

Re: OT: Definition of science (WAS: Making money from Java)

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Cobol/comp.lang.cobol/2005-12/msg01137.html>

- *From:* "Alistair" <alistair@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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Oliver Wong wrote:

> <docdwarf@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message [news:dnscei\\$kiu\\$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:dnsceikiu1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)
> >> If someone says "I have a theory about how electrons work, and I came
> >>about this theory because I did such and such experiment and arrived at
> >>these results", someone else, on the other side of the world, reading
> >>about
> >>it over the Internet, should be able to say "Let me try the same
> >>experiment
> >>and see if I arrive at the same results".
> >>
> >> Most of psychology, anthropology, etc. does not fall under this
> >>definition, but psychologist, anthropologists, etc. sometimes get touchy
> >>if
> >>you try to tell them what they are doing is not "real" science.
> >>
> >> That might be because human beings – the objects of study for the 'soft
> >> sciences – are not electrons. On the other hand psychologists can say
> >>'given a certain set of behaviors it has been found that, in a number of
> >> instances, they can be changed if...'
> >>
> >> Yes, and if another psychologist on the other side of the word tries the
> >> same experiment and gets a completely different set of results, what then?
> >> The results are not typically reproduceable, and hence, not "science" under
> >> my definition.

In a manner of speaking, there is a multi-regional multi-cultural experiment under way. Consider the earth. A sphere hanging in space upon the surface of which a number of different cultures have developed and in time produced theories about their origins. Most of these seem to encompass some deity or other creating the earth from some void. Most run counter to the evidence available and all are unverifiable.

>
> But so what? There are lots of things that are not "science" which are
> "Good" or "Useful" or whatever other positive adjectives you'd like to use.
> To me, it's just an issue of mis-using a term. I might ask other people to
> refer to me as a "surgeon" because I slice open computer programs, examine
> their innards, and make modification to ensure their continued functioning.

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> Doesn't mean it's the most appropriate term to describe my occupation.

>

> – Oliver

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• **References:**

◆ **[Re: Making money from Java](#)**

◇ From: Peter Lacey

◆ **[Re: Making money from Java](#)**

◇ From: Oliver Wong

◆ **[Re: Making money from Java](#)**

◇ From:

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◇ From: Oliver Wong

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◇ From:

◆ **[OT: Definition of science \(WAS: Making money from Java\)](#)**

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