Reading Assignment 11: Reliabilism and Rule Circularity

Assigned Reading J. V. Cleve. "Reliability, justification, and the problem of induction". In: *Midwest studies in philosophy* 9.1 (1984), pp. 555–567

Questions Answer questions two through four, seven, and eight

1. van Cleve's article focuses on defending inductive inferences belonging to two patterns/forms. Give an example of an inference of each type. Are the conclusions of inferences of the two types always about the future? Are the conclusions claims about causal relationships?

2. According to van Cleve, under what conditions is an *inference* justified?

3. Inspired by Carnap, van Cleve distinguishes two senses in which the English word "probable" is used (these two senses also distinguished in Goldman's article "What is Justified Belief?"). For each of these two meanings of the word "probable", give an example of a sentence in which the word "probable" is used in the relevant sense, and explain why it would typically be inappropriate to interpret the sentence using the other sense of "probable." Finally, explain why this distinction is relevant to criticizing the inductive probabilist's response to Hume's argument.

4. Define "epistemically circular," "premise circularity" and "rule circularity." Are premise circular arguments epistemically circular? Are rule circular arguments? Provide your own example of an argument that is *rule circular* and explain why the argument is rule circular. If you are encountering difficulty producing such an example, read page 557 carefully as Argument A is purportedly an example of a rule circular argument that you might choose to modify to create your own example.

5. According to van Cleve, what does it mean to say "induction is reliable?"

6. In what ways is reliabilism an *externalist* theory of justification (and or knowledge)?

7. In your own words, and in no more than two paragraphs, summarize the first objection than van Cleve considers to the reliabilist solution to the problem of induction, and summarize van Cleve's response.

8. van Cleve distinguishes between two "traditions" in characterizing justification. One is reliabilism. What does van Cleve call the second? According to the second tradition, how is "justification" defined and how are truths about justification learned?

9. According to van Cleve, if one rejects both solutions to the problem of induction, what thesis must one endorse about the relationship between justification and reliability?

References

[1] J. V. Cleve. "Reliability, justification, and the problem of induction". In: *Midwest studies in philosophy* 9.1 (1984), pp. 555–567.