

# I. Kant's Reconciliation of Rationalism and Empiricism

## A. Why is it needed? Want to know OBJECTIVE WORLD.

I.e., need reliable ground for our perceptions and judgments (concepts) of/about the world.

1) Rationalism: led to scepticism;

1st principles not based on empirical source of our knowledge of the world.

2) Empiricism: lost absolute knowledge;

seems to undermine role of reason in thought; lacks plausible explanation for truths of math/logic, etc.

## B. Kant's Insight: Constructivism

1. Rationalism and Empiricism share common mistake: assume one source or ground of objective knowledge.

2. Correct view: TWO sources/grounds for obj. knowl.:

1) input from outside the mind  
interacts with

2) the structure of the mind.

3. Constructivism:

Causal input + innate mental processors = representational output  
(experience, mental content)

## C. Handout #7 (Summary of Kant's strategy in the *Critique of Pure Reason*)

1. Kant's objective: there are synthetic a priori truths that apply to the world.

a. Hume's legacy: objective knowledge of the world cannot be established based on:

1) analytic a priori judgments (made true by rel's of ideas:  
"bachelors are unmarried males")

2) synthetic a posteriori judgments (made true by matters of fact: " $f=ma$ ").

What is wrong with each of these? (class)

b. Kant's THIRD WAY: Synthetic A Priori Judgments (SAPJs)!

2. Go over handout #7 (Kant's basic strategy for showing that SAPJs are possible)

3. Step 6: The "Knowledge Acquisition Device" (KAD) (We are KADs.)