



A Critical Introduction to Properties (Bloomsbury Critical Introductions to Contemporary Metaphysics)

By Sophie Allen

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What do blue things have in common? Or electrons? Or planets? Distinct things appear to share properties; but what are properties and what is the best philosophical account of them? *A Critical Introduction to Properties* introduces different ontological accounts of properties, exploring how their formulation is shaped by the explanatory demands placed upon them.

This accessible introduction begins with a discussion of universals, tropes, sets and resemblance classes, the major objections to them and their responses, providing readers with a firm grasp on the competing ontological accounts of what (if anything) grounds similarity and difference. It then explores issues concerning the formulation and justification of property theories such as: how many properties are there? Should we accept a sparse ontology of properties, or an abundant one? Can we make a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic properties? Do properties have their causal roles necessarily? What is the relationship between properties and other metaphysical phenomena such as causality, laws and modality? These questions get to the heart of why a coherent theory of properties is so important to metaphysics, and to philosophy more generally.

By concluding with the question of the ontological status of properties, the reader is introduced to some Carnapian and contemporary themes about the content and methodology of metaphysics. For students looking for an accessible resource and a more comprehensive understanding of contemporary metaphysics, *A Critical Introduction to Properties* is a valuable starting point.

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Editorial Review

Review

Sophie Allen has written a much needed critical introduction to properties. Written in a clear and accessible language, it provides an excellent first avenue into this important philosophical topic. Highly recommended.

-- Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra, Professor of Metaphysics, University of Oxford, UK
The question of how many things can share a nature - the question of 'one over many' - is one of the oldest and most persistent in metaphysics. But the contemporary discussion can seem obscure and over-technical for the beginner. Sophie Allen has provided just what the beginning student needs: a clear, punchy, authoritative introduction to theories of properties in recent philosophy, packed with arguments and information. Highly recommended.
Tim Crane, Knightbridge Professor of Philosophy, University of Cambridge, UK

About the Author

Sophie R. Allen is Supernumerary Fellow in Philosophy at Harris Manchester College, and Philosophy Lecturer at St Peter's College, University of Oxford, UK

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