

## THERE ARE NO MONOPOLIES ON TRUTH.

No person, identity, or group has a natural monopoly on the truth of a situation. On the contrary, lived experience within a cultural tribe may be reason to take someone's assertions with a grain of salt.

It is often remarked that someone's lived experience should always be given primacy in a situation; their perspective, based upon their personal experiences, should be afforded the deepest respect and that they should own the definition of what is happening in a situation.

However, objective truth is very difficult to discern, and being close to a situation often makes it rather challenging to remain impartial.

Therefore, people who have an identity tied up in a situation should simultaneously be given more credence for their opinion (due to their experiences), and also a great deal more wariness towards their assertions, due to the much greater risk of **motivated reasoning** (e.g. tribal identity politics, receiving a social benefit from being disproportionately aggrieved).

This creates something of a paradox. This paradox is resolved through engagement between persons who are close to a situation in terms of lived experience or identity, and those who are far from it. Only by engaging in good faith dialogue and discussion can something closer to the objective truth of a situation be ascertained, and in so doing find a balance which is more likely to be fair and equitable for everyone.

Similarly, people in a particular demographic may feel that their experience generalizes to all other people in that demographic, and that they can speak for all, which is doubtful. Opinions and experiences should always be a personal matter, avoiding any claim upon those of other people.

*Peace requires acknowledging that having an identity tied up in a situation does not entitle one to a monopoly on the truth of it. Rather, such truth may best be located in dialogue between different groups, some close to a situation, some far from it.*