

# Descartes Notes

Time period – consult original Excel diagram. Where does Descartes come into the story compared to others “near” him?

Descartes as mathematician. You have heard of Cartesian Coordinates?

Descartes as physicist. Biologist?

Rationalism Frequently goes together with mathematics and quest for certainty

Mechanism in biology; Where does psychology fit?

Primary and Secondary qualities in experience [most immediately in Galileo]--

“Special sensibles” -- from Aristotle and Scholastics. Experiences specific to the body, the body’s special senses – seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling. Colors (vision), pitch (sounds), taste, etc. are these special sensibles. Also called secondary qualities, and later in Johannes Müller, specific nerve energies. Related to “second grade of sense” to Descartes.

“Common Sensitbles” –Primary qualities are truly about the world. Number, extension, motion.. Related to “third grade of sense” to Descartes

(Descartes’ “first grade of sense” is automatic response to stimulus; not exactly a “sense”)

Method of Doubt – Meditations – Conclusions?

Cogito ergo sum – Meditation II

Mind – Body Dualism