# Reading Assignment 6: Reliabilist Epistemology

**Assigned Reading**

1. Goldman and Beddor, "Reliabilist Epistemology"
2. Roush, *Tracking truth*, Chapter 2

**Due Date**

Please submit your assignment on Canvas at least 30 minutes before class. Remember to bring a typed, hard copy of your answers to class as well, so that you can refer to your answers during discussion.

**Technical Requirements**

Answer questions two, five, eight, ten, twelve, and fourteen. Together, your answers should not be longer than a single typed page, but your assignment may be longer if you choose to copy the questions as well. Remember to provide page numbers indicating which passages you are paraphrasing. For the remaining optional questions, please write down the page numbers on which the author addresses the question. More detailed instructions for reading assignments are available on the course website.

**Questions**

1. What was Goldman's first desideratum on (i.e., criterion for) a theory of justification, and why did he propose that any theory of justification should satisfy that desideratum?

2. What types of terms can a theory of justification use, according to Goldman's first desideratum? Open Ended Question: Discuss the relationship between Goldman's first requirement and the claim that, "One major motivation for reliabilism – and one source of its enduring interest – is its naturalistic potential." You may wish to read a bit about naturalism before answering this open ended question.

3. Suppose Sally believes that Tim has a pet dog and a pet cat because she has seen both Tim's dog and cat in his apartment. Sally later comes to believe that Tim has at least two pets. Is Sally's belief justified according to reliabilism? Why or why not?

4. What two "senses" of reliability does Goldman discuss?

5. What is a "categorical" concept? Is justification a categorical concept? Why? Give an example of a categorical concept if justification is not categorical, and give an an example of a concept that is not categorical concept if justification is.

6. Briefly summarize the clairvoyance objection to reliabilism. (Does the objection challenge reliabilism for knowledge or for justification? Doe the claim that reliability is necessary or sufficient for justification? Or both?). Then briefly summarize one of the two responses discussed in the article. Does the "response" you summarize directly challenge the clairvoyance objection, or do proponents of the response modify reliabilism?

7. Briefly summarize the New Evil Demon Problem (Does the objection challenge reliabilism for knowledge or for justification? Doe the claim that reliability is necessary or sufficient for justification? Or both?). Then briefly summarize one of the three responses discussed in the article. Does the "response" you summarize directly challenge the New Evil Demon Problem, or do proponents of the response modify reliabilism?

8. This question is about the Generality Problem.

    - Briefly summarize the Generality Problem. Note: Unlike previous objections, the generality problem does not challenge the necessity or sufficiency of reliability for justification or knowledge. So in what sense is it an objection to reliabilism?

    - Then briefly summarize one of the three responses discussed in the article.

9. Give your own example to illustrate the Bootstrapping problem. (Does the objection challenge reliabilism for knowledge or for justification? Doe the claim that reliability is necessary or sufficient for justification? Or both?). Then briefly summarize one of the three responses discussed in the article. Does the "response " you summarize directly challenge the New Evil Demon Problem, or do proponents of the response modify reliabilism?

10. Illustrate the problem of defeat for reliabilism using an example of your own devising. Does Goldman's solution to the problem address your example? Defend your answer. Hint: The problem of defeat is an objection to the claim that the reliability of a belief-forming process is *sufficient* for justification. In other words, the conclusion of the argument is that one's belief may be unjustified yet formed via a reliable process.

11. Explain why, according to Roush's theory, Smith does not know "Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Barcelona" in Gettier's second case.

12. Imagine you leave a glass of ice water on your apartment balcony at noon on a 80 degree day. You forget about the glass when your friend calls, and you leave your apartment at 1PM. Around 3PM, you realize $P$, "Those ice cubes must be melted now!" Explain why some might claim that, according to Nozick's theory, you don't know $P$ at 3PM. Does Roush's theory entail that you know $P$ at 3PM? Explain.

13. According to Nozick's modified theory (involving methods), do you know "Those ice cubes have *probably* melted"? Explain.

14. Roush's theory of knowledge employs conditional probability, not subjunctive conditionals like Nozick and Sosa's theory. What virtues does Roush think using conditional probability has over subjunctive conditionals? Can you think of any additional virtues? Are there any vices?

15. According to Roush, if you know a proposition $P_1, P_2 \ldots P_n$ and competently deduce a *logical consequence* $Q$ from $P_1, \ldots P_n$ (see the exact conditions in the book), you know $Q$. Suppose $Q$ is not a logical consequence of $P$, but would be accepted on the basis of inductive reasoning from $P$ by any reasonable person. For example, suppose $P_1$ asserts the first emerald discovered was green, $P_2$ asserts the second emerald discovered was green, and so on. Do you know $Q$ "All emeralds are green" if all observed emeralds are green, according to Roush's account? Explain.

**References**

[1] A. Goldman and B. Beddor. "Reliabilist Epistemology". In: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Ed. by E. N. Zalta. Winter 2016. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2016.

[2] S. Roush. *Tracking truth: Knowledge, evidence, and science*. Clarendon Press Oxford, 2005.