Joshua Reed Being and Knowing Spring, 2017

Study Questions 7

Huemer thinks it is difficult to be a skeptic because radical skepticism doesn't match with everyday life. Even if a person has radical skeptic beliefs philisophically, they don't tend to follow those beliefs in everyday life.

Radical skepticism is sort of parilyzing because stopping to verify that every core belief is justified before moving to another would lead a person to starvation. Often times (as Descartes found) it can be tiring and nearly impossible to proceed beyond knowing that you exist and think.

Of much more practical use is to start with a 'reasonable belief', a sort of Z in the $A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C \rightarrow ...$ of reasoning, to base the rest of our knowledge off of. For example, I know that laughing makes me happy. I laugh when I'm with my friends. Therefore, I would enjoy a barbecue at my friends place.

I don't like pain. \rightarrow Stoves are hot. \rightarrow Hot things cause pain \rightarrow Don't touch a hot stove. Of course this is in reverse whereas the original idea is that I don't like pain.

A radical skeptic has to throw out or prove these sort of base assumptions before developing any further reasoning. This is incredibly difficult and impractical.

Still, I don't disagree with the radical skeptics that we may all be in the matrix, but what little can us non-chosen ones do? : p