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Philosophy

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Questions 4

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

1. Explain in your own words what Locke means by a "quality" of matter. Locke says that "quality" is the power that our body has to produce ideas. The quality of matter he refers to is anything, like an object, that causes or creates an idea in our mind.

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? Size, Shape, and texture are examples of Locke's Primary Qualities, while color, taste, and sound are examples of his Secondary Qualities. Primary Qualities are the ideas that resemble their causes out in the world, while those that don't are the Secondary Qualities. The Secondary Qualities produce sensations in us through our Primary Qualities, but they are nothing in themselves.

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. One example that Locke uses to illustrate this distinction is that of a snowball. Locke argues that the snowball's primary qualities include its shape, size, and motion, while its secondary qualities include its whiteness and coldness. He makes sense of the reality of the snowball by providing a way to differentiate between the

qualities that are inherent to the object and those that are dependent on our perception of it. He says how the snowball's primary qualities, such as its shape and size, are objective and exist in only the object itself, regardless of whether or not we perceive them. In contrast, he says how the snowball's secondary qualities, such as its whiteness and coldness, are dependent on our senses and do not exist in the object itself.

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"? His criteria for existence is that in order for something to be real, it must exist in many minds so that whether or not he still exists, the object or what is perceived to be real will continue to exist. He explains that what he merely imagines exists in his mind alone and continues to exist only as long as he thinks of it. He claims that sensible objects cannot exist unless it is perceived. He says that everything in existence is either a mind or an idea in the mind, and he argues that we cannot know anything about the external world beyond our own ideas and perceptions.

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 thinks we should not believe in independent primary Qualities because we cannot know anything about the primary qualities of objects because they exist independently of our perception. He believes that our perceptions are the only reality, and that the primary

qualities of objects are nothing more than collections of ideas in our minds. His rejection of independent primary qualities leads him to reject the existence of matter as well. For Berkeley, matter is the supposed substance that underlies the primary qualities of objects. However, since he denies the existence of primary qualities independent of our perception, he also denies the existence of matter.

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. He argues that the ultimate source of all sensory experiences we receive is not in the material world, but in the mind. He believes that sensory experiences are not caused by material objects themselves, but by the ideas that our minds form in response to stimuli. He argues that our senses do not directly perceive material objects, but only the ideas that we form based on our sensory experiences. He believe that the external world only exists as a collection of ideas in our minds. However, he claims that the sensory experiences we receive are created by God, who constantly and immediately communicates ideas to our minds. So therefore, the ultimate source of all our sensory experiences is not the material world, but God's continuous creation and communication of ideas to our minds.