Anderson Philosophy of Religion

Winter 2013 PHIL 112/212G

STUDY QUESTIONS NO. 2

1. Define or briefly explain each of the following.

(a) Deductively valid argument; (b) Inductively strong argument; (c) Requirement of Total Evidence; (d) The Theory of Appearing (Alston); (e) The fallacy of Epistemic Imperialism (Alston); (f) The fallacy of Double Standard (Alston);

(g) Atheistic Many-Universes Hypothesis; (h) Prime Principle of Confirmation; (i) Confirmation (as used in Probability Theory).

1. William Alston argues that Mystical “Perception” is analogous to Sensory Perception in a number of respects. Explain two features that mystical “perception” is supposed (by Alston) to have in common with sensory perception.
2. According to Alston the Christian Mystical Perceptual Practice (CMP) is a well-established “doxastic practice” and satisfies the conditions necessary for such a practice to provide *prima facie* justification to the beliefs it produces as output. Explain briefly what a “doxastic practice” is and three of the conditions required for such a practice to be epistemically acceptable.
3. Alston considers several arguments that are supposed to show that CMP is unreliable (Chapter 6). Explain three of these arguments and Alston’s replies to them.
4. We presented some objections to Alston’s overall argument in handout. Explain two of these objections.
5. Explain how the diversity of religious mystical practices causes a problem for Alston’s argument that CMP produces *prima facie* justified beliefs.
6. Briefly state Robin Collins’s version of the Fine-Tuning Argument and critically discuss. Be sure to discuss whether or not the argument is deductively valid (as he states it) and to discuss at least two of the objections against it that Collins considers.
7. Robin Collins gives five reasons for rejecting the Atheistic Many-Universes Hypothesis. State two of these. (Extra credit for critical discussion of those two of Collins’s reasons that you have chosen).