Evidential Arguments from Evil (Continued)

According to Rowe, this is probable on some of our evidence (setting aside evidence for the existence of God):

- **Pointless Evil.** There are evils which are **pointless**, in the sense that no all-powerful, all-knowing, and wholly good being has a reason to allow them.

What is the evidence we have that makes it probable that there are pointless evils? Something like this:

- **Apparently Pointless Evil.** There are evils which are pointless as far as we can tell.

(But maybe it should be something more specific than this, about the kinds and amounts of such evil.)

Then the support for the claim that Pointless Evil is probable rests on these two premises:

1. Apparently Pointless Evil is part of our evidence.

**Response 1: Theodicy**

Argue against 1. Can we give some plausible explanation for what might justify a divine being in permitting the evils we observe?

**Response 2: Skepticism**

Argue against 2. Maybe the fact that we can’t justify evils isn’t good support for the claim that there is no justification.

**“Noseeum” Arguments**

1. **Noseeum Premise.** So far as we can tell (detect), there is no x
2. So, it is more likely than not ... that there is no x.

(Howard-Snyder and Bergman, p. 15)

**The Noseeum Assumption**

A noseeum premise makes its conclusion more likely than not only if more likely than not we’d detect (see, discern) the item in question if it existed. (p. 16)

Is it likely that, if there was a reason for allowing horrendous evil, we would know what it was?

**Rowe’s Concert Example**

Suppose we are unsure whether Smith will be in town this evening. It is just as likely, say, that he will be out of town this evening as that he will be in town. Suppose, however, that we do know that if Smith is in town, it is just as likely that he will be at the concert this evening as that he won’t be. Later we discover that he is not at the concert. I conclude that, given this further information (that he is not at the concert), it is now less likely that he’s in town than that he’s out of town, that given our information that he is not at the concert, it is more likely that he is out of town than that he is in town. (p. 10)