

Locke #1

Rationalism / empiricism

Locke's *Essay* explores the extent and limits of human knowledge

The materials of human knowledge

Ideas

Simple ideas

The atoms of experience

We can neither make nor destroy them. (16)

Their origin

Not innate

The blank tablet (tabula rasa)

Come from

Sensation (just these for humans) **q 17**

Reflection

Sum up: The "dark room" (37)

Existence and *unity* are simple ideas that accompany every other idea. (22#7) ????????????????

Operations of the mind (on simple ideas)

The big three:

Combining (37)

Yields complex ideas
e.g., beauty (39), a man, an army, the universe

*Putting side-by-side – comparing and contrasting
without combining*

Yields ideas of relations

Abstraction

Yields general ideas

Other mental operations

Discerning and distinguishing (35)

Naming (36)

Memory, which allows the storing of ideas. (34)

The simple idea of solidity (p19-20)

= Impenetrability?

Re the essence of matter

vs. Descartes' theory of matter as extension

Question: Is this a simple idea?

Primary and secondary qualities

Distinguish between the world of bodies as they really are in themselves independently of the human mind, and bodies as they appear within the human mind.

Bodies vs. ideas *produced in the mind by* bodies.

Some of these ideas give us an accurate view of bodies, others don't.

Primary

“Solidity, extension, figure, and mobility” (25)

“Bulk, figure, number, situation, and motion or rest in their solid parts” (29)

Secondary

Powers to produce ideas of color, sounds, smells, tastes, etc. (29)

Tertiary

Powers to produce powers in other object – powers that enable them to produce ideas in us.

Theses:

Primary qualities are really in the objects as they are independently of our perception of them.

In virtue of having those primary qualities, the objects have the power to produce ideas in us.

Some of these ideas – ideas of primary qualities – accurately represent (Locke says “*resemble*”) the objects themselves.

Others don’t. Ideas of secondary qualities bear no resemblance whatever to objects outside the mind, though it is a common mistake to suppose that they do.

Arguments:

- Light and color (28 – the porphyry example)
- Pain, heat, and fire
- Sickness, sweetness, and manna (28 top)
- Same water cold to one hand, hot to another

The representational theory of perception

Ideas are the immediate object of perception. External objects are represented by ideas.

**Against Descartes' claim that the soul is always conscious
(pp. 13-14)**