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PHI101: Introduction to Philosophy: OA

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Please submit a Word doc or pdf with thoughtful answers for the following questions from your assigned reading:

Locke, "Qualities and Ideas" (Essay . . .) – pp. 86-90

1. Explain in your own words what Locke means by a "quality" of matter.

Locke defines a property of matter as the capacity of an object to engender perceptions or notions within us. This property pertains to a substance's ability to generate ideas within our psyche. According to Locke, this property possesses the ability to influence our minds and instill ideas within us.

2. Give three examples of Locke's Primary Qualities, and three examples of Secondary Qualities. How does Locke explain the key differences between Primary and Secondary Qualities?

Properties that are considered primary are inherently connected to the body and cannot be separated from it, regardless of its state or any changes it may undergo. These qualities are also referred to as genuine, as the size, shape, number, and movement of a body are present within it,

even if they cannot be sensed by humans. These qualities are inherent and unchangeable in bodies, and they exist within them, whether or not we can perceive them. Three examples of primary qualities include shape, motion, and form.

On the other hand, secondary qualities do not exist as physical properties in bodies, but rather as capacities that elicit certain sensations in us. These qualities activate faculties in objects that trigger ideas within us, even though these ideas do not have a physical presence in the bodies themselves. This phenomenon also occurs in the case of bodies that are not perceptible to our senses due to their size. The connection between primary and secondary qualities lies in the fact that particles act upon us through primary qualities, generating secondary qualities within us. While secondary qualities can produce various sensations, they are not fundamental to the object. Three examples of secondary qualities include sound, color, and cold.

3. Present an example from Locke's writing that describes a material object in terms of its fundamental primary qualities versus its secondary qualities, and how Locke's distinction makes sense of the reality of that object.

In the following text, I will utilize an example from Locke's work - the ice cube - to introduce the differentiation between a material object's fundamental primary attributes and its secondary properties.

It is conceivable that in our mind, an ice cube embodies its distinct cubic structure. Additionally, we commonly associate an ice cube with attributes such as coldness and transparency. Locke segregates these ideas, which solely exist within our minds, into primary and secondary qualities. Primary qualities endure within objects, despite any alterations they may undergo. These properties exist solely within objects and are referred to as original qualities. In contrast, secondary qualities are those that have the capacity to generate various sensations within us.

Berkeley, "Nothing Outside the Mind" (*Principles . . .*) – pp. 97-102

4. Explain Berkeley's criteria for "existence" - what does he think we mean when we say something is "real" or that it "exists"?

According to Berkeley, having an idea in one's mind requires prior perception of it. Therefore, he argues that only things that have been perceived truly exist. The existence of things that have not been observed cannot be verified. Therefore, if we claim that something is real or exists, we must have previously perceived it.

Berkeley's persuasive arguments reject the existence of entities that are independent of the mind. This leads to the conclusion that only a non-human mind can serve as the origin of sensory ideas.

5. Based on his definition of existence, why does Berkeley think we should not believe in the existence of independent Primary Qualities? What does this mean about the existence of matter?

Berkeley's philosophy maintains that primary and secondary qualities are only present in the mind. Therefore, these qualities are inseparable from each other since they rely on one another for function.

Similarly, all other sensory qualities can also be shown to exist solely within the mind, regardless of whether they have an existence in material reality or outside the mind.

6. As a result of his critique of materialism, explain what Berkeley has to say about the ultimate source of all the sensory experiences we receive.

Berkeley's primary objective is to criticize the prevailing materialism of his time, which posits the existence of an external material world independent of consciousness. He criticizes this worldview on theological and moral grounds, viewing it as a threat to faith. Despite this, his argumentation is entirely philosophical and claims to be objective and free of unfounded assumptions.

As previously mentioned, Berkeley asserts that things cease to exist once they are no longer perceived, with the exception of God, whom he sees as the ultimate source. Berkeley posits that God perceives everything and is the origin of all our thoughts and experiences.