## Comments on Leonard, "A Puzzle about Probabilism"

Formal Epistemology Workshop 28 May 2017 Nevin Climenhaga, University of Notre Dame

## 1. A Puzzle about Leonard's Puzzle

- Leonard's puzzle about Probabilism is based on a conflict between Probabilism and Calibrationism in the following case. Anna is asked whether:
  - (L) If Lenny is happy if and only if Jenny and Benny are not happy, then if Jenny is happy if Benny is not, Lenny is not happy.
  - (L) is a tautology, but Anna has been told that at the present moment she only reaches the right solution on problems like this 20% of the time.
- Suggestion: Anna does not believe (L), but rather,
  - (L\*) The proposition expressed by *that* sentence is true.
  - $(L^*)$  is not a tautology. Hence, Anna should follow Calibrationism's advice and have a credence of 0.2 in  $(L^*)$ .
- What about (L)? She should have no degree of belief in it at all, because she does not fully understand it.
- What if Anna is told she is only 20% reliable with respect to a simpler logical truth, like "If Lenny is happy, then Lenny is happy?" Here she should stick with her credence of 1.

## 2. A Critique of Leonard's Critique

- In defense of his Indeterminacy resolution of the puzzle, Leonard says that, because we are not aware of any principled grounds for favoring Probabilism or Calibrationism in the above case, "there is good reason for accepting that there are no plausible, non-ad hoc ways of specifying which requirement fails to apply to Anna."
- Worry: this is a "noseeum inference": "I noseeum, so they probably ain't there."
- Noseeum inferences are justified when, were the thing we are looking for present, we would probably see it. But in the case at hand, we should not expect that, were there principled reasons for preferring Probabilism or Calibrationism, we would know what they are.