

## Radical Scepticism

The most serious epistemological problem continues to be the question whether we can know anything at all about the world – a problem that has, perhaps, become especially pressing in the light of the rise to prominence of so-called ‘closure-based’ sceptical arguments. The closure principle states that ‘If S knows that p, and S competently deduces q from p thereby coming to believe that q on this basis while retaining her knowledge that p, then S knows that q.’ But acceptance of this principle seems to have paradoxical consequences. In particular, if we endorse it, the following argument seems to be valid:

(P1) If I know I have two hands, then I know that I’m not systematically deluded.

((P1) follows from the ‘closure principle’).

(P2) I don’t know I’m not systematically deluded.

(P3) I don’t know I have two hands.

The lecture examines the question of whether there is any way of resisting (P2). Can we ever know that we are not systematically deluded? If, yes, how? If not, what do we do?