

Contradictions, sorry seems to be the hardest word!

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Black and white, male-female, young-old, beautiful-ugly, good and bad, all our knowledge is rooted in the recognition of contradictions. Even knowledge itself consists of discriminants: real knowledge versus false knowledge, real news versus fake news. According to logic, human knowledge (and therefore science, religion and art) is based on dialectics. Whether we like it or not, we have no choice but to discriminate or go through life as complete nitwits.

Certainly, it is often far from fun. Shameful how skin colour or last name often determines which doors open or remain closed, even in our day, or how gender determines whether one participates to achieve a women's quota, or whether one is really wanted. Likewise, it's shameful how age still determines whether someone is considered old enough to talk about the future, or leave it to the settled generation. Imagine you are a coloured child of the female sex. In the local newspaper I read about two Dutch-born girls from Nigerian parents who were shopping for the first time to buy a present for their mother's birthday. Dad watched them closely just outside the shop window. Before they realised it, they were taken and searched by the shop owner because the whole situation was very suspicious ...

Shameful

Shameful, and at the same time unfortunately absolutely only changeable by wearing patterns in our everyday reality in which gender, age, skin colour do not matter. Only then can we produce knowledge based on discriminants (both true and false, the distinction between real and fake news is really nonsensical) that does not set people aside based on colour, gender or age. Or we will probably put other people aside because discrimination based on contradictions (false / true) is really the source of human knowledge.

Rich versus poor, rural versus urbanites, workers versus managers, the autistic versus the "normal". Despite systems to "enlighten" truth (such as the rational enlightenment that heralded the scientific revolution), we will always have to feel and believe. Our knowing will always remain temporary, until a better reading of the "facts" emerges, and today's generated truths will turn out to be the errors of tomorrow's past.

A past of slavery and exploitation that I am deeply ashamed of. But this is easy to say for a white male in a good position. Shame and pride. Still, I would love not to feel so guilty relative to the dark-skinned fellow human or the opposite gender. If slavery and the oppression of women were only a Hoax... I would almost embrace a belief in conspiracies. Because, in my opinion, people believe in conspiracies to prevent facing a horrible reality, stating there is no climate crisis, or there has never been exploitation.

Unfortunately I know better, there's no hoax we can hide behind, while there's no comfort in the truth. Shame and pride, pride and shame. Elton John was absolutely right, sorry seems to be the hardest word. Sorry!

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