

Jamar Johnson

Phi101:Introduction to Philosophy

LOUIS SANCHEZ

04/18/2023

Reading Questions Lesson 4

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

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

Locke held that attributes of substance, such as color, texture, shape, size, taste, and smell, are objective and exist without attention to any specific observer.

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?

Primary characteristics include its shape, extension, motion, color, taste, and odor.

Shape is an object's actual physical form, which exists regardless of how an observer perceives it. The length, width, and height of an object collectively make up its extension. An object's ability to move from one location to another, along with its speed and direction, is referred to as motion. The visual perception of an object's color is based on how light and the observer's eye interact. Taste is the individualized perception of a substance's flavor that results from the interaction of the substance with the taste buds of the observer. Smell is the individual perception of an object's odor, which is based on how that object's odor interacts with the olfactory receptors of the observer.

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.

For instance, consider a chunk of wax. We are aware that the wax's fundamental properties, such as its extension, shape, and solidity, are inherent in it and would not be altered by melting or shaping the wax. However, the wax does not naturally possess its secondary attributes, such as color, flavor, or aroma; rather, they are the outcome of how the wax interacts with our senses. The perfume would be gone if we melted the wax and tried to smell it again since it was an effect of the wax's interaction with our sense of smell rather than the quality of the wax 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"?

According to Berkeley, two conditions must be met in order for something to be considered to exist: it must be perceived by the senses or the mind, and it must also be perceivable in principle in order for something to be considered to exist. For instance, even though a tree in a forest may not be seen by anyone at a given time, it nevertheless exists since it has the capacity to be seen.

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 contends that fundamental properties like extension, figure, and motion can only be perceived through the senses and are not mind-independent. He challenges the materialist conception of reality and contends that there is only one reality—the reality of ideas, which are the things we perceive.

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 contends that the mind or spirit, a heavenly being that produces and upholds the world of ideas, is the ultimate source of all sensory experiences. Instead of arguing that the mind or spirit is a heavenly force that generates and maintains the universe of ideas, he rejects the assumption that physical matter is the origin of our sensory experiences.