

**Outline of Topics Covered in Philosophy 22**  
**G. J. Matthey**  
**March 17, 2018**

**Descartes**

1. Provisional skepticism
  1. Our preconceived opinions frequently lead us into error.
  2. To avoid error entirely, we may reject any kind of beliefs that could be doubted in any way.
    1. Those based on the senses, as they are frequently erroneous.
    2. Those based on intellectual perception of simple things, as God may be a deceiver.
  3. The supposition of an evil demon aids us in rejecting our belief in an external world.
2. First knowledge
  1. I cannot doubt that I exist and that I am a thinking thing.
  2. A thinking thing is one which understands, wills, imagines and senses.
  3. The understanding has a clearer perception of physical objects than do the senses and imagination.
3. What is required for knowledge
  1. Whatever I presently perceive very clearly and very distinctly is true.
  2. The only reason to doubt what is clearly and distinctly perceived is the later thought that God might be deceiving me.
  3. If I can prove that God exists and is no deceiver, I can be sure of what I remember to have clearly and distinctly perceived.
4. Proofs of God's existence
  1. The first proof is that I have an idea of God that could only exist in my mind if placed there by God.
  2. The second proof is that I have an idea of God as a perfect being, in which case there is a nature of a perfect being, and the nature of a perfect being includes existence.
5. The source of error
  1. The ability of my will to affirm any proposition brought before it is infinite.
  2. My understanding clearly and distinctly perceives only a limited range of propositions.
  3. Error occurs when I affirm what I do not clearly and distinctly perceive.
  4. I can avoid error entirely by restricting my affirmations to what I clearly and distinctly perceive.
  5. God is not a deceiver, because God gave me the ability to avoid error if I use my mental faculties correctly.
6. The Cartesian circle
  1. My proofs of God's existence depend on the truth of my clear and distinct perceptions.
  2. The truth of my clear and distinct perceptions depends on my proofs of God's existence.
  3. The proposed solution is that present clear and distinct perceptions, used in the proof of God's existence, do not require knowledge of God's existence in order to be known to be true.
7. Freedom of the will
  1. I have the experience of my acts of will arising spontaneously in me.
8. The nature of material things

1. I clearly and distinctly perceive the mathematical properties of material things, primarily their extension.
2. Any possible material things are extended.
9. The existence of material things
  1. I know that material things exist because I have a strong inclination to believe that they do, and God, who is no deceiver, gave me this inclination.
  2. What nature teaches me is mostly sufficient for my physical needs.
  3. Errors from following the teachings of nature are the result of the complicated structure of the human body and cannot be blamed on God.
10. Mind and body
  1. The mind is closely united to the body.
  2. The mind's relation to the body does not resemble that of a pilot to a ship, but the mind is, as it were, co-mingled with the body.
  3. It is difficult to explain how an unextended mind could mingle with an extended body.

## **Spinoza**

1. Properties of God
  1. God exists necessarily.
  2. There is only one God.
  3. God acts from the necessity of his own will.
  4. Everything else depends for God for its existence and all the states they are in.
2. Pre-determination
  1. Because of the complete dependence of humans on God, all human actions are pre-determined by God.
3. Rejection of teleology
  1. People maintain the prejudice that God directs the course of the world with ends in view.
  2. People give teleological explanations because they are ignorant of the true causes of things.
  3. People believe that the fittingness of the parts of nature to one another are evidence of a favorable design.
  4. What is unfavorable is attributed to God's displeasure, which is mysterious to humans.
4. Values
  1. Because of their belief in teleology, people conclude that the value of things is based on its usefulness to them.
  2. Because of their false belief in free will, people assign praise and blame according to the values they have adopted.
  3. People even imagine that their values are embodied in nature.

## **Leibniz**

1. The best possible world
  1. God exists and by his own nature always acts for what God knows to be the best.
  2. The created world is the world God recognizes as best among all worlds that are possible.
  3. God therefore could not have made things better than they are.
  4. The best possible world is that which combines the most economical principles with the most abundant consequences.

2. Individual substances
  1. The beings created by God are individual substances, each of which has many predicates.
  2. The predicates of a substance follow from the nature of the substance.
  3. Truths about substances predicate of the substance what belongs to its nature.
  4. Therefore, if the nature of a substance were known in its entirety, all predicates, past, present, and future, would be known.
3. God's freedom
  1. God knows at the creation everything that will ever happen to any created substance.
  2. God's fore-knowledge is consistent with God's freedom.
    1. It is a free act of God's will that God create the world that actually was created.
    2. God's knowledge of each individual substance is part of God's knowledge of the whole of the universe.
    3. The events of the created world are necessary hypothetically, given God's free act of creation, but they are not necessary absolutely, since there is no contradiction in their not having occurred.
  3. An objection is that God is not free to prevent an event once the world has been created.
  4. The proposed response is that events in the world come to be through a single free act of creation, with all events throughout history in view.
4. Human freedom
  1. Human beings act according to their view of what is the best.
  2. This view does not necessitate the action, but only inclines the will to carry it out.

## Locke

1. Innate principles
  1. There are no principles present in the human mind from birth.
  2. If there were such principles, there would be universal assent to them, but there are not.
  3. As a consequence, the human mind is like a piece of white paper, ready to be filled by experience.
2. Ideas
  1. The objects of the human understanding are called ideas.
  2. Ideas have two original sources.
    1. Ideas of sensation result from the action of material things on our bodies, producing a perception in the mind.
    2. Ideas of reflection result from the observation of the workings of the mind.
  3. There are two varieties of each kind of idea.
    1. Simple ideas are uncompounded.
    2. Complex ideas are compounded from simple ideas.
3. Substance and quality
  1. Both the mind and material objects are the seats of many qualities.
  2. Because we must explain why certain qualities always accompany one another, we postulate a substance in which the qualities inhere.
    1. Ideas inhere in minds.
    2. Extension, figure, solidity, motion and other primary qualities inhere in material objects, because we cannot conceive of a body without them.
  3. The primary qualities of the small particles making up bodies produce ideas of secondary

- qualities, such as color, taste, and others depending wholly on the senses.
4. The ideas of secondary qualities do not resemble anything in the bodies that produce them.
  4. The idea of power
    1. When two objects have been observed to accompany each other uniformly, we form the idea of the power in the prior one to bring about a change in the later one.
    2. Human beings have two kinds of active power.
      1. To move parts of the body.
      2. To recall and combine ideas in their minds.
    3. The human will is power to bring about these changes by command.
    4. The commands are determined by a present feeling of uneasiness, which the mind undertakes to alleviate.
  5. Human freedom
    1. Freedom is a property of the human mind such that its commands are not constrained by any thing external to it.
    2. The determination of the mind by the feeling of uneasiness is compatible with the will's freedom.
    3. The mind has the ability to suspend any immediate response to the feeling, in order to consider alternative ways of alleviating it.
  6. Identity and diversity
    1. Because the properties of an object change over time, the question arises as to whether the object remains the same or becomes a different object.
    2. Different kinds of objects have different criteria of identity over time.
      1. To be the same mass requires that all the same particles be retained, though they may be differently arranged.
      2. To be the same artifact, vegetable or animal requires a single principle of organization, though the particles making them up may be different.
      3. To be the same human requires the same union of body and mind.
      4. To be the same person requires ability to extend present consciousness to the past.
  7. Knowledge
    1. Knowledge comes in three degrees.
      1. Intuitive knowledge of ideas before the mind is certain, admitting of no doubt.
      2. Demonstrative knowledge from chaining ideas together is nearly certain, admitting of doubt when the chain is too long.
      3. Sensitive knowledge from the senses, which is somewhat less certain.
    2. The range of knowledge depends on its type.
      1. Intuitive knowledge extends to the content of our minds and simple propositions such as that white is not black.
      2. Demonstrative knowledge extends to mathematics, ethics, and the existence of God.
      3. Sensitive knowledge extends to objects that are present to the senses.
      4. All else is mere probability.
    3. Proof of God's existence.
      1. The demonstration of God's existence depends on the empirical premise that I exist.
      2. The argument is that if one thing exists, then there has always been something, and that this object is God.
    4. The existence of bodies.
      1. Ideas of sense can only arise through the inlet of the senses.

2. Ideas of memory are different from those of sense.
3. Pleasure and pain are greater when accompanying ideas of sense than when accompanying other objects.
4. Ideas of different senses are coherent with one another.

## **Berkeley**

1. Abstract ideas
  1. There are no abstract ideas, but only particular ideas that are associated with general words.
  2. To be abstract, an idea would have to represent all and none of the qualities of the things it represents, which is impossible.
2. Physical objects
  1. The being of a physical object is to be perceived by a mind.
  2. The mind-dependence of physical objects is consistent with ordinary ways of speaking, as when I say that a table exists because I see and feel it.
  3. A physical object is a collection of ideas in the minds of perceivers.
  4. Ideas making up physical objects are distinguished from ideas of the imagination.
    1. They occur in our minds against our will.
    2. They occur in regular, coherent patterns, which we call laws of nature.
3. Arguments for the immateriality of physical objects
  1. It is impossible to conceive of a body existing independently of perception.
  2. There is no distinction between primary and secondary qualities.
    1. Ideas of primary qualities cannot be abstracted from ideas of secondary qualities.
    2. The arguments that establish that our ideas of secondary qualities do not resemble real qualities of objects can be applied to primary qualities as well.
4. Spirits
  1. The only objects existing unperceived in the world are minds or spirits.
    1. God is the omnipotent, omniscient, all-good being who is the source of ideas in our minds.
    2. Human minds are substances, dependent on God for their existence and for the population of their minds with ideas.

## **Hume**

1. Perceptions
  1. The simple perceptions in the mind are of two types.
    1. Impressions, which are original and more vivid.
    2. Ideas, which are less-vivid copies of impressions.
  2. An idea is clear to the mind only if the the impressions from which it originated are found.
2. Association of ideas
  1. Ideas occur in the mind in an orderly way, which is the result of three principles.
    1. They resemble one another.
    2. They represent objects situated next to one another in space and time.
    3. They represent objects related as cause and effect to one another.
3. Knowledge and probability
  1. Knowledge is restricted to the relations of ideas which can be found by comparing the ideas themselves.

1. Intuitive knowledge compares them directly.
2. Demonstrative knowledge compares them through an intermediate chain of ideas.
2. Probability pertains to matters of fact, which cannot be discovered by mere comparison of ideas.
  1. Probability is based on experience of the conjunction of ideas with one another.
  2. The probable existence of things beyond our ideas depends on the relation of cause and effect.
3. Cause and effect
  1. The idea of cause and effect is that of priority, contiguity, and necessary connection.
  2. A causal relation cannot be discovered by observation of the qualities of bodies.
  3. Only an observed constant conjunction can be the basis of a belief in a causal relation.
  4. The inference from constant conjunction to a causal relation assumes that nature is uniform.
  5. But the assumption that nature is uniform depends on an inference from constant conjunction.
  6. So inference from constant conjunction depends on inference from constant conjunction, which is circular.
  7. The role of constant conjunction is to form a habit in us to expect that nature is uniform and that observed regularities will continue.
  8. A cause must have a minimum definition.
    1. An object followed by another object with which it has been constantly conjoined.
    2. An idea followed by another which is habitually associated with it.
4. Necessary connection
  1. There is no impression, and thus no idea, of any power, energy, force, etc. in either bodies or the mind.
  2. The only impression we have is of a determination of the mind to pass by habit from one idea to another.
5. Liberty and necessity
  1. The only necessity we can attribute to anything is by way of constant conjunction and habitual inference.
  2. This minimal notion of necessity applies to the actions of bodies.
  3. The actions of mind do not differ in this way from those of bodies.
    1. Human behavior is observed to be uniform in general, and when it is not, we presume that it is the outcome of deeper, unobserved regularities.
    2. We make inferences from this uniform behavior and even mix physical and mental factors into our inferences.
  4. Humans are at liberty insofar as they act without being externally restrained.
6. Skepticism
  1. Nobody is a Pyrrhonian skeptic who believes nothing.
  2. Placing everything into doubt antecedently to investigation leads to universal doubt because it questions the very faculties that would lead it out of doubt.
  3. There are philosophical reasons to doubt a number of things.
    1. Our faculties are weak and subject to much error.
    2. The common belief in the existence of external objects as perceptions is incompatible with the demonstrations of philosophers that perceptions are mind-dependent.

3. The distinction between primary and secondary qualities breaks down so that all qualities are mind-dependent.
4. Abstract sciences are troubled by the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of extension.
5. No real causal connections in nature are discoverable.
4. A moderate or Academic skepticism is beneficial.
  1. We avoid dogmatism and its associated passions in disputes.
  2. We confine our inquiries to common life.
  3. As a result, metaphysical inquiries with all their controversies are discounted.

## Kant

1. Metaphysics
  1. Metaphysical principles have forever been in conflict, leading to no progress, so that metaphysics cannot be deemed a science.
  2. The fundamental problem with metaphysics is that it proceeds without examining how the human cognitive faculties could produce metaphysical knowledge.
  3. Hume cast the very existence of metaphysics into doubt by showing that the principle of causality has no basis in demonstrative reasoning or in experience.
  4. It must be shown how metaphysics as a science is possible.
2. Kinds of judgment
  1. There are two types of judgment, depending on the relation of the subject to the predicate.
    1. Analytic, where the predicate is contained in the subject.
    2. Synthetic, where the predicate is not contained in the subject.
  2. Judgments are additionally distinguished according to their sources.
    1. *A posteriori*, or empirical, judgments are made on the basis of experience.
    2. *A priori* judgments are made independently of experience.
  3. Hume overlooked the possibility of synthetic judgments made *a priori*.
    1. Mathematical judgments, such as that  $7+5=12$ .
    2. Metaphysical judgments, such as that every beginning of existence has a cause.
3. The possibility of synthetic *a priori* judgments.
  1. Mathematical judgments are known to be true, so synthetic *a priori* judgments are possible.
  2. Metaphysical judgments that are synthetic *a priori* must be shown to be true.
  3. If the attempt is successful, metaphysics can be placed on a scientific footing.
4. Human cognition
  1. There are two cognitive faculties of human beings that are involved in experience.
    1. Sensibility, which represents objects through the act of intuition.
      1. Objects are represented as singular.
      2. The mind is receptive to objects in intuition.
    2. Understanding, which represents objects through the act of judgment.
      1. Objects are represented generally, through concepts that apply to many objects.
      2. The mind is spontaneous in the production of judgments.
  2. Both sensibility and understanding bring with them forms according to which sensations given to sensibility are placed by the mind in an order they do not otherwise have.
  3. The fact that these forms are applied independently of experience allows us to make synthetic *a priori* judgments about the objects which they order.
5. Idealism

1. If forms of sensibility and understanding are to apply *a priori* to objects of experience, those objects must be only appearances and not things in themselves.
  1. Because space and time are forms of sensibility, all spatial and temporal predicates apply only to experiences.
  2. Because things in themselves are not subject to the forms of space and time, no predicates of experience can be applied to them, and they are unknown.
2. The doctrine that objects in space and time are appearances and not things in themselves is a version of idealism, called “transcendental” or “critical” idealism.
  1. Critical idealism is not the doctrine that the only things that exist are minds and their ideas, as with Berkeley.
    1. Things in themselves are what appear to us as bodies and our own minds, and they may not be minds.
    2. Appearances (*Erscheinungen*) are not illusory (*Schein*), because they cohere with one another in a way that mere products of the imagination do not.
6. Concepts and principles of the understanding
  1. The function of the understanding is to judge by combining concepts with one another.
    1. The concepts of the sun, a stone, and warmth are combined in the judgment:
      1. When the sun shines on a stone, the stone becomes warm. (Judgment of perception)
      2. The concepts of the sun, a stone, warmth and causality are combined in the judgment:
        1. The sun causes the stone to become warm. (Judgment of experience)
    2. The way in which judgments are formed generates a table of pure concepts of the understanding (categories), such as cause and substance.
  3. The categories are *a priori* products of the understanding, and the principles which govern their use are *a priori* principles of the understanding.
    1. In all changes of appearances substance is permanent.
    2. All changes in appearances occur according to the law of the connection of cause and effect.
7. Response to Hume
  1. Hume correctly concluded that the causal principle cannot be demonstrated by reason, but he incorrectly inferred that it therefore must be derived from experience.
  2. A third possibility is that the causal principle is part of what makes experience possible.
  3. *A priori* principles of the understanding are what provide the coherence that is a necessary condition of experience.
  4. Hume wrongly presumed that we discover coherence in experience through the observation of constant conjunction.
8. Justification of the causal law
  1. We judge objects have determinate positions of “before” and “after” in time.
  2. The imagination may set two objects A and B in either order: A before B or B before A.
  3. We cannot perceive time and so cannot determine the order of A and B by reference to time itself.
  4. The only resource we have for placing one before the other is that they stand in causal relations which necessitate either the occurrence of A before B or the occurrence of B before A.
  5. Since having a determinate position in time is a condition for experience to be possible, the causal law is a condition of possible experience.
9. Scope of the causal law

1. The necessity of the causal law is due to the role of the understanding and extends only to the succession of changes in appearances and not to things in themselves.
  2. The faculty of reason has an idea of an “unconditioned,” a condition which is not itself subject to any condition.
  3. Thus reason has an idea of a cause which is not itself the effect of any cause, which can be called a free cause.
  4. Although this idea is incompatible with the the causal law in the realm of appearances, it can be thought, without contradiction, as applying to things in themselves.
  5. Human action as initiated freely by the self as a thing in itself is compatible with the same action initiated necessarily by the self as appearance.
10. Rational Theology
1. The concept of God
    1. Reason’s concept of God is that of a most real being (*ens realissimum*).
    2. This concept is indeterminate, so that nothing more specific can be said about it.
  2. Attempted proofs of God’s existence.
    1. All metaphysical proofs for the existence of a most real being fail.
    2. The only viable proof is moral, where God is conceived as a being with the wisdom and power to bring happiness to the virtuous and misery to the vicious, in an afterlife.
  3. Making the concept of God determinate.
    1. The deistic concept of God is simply that of an indeterminate most real being.
      1. Such a concept is not satisfying to human reason.
      2. Theism assigns specific properties to God.
        1. Anthropomorphism projects human attributes such as understanding and will on God.
          1. Hume showed that arguments for the existence of a God with human attributes fail.
      3. A third alternative, endorsed by Kant is to attribute to God attributes that are analogous to human attributes.
        1. Thus, God is conceived as if having human attributes, but not as actually having them.