

Philosophy

Logic, metaphysics, epistemology, it all covers essentially the same trail through the woods. It's usually late autumn, or the depth of winter. Often, snow litters the ground. It's cold, sweater-weather indoors, and a heavy coat, gloves, and a knit cap outside. You can see your breath and that both helps and hinders each of the hypotheses you try to consider. Inevitably, a light snow will be falling through the barren limbs of the trees and it is easy enough to begin to wonder whether you might get lost if you go too far or if the snow begins to fall heavier or faster, and you think that perhaps you need to turn back while you can still see your own tracks. There is never anyone around to talk to and so you are left to your own devices, as they say. Sometimes you try to talk it out out loud, and startle a bird or two. You become conscious of your feet, hear and feel yourself walking, just as Beethoven must have kept composing music in his head, keeping the beat with his feet as he trudged through the Vienna woods long after he had lost his hearing. Then, before you know it, you sense that it is really getting dark, that the snow is falling faster, and that you have almost no notion of how you might get back to where you began.