



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Feel free to read just this page and ignore the others

PROPOSED GOAL - To Seek Answers to these Questions:

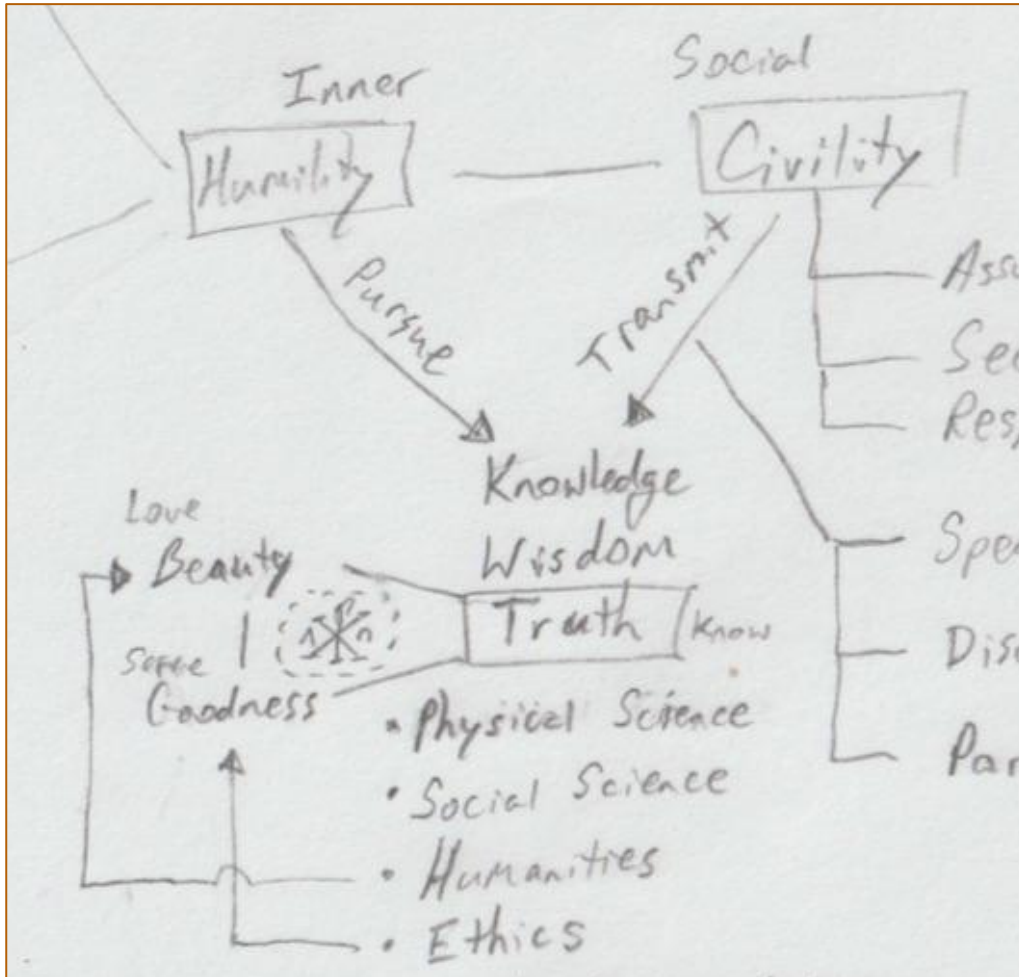
- How would **Scientific Skepticism** approach Family & Marriage - and how far does that take us ?
- How would **Rationalism** approach Family & Marriage - and how far does that take us ?
- What is our best hope for building a **consensus of first principles** and a **common methodology** that will enable our society to have **rational and productive discourse** around Family & Marriage ?
- What is our best hope for attracting people to **Science & Reason** and/or discrediting the **Post-Truth Forces of Individualism & Tribalism; Relativism & Nihilism; Revenge of the Layperson?**

FOUNDATIONAL TOPICS - Valuable Discussions that will enable achieving the above Goal:

- A. Discourse: Dialectic thru Mutual Hunger for Truth, Humility, and Civility [Slide 2]
- B. Heuristics & First Principles: Types 1-vs-2 Errors; Pascal's Wager; Experts; Wisdom [Slide 3]
- C. The Case for Moral Realism; Moral Philosophy (Ethics); Knowledge, Certainty, Truth Claims [Slide 4]
- D. Evaluating & Critiquing Mr.H's Pursuit of Knowledge & Wisdom of Marriage & Family [Slide 5]



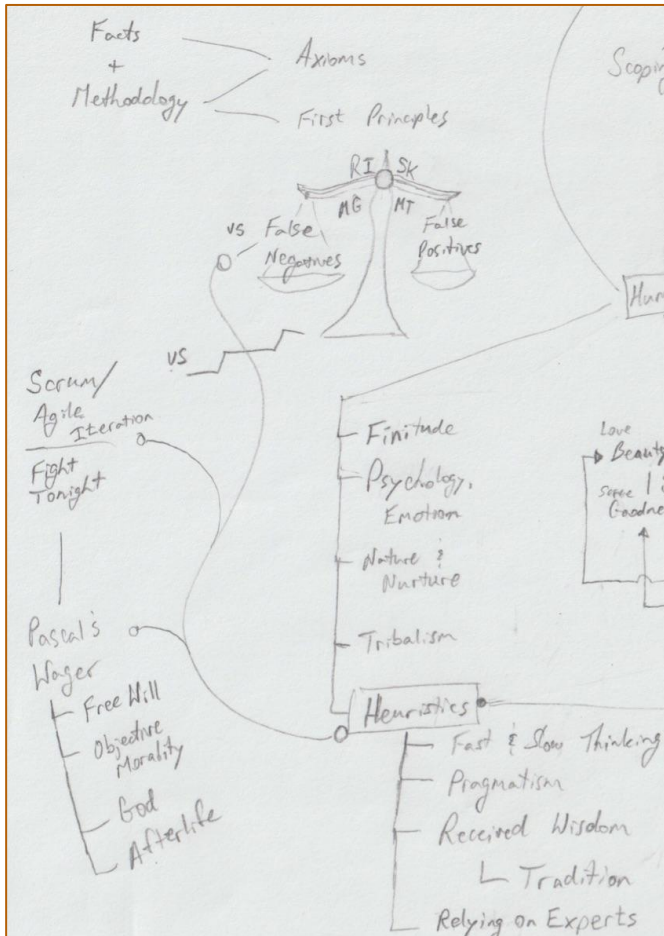
A. Discourse: Dialectic thru Mutual Hunger for Truth, Humility, and Civility



- Why should we value “Truth” more than Pleasure (Hedonism) ?
- How do we cultivate the right kind / healthy level of “Humility” ?
- What are the essential components of “Civility” ?
- When is incivility permissible ?
- How do we shift gears between
 - *pursuing* “Truth” (filling a known-unknown) and
 - *transmitting* “Truth” (promulgating a known-known) ?



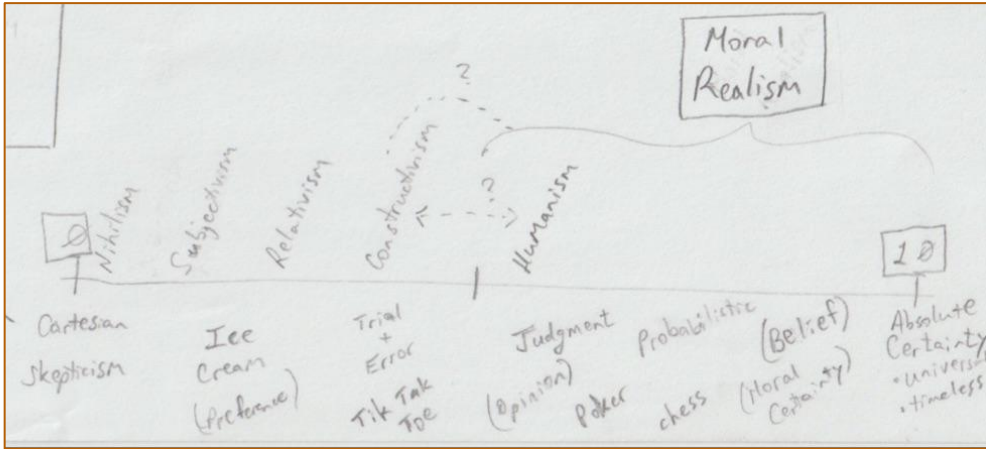
B. Heuristics & First Principles: Types 1-vs-2 Errors; Pascal's Wager; Experts; Wisdom



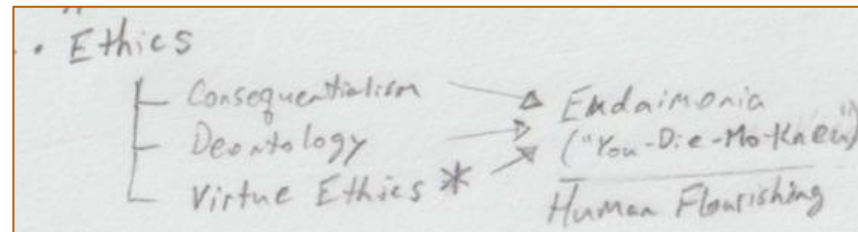
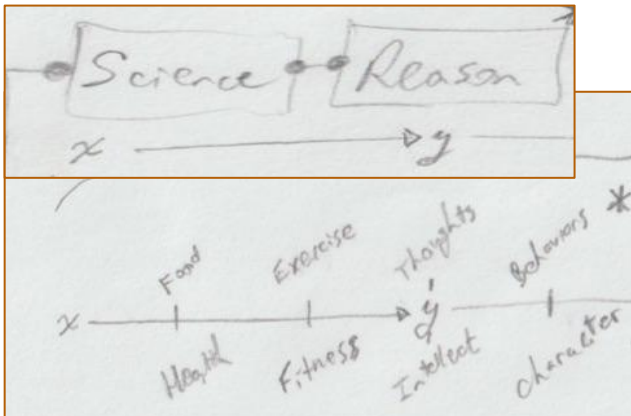
- Should we prioritize
 - (a) minimizing Type 1 Errors (False Positives),
 - (b) minimizing Type 2 Errors (False Negatives), or
 - (c) something else ?
- When (if ever) is it appropriate to rely upon “Pascal’s Wager”-type thinking to fill a gap (known-unknown) that we are unable to directly address through either Science or Reason ?
- What is appropriate reliance on Experts; and what is inappropriate reliance on Experts ?
- What is appropriate reliance on Received Wisdom (e.g. Tradition); and, What is inappropriate reliance on Received Wisdom ?



C. The Case for Moral Realism; Moral Philosophy (Ethics); Knowledge, Certainty, Truth Claims

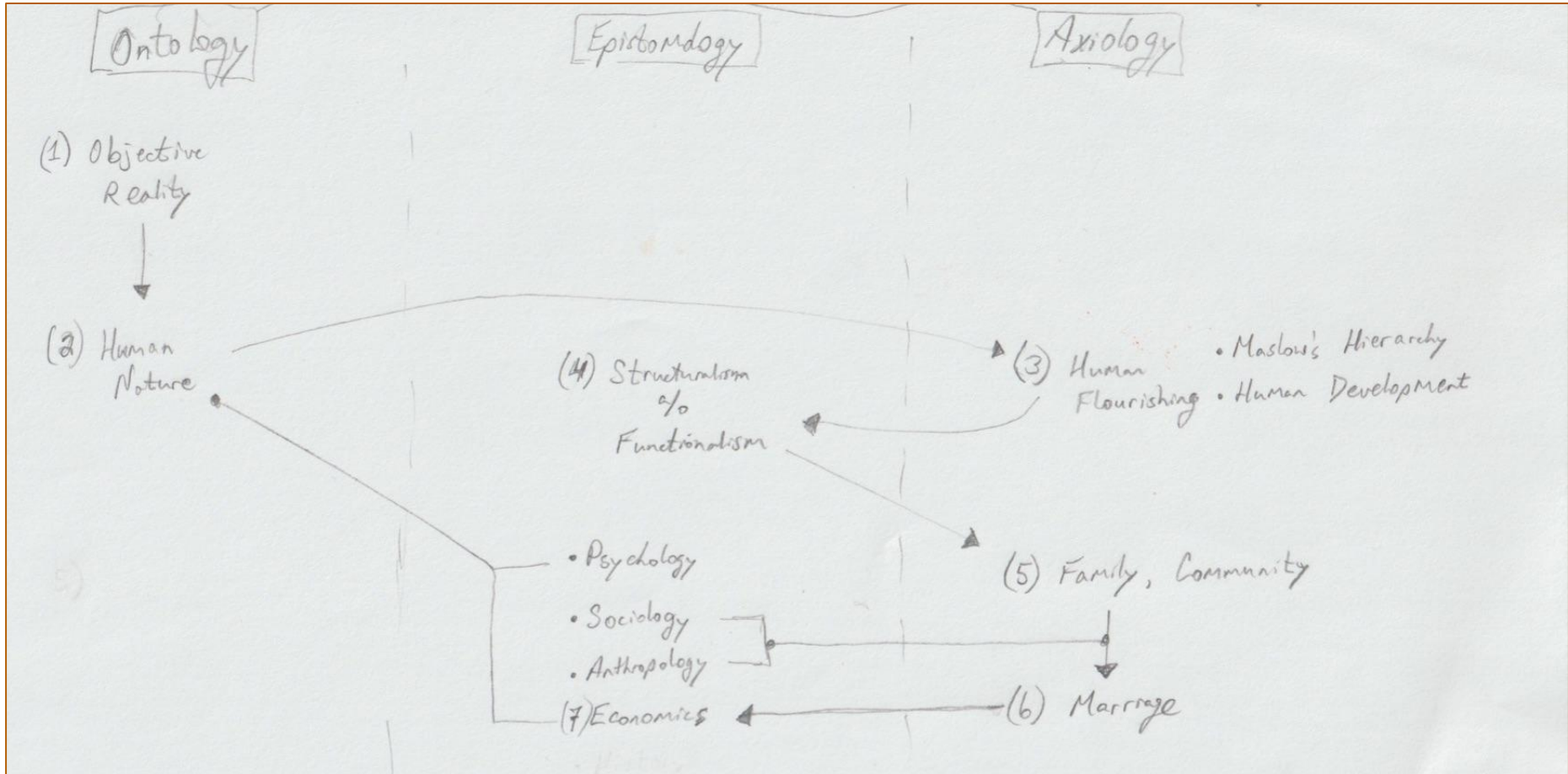


- What are the relationships among (a) Humanism, (b) Constructivism, (c) Relativism; and (d) Moral Realism ?
- Game! Can Mr.H Define these Terms ?
(*need a catchier name)
 - Truth / Truth Claim
 - Certainty
 - Knowledge
 - Scientific Skepticism / Cartesian Skepticism
 - Belief
 - Judgment
 - Opinion
 - Preference
- Where is Moral Realism strongest; and, where is Moral Realism weakest ?





C. Evaluating & Critiquing Mr.H's Pursuit of Knowledge & Wisdom of Marriage & Family (1 of 2)





C. Evaluating & Critiquing Mr.H's Pursuit of Knowledge & Wisdom of Marriage & Family (2 of 2)

1. **Objectivism:**

Reality and truth exist objectively - independent of our individual perceptions, emotions, or imaginations. While people can and do have diverse subjective experiences and beliefs worth consideration, objective reality and truth remains the ultimate measuring stick by which perceptions are evaluated.

2. **Human Nature:**

The essential elements of the human experience are common to all people; and, that diversity is the result of cultural and individual variations built on this shared foundation of human nature. It is *not* the case that cultural or individual diversity are evidence of multiple "human natures" or that no shared foundation exists at all.

3. **Human Flourishing:**

From the preceding concepts of Objectivism and Human Nature flows the idea that the essential elements of Human Flourishing are objective realities common to all people. This means that what is good for us and what goods we should pursue are for us to discover; not for us to *invent*.

4. **Structuralism:**

Structuralism - the sociological and anthropological school of thought - posits that

- human institutions can only be meaningfully understood through their relationships to other institutions. For example, the institution of marriage and the institution of family shed light on one another. Similarly, the institution of the nuclear family is better understood in the contexts of both the extended family and the geographic community than it can be understood in a vacuum.
- And, ultimately, all these institutions are shaped by human nature; and
- the function or dysfunction of these institutions are evaluated against whether they cultivate human flourishing.

