

A systems rationale for an evolutionary epistemological approach.

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The question "How do we know that we know?" is in some senses unassailable. No position taken in response to this fundamental query is sufficiently unequivocally well-founded that it cannot be reasonably attacked.

This paper briefly draws on prior epistemological debates, such as the rationalist - empiricist polarity; the determinist - free will dilemmas, and then moves by way of the morphogenetic school's reaction to the postmodernists and the biological view of evolutionary epistemology to a consideration of Prigogine's complexity theory - based views.

It is posited that the consideration of the above, together with the invocation of Occam's razor (both in its original and latter day interpretations) leads to an evolutionary epistemological view which resonates closely with Prigogine's view that the universe is an indeterminate, probabilistically evolving process. In short, epistemology is a process rather than a position, and the process is arguably entirely consistent with our understanding of the development of complex systems.

The embodiment and construct consistency of this epistemological view with and in the methodology employed in the author's research strategy (which includes, inter alia, action research) is also described. The author is presently researching critical success factors for the venture capital firm.