

March 4, 2002

CENTRAL PROBLEMS IN PHILOSOPHY

SECOND PAPER

Locke (Perry and Bratman, p.142):

“[t]he ideas of primary qualities of bodies are resemblances of them, and their patterns do really exist in the bodies themselves, but the ideas produced in us by these secondary qualities have no resemblance to them at all.”

Berkeley (Perry and Bratman, p. 164):

“HYL: Upon inquiry, I find it is impossible for me to conceive or understand how anything but an idea can be like an idea. And it is most evident that *no idea can exist without the mind.*”

Explain the attack Berkeley is making here on Locke’s distinction between primary and secondary qualities. Do you think it succeeds? Why or why not?

Be sure to do the following things in your paper:

- (a) explain Locke’s distinction**
- (b) clearly present Berkeley’s argument and explain the conclusion of the argument**
- (c) say whether it succeeds**
- (d) give reasons why it does or does not succeed.**

Write a four-page, double-spaced paper on this topic. Make sure you understand the assignment before you start writing, and make sure to answer the specific questions asked. The paper should give your own views and the reasons for them. You should have as few quotations in the paper as possible – and anything quoted or derived from another writer should be fully cited to its original place of publication.

There is an excellent set of recommendations called “Guidelines on writing a philosophy paper” at the following web location:

<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~jpryor/general/writing.html>

You should look at it if you haven’t written many philosophy papers before.

The paper is due in class on Monday, March 18. Please write only your ID number on the paper, to permit blind grading. Late papers should be put in Professor Nagel’s mailbox at the philosophy department, 503 Main, and the time of receipt should if possible be entered by someone on the office staff.