

## The Scope of Parity Reasoning

'In Knowledge and Lotteries, John Hawthorne offers a plausible diagnosis of our unwillingness to grant that we can know, of a given lottery ticket, that it will lose - no matter how large the lottery in question. According to Hawthorne it is natural to employ parity reasoning when thinking about lottery outcomes: Put roughly, to accept that a given ticket will lose, no matter how likely that is, is to make an arbitrary choice between alternatives that are perfectly balanced, given one's evidence. In this paper I shall present an argument to the effect that parity reasoning is not limited to propositions about lottery outcomes but, on the contrary, can be applied to any proposition that is less than certain, given one's evidence. If this argument is cogent then accepting any uncertain proposition, no matter how likely it is, involves a (covert) arbitrary or capricious choice.'

Martin Smith