2017

Thinking Vs Knowing



After having had a number 'debates' with a number of eminent people on LinkedIn and finding we simply had to **agree to disagree**, I went back to my first year mathematics course and went over the section that had to do with [propositional logic](#). Why propositional logic? Well, the basis of propositional logic is to prove that any statement can be either true or false, but not both.

For example:

A bear is a mammal

George Washington was the 3rd President of the United States of America

A rose is a flower

Remember, the statement does not have to be valid, only true or false. Example George Washington was the President of the United States of America, but not the 3rd.

I will now use my understanding of propositional logic to help me resolve the conundrum of agreeing to disagree. To do this I will start by asserting this statement: Either you think I am right, know that I am right, think I am wrong or know I am wrong.

Then once you have worked this out then look at the problem from your point of view:

Either you think you are right, know that you are right, think you are wrong or know you are wrong.

This should finally resolve itself to: we will agree if and only if I know I am right and you cannot prove you are right. But first I need build up the propositions.

To do this I need to create a relatively simple truth table, however those of you who know anything about a truth table, should know that the number of 'yes and no' columns would soon cause a problem so I have rationalised the table into 2 simple matrices. If you know I am wrong, please do the maths and prove you are right (see proposition E).

Thinking vs Knowing

1) Your opinion of me - me as the object

	I am right	I am wrong
Think	Proposition A	Proposition B
Know	Proposition C	Proposition D

2) Your opinion of yourself - you as the object

	You are right	You are wrong
Think	Proposition A	Proposition B
Know	Proposition E	Proposition F

Please note that 'seeming' is not knowing. Knowing or knowledge comes from experience and lots of experimentation (asking lots of questions). Having an opinion may or may not be knowing, so whenever I use IMHO, I am trying not to be a 'wise guy', even though I know I am right. Otherwise I may as well invoke Proposition F right now.

Moving right along, here are the propositions:

- Proposition A - You are uncertain and need to learn more
- Proposition B - You are uncertain and need to rethink
- Proposition C - Work with me or learn from me
- Proposition D - Prove you are right, which will prove I am wrong then use your opinion of yourself
- Proposition E - Prove it explicitly, using no ifs or buts and know all the flows (inputs and outputs) as well as the processes. If you cannot carry out this step, then you have to admit to yourself that you do NOT KNOW, so see Proposition F
- Proposition F - You need to stop preaching or teaching and learn more

If you now apply propositional logic to each of the propositions, I know that they will all be proved to be 'true'. If I am wrong, please tell me where I went wrong and I will invoke Proposition F and retire forever.

Just remember that the legacy system time 'e-bomb' is ticking and if you think you have a better, more explicit method (than I have) to defuse it, then you had better follow Proposition B and do it quickly. On the other hand if you know you have a better solution then be prepared to prove it (see Proposition E), just as I have had to do.

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