

Topics in Early Modern Philosophy: British Empiricism

Philosophy 509

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Spring 2009

Paper #3

Write an essay of 5-7 pages in length on one of the topics below. (You may also write on another topic of your own choice, but only after consulting with me.) Papers are due on Monday, May 4th (at 1:00pm!).

- (A) Hume argues that (a) all simple ideas must have simple impressions as their origin and (b) all ideas are loose and separate and can be combined by the imagination in various ways. What role do these epistemological principles play in Hume's analysis of the relation of cause and effect? Do you agree or disagree?
- (B) What is Hume's view of the nature of the *soul* and/or *self*? Please note: in the Appendix to the *Treatise*, Hume claims that he can't resolve the issue. Can you?
- (C) What is Thomas Reid's critique of the "way of ideas"? Sketch Reid's epistemology and critically examine it in light of our trio of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. Reid gets the last word in the course; should he get the last word in the argument?