**Moorean Methodology, cont’d, and Closure & Skepticism**

Phil. 270, Thursday 4/11/19, Readings 14 & 15, and looking ahead to 16 & 17

**Kelly’s stance**, laid out at 14: pp. 181.3-181.6, *might* be a very extreme one indeed, according to which he not only Moores the skeptical arguments that have already been dreamt up, but preemptively Moores skeptical arguments that we haven’t even seen yet, but that might be coming around the bend – though my best guess (see my attempt to interpret Kelly at 15: p. 51.3-51.7) has him making a claim not quite that strong, and as instead claiming that no way of working out the details of any of the skeptical arguments that we (epistemologists) are aware of will yield an argument to a radical\* skeptical conclusion which is such that it would be reasonable for us to follow it to that conclusion.

\*See Kelly’s note 5 at 14: p. 204.6 for his account of what counts as “radical” here; but basically, we can basically take it to be thorough-going “external world skepticism”

-But, at any rate, I’m opposing Kelly by suggesting that the skeptic might not be doomed to defeat from the outset with respect to even a very well-known old chestnut of a skeptical argument that we epistemologists (and certainly Kelly himself) are all familiar with.

**Yet I think the skeptic might still have a chance**…

-Even though we have reached the parties’ argumentative starting points in our “Moorean situation” (15: p. 46.2), so there are no deeper positive arguments to consider, there may still be this kind of factor to take into consideration: damage-controlling explanations for why the claim one rejects enjoys the plausibility it has (“explaining away” that plausibility): 15: pp. 46.5-49.5, 52.6-52.8

-“Moorean choice” 🡪 “enlightened Moorean choice” (phrase at 15: p. 48.4)

**Closure and Skepticism**

-how “closure,” which looks like a principle explaining how knowledge expands, fuels skeptical arguments

It all looks so positive and wonderful: If I know this, and this entails that, I’m all set to know that, too! But one person’s modus ponens is another’s modus tollens, after all, so the skeptic can powerfully argue: “Hey, but you don’t/can’t know that, at least not in that way, so you must not know this, after all.”

-a quick tour of the project of trying to formulate the closure principle properly (including the main fork in the road, and generalizing to MPC), with a look or two at what our skeptical argument (AI) looks like if we try to make key parts of it express instances of closure principles (the way of auxiliary premises vs. the way of beefing up the base premise)

Well, just for fun (!!), here’s how it comes out, for my hands and BIV, given my favorite way of trying to formulate closure:

1S+. I don’t know that I’m not a BIV, and, even if I KNEW that (I have hands entails I’m

not a BIV), and if I were to COMPETENTLY deduce I’m not a BIV from I have hands,

I would not thereby come to know that I’m not a BIV

2CU-. If I know that I have hands, and if I do not already know that I’m not a BIV, then if

I KNEW that (I have hands entails I’m not a BIV), and if I were to COMPETENTLY deduce

I’m not a BIV from I have hands, I would thereby come to know that I’m not a BIV

(*The Appearance of Ignorance*, pp. 283, 284)