

Primary and Secondary Qualities

A. Readings

Compulsory readings:

- John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, OUP (1976), edited by P. H. Nidditch, Book II, Chapter viii
- E. J. Lowe, *Locke on Human Understanding* (Routledge 1995), [Chapter 3](#), pp. 35–59.
- Jonathan Bennett, [Learning from Six Philosophers](#), vol. 2, OUP, (2001) Chapter 25, pp. 74–89.
- Boghossian, P. and Velleman, D., ‘Colour as a secondary quality’, *Mind* 98 (1989). Reprinted in Byrne and Hilbert (eds.).

Additional Optional Readings:

On Locke:

- Mackie, J. L., *Problems for Locke*, OUP (1976), ch. 1.

On the general issue:

- Campbell, J., ‘A simple view of colour’, in Haldane and Wright (eds.), *Reality, Representation and Projection* (OUP, 1993).
- McGinn, C., *The Subjective View*, Clarendon Press (1983), pp. 5-15.
- Maund, B., [Color](#), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
- McDowell, J., ‘Values and secondary qualities’ (especially section 3-4) in Honderich T. (ed.), *Morality and Objectivity*, Routledge (1985).

B. Essay

Write an essay addressing the following issue:

What is the best way to understand Locke’s account for the distinction between primary and secondary qualities? What is the best account of the distinction in general, and what (if at all) is its philosophical importance? Should colour properties be classified as primary or secondary?