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Intro to Philosophy
John Locke

There are many questions that one may have on how we obtain knowledge. There are many philosophers that believed knowledge was obtained through experience, principles or many other great things. One philosopher that caught my eye was Philosopher John Locke. John Locke was known to be an empiricist. Empiricist comes from the rooted Latin word *Emperia*. An empiricist is defined as a person that believes knowledge is only derived from experience; inductively, observation, experimentation or sensory. John Locke believed that knowledge is obtained through experience. He believed that there are no innate ideas meaning the mind starts from a blank slate. He compared the mind to the Latin word *Tabula Rasa*. *Tabula Rasa* is defined as a clean slate. In epistemology (theory of knowledge) and psychology, as a supposed condition that empiricists have attributed to the human mind before ideas have been imprinted on it by the reaction of the senses to the external world of objects. His uncompromising conclusion is that the human mind does not have the 'least glimmering' of any ideas which it does not receive either from sensation or subsequent reflection.

A priori knowledge is accepted by both early modern rationalist and empiricist thinkers. They concur, for instance, that we are capable of having a priori understanding of mathematics. When it comes to what we can know a priori, rationalists differ. While John Locke and the empiricists believe that we must instead rely on experience to learn about the natural world, they tend to think that we can find statements about the nature of reality via a priori reasoning. Knowledge, according to Locke, is the experience of agreement (or discord) between ideas. This concept of knowledge is naturally compatible with an account of a priori knowledge, if not solely.

All knowledge comes from experience. All ideas are based on experience but knowledge can also be justified by intuition and demonstration. By sensation and reflection, we get sensitive, intuitive and demonstrative knowledge with different degrees of certainty and ways of evidence. John Locke held that knowledge is believed to be ideas generated by experience. For Locke ,Our ideas are derived from two sources: sensation and perception of the operation of our mind, which is called internal sense (reflection). What Locke set out to make clear was that we cannot have experience of reflection until we have had the experience of sensation. This is why John Locke believed that our minds are clean slates.

An infant is not born fully knowing but grows and becomes aware of things through experiences. A stubborn kid is thobuiltught not to put their hand in a hot pot because they can get burned. A child, because of curiosity then proceeds to put their hand in a hot pot because they do not fully know the extent of how hot the pot is. Eventually the child ends up being burned. This analogy's shows or proves that knowledge is shaped or formed through experience. John Locke often compared the mind to an "empty cabinet" that is yet unfurnished. The "empty cabinet" compares to the mind without innate knowledge. The only way for the

empty cabinet to become furnished is to fill it with things. In order for the mind to become filled you will need to fill it with data from your senses. John Locke never denied human innate capacities but he argues that in order for you to fully know or comprehend something you will have to go through experiences or in other words have had gone through something to know the knowledge of that thing. I believe that we are not born knowing but through our experiences we are able to live through the knowledge of things we experience.

John Locke made a distinction between fundamental and secondary features of objects in an effort to demonstrate where we receive our ideas from and how they relate to knowledge. According to Locke, some concepts seem to be inseparable from the actual physical objects, while others alter depending on the situation of the perceiver. Primary characteristics are those that exist in all living things. According to John Locke, these characteristics allow us to have concepts that are similar to their cause when we perceive them (the physical objects). The secondary attributes are nothing more than abilities in the objects to give us concepts that differ from their cause (physical object). Color, taste, sound, and smell are some of the concepts thus created.

People may argue the fact that knowledge solely comes from only experiences. Some may believe that knowledge is all about principles. As quoted in the book *Western Philosophy*, " And as for other scientists, insofar as they borrowed their principles from philosophy, "*nothing solid could be on shaky foundations.*" This can show solid things are built on solid foundations. Philosopher Descartes believed if anything can be doubted then it's deemed as invalid. Experiences are known to be unstable and shaky. Which allowed for many to believe that knowledge doesn't come from experiences but it comes from things that are secure and solid. Mathematics and science can be proved time and time which allows for people to believe that knowledge does not come from experience.

In conclusion I support and agree with Philosopher John Locke in knowing that knowledge comes from our experiences. I believe that knowledge stems from our own experiences. I believe that in order for us to know something we have had to go through experiences. Experiences are rooted in our sensory skills. The things that we know are through the challenges and experiences that we have gone through. Some may argue and say that experiences are unstable but I beg to differ. Experiences are things we encounter through life that we are able to discuss and grow. In order for us to grow we need the knowledge of what happened to us in the past that allowed us to get through whatever we've been through. Encounters are what shapes our knowledge of the knowing. As John Locke states, " No man's knowledge here can go beyond his experience." I only know what we know because of our experiences.