Confronting the World’s Great Unrecognized Crisis

by Guy Harrison

(Kenii's comments are in italics ... mine follow in regular font)

*I'm skeptical.*

My experience has taught me that over 90% of the people who make that claim ... aren't.

Let's find out.

*I don't like "bigfoot"-like thinking either, but what's being described is more than just "skepticism". This post seems to combine concepts that are distinct from one another.*

Why must a post be limited to a single concept?

Maybe you would be happier sticking to simple posts that you can comprehend, without having to strain to grasp multiple concepts?

*For starters, "thinking like a scientist" doesn't necessarily increase one's skepticism because everyone is subject to their own biases.*

You tried to connect two unrelated concepts (now it becomes clear, why it bothers you so much to try to deal with multiple concepts).

The fact that everyone is subject to their own biases, isn't logically connected to the author's observation that thinking like a scientist will increase one's skepticism.

*Even a scientist is bound to question some things more than others, especially if they're being paid to do so.*

What does pay have to do with it?

That is usually inserted by those who are trying to imply bias.

*I also don't appreciate the "appeal to fear" tone of the post.*

My, we are a touchy little toad, aren't we?

Maybe you should stick to reading books of poetry.

*The idea that if people don't start to be more skeptical and think like scientists that the world could be doomed is a bit much.*

Not only is it *not* a bit much, the evidence that it is already happening is all around you.

*Is that backed by hard scientific evidence?*

A book on WW2 would be good evidence. Especially pay attention to ... the ending.

*It's not like nobody's thinking.*

I see you slept through that whole government shutdown thing.

*In fact, some articles suggest that society's becoming more secular so perhaps people are thinking more than they used to.*

The secularization of the planet doesn't mean we are thinking more now, it means we now have the courage to act on our thinking, rather than hiding in the closet as we were forced to do for centuries.

*Plus, there's a curious contradiction near the end of the post. On the one hand we're encouraged to: "be sure to do all of this with kindness in your heart," and then in the last paragraph: "Never worry that it may be impolite to encourage".*

Sorry to be a grammar Nazi (I ignored it the first time, but now it's getting on my nerves), but the period goes inside the final quote mark (google: grammar girl).

*Sorry, but being rude (i.e. impolite) to promote a cause will probably just deter people more and undermine the cause - it's actually the kind of intellectual arrogance the author was supposedly discouraging earlier in the post.*

As you have probably noticed by now, I didn't agree with the author about being rude; but I disagree that, that makes him intellectually arrogant.

I don't give a rat's ass if you, or anyone else, finds my style rude. Feel free to get as offended as you want.

When you're through drying your widdle tears, and you think you can get back into the debate with facts rather than whining ... be my guest.

*Don't get me wrong, I like scientific thinking and skepticism, but this post doesn't appeal to me.*

That makes us even because your crap doesn't appeal to me.

Advice: the skeptical movement doesn't need little crybabies. Try converting to Christianity or Islam. They will accept you with open arms ... and we won't miss you.

*The author has some pretty strong, unwavering beliefs of his own that deserves some skepticism.*

So now you're Dr. Phil?

*Skeptical II*

*by Kenii*

*I'm going to play devil's advocate and exercise my skepticism on the third paragraph:*

*1. "Every day, unknown numbers of people in every society suffer because they trust medical quackery over evidence-based medicine. Some of them die."*

*Yes, and if some day science finds evidence of health benefits for some of those practices and appropriates them (or part of them) would it still be "medical quackery"? Would it ever have been?*

Case closed. Remember earlier when I said over 90% of people who claim to be skeptics ... aren't?

No skeptic would have made the egregious error that you just committed. Science is *always* changing. That's the difference between science and religion.

Medical quackery is judged based on what data we have at the time we form the opinion - not on data that may or may not come in at some future time.

How could you make such a stupid mistake?

*"Some of them die"?*

*Yes, so do some recipients of "evidence-based medicine."*

The author's point sailed right over your head.

Evidence-based medicine doesn't guarantee eternal life. The difference is, those who died while receiving evidence-based medicine were given the best survival chance possible by science; while those who got alternative medicine, bet it all on the double zero (google: roulette).

*2. "Democracies often produce incompetent leaders because too many people are in the habit of accepting and believing before they think and vote."*

*Yes, but I would postulate that democracy, itself, is part of the reason for that. A democracy is the best governmental system in the world, but it's not perfect. If you're forced to vote amongst a group of incompetent candidates, then you'll still end up with an incompetent leader regardless of how hard the citizens think.*

Your mistake that time was to ignore the process that leads up to someone becoming a candidate. They don't just pop out of thin air. So his point remains valid ... and yours does not.

*And a thoughtful, skeptical, scientific-minded person does not necessarily make a good leader.*

Where did the author claim that a thoughtful, skeptical, scientific-minded person *necessarily* makes a good leader?

Your error that time was known as the "Straw Man" logical fallacy.

*Evidence from other parts of society (e.g. business) suggest that other traits are also necessary.*

And who exactly do you think doesn't already know that?

The author?

*3. "Distracted by delusions, billions never attempt to connect with the real universe they live in, thereby denying themselves much of the knowledge and excitement it offers."*

*I'm not sure what "connect with the real universe" means.*

Yeah, I see your point. The author went and snuk in another concept on you. Allow me to be of assistance (see, I can be nice).

He is referring to people like religious believers, who are threatened with eternal torture should they dare to lose their faith.

*That's pretty vague.*

Not to those of us holding a certified GED.

*I mean, as long as they're living in the universe, they're "connected" to it in some way.*

His point was ... that they don't know it. They think they are connected to an invisible magic ghost.

*Also "excitement" is subjective.*

And?

*What one person finds "exciting" isn't necessarily what another person finds "exciting"*

Brilliant. I'll make sure to put that on the bottom of my birdcage.

*and that's a good thing because it promotes biodiversity.*

How does it "promote" biodiversity? If people find different things exciting, that would be a result of biodiversity ... not a cause.

*It also allows for creativity and innovation. History has shown that disruptive innovation can be facilitated when something is appropriated from another domain.*

WTF?

I think the only person you are impressing here ... is yourself.

*So if everyone were encouraged to think the same way and to be excited about the same things, then we could actually be undermining the advancement of technology.*

What a bunch of utter nonsense (google: counterfactual).

I need an aspirin.

Actually, just give me the whole bottle.

(Suicide would be preferable to running the risk of ever having to read another word this guy writes).