Scepticism

Infinite regress

1. I know that p only if I'm justified in believing that p
2. I'm justified in believing that p only if I have a reason for believing p
3. q is a reason I have to believe that p only if I know that q
4. The is-a-reason-I-have-to-believe relation is asymmetric and transitive
5. I do not have an infinite number of beliefs
6. Therefore, I do not know anything

Infinitism and Coheretism

Infinitism denies premise 5 and states that we do have an infinite number of beliefs. For instance, we believe that 38784783 is a number, and the same is true for all the other numbers, we do not need to have the believes present in our conscience. Therefore, we do have an infinite number of beliefs.

Coheretism denies premise 4 and states that the relation can be symmetric.

Both of these views are very unpopular so skip them.

Foundationalism

Denies premise 1, some beliefs do not need justification:
- Cogito ergo sum
- Propositions about how things seem to us
    - These even work if we are dreaming. At least I do know that I *experience* that I have hands.
    - Counterargument: it seems as if a shadow is not moving, yet it must have moved when it is, an hour later, in a different location.
- Externalism (see knowledge)

BIV (brain in a vat)

1. I do not know whether or not I am a brain in a vat
2. If I do not know whether or not I am a brain in a vat, then I do not know whether or not I have hands
3. Therefore, I do not know whether I have hands

Moore

Moore's response is very simple: I do have hands, here is one and here is another. Therefore, I am not a brain in a vat. There seems to be a disagreement between our intuitions. On the one hand it seems very intuitive that we just, clearly, have hands, look at them. But on the other hand, it is also very intuitive that we do not know whether or not we are a brain in a vat.

Some might find Moore's argument very unconvincing but there is more to it. Moore, as he also explains, is not trying to *prove*, as the people who would not agree with his argument understand a proof, that we have hands. He is just trying to show how crazy it is to be a sceptic. Clearly, we have hands. Philosophers seem to have this tendency of making very strange and unintuitive arguments and we probably have hands. Moore does not think the arguments in favour of scepticism are very strong, and because it is so intuitive that we have hands, the burden of proof is on the sceptic.

Nozick

Also talk about the 4ᵗʰ condition, why does he add this??
Its about the closest possible worlds where p is true, would we still believe it. This helps deal with the dictator scenario: imagine we all live in an awful totalitarian state and the dictator dies. All the newspapers are all truthful and say that all the dictator has died, you read one of these. However, the state propaganda machine kicks in and starts getting rid of all these newspapers. In 30 seconds you are gonna turn on the tv and see that actually, he isn't dead (even though he is). This does satisfy all the other conditions. However, this does not really seem like knowledge yet and that's why we need the 4ᵗʰ condition.

Nozick has another response. With his counterfactual tracking condition he comes to a different result. He denies the 2ⁿᵈ premise. He agrees with the first one, if I were a brain in a vat then I would still believe that I wouldn't be, hence I do not know that I am a brain in a vat.

However, if I did not have hands, then I would not believe that I did. Because, and this is the way that he determines the truth-value of counterfactuals, in the set of nearest possible worlds, if I would not have hands, the reasons for that would be that they were cut off or I had an accident. It would not be because I would be a brain in a vat.

To illustrate the view of closest possible worlds, consider the following statement: 'if kangaroos had no tails, they would topple over'. This statement does not consider all the possible worlds in which kangaroos have no tails (surely, there must exist one in

which the kangaroos would not topple over). It only considers the possible world which is closest to ours as much as kangaroos having no tails permits it to.

One could object, as you would also do to Moore, and say that we do not know what are the closest possible worlds. If we are brains in vats, then the closest possible worlds would be some in which we would still think that we had hands. However, Nozick is an externalist and ends up rejecting the KK-principle. Externalists do not need internal justification for what they know. Nozick does not have to know that the closest possible world would be one in which he knows that he did not have hands, as long as this is actually the case. He, hereby, also rejects the KK-principle: that, if one knows that p, he also knows that he knows that p.

TALK more about the KK-principle and how it is weird to reject the kk-principle.

A couterargument against Nozick's tracking theory is given by Kripke. Imagine the Henry barn scenario. Suppose that the real barns are red but that the fake, papier-mâché barns cannot be red and can only be green because of some special properties of the papier-mâché. Then it would seem as if Henry, when looking at the one true real barn, would know that he sees a red barn, but not that he sees a barn. For, if it would not be the case that he did not see a red barn, if the barn was fake, then he would see a green barn so the counterfactual condition is met here. But, as explained before, he would not know that he would see a barn. This is very unintuitive. Surely, if you know that there is a red barn, then you know that there is a barn. However, Nozick bites the bullet here and ends up rejecting the closure principle.

Closure

The closure under known entailment is the view that one can deductively get new knowledge: if you have a valid argument and then attach "S knows that" to all the premises and the conclusion, then you still have a valid argument. So a consequence of this view is that if S knows that p and S knows that p entails q, then S knows that q. For Nozick, denying closure does come at a great cost because of the example given above.

There are a few small objections to closure:
- Maybe someone is unable to understand a long, tautological argument. But with the condition that someone grasps it in closure, this should be fixed.
- Maybe S does not know that p entails q. Can be fixed, as I have already done, by adding that S must know that p entails q.

This is also why it is closure under *known* entailment.

A larger objection comes from Dretsky. Suppose you are at a zoo in ordinary circumstances standing in front of a cage marked 'zebra'; the animal in the cage is a zebra, and you believe zeb, the animal in the cage is a zebra, because you have zebra-in-a-cage visual percepts. It occurs to you that zeb entails not-mule, it is not the case that the animal in the cage is a cleverly disguised mule rather than a zebra. You then believe not-mule by deducing it from zeb. What do you know? You know zeb, since, if zeb were false, you would not have zebra-in-a-cage visual percepts; instead, you would have empty-cage percepts, or aardvark-in-a-cage percepts, or the like. Do you know not-mule? If not-mule were false, you would still have zebra-in-a-cage visual percepts (and you would still believe zeb, and you would still believe not-mule by deducing it from zeb). So you do not know not-mule. But notice that we have:
You know zeb]
You believe not-mule by recognizing that zeb entails not-mule
You do not know not-mule.

Maybe closure in general is not useful.
However, there are easy objections. In some zoos you would know that the zebra is not a cleverly disguised mule.

Another counterexample against Nozick would be that his analysis of knowledge is not plausible.

For instance, objections to the closest possible worlds account. Which closest possible worlds are the most relevant?

The grandmother problem, we think the grandmother has knowledge but according to the tracking account she does not have knowledge.
A grandson comes to visit his grandmother. And the grandmother deduces that he is healthy. However, if he had been unwell, the entire family would have conspired to make her think that he is well.

However, Nozick gets around the problem by using a belief forming process. He modifies conditions 3 & 4 by mentioning a specific method:
-    **If p were false and S used m, they would not have believed p**
-    **If p were true and S used m, they would not have believed p**

Where m was the method used by the grandmother, so the grandmother does not use the same method to arrive at the belief, so it still counts as knowledge. However, it invites the generality problem.

Other problems for Nozick, the mountain climbing brain in a vat. Right now, I know that I am not a brain in a vat who is lead to believe to be climbing a mountain.

the trash chute: I drop a trash bag down a chute in my apartment complex. An hour later I
presumably know that the bag is in the basement. However, if it were not true that the bag is in
the basement, this would be because the bag got stuck in the chute (a very rare occurrence).
But in that case I would still believe that the bag is in the basement, so condition 3 is not
satisfied.
the mountain-climbing brain-in-a-vat: Presumably, I right now know that I'm not a brain-in-a-vat being led to
believe that I'm climbing a mountain. However, if I were a brain-in-a-vat being led to believe
that I'm climbing a mountain, I would believe that I'm not such a brain-in-a-vat, so condition 3 is not satisfied.
the lucky glance: I glance out my window and see Darien crossing the street. However, Darien very
easily could have crossed the street at a spot I can't see from my window. So although it
seems that I know that Darien crossed the street, in several nearby worlds in which that
proposition is true and in which I use the same belief-forming method (glancing out my
window), I don't believe that Darien crossed the street. Thus condition 4 is not satisfied.

Relativization to method deals with this. If the method was instead: I was sitting in front of my window for hours and only once looked out of my window.

Kripke's barn: I'm driving through the countryside and see a red barn. However, it turns out that,
although I passed a real barn, there are lots of fake barn facades scattered throughout the
countryside. One catch: all of the fake barns are yellow. So I fail condition 3 with respect to

the proposition that I passed a barn (there are nearby worlds in which I pass a facade instead
of a barn, but believe that I passed a barn), but I meet all four conditions with respect to the
proposition that I passed a red barn. However, this is counterintuitive: either I know both
propositions or I know neither, but I don't know one but not the other.