

### Against Lack of Evidence

In Kelly Clark's *Without Evidence or Argument*, he starts off with multiple circumstances in which he attempts to put the reader into a position of choice – to trust in their previous knowledge or to seek truth in an outsiders perspective that goes against their belief. Clark then starts promoting a stand against W. K. Clifford's work; *Evidentialism* states that for anyone to believe in anything, they must have sufficient evidence. Clark argues against this by showing that it is, in fact, a hypocritical thing to say because there is not evidence to support this argument and that reasoning must start somewhere. With this in mind, Clark believes that we produce beliefs that we can reason from and that we must accept without the aid of a proof. Throughout the whole writing, Clark is defending the rational belief in God without evidence or argument. I am able to see Clark's point-of-view throughout his writing; and while I agree, to some extent, on the stance he has against needing evidence or argument on everything, he leaves a lot to circumstantial evidence and faith while misinterpreting Clifford's idea behind his work.

With Clark's “supposes”, he uses an example of a stranger, David, that sends you a message that states that your wife is cheating on you. Clark, then wants to know what your action would be based on Davids information. In this scenario, It puts you against the faith of your opinion of your happy marriage against that of a stranger and he wants to know your path of blindly accepting, upright refusal, or gather evidence to find the truth. This scenario has an impact on how your life plays out

based on your decision, and I think it would merit further evidence to prove or disprove the claims. If you decide to not act upon the letter and trust that your wife is faithful, you might start acting weird

around her because of lingering thoughts of David's letter. If you hire a detective to investigate, then you are giving ill-will in the faith that your wife might still have in you if she is not cheating. And, if you confront her with what David has proclaimed to be true, she will, most likely, turn the table and put blame on you without giving an answer because of you taking the side of some “stranger”, tell the truth, good or bad, or lie to you. Since having a wife cheat on you can affect how the rest of your life will play out, I would seek out more evidence from, and about, the unreliable source, David, to find out what his motives and interests in my private affairs are. Then I would seek information from the accused, my wife, to fill her in on what has transpired and then interpret her reaction into evidence for or against the claim.

In Clark's second “suppose”, he brings a trusted person, your son, into the mix as the implementer of evidence. Your son, Clifford, brings a philosophy of the “problem of other minds”, which brings to light that you do not know if other minds, and therefore people actually exist. It continues with people being robots and everything besides yourself might be fake. In this scenario you can not access another person's mind, thoughts, feeling, etc..., so you cannot gather proper evidence from them. Then, he gives a choice to find out by hiring a philosophical detective to find out if people like things are actual people; this contradicts the fact that you do not even know if the detective is an actual person and would provide factual evidence. My perspective on this is, does it even matter if people are real or just aspects of my own mind. This scenario does not warrant evidence or an argument based on the fact that it does not play a role in the outcome of how my own, or others lives, or lack thereof, play out. If my wife might be a non-person, why would I have to

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treat her differently than before I thought this way?

When arguing against Clifford's claim that you should not believe anything without sufficient

evidence, Clark attacks Clifford's upbringing in a form of bullying tactics to try to discredit Clifford. Also stating that his demand for evidence cannot meet its own demand. Clark then changes the wording of Clifford's argument into something that can be turned against itself: "It is wrong, always and everywhere, for anyone to believe anything on insufficient evidence," into everything needs evidence to be acknowledged. To me, the evidence is only required to believe and to believe in something; I have to care about it because it might have some affect on my life. Then Clark goes on about what sufficient evidence is, talking about Paraguay. A place where he has never been before and only heard about from testimonial evidence, how can he be sure it exists without sufficient evidence? He has only heard about it and seen it on maps, so it might just be a conspiracy to delude him about the existence of Paraguay. Yet, in his "supposes" he suggests using other peoples testimonies to provide evidence of situations.

Throughout Clark's argument for not needing evidence or argument to believe, he contradicts himself many times; this whole argument is to show the reader that there is not a need for evidence or argument to believe and he tries to provide evidence of this by using circumstantial scenario's that are vastly different in terms of what the reader can and cannot control or even care about because it might not have any merit on how one's life plays out. Believing in something is different than knowing something. Rational people can believe anything they want but only gain knowledge of the truths of the world and beyond by learning from the evidence that has been gathered by them; knowledge has the ability to change ones believe and that is what makes a rational person rational.