

PHIL 340 paper 2 suggested topics

Here are some suggested topics for paper #2. As with the first paper's suggestions, notice how each one is focused on a particular argument or issue. Pick just ONE of the bulleted points, or just one aspect of what's suggested there, or pick something else that's similarly focused. Think in terms of one argument, one view, one objection, etc., and structure your paper around a thesis of your own having to do with that one argument, view, etc. that you're analyzing.

Papers are due on Blackboard, through the SafeAssign link, by **Monday, February 6 at 11:30 p.m.** (a class day later than the syllabus tells you).

Hume's "The problem of induction"

- Solve the problem of induction as Hume characterizes it. Take one horn of the dilemma (or trilemma, if you include *a priori* intuitive support for a principle of induction too) and defend that justification of induction against what Hume would likely say in response. (E.g., defend an inductivist account of induction, a deductivist account, etc.) Don't spend the entire paper explaining what the problem of induction is. Instead, keep that part brief and spend most of your space developing your solution. This goes for similar topics below too.

Hempel's "The role of induction in scientific inquiry"

- Hempel's "wide sense" of inductivism—Is that view correct?
- Either of the paradoxes of confirmation: The raven paradox or the grue paradox (not both). Solve the one you choose.

Popper's "The problem of induction"

- Popper considers, and rejects, an "appeal to probability" in order to solve the problem of induction. Is the appeal to probability the right way to solve the problem or not?
- Popper's deductivism—Does this adequately solve the problem of induction?

Duhem's "Physical theory and experiment"

- One conclusion of the article seems to be that scientific hypotheses can never be conclusively verified OR falsified. Analyze Duhem's argument critically: Is the argument sound?

Lipton's "The method of inference to the best explanation"

- A proposal to consider all inductive inference as inference to an explanation—Does this solve the problem of induction adequately?