The Material Theory of Induction

In my work in history of science, I have often sought to assess the cogency of claims of evidential support by historical figures. However existing accounts of inductive inference were too remote from the actuality of the history to be applied usefully. The material theory of induction arose from my attempts to produce an account of inductive inference that is useful in historical work. Its main claim is that inductive inferences are not warranted by conformity to some general schema or universally applicable rule, as it the familiar case with deductive inference. Rather inductive inferences are warranted by facts that obtain only locally.

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