

Carneades's *convincing* is of course not the modern quantified notion of probability. But its core features are those later philosophers commonly associate with epistemic notions of the "probable". First, it somehow invites assent: it makes something "appear true". Second, it is discernible. On Carneades's view the two are conjoined: the convincing is discernible because it is a certain way of appearing true. Third, it is not truth-entailing but it is reliable. Fourth, it comes in degrees. These features can be found in later notions of "probability", sometimes—but not always—spelled out in terms of mathematical probability.⁷³ Thus "Probabilism" is not a wholly bad name for a view inspired by Carneades.⁷⁴ The same features may be found in the contemporary internalist notion of (epistemic) "justification", when that term is used to denote not simply the normative status of *being justified* but some discernible indication of truth in virtue of which a belief has that status ("one's reasons", "grounds" or "evidence").

Philosophers who adopt Carneades's "criterion" may emphatically deny that they are Sceptics because they deny *that we ought to suspend judgement*. But they are Sceptics in the sense of denying *that we know*. Locke is a prime example. He distinguishes the *certain*, which is the province of knowledge, from the merely *probable*, which falls short of knowledge.⁷⁵ The scope of the former is severely limited: ideas and conceptual truths, the existence of God and the existence of particular things that we currently perceive.⁷⁶ In the latter, however, opinion is allowed. As with Carneades, "probability" is defined in terms of discernible indication of truth—though Locke hesitates on whether the indication's reliability should be real or apparent.⁷⁷ Probabilist Scepticism is also manifest in the first philosophers to call themselves "fallibilists", namely

to show that lack of knowledge did not entail that no action was justified (Long and Sedley, 448–9 and Schofield, 1999, 334–8). At any rate, it is clear enough that Philo did relax Academic Scepticism enough to allow the formation of "probable" opinions. See Long and Sedley (1987, 455–60) and Schofield (1999) for further discussion.

⁷³See e.g. Kant (AA 9:82) who insists that not all probability can be given a mathematical representation.

⁷⁴See Burnyeat (n.pub) and Schofield (1999, 350) for discussion. It is potentially misleading to call Carneades himself a "probabilist" because (a) he puts a view forward dialectically, but does endorse it and (b) the view he puts forward is not *we ought to follow chances*, but rather than there is no reason not to. But Philo turned Carneades's view into a non-dialectical, normative one. In a landmark study Hacking (1975, 18–38) argued that pre-modern notions of "probability" lacked the dimension of evidential support. The claim has since been overturned; see Franklin (2001, 373).

⁷⁵Locke (1975 IV, 3 §14): "the highest probability amounts not to certainty, without which there can be no true knowledge".

⁷⁶Locke (1975, IV, 3, §1, §5, §9–14, §21); "our ignorance is great" (§22).

⁷⁷Locke, 1975, IV, 15, §1: "probability is nothing but the appearance of such an agreement or disagreement [between two ideas] by the intervention of proofs, whose connexion is not constant and immutable, or at least is not perceived to be so, but is, or appears for the most part to be so, and is enough to induce the mind to judge the proposition to be true or false, rather than the contrary." The text leaves open whether probability involves a connexion that "is" or "appears" for the most part to be so.