

Three standard uses of the term 'knowledge'

∞ knowledge as acquaintance ∞

I know Bob.

∞ knowledge as competence or skill ∞

I know German.

∞ knowledge as propositional ∞

I know that George Washington was the first President of the United States.

↻ knowledge as acquaintance ↻

I know Bob

What is missing?

↻ knowledge as propositional ↻

*I know that George Washington was the first
President of the United States.*

↻ knowledge as acquaintance ↻

I know Bob

**A realist notion of
knowledge of "things"**

↻ knowledge as propositional ↻

*I know that George Washington was the first
President of the United States.*

The Tri-partite Theory of Knowledge

justified, true, belief

Broadly considered, contemporary epistemology regards these three as the necessary and sufficient conditions for knowledge.

Necessary and Sufficient Conditions

A necessary condition for X are those things in whose absence X cannot be or occur.

e.g., Oxygen is necessary for fire. If the oxygen is absent, fire cannot occur.

Necessary and Sufficient Conditions

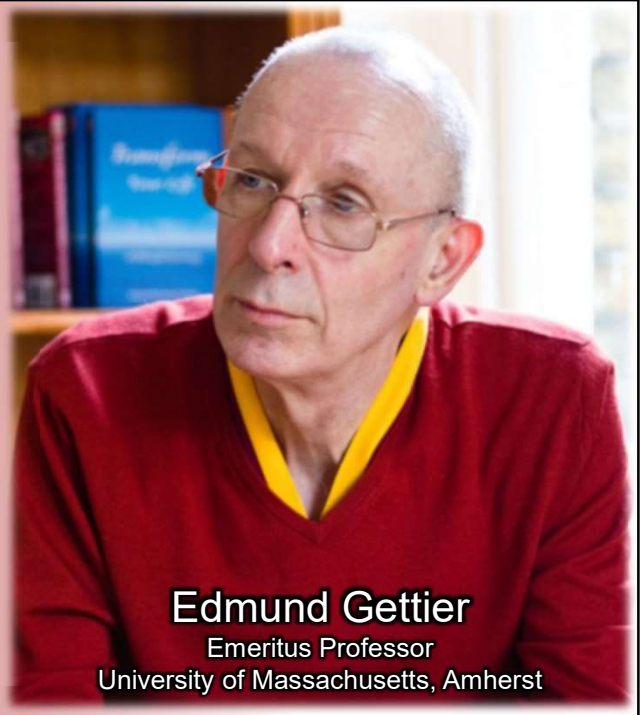
A sufficient condition for X are those things in whose presence X must be or occur. (Note that this is not necessarily a causal relationship.)

1. I believe X.

2. I am justified in (have good reasons for) believing X.

3. X is the case (i.e., it is true that X).

Though the tri-partite theory (or definition) of knowledge has gained widespread favor, it was seriously challenged by Edmund Gettier in his "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?"



Edmund Gettier
Emeritus Professor
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ANALYSIS 23.6

JUNE 1963

IS JUSTIFIED TRUE BELIEF KNOWLEDGE?

By EDMUND L. GETTIER

VARIOUS attempts have been made in recent years to state necessary and sufficient conditions for someone's knowing a given proposition. The attempts have often been such that they can be stated in a form similar to the following:¹

- (a) S knows that P IFF (i) P is true,
(ii) S believes that P, and
(iii) S is justified in believing that P.

For example, Chisholm has held that the following gives the necessary and sufficient conditions for knowledge:²

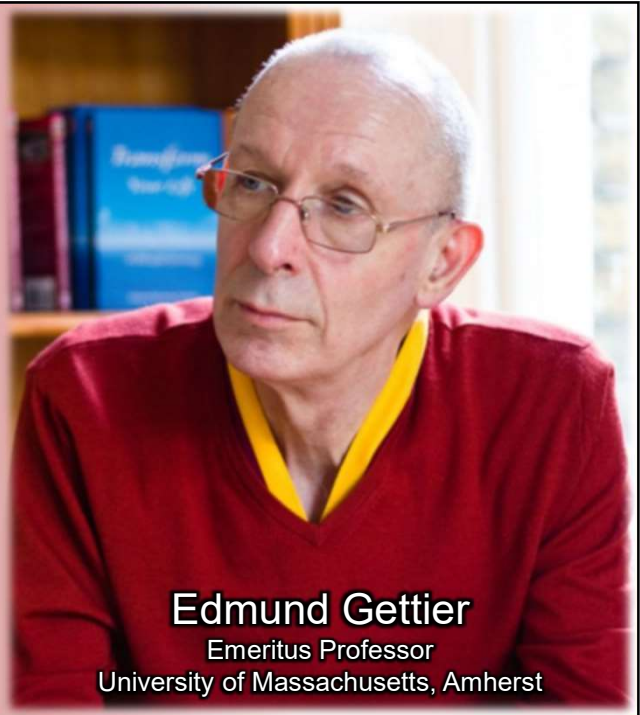
- (b) S knows that P IFF (i) S accepts P,
(ii) S has adequate evidence for P, and
(iii) P is true.

Ayer has stated the necessary and sufficient conditions for knowledge as follows:³

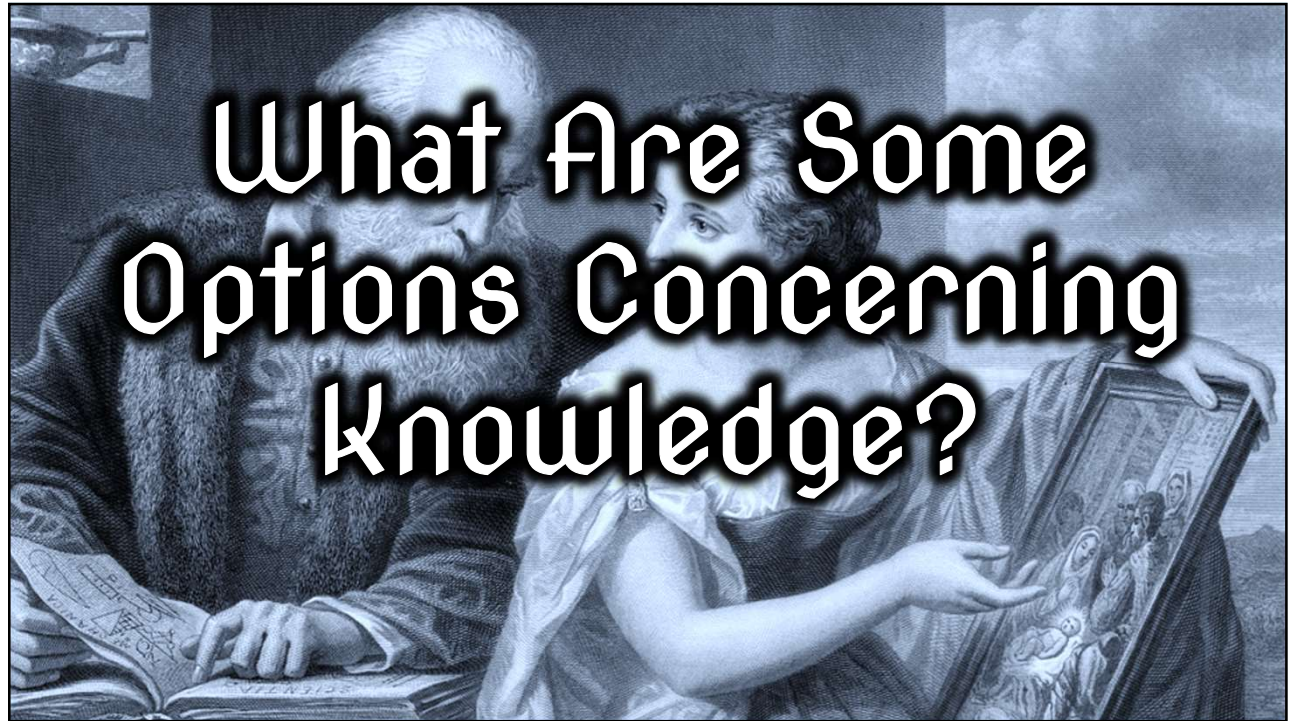
- (c) S knows that P IFF (i) P is true,
(ii) S is sure that P is true, and
(iii) S has the right to be sure that P is true.

I shall argue that (a) is false in that the conditions stated therein do not constitute a *sufficient* condition for the truth of the proposition that S knows that P. The same argument will show that (b) and (c) fail if 'has adequate evidence for' or 'has the right to be sure that' is substituted for 'is justified in believing that' throughout.

I shall begin by noting two points. First, in that sense of 'justified' in which S's being justified in believing P is a necessary condition of S's knowing that P, it is possible for a person to be justified in believing a proposition that is in fact false. Secondly, for any proposition P, if S is justified in believing P, and P entails Q, and S deduces Q from P and accepts Q as a result of this deduction, then S is justified in believing Q. Keeping these two points in mind, I shall now present two cases



Edmund Gettier
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∞ Skepticism ∞

We do not have knowledge.

∞ Rationalism ∞

Reason (apart from sense experience) is the sole (or primary) source of our fundamental knowledge about reality.

∞ Rationalism ∞

*This means that reason is capable of giving us **at least some** knowledge apart from experience.*

∞ Empiricism ∞

sense experience is either:

*the beginning of our
knowledge
about the world*

or

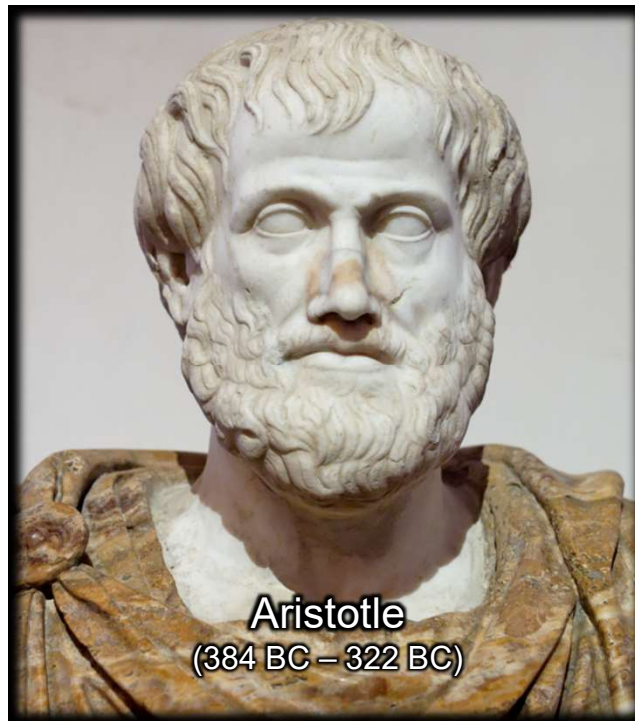
*the sole basis of our
knowledge
about the world*

Classical Empiricism

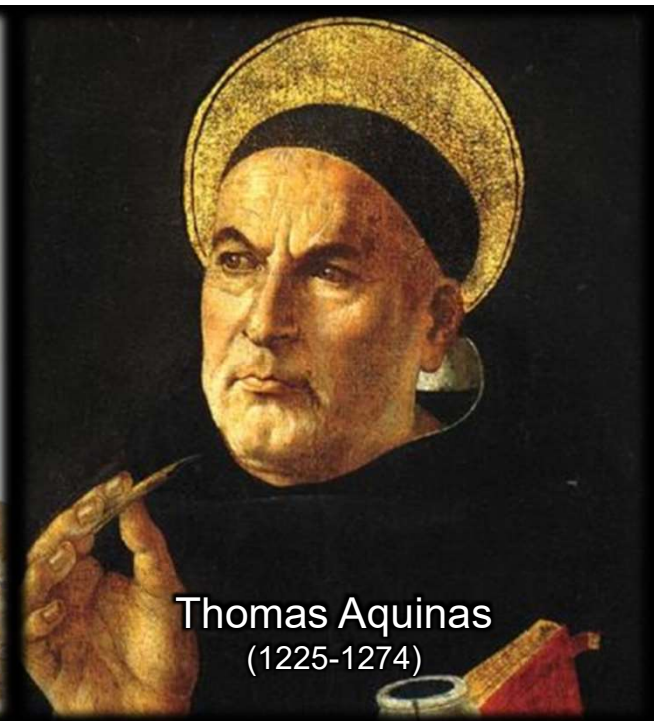
vs.

**Modern & Contemporary
Empiricism**

Classical Empiricists



Aristotle
(384 BC – 322 BC)



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

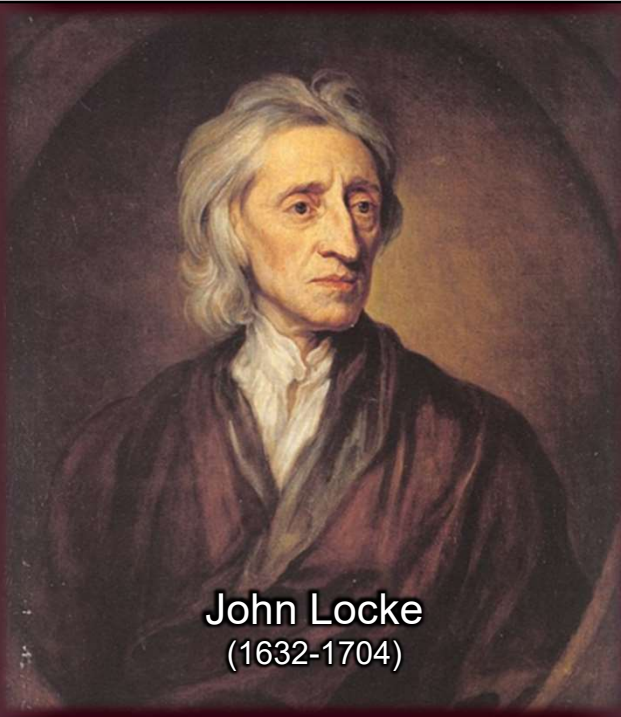
Modern Empiricists



John Locke
(1623-1704)

George Berkeley
(1685-1753)

David Hume
(1711-1776)



John Locke
(1632-1704)

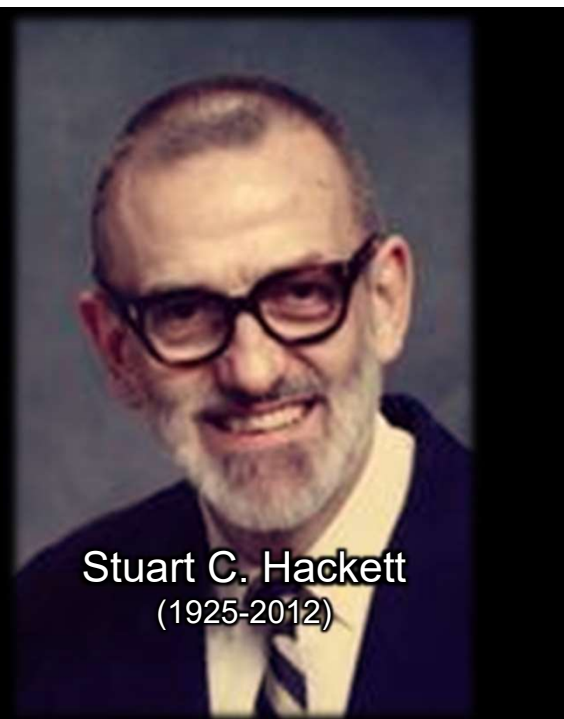
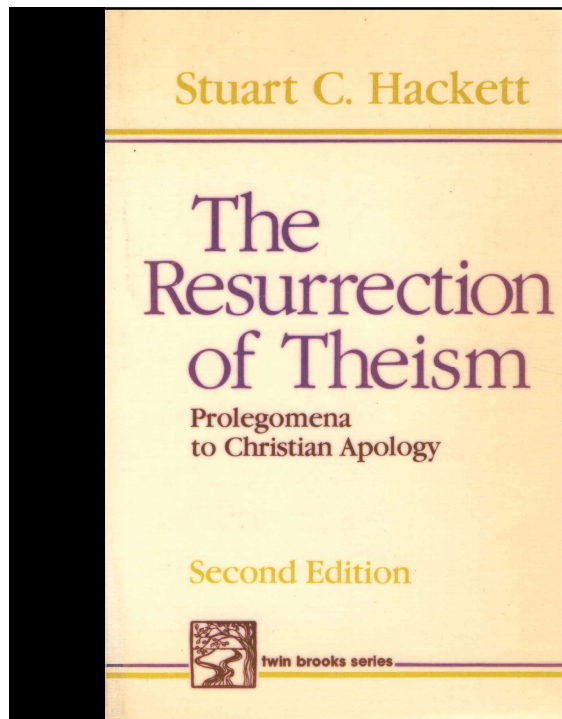
Locke's Epistemological Dualism

*"Epistemological dualism is the doctrine that the immediate object present to the mind is not the independently existing reality—say a box or what have you—but a **representative** idea of this object. All the mind knows directly are its ideas and nothing else."*

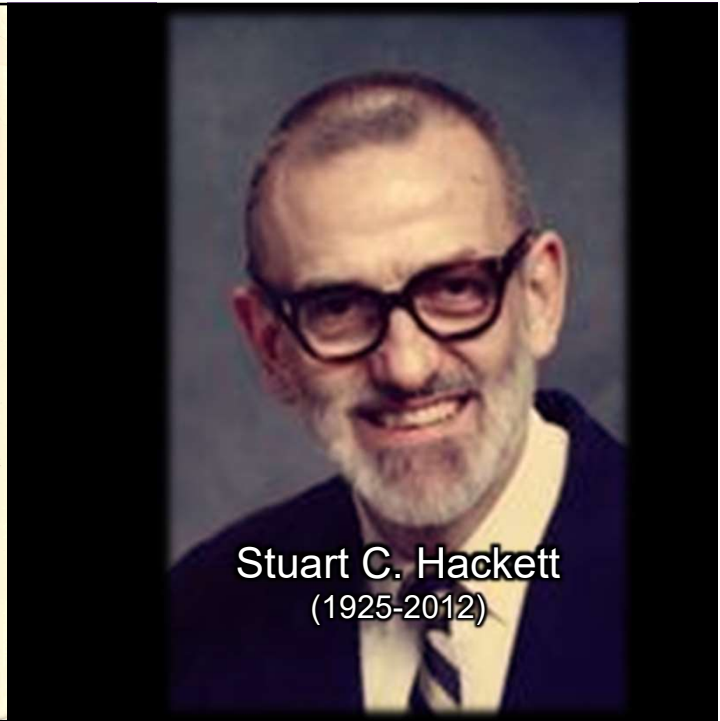
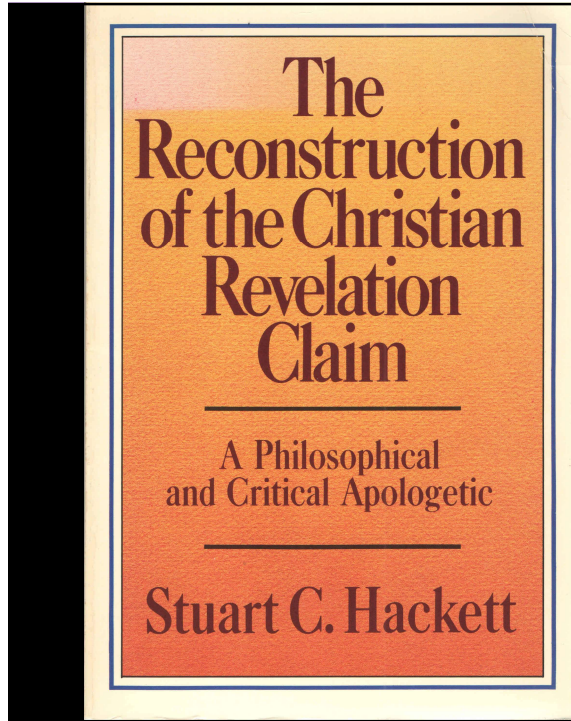
[The Resurrection of Theism: Prolegomena to Christian Apology, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982), 38]



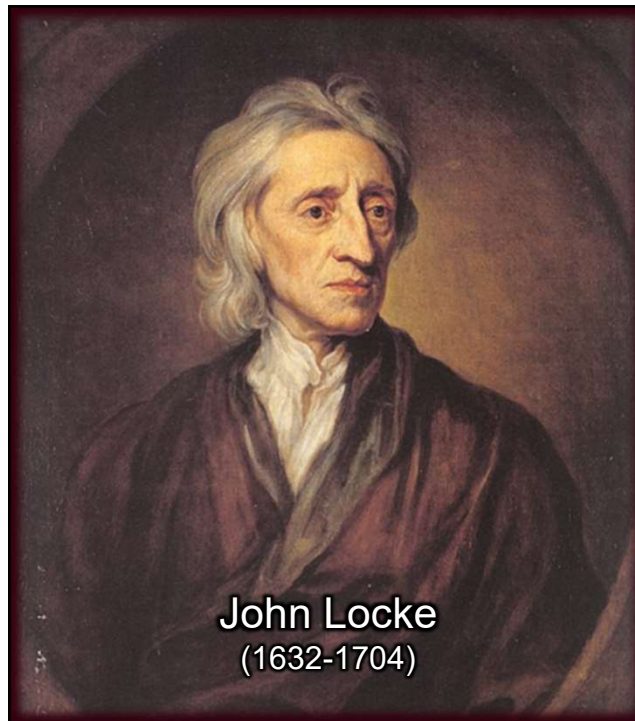
Stuart C. Hackett
(1925-2012)



Stuart C. Hackett
(1925-2012)



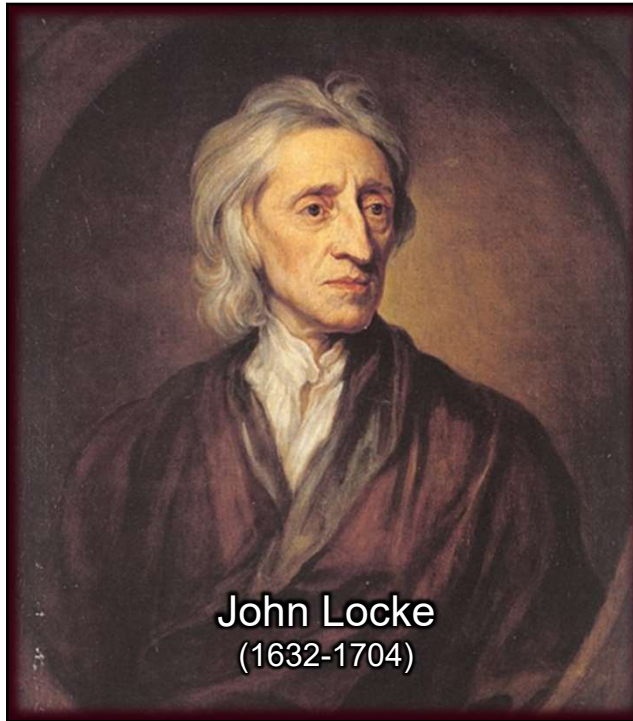
Stuart C. Hackett
(1925-2012)



John Locke
(1632-1704)

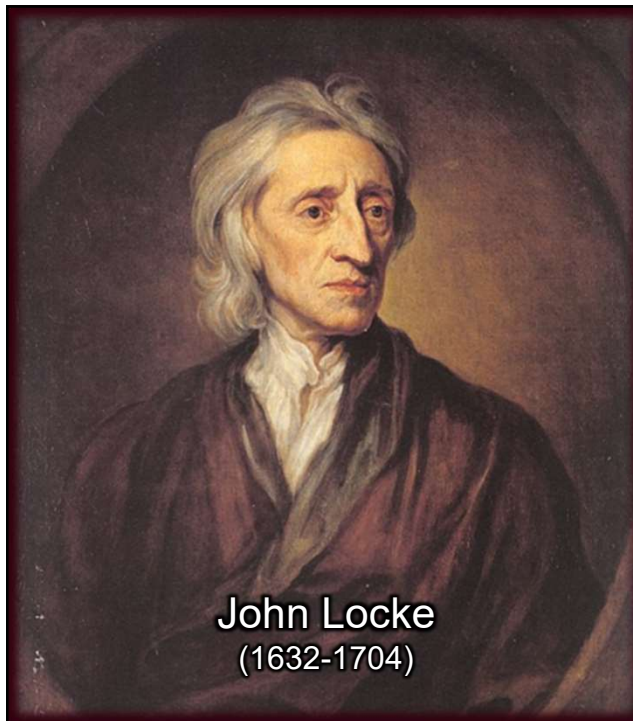
*"Since the mind, in all its thought and reasonings, hath **no other immediate object** but its own ideas, which it alone does or can contemplate, it is evident, that **our knowledge is only conversant about them**. Knowledge then seems to me to be nothing but the perception of the connexion and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas. In this alone it consists."*

[An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, IV, I, 1, §1-§2, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 525]



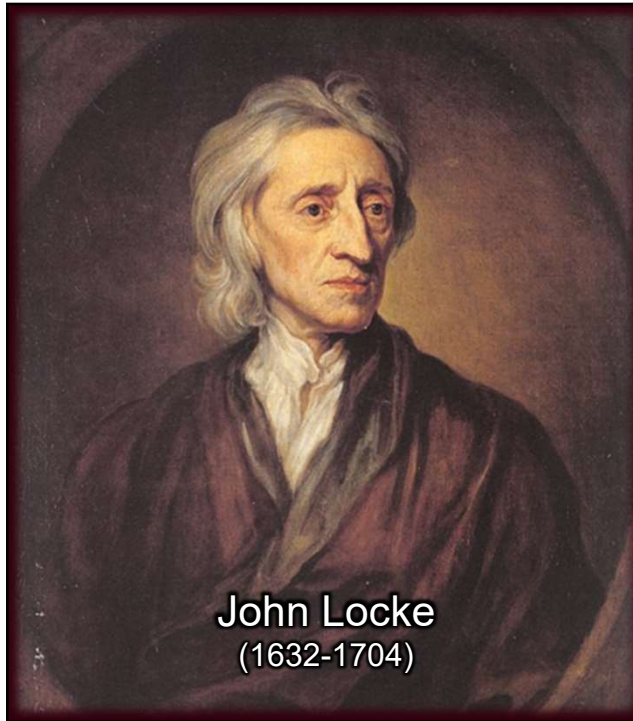
John Locke
(1632-1704)

" 'Tis evident, the mind knows not things immediately, but only by the intervention of the ideas it has of them. Our knowledge therefore is real, only so far as there is a conformity between our ideas and the reality of things. But what shall be here the criterion?"



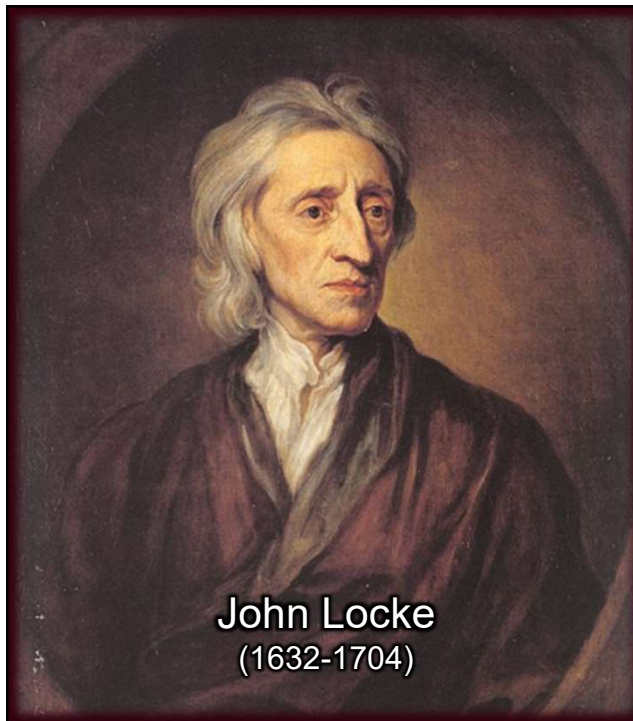
John Locke
(1632-1704)

" How shall the mind, when it perceives nothing but it own ideas, know that they agree with things themselves? This, though it seems not to want difficulty, yet, I think there be two sorts of ideas, that, we may be assured, agree with things."



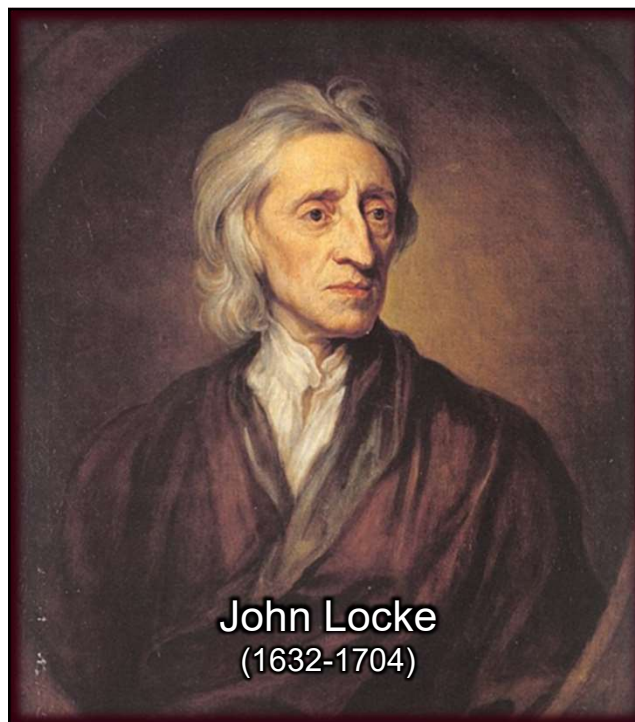
John Locke
(1632-1704)

"First, the first are simple ideas, which since the mind, as has been shewed, can by no means make to it self, must necessarily be the product of things operating on the mind in a natural way, and producing therein those perceptions which by the wisdom and will of our Maker they are ordained and adapted to.



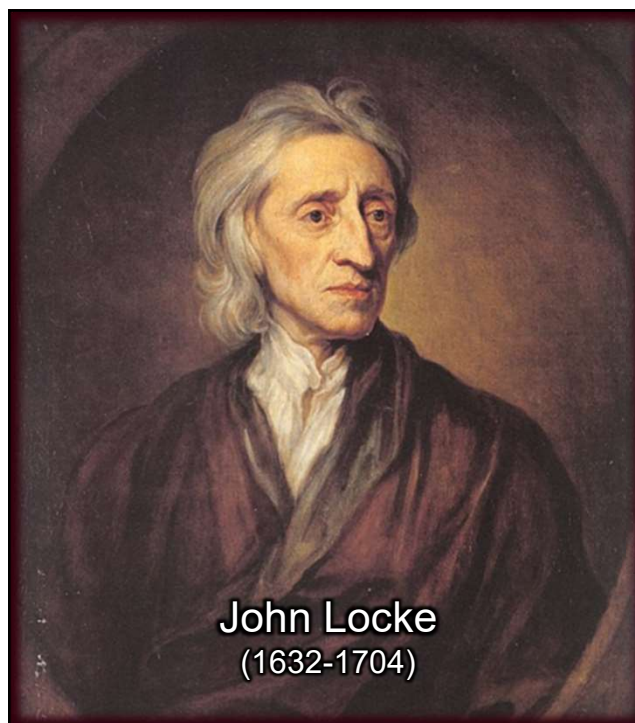
John Locke
(1632-1704)

"From whence it follows, that simple ideas are not fictions of our fancies, but the natural and regular productions of things without us, really operating upon us; and so carry with them all the conformity which is intended; or which our state requires:



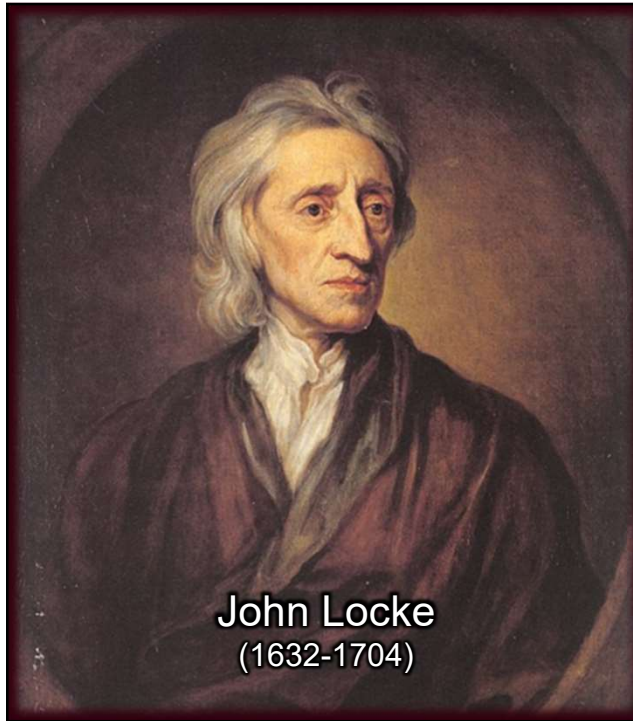
John Locke
(1632-1704)

"For they represent to us things under those appearances which they are fitted to produce in us; whereby we are enabled to distinguish the sorts of particular substances, to discern the states they are in, and so to take them for our necessities, and apply them to our uses."



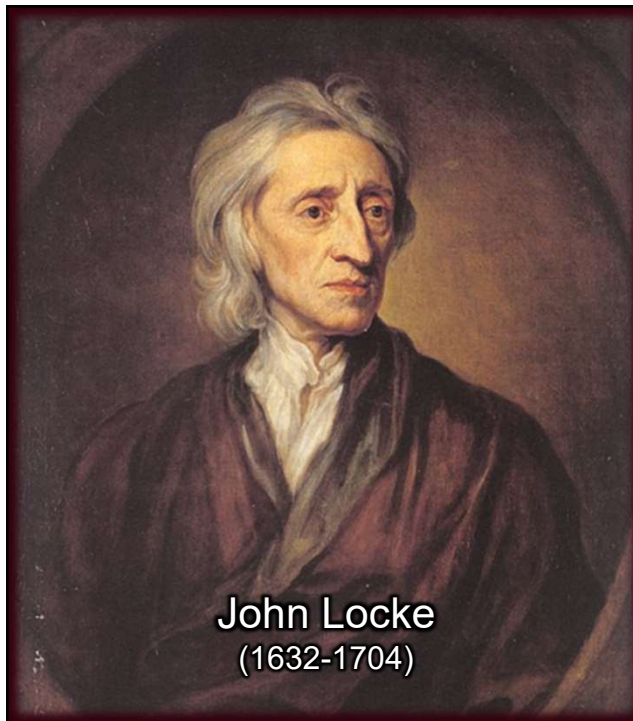
John Locke
(1632-1704)

"Thus the idea of whiteness, or bitterness, as it is in the mind, exactly answering that power which is in any body to produce it there, has all the real conformity it can, or ought to have, with things without us. And this conformity between our simple ideas, and the existence of things, is sufficient for real knowledge."



John Locke
(1632-1704)

"Secondly, all our complex ideas, except those of substances, being archetypes of the mind's own making, not intended to be the copies of any thing, nor referred to the existence of any thing, as to their originals, cannot want any conformity necessary to real knowledge. For that which is not designed to represent any thing



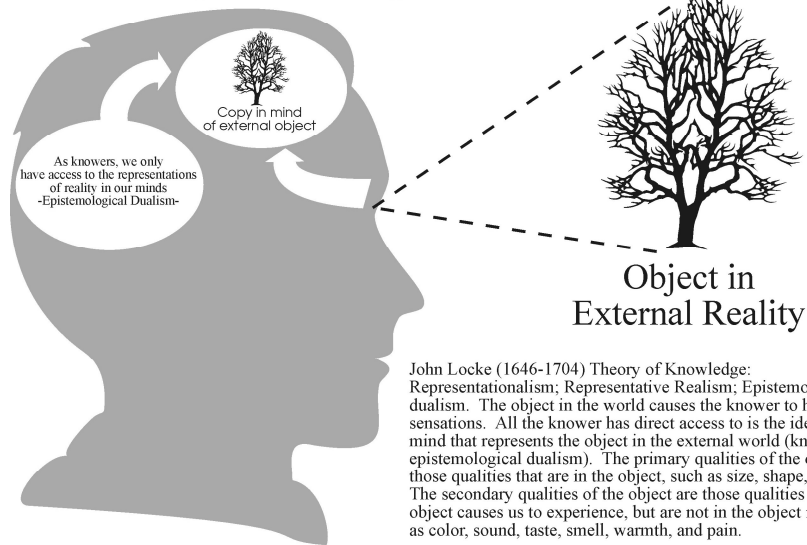
John Locke
(1632-1704)

"but it self, can never be capable of a wrong representation, nor mislead us from the true apprehension of any thing, by tis dislikeness to it: and such, excepting those of substances, are all our complex ideas, which the mind, by its free choice, puts together, without considering any connexion they have in nature."

[An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, IV, I, 4, §3-§5, ed. Peter H. Niddich (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 563-564]

Locke's Theory of Knowledge

Empiricism: Representationalism



born 1711 in Edinburgh, Scotland to a Calvinist family of modest means

attended Edinburgh University where he studied classics, mathematics, science, and philosophy

went to France for three years where he wrote the *Treatise of Human Nature*

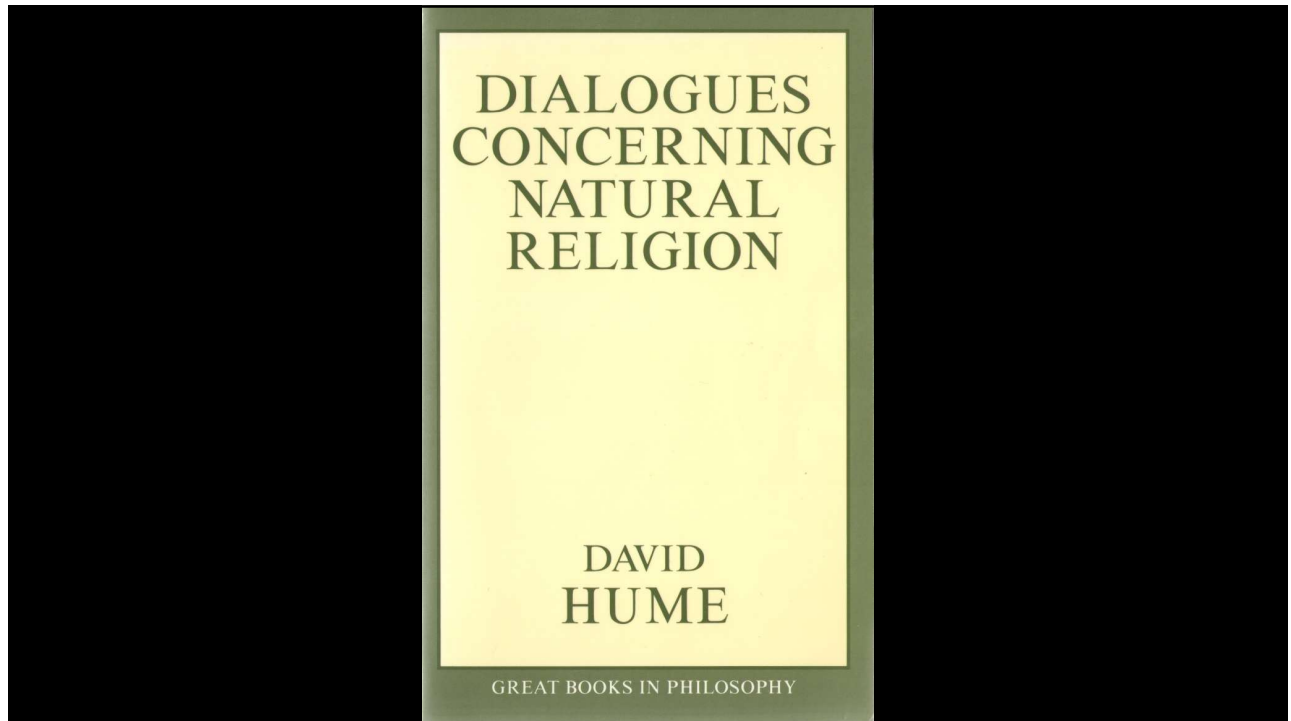
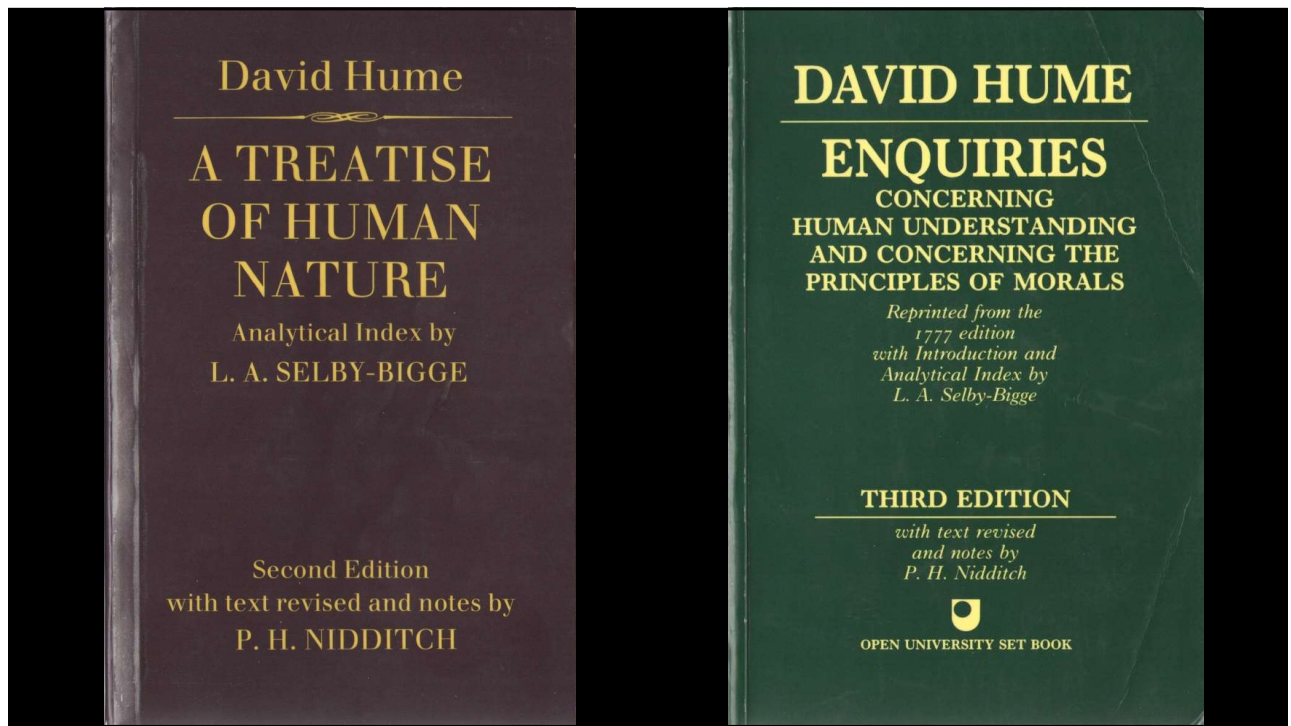
once confessed that the hope of achieving literary fame was his "ruling passion"

[William F. Lawhead, *The Voyage of Discovery: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (Stamford: Wadsworth, Thomson Learning, 2002), 310]

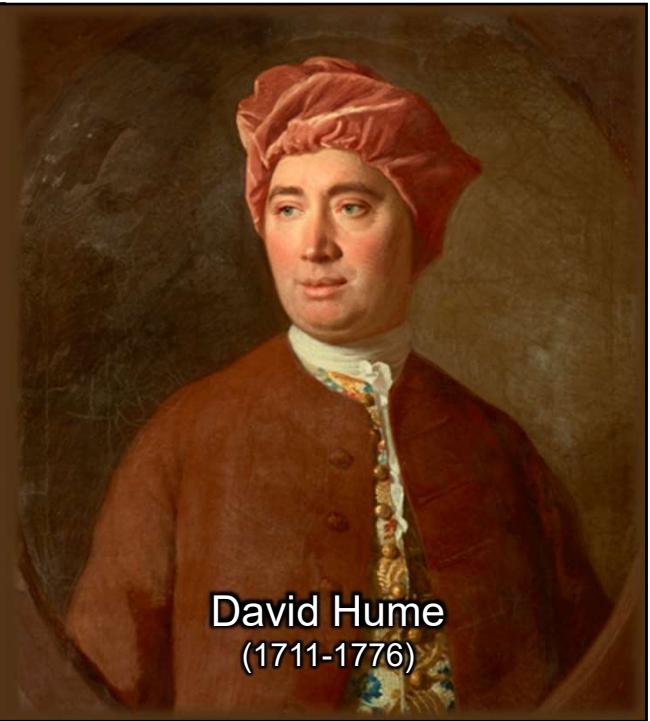


David Hume
(1711-1776)

Significant Philosophical Works by Hume



Considered by some to be one of the most formidable philosophical skeptics.



David Hume
(1711-1776)

Though Hume was a skeptic, it is still accurate to call him an empiricist, for he believed that all knowledge comes through experience.



David Hume
(1711-1776)

*Three of the biggest
apologetic issues
argued today are
framed and discussed
the way they are
because of the
influence of
David Hume.*



David Hume
(1711-1776)

*miracles
the design argument
for the existence
of God
the problem of evil*



David Hume
(1711-1776)

∞ Empiricism ∞

Classical vs. Modern

Modern Empiricism



Modern Empiricism

Sees itself concerned largely with the knowing of "qualities" or "properties" or "sensations" or "phenomena" (e.g., red, sweet, loud).

Modern Empiricism

Early on, Modern Empiricism was committed to the notion that such sensations were "caused" by external objects or by "substances" though such objects or substances were ultimately inexplicable or unaccountable by the greater philosophy of these Modern Empiricists.

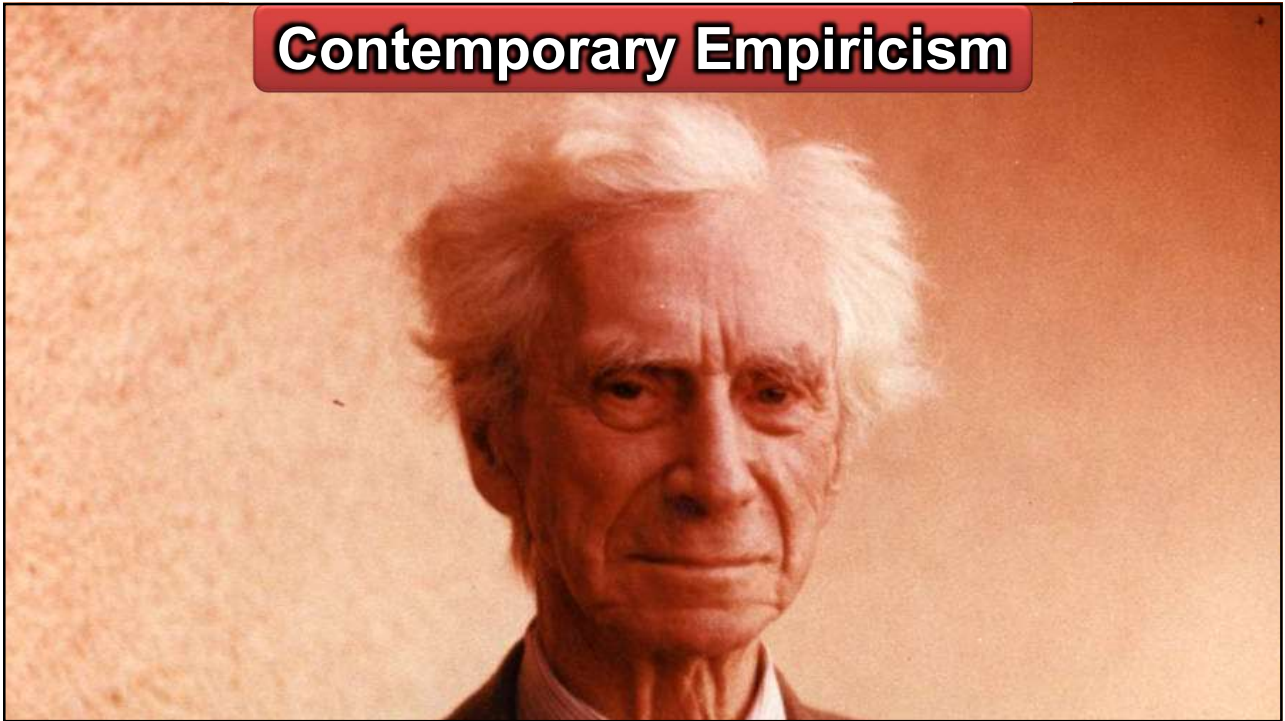
Modern Empiricism

Later, Empiricists such as Hume began to realize the implications of such a divorce between knowing sensations (also called "phenomena") and any reality antecedent to (and supposedly the "cause of") these sensations.

Modern Empiricism

The ability of making philosophical conclusions about this antecedent reality began to be challenged, giving rise to a formidable skepticism (Hume) and a profound but failed attempt to rebuild the bridge between empirical experience and certainty (Kant).

Contemporary Empiricism



Contemporary Empiricism

Contemporary empiricism began to become absorbed into epistemology more broadly considered and began to concern itself with issues related to the strict definition of terms and the rigors of formal logic (Analytic philosophy).

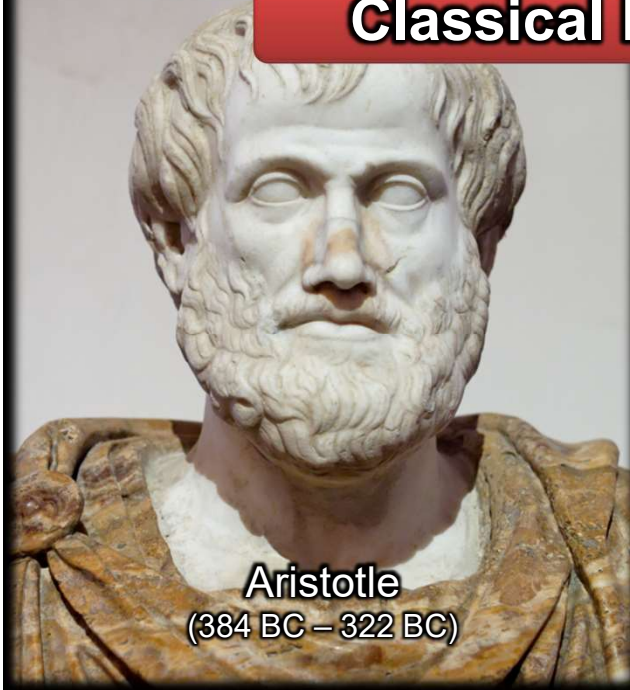
Contemporary Empiricism

It attempted to eliminate the philosophical challenge of accounting for any antecedent realities like substances by restricting itself as a second-order discipline which should only be concerned with aiding the endeavors of the natural sciences (Logical Positivism).

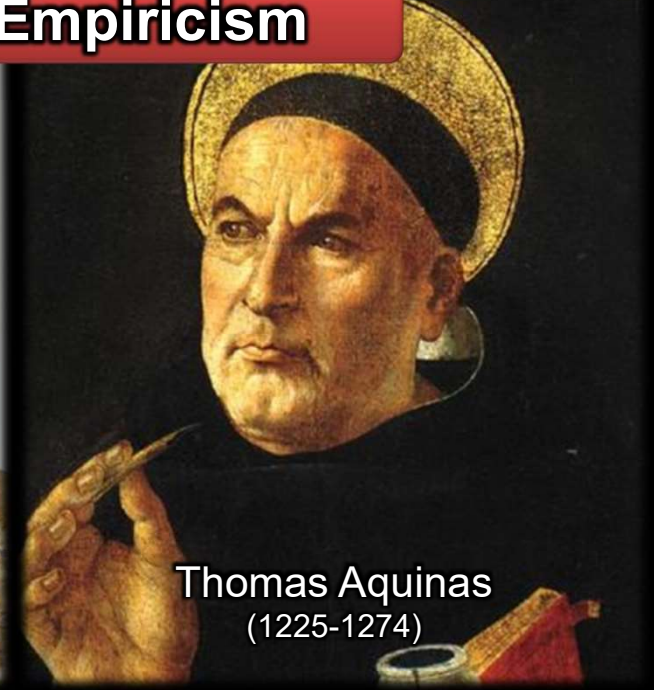
Contemporary Empiricism

Most recently, certain aspects of contemporary epistemology has challenged the assumptions of the justification discussion and have sought instead to talk in terms of "warrant." (Plantinga)

Classical Empiricism

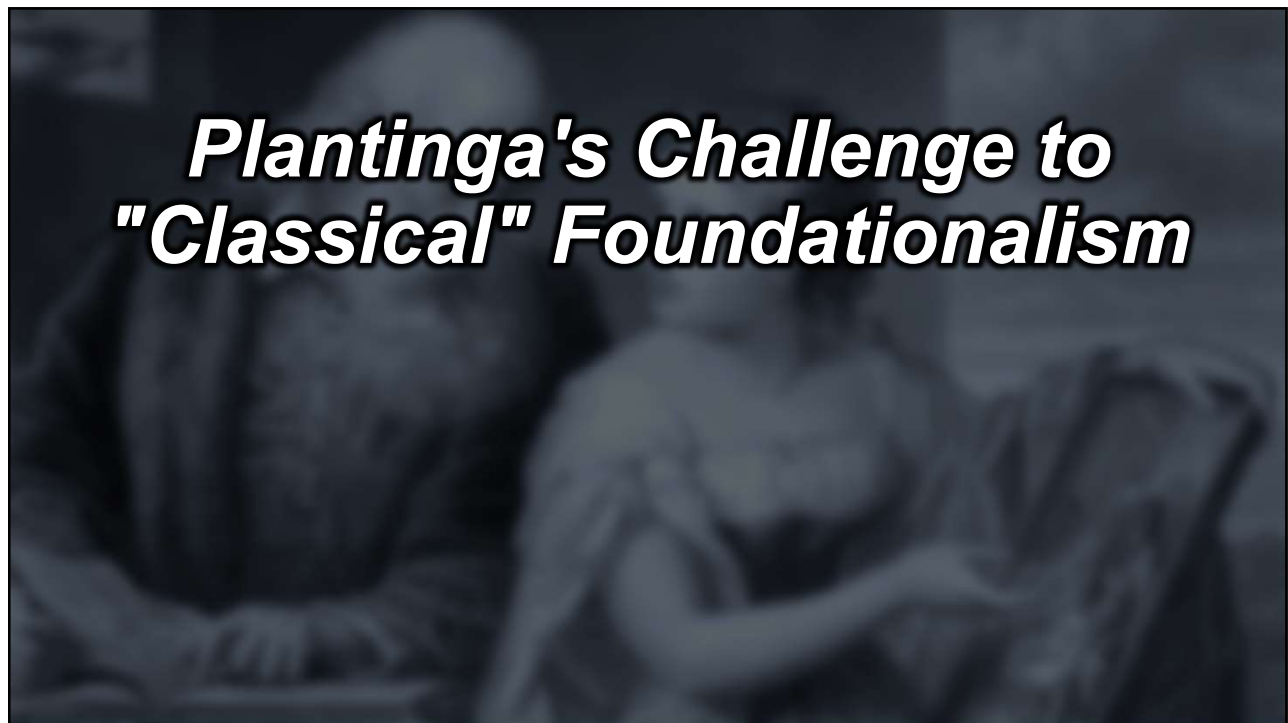


Aristotle
(384 BC – 322 BC)



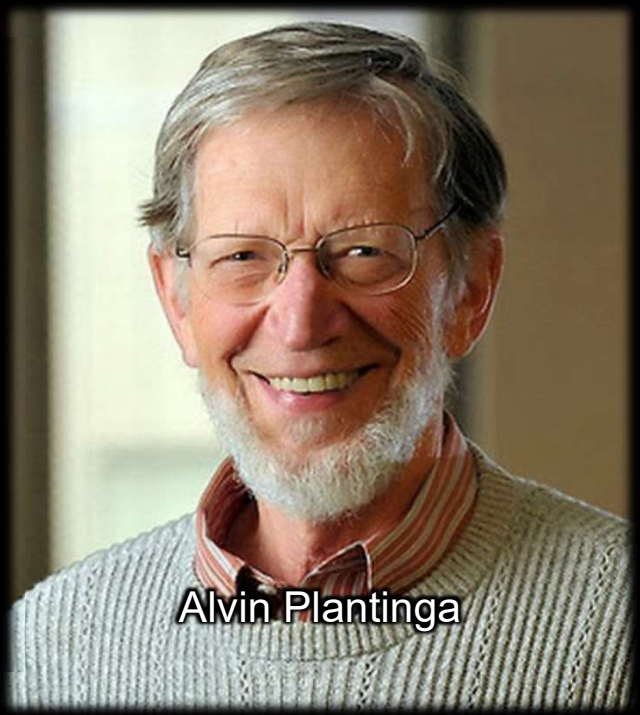
Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

Remember that, for the most part, contemporary philosophy has defined knowledge according to the tri-partite theory, to wit, knowledge is justified, true, belief.

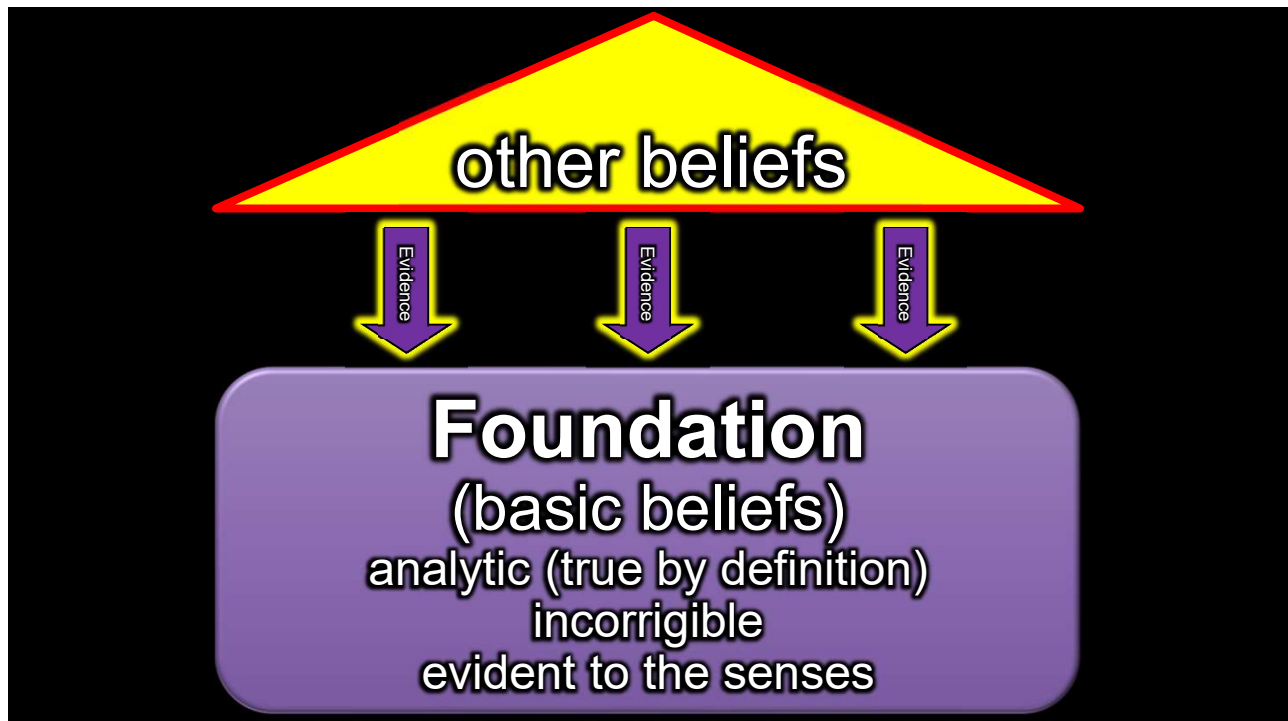


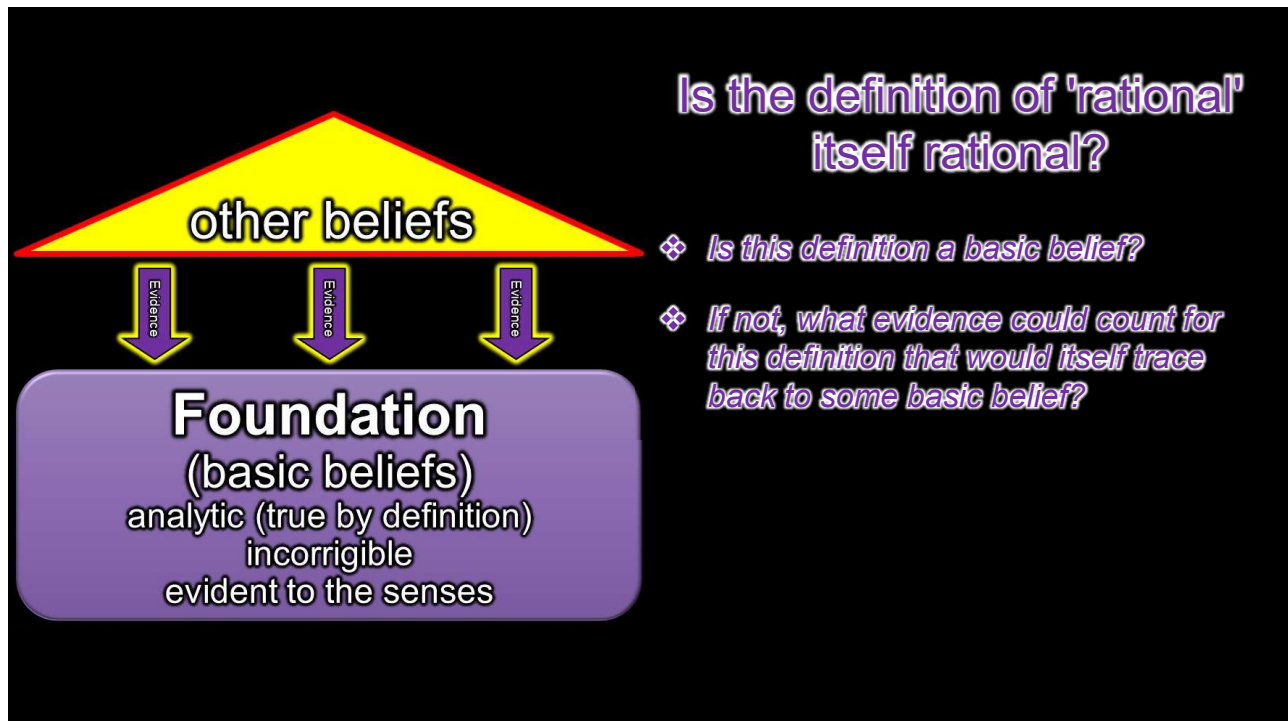
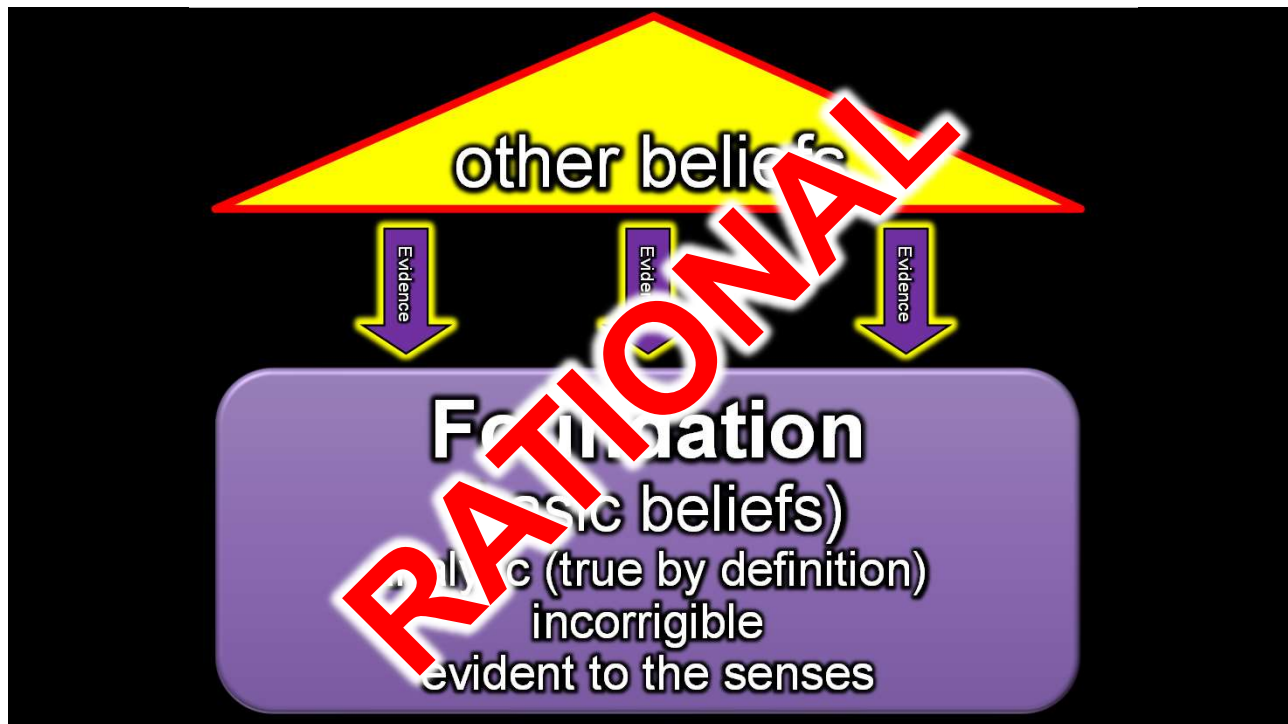
"Classical foundationalism ... is a picture or total way of looking at faith, knowledge, justified belief, rationality, and allied topics. ... According to the foundationalist some propositions are properly basic and some are not; those that are not are rationally accepted only on the basis of evidence, where the evidence must trace back, ultimately, to what is properly basic."

[Alvin Plantinga, "Is Belief in God Rational?" in C. F. DeLaney, ed. *Rationality and Religious Belief* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979) as cited in Louis P. Pojman, *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1987), 455]



Alvin Plantinga



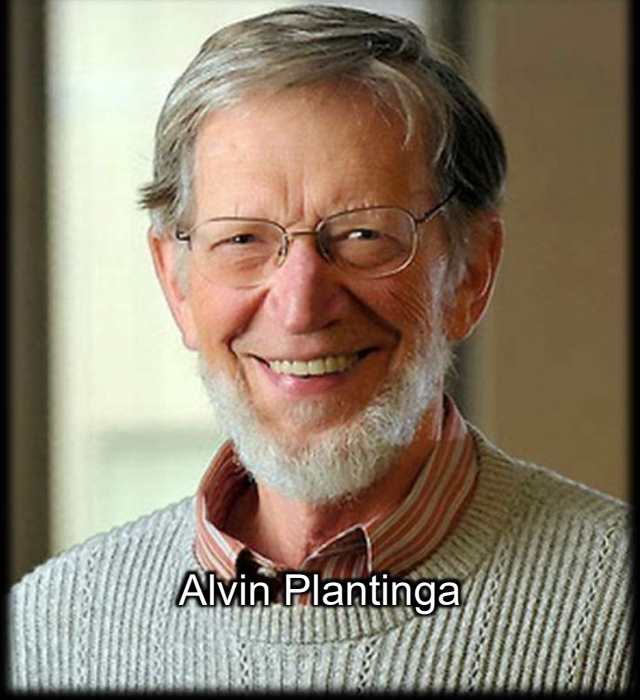


GOD
AND
OTHER
MINDS

A Study of the
Rational Justification
of Belief in God

With a new Preface by the author

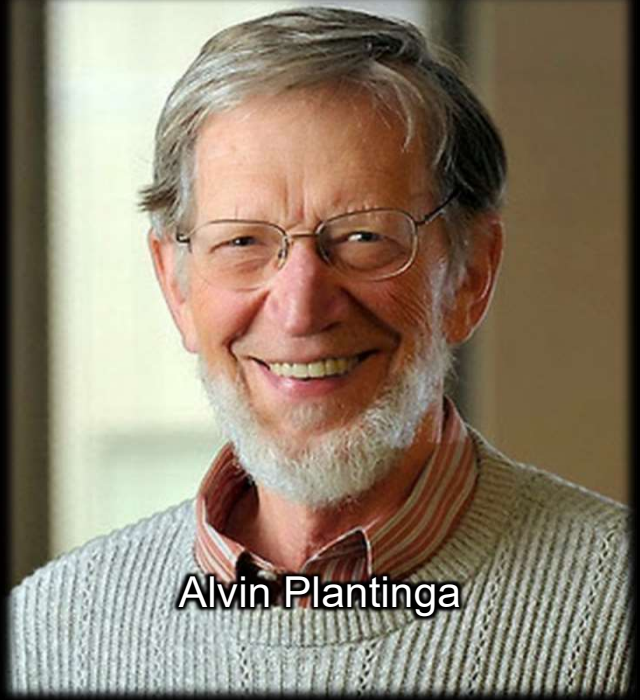
ALVIN PLANTINGA



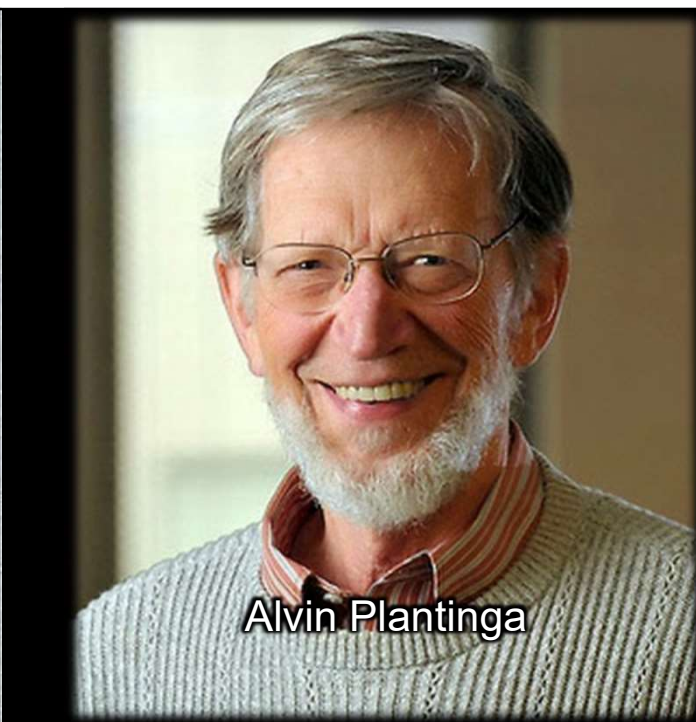
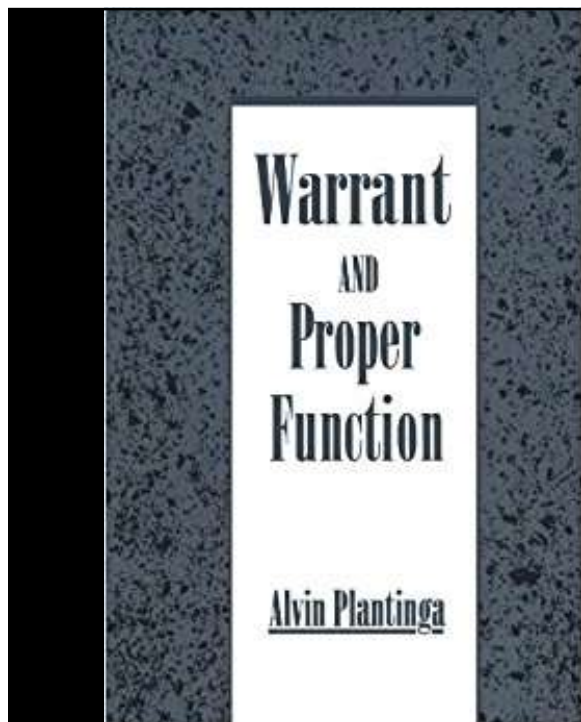
Alvin Plantinga

Warrant:
THE
Current
Debate

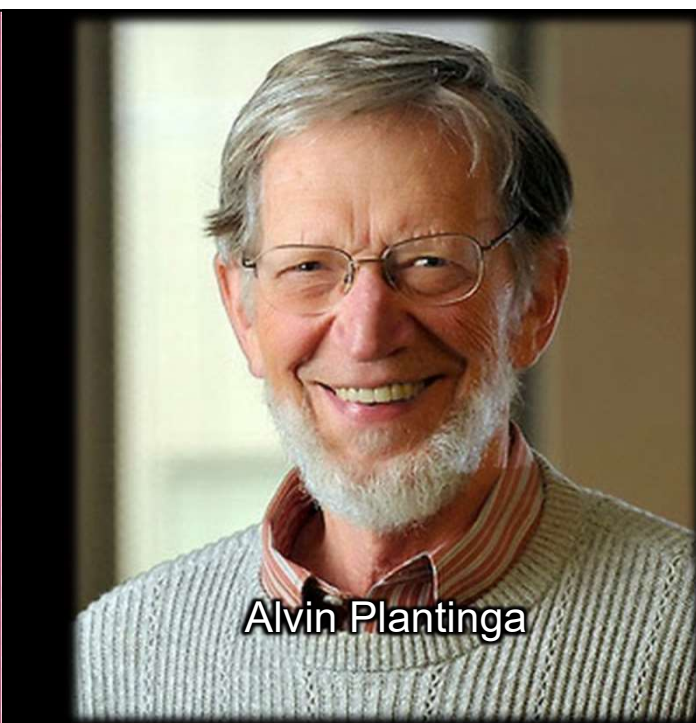
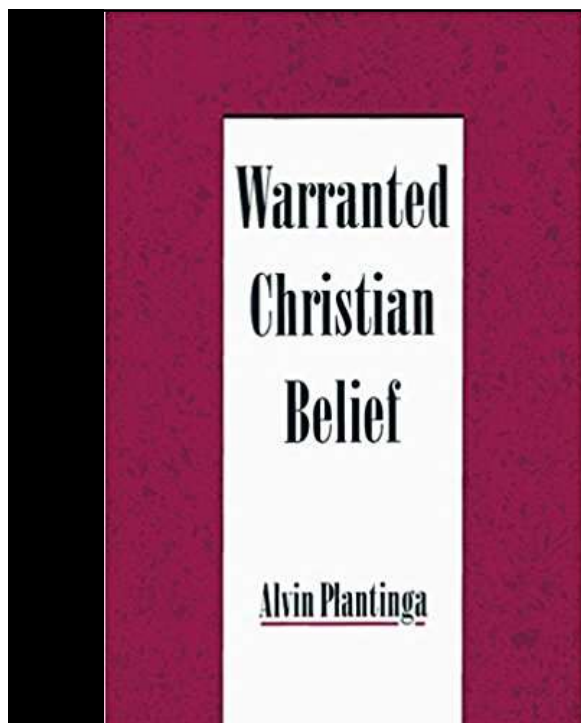
Alvin Plantinga



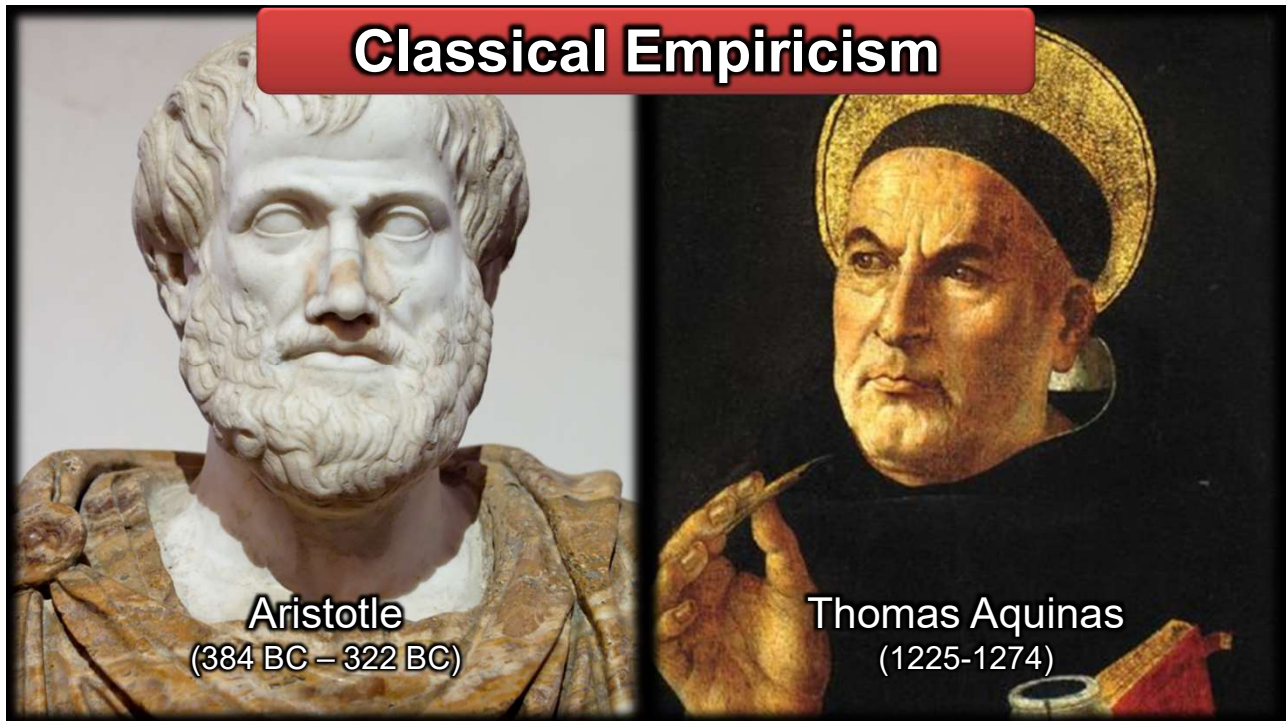
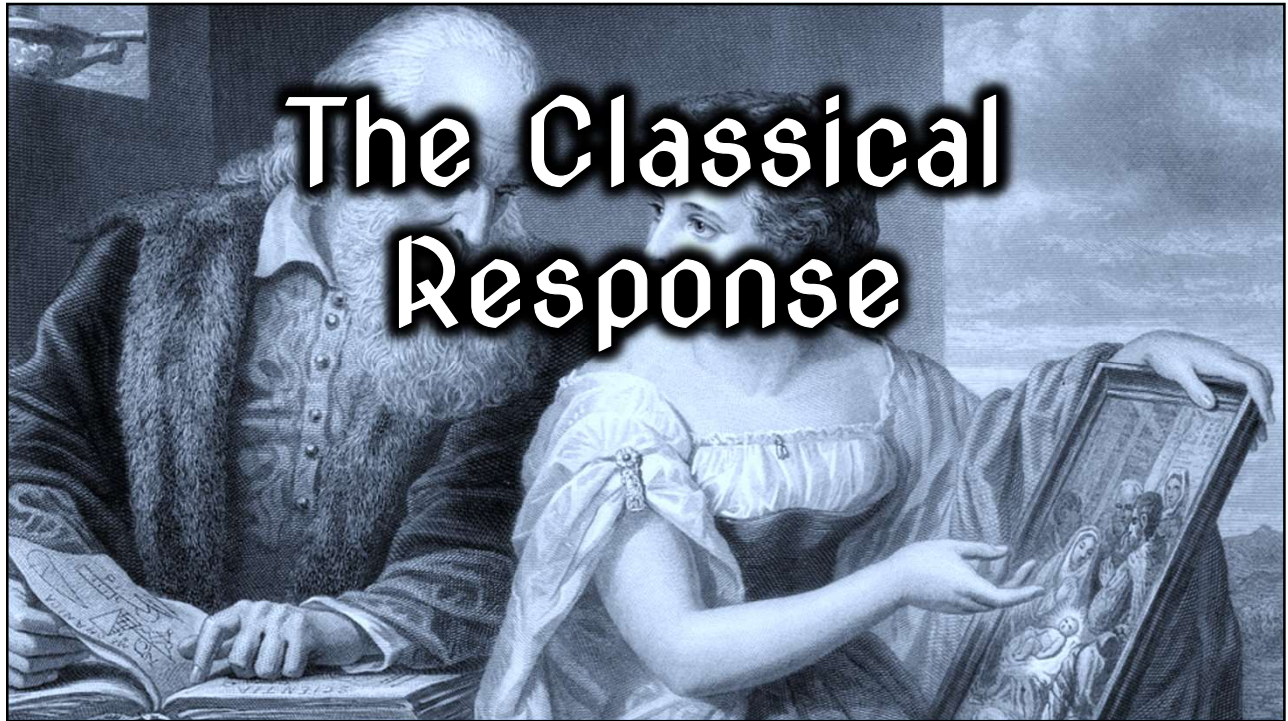
Alvin Plantinga



Alvin Plantinga



Alvin Plantinga



Classical Empiricism

Classical Empiricism takes externally existing sensible (i.e., physical) objects as its starting point of knowledge.

"Sensible things [are that] from which human reason takes the origin of its knowledge."

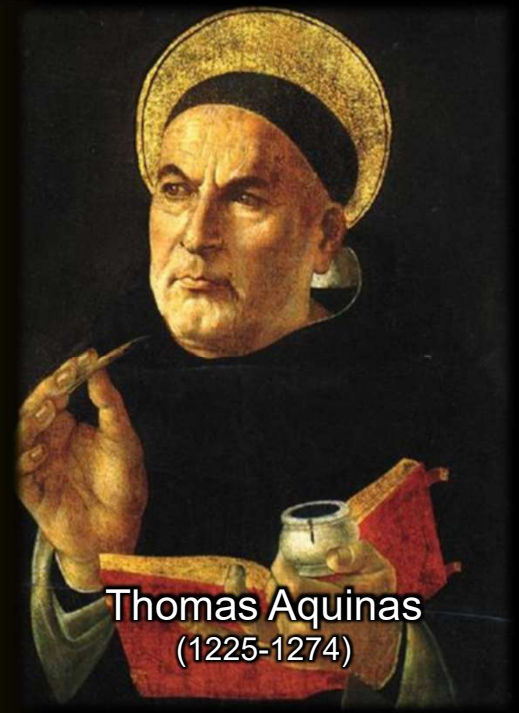
[Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 9, §2. Trans. Anton C. Pegis. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), I, 77]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"Our knowledge, taking its start from things, proceeds in this order. First, it begins in sense; second, it is completed in the intellect."

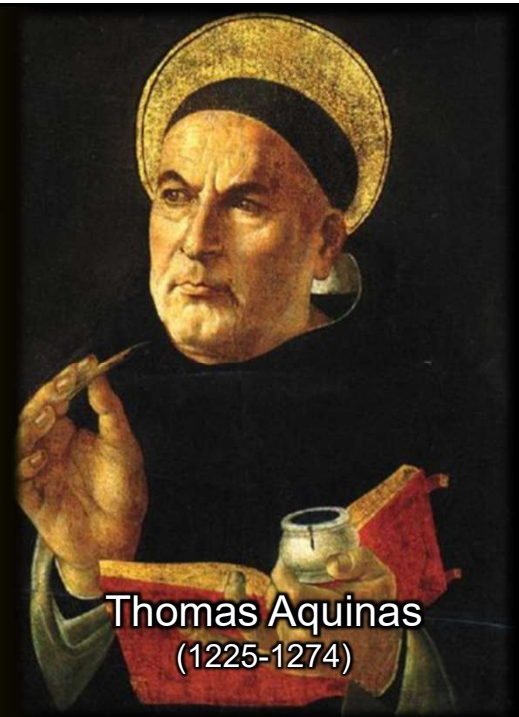
[[Thomas Aquinas, *Truth*, I, 11, trans. Mulligan, 48, in *Truth* (3 vols), vol. 1 trans. Robert W. Mulligan (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1952); vol. 2 trans. James V. McGlynn (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953); vol. 3. trans. Robert W. Schmidt (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1954). The three volumes were reprinted as *Truth* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994)]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"According to its manner of knowing in the present life, the intellect depends on the sense for the origin of knowledge; and so those things that do not fall under the senses cannot be grasp by the human intellect except in so far as the knowledge of them is gathered from sensible things."

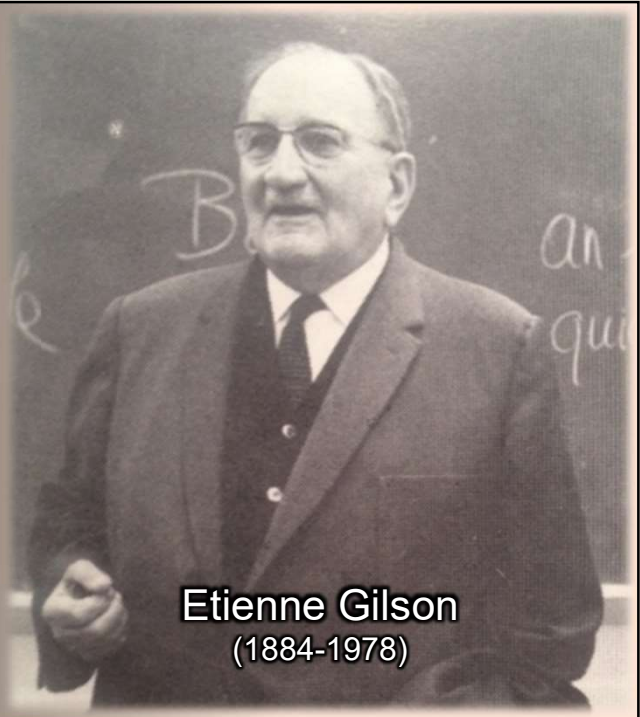
[[Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 3, §3. Trans. Anton C. Pegis. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), I, 64]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"The senses are only the bearers of a message which they are incapable of reading, for only the intellect can decipher it."

[Etienne Gilson, *Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983), 199. While in context Gilson was referring to the act of existing, I believe this point can be extended to other metaphysical aspects of things.]



Etienne Gilson
(1884-1978)

Classical Empiricism

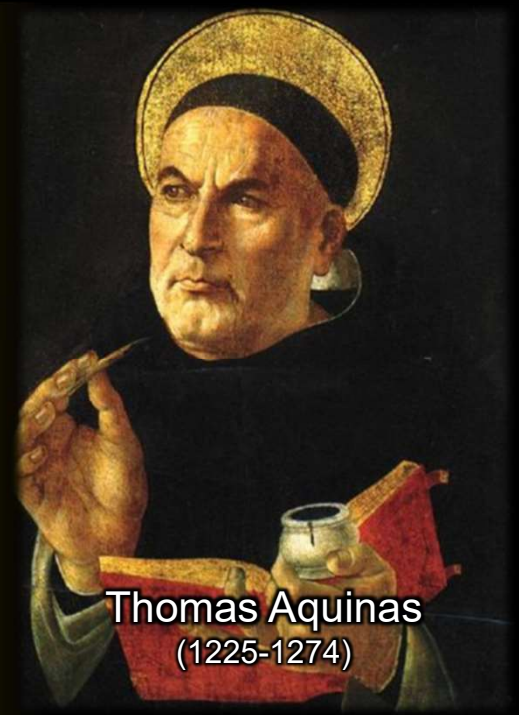
The Aristotelian/Thomistic model of human knowing factors in a certain metaphysical understanding of the nature of reality in general and physical objects in particular.

Classical Empiricism

One important thing to see here is that this starting point is with "things" (e.g., rocks, trees, humans, animals, etc.) and not with mere "sensations" or "phenomena."

"Our knowledge of principles themselves is derived from sensible things."

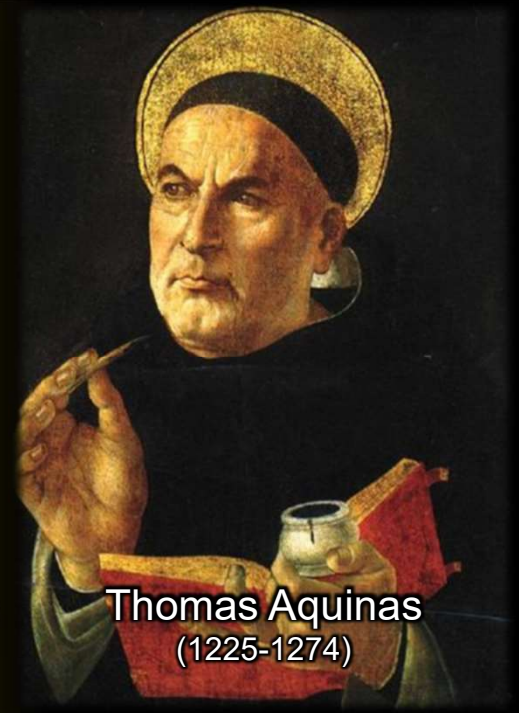
[[Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, II, 83, §26. Trans. James F. Anderson (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), II, 279]]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"Our senses give rise to memories, and from these we obtain experiential knowledge of things, which in turn is the means through which we come to an understanding of the universal principles of sciences and art."

[Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, II, 83, §32. Trans. James F. Anderson (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), II, 282]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

Classical Empiricism

It has never seen itself in any way as needing to "prove" or "justify" the existence of this externally existing physical reality.

Classical Empiricism

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