

BA Intercollegiate Lectures in Epistemology and Methodology

Autumn 2001: Scepticism, Truth-Tracking and A Priori Knowledge

Readings 2: G. E. Moore on Scepticism

Moore's main discussions of scepticism appear in

1. "Hume's theory examined", in Some Main Problems of Philosophy (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1953), 108-126.
2. "A defense of common sense", in Contemporary British Philosophy (second series), ed. J. H. Muirhead (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1925), 192-233.
3. "Proof of an external world", in Proceedings of the British Academy 25 (1939), 273-300.
4. "Certainty", in Philosophical Papers (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1959), 223-246.
5. "Four forms of scepticism", in Philosophical Papers (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1959), 193-222.

The first four items are reprinted in

6. Baldwin, Thomas (ed): G. E. Moore: Selected Writings (London: Routledge 1993)

Item 5 is very important for understanding Moore's response to scepticism, but perhaps less important for understanding scepticism. The same is true of several of Moore's "Replies" to his critics in

7. Schilpp, Paul A. (ed): The Philosophy of G. E. Moore (Open Court: LaSalle, IL, 1942), vol. IV of The Library of Living Philosophers.

Important recent discussions include

8. Baldwin, Thomas: G. E. Moore (London: Routledge 1990), esp. Chapter IX.
9. Clarke, Thomson: "The legacy of skepticism", J. Phil. 1972.

10. Stroud, Barry: The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism (Oxford: OUP 1984), esp. Chapter 3.
11. Williams, Michael: Unnatural Doubts (Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1997), esp. Chapter 1 Section 7.

Moore work on scepticism attracted the attention of Wittgenstein--witness the notes published posthumously under the title Certainty. There is a large literature on Wittgenstein on Moore, of which more later in the term.