

Descartes, "New Foundations for Knowledge"

1. Three reasons Descartes gives for doubting what he thought he knew are: (1) that our senses can deceive us, (2) that we sometimes dream and what we experience in dreams can seem as real as waking experiences, and (3) that there could be an evil demon or some other powerful being that is deceiving us about the nature of reality.
2. While still in the realm of doubt, Descartes says that the general sciences and mathematics are the most certain of all our beliefs because they rely on reason and deduction rather than sensory experience. He suggests that they can provide a firm foundation for knowledge and a starting point for rebuilding our beliefs.
3. Descartes ultimately argues that the only strong and unshakeable basis for knowledge is the existence of the self, which he discovers through the process of doubting everything else. He makes his case by arguing that even if an evil demon were deceiving him about the external world, he could not be deceived about his own existence because he must exist in order to be deceived. This leads him to his famous statement, "Cogito, ergo sum" or "I think, therefore I am".

Locke, "The Senses as the Basis for Knowledge"

1. Locke believes there are no innate ideas because there is no universal assent to any idea among all humans, and because the same idea can be lacking in some individuals but present in others. He argues that all knowledge is derived from sensory experience.
2. The significance of "children" and "idiots" in Locke's argument is that they do not possess any innate knowledge or ideas, and therefore they must acquire all of their knowledge through experience. This supports Locke's argument against innate ideas.
3. The concept of the "tabula rasa" refers to the idea that the mind is like a blank slate at birth, with no innate knowledge or ideas. According to Locke, all knowledge comes from sensory experience and the mind is passive in receiving this knowledge.
4. Locke describes "sensation" as the process of the mind receiving information through the senses, while "reflection" is the process of the mind thinking about and analyzing its own ideas and experiences. Sensation provides the raw material for knowledge, while reflection helps us to understand and make use of that material. Together, sensation and reflection form the basis for all knowledge.