

Philosophy 101: Introduction to Philosophy, Queens College, Spring 2005
Russell Marcus, Instructor
email: philosophy@thatmarcusfamily.org
website: <http://philosophy.thatmarcusfamily.org>
Office phone: (718) 997-5287

Lecture Notes, March 16

I. Reviewing the Midterm

II. Distinguishing the real properties of an apple from its merely apparent properties.

Red	Apparent
Spherical	Real
Cool to the touch	Apparent
Sweet	Apparent
Shiny	Apparent
Smooth	Apparent
Crunchy	Apparent
Weighs 10 oz.	Apparent
Has a mass of 280 grams	Real
Is one apple	Real
Being considered by you	Apparent
Smells like an apple	Apparent

We'll return to this example below.

III. Locke's second worry about Descartes' epistemology

Consider the water experiment, at §II.VIII.21.

Descartes says we can not trust the senses.

Locke thinks that Descartes throws out the baby with the bath water.

Our senses do give us some misrepresentations.

But some sensory evidence is useful.

If we had no senses, we could not even start to understand the physical objects.

IV. The representational theory of mind

Descartes and Locke both hold the representational theory.

Ideas are like pictures in the head.

The resemblance hypothesis says that the movie in my head is a fair representation of reality.

Descartes says that no sensory information is veridical.

(An idea is veridical if it truly represents an external object.)

Locke says that sensory information is partially veridical.

Our ideas are complicated.

Some parts of an idea do represent reality.

Descartes is right that not all do, and in particular that hot and cold do not.

So, how do we draw the line between veridical and misrepresenting ideas?

V. The line between veridical sense properties and ones that misrepresent the nature of the world

Locke tacitly presumes the following principle:

If an object seems (to one person, or to two) to have two incompatible properties, then it must really have neither property.

Compare with Descartes' discussion of the wax.

Locke does not discard all sense properties, though.

VI. Sense properties that Locke claims do not represent the world

Hot and cold, §II.VIII.21

Color, because porphyry loses color in dark, §II.VIII.19

Taste and odor, because an almond changes taste and odor when mashed, §II.VIII.20

VII. A corollary to the first principle

Even if a change in us entails the change in the perceived quality, it can not be a real quality.

Then we are like two people: one before and one after.

And so it appears to have incompatible properties to two different stages of us.

VIII. A second principle

If an object has the same property under all conditions, it must really have that property.

This one tells us which properties are veridical.

See §II.VIII.9: "Qualities such as are utterly inseparable from the body..."

A corollary:

If every one has the same impression, then it must really have that property.

See §II.VIII.21 and the discussion of figure (shape).

IX. The Primary/Secondary Distinction

See §II.VIII.9-10

Primary Qualities	Secondary Qualities
Solidity extension Figure Motion/ Rest Number	Color Odor Hot/ Cold Sound Texture Taste