

Knowledge and Inference

The interest and energy epistemologists have invested in the study of the principle of epistemic closure has been very fruitful despite the lack of convergence on a solution to the paradoxes it raises, but we must guard against considering closure to the exclusion of other compatible principles linking knowledge and inference. The present paper contrasts closure with a weaker principle which has been overlooked in the existing literature, which I will call the principle of epistemic extendibility. Extendibility is extremely intuitive; indeed, we shall see that it is motivated by the same core thought that underwrites the acceptance of closure. Extendibility also seems to be paradox-generating, and these extendibility-based paradoxes are worthy of philosophical attention in their own right as they raise genuinely new issues, a proper appreciation of which can cast illumination on their closure-based counterparts. For example, consideration of the extendibility paradoxes suggests an adequacy constraint on attempts to resolve the clash of intuitions at work in the paradoxes generated by closure, and it is a constraint with teeth. To illustrate this last point, I show that a solution to the lottery puzzle that can be extracted from John Hawthorne's discussion in **Knowledge and Lotteries** fails this constraint in an instructive manner.