Berkeley on Ordinary Objects

Jeffrey K. McDonough

Berkeley famously maintains that spirits and ideas exhaust the fundamental ontology of the world. How then do ordinary objects – tables and chairs, cats and dogs – fit into Berkeley's metaphysics? Section 1 below presents the core of Berkeley's account of ordinary objects as well as a longstanding objection to that account, namely that he must deny the commonsense conviction that ordinary objects persist even when not perceived by us. Sections 2 through 4 consider three lines of response to the problem of the persistence of ordinary objects that have been attributed to Berkeley by his commentators. Finally, section 5 suggests that those three lines of response might perhaps best be seen as complementary – rather than rival – threads in Berkeley's considered understanding of things such as birds and bees, mountains and lakes.

1. Ordinary Objects and the Persistence Problem

It is tempting to suppose that for Berkeley ordinary objects should be identified with particular ideas. A rose, for example, might be identified with a rose-idea. A bird with a bird-idea. Etc. Particular Berkeleyian ideas, however, would offer a poor substitute for ordinary objects. For ordinary objects are generally assumed to be perceivable at different times, via different sensory modalities, and by different perceivers. I'm able to see the same rose today that I saw yesterday. I'm not only able to see it but to smell it as well. And the same holds for others – my wife and daughter can see and smell the same rose as I. If Berkeley were to identify ordinary objects with particular ideas, he would have to deny all these commonsense convictions about ordinary objects in light of the fact that he takes particular ideas to be transitory, restricted to particular sensory modalities, and resolutely private.

Berkeley is able to recapture many of our commonsense intuitions concerning ordinary objects, however, by identifying them with collections

"Berkeley on Ordinary Objects," to appear in *The Continuum Companion to Berkeley*, eds. Bertil Belfrage and Dick Brook (New York: Continuum Press), submitted 2011.

or "combinations" of ideas rather than with particular ideas (see, PHK 1, 3, 12, 148; DHP 1:195, 2:224, 2:249). In this vein, an apple, for example, might be identified with a collection of ideas enjoyed at different times, via different sensory modalities, and by different perceivers. I might be said to have perceived the same apple on two different days in virtue of my experiencing two members of an apple-collection, one member on Monday, another member on Tuesday. Likewise, I might be said to have both touched and tasted the same apple in virtue of my experiencing a tactile and a gustatory idea from one and the same collection of ideas. And similarly you and I might be said perceive the same apple in virtue of our having direct perceptual acquaintance with different members of the same apple-collection of ideas. In identifying ordinary objects with collections of ideas, rather than with particular ideas, Berkeley is thus able to salvage many of our commonsense intuitions concerning ordinary objects without abandoning any of his deep metaphysical principles.

On shouldn't suppose that in identifying ordinary objects with collections of ideas that Berkeley thereby commits himself to the view that any old collection of ideas must count as an ordinary object. My tactile sensation of sandpaper, visual glimpse of a silk tie, and olfactory perception of my neighbor's fresh-cut grass might well constitute a collection of ideas. There is no reason, however, to suppose that they must constitute an ordinary object. In a passage from the first section of the *Principles*, Berkeley suggests some rough and ready considerations that might be used to distinguish mere collections of ideas from ordinary objects:

> [A]s several of these [ideas] are observed to accompany each other, they come to be marked by one name, and so to be reputed as one thing. Thus, for example, a certain colour, taste, smell, figure and consistence having been observed to go together, are accounted one distinct thing, signified by the name apple. Other collections of ideas constitute a stone, a tree, a book, and the like sensible things; which, as they are pleasing or disagreeable, excite the passions of love, hatred, joy, grief, and so forth. (PHK 1; see also DHP 245, 249; NTV 109)

This passage implies that a collection of ideas is a better candidate for counting as an ordinary object if its members are instances of types of ideas that regularly co-occur in experience, if we have names for referring to such collections, and if it is the sort of collection that interests us. While these suggestions do not, of course, represent a fully developed theory of necessary and sufficient conditions according which a collection of ideas may be designated an ordinary thing, they nonetheless provide some

plausible heuristics for distinguishing between "mere" collections of ideas and the collections of ideas that might appropriately be identified with ordinary objects (see, Atherton, 2008; Flage, 1994; Glauser, 2007).

A more serious difficulty for Berkeley's account of ordinary objects, however, remains. It is nicely capture in an often-quoted limerick attributed to the Monsignor Ronald Knox:

> There was a young man who said God,
> must find it exceedingly odd
> when he finds that the tree
> continues to be
> when noone's about in the Quad.

The difficulty alluded to by Knox's poem arises from a tension between Berkeley's "*esse* is *percipi*" doctrine and our commonsense intuitions concerning the persistence of ordinary objects. Berkeley's doctrine – central to his defense of immaterialism – insists that perceived things exist only as long as they are perceived (PHK 2-4, 48, 139; DHP 3:230). If the tree in the quad is a perceived thing, this implies that it exists only as long as someone is perceiving it, and thus that it must cease to exist when no one is around and suddenly "pop" back into existence as soon as someone observes it again. This apparent consequence of Berkeley's immaterialism has long troubled his readers and has been much discussed by his commentators. The next three sections will take up three lines of response that have been developed by leading scholars in light of various suggestive passages in Berkeley's writings.

2. A Dismissive Response

Since Berkeley is not committed by his fundamental metaphysics to the continuous existence of ordinary objects, he could have simply dismissed the widespread conviction that the tree in the quad continues to exist when no one is there to see it. All interesting philosophical theories have some unintuitive consequences, and Berkeley could have counted the "gappy" existence ordinary objects as one of the more surprising results of his often-surprising immaterialism. Furthermore, he could have hoped to soften the initial shock of such a move by noting that the intermittent existence of ordinary objects needn't have any practical significance whatsoever given Berkeley's system. If the tree ceases to exist precisely when no one is there to see it, its absence clearly couldn't be noticed directly. But it might also

be impossible to notice gaps in the tree's existence even indirectly since Berkeley's God might guarantee that our actual perceptions are indistinguishable from the perceptions we would have if the tree were to exist continuously. While it might still be counted as a shocking metaphysical conclusion that the tree in the quad pops in and out of existence depending on whether or not anyone is about, it appears that Berkeley, if he had wanted to, could have turned his back on the commonsense belief in the persistence of ordinary objects without inflicting any serious damage to his considered metaphysics.

But did Berkeley adopt such a dismissive attitude? In a provocative series of writings spanning almost four decades, Jonathan Bennett has argued vigorously that Berkeley's "fundamental attitude toward the plain person's trees and stones" was a "disrespectful one" (Bennett 2001, 177; see also Bennett 1965; Bennett 1971, 169-198). In support of his interpretation, Bennett offers three main lines of evidence.

The first line of evidence involves a close examination of Berkeley's texts for signs that he does not take the person on the street's view of ordinary objects to be a serious metaphysical concern (see, NTV 49, 108, 110; PHK 1; DHP 1:245). Especially relevant in this regard is a three-paragraph stretch of the *Principles*, that begins with Berkeley noting that "it will be objected that from the foregoing principles it follows, things are every moment annihilated and created anew … the trees therefore are in the garden, or the chairs in the parlour, no longer than while there is some body by to perceive them" (PHK 45). Instead of immediately rejecting this apparent consequence of his immaterialism, however, Berkeley spends the remainder of the section, as well as most of the next two sections, implying that the commonsense belief in the persistence of ordinary objects is less secure than one might have imagined. He maintain that philosophers in general are widely committed to the non-persistence of ordinary objects given their views on sensible qualities, divine conservation, and the divisibility of matter (PHK 46-47). And he entreats "the reader to sound his own thoughts, and not suffer himself to be imposed on by words," declaring that if the reader

> can conceive it possible either for his ideas or their archetypes to exist without being perceived, then I give up the cause: but if he cannot, he will acknowledge it is unreasonable for him to stand up in defense of he knows not what, and pretend to charge on me as an absurdity, the not assenting to those propositions which at bottom have no meaning in them. (PHK 45)

Passages such as these provide some textual support for Bennett's suggestion that Berkeley did not have a considered interest in reconciling his own immaterialism with the person on the street's belief in the persistence of ordinary objects.

Bennett finds a second line of support for the same conclusion in Berkeley's failure to pursue various philosophical strategies that might have brought his fundamental ontology into better agreement with commonsense beliefs about ordinary objects. Particularly glaring, in Bennett's opinion, is Berkeley's failure to "reach for the glittering prize of an account of thing-collections which allows for one to exist when not perceived by anyone" (Bennett 2001, 177). As we have noted, by identifying ordinary objects with collections of ideas, Berkeley is able to recapture some of our commonsense beliefs about ordinary objects – that, for example, they can be perceived at different times, by different perceivers, and via different sensory modalities. But once ordinary objects are identified with collections of ideas, it seems that they might also be said to persist through gaps in our perceiving them provided that they include ideas that exist both before and after those gaps. The tree in the quad might thus be said to exist on Wednesday even if it is unperceived provided that it is constituted by a collection of ideas, at least one member of which is perceived earlier in the week and another member of which is perceived later in the week. This is the "glittering prize" that Bennett maintains Berkeley could have failed to adopt only through willful neglect; Bennett therefore counts Berkeley's indifference to this solution as evidence of his indifference to the problem that it would solve.

A third line of support invoked by Bennett is similarly indirect. In an undeniably important passage from the *Dialogues*, Berkeley's spokesperson Philonous implies that whether two perceivers may be said to perceive the same object or not might be simply a matter of convention. In making the point he introduces the following analogy:

> [S]uppose a house, whose walls or outward shell remaining unaltered, the chambers are all pulled down, and new ones built in their place; that you should call this the *same*, and I should say it was not the *same* house: would we not for all this perfectly agree in our thoughts of the house, considered in it self? and would not all the difference consist in a sound? (DHP 3:248)

The analogy implies, of course, that whether a house with a fully replaced interior should be counted as the same house or not is of no metaphysical importance – a matter of pure convention. One might therefore see in Berkeley's analogy an indication that he intends to take the same stance

toward the persistence of ordinary objects more generally; as saying, in effect, that the question of whether or not the tree in the quad continues to persist when no one is looking is metaphysically shallow and unworthy of serious reflection – a matter ripe for brute stipulation.

3. An Idealist Response

While it might well be correct to see Berkeley's treatment of ordinary objects as occurring at a level up, as it were, from his most fundamental metaphysics, it must be counted against Bennett's interpretation that Berkeley appears to offer not one, but two positive strategies for reconciling his immaterialism with the commonsense view that the tree in the quad persists when no one is there to perceive it. The more famous of those two strategies is suggested by yet another limerick attributed to Knox:

Dear Sir, your astonishment's odd
I'm always about in the Quad
And that's why the tree
continues to be
Since observed by, yours faithfully, God

As Knox's poem implies, Berkeley could hope to reconcile his commitment to the *esse* is *percipi* doctrine with the persistence of ordinary objects by insisting that ordinary objects are always perceived by God. That is to say, he could maintain that an ordinary object, taken to be a collection of ideas, exists as long as at least one of its members is perceived, and, in particular, that the tree in the quad may exist when no one is about because at least one of its member-ideas is always perceived by God. This "idealist" strategy suggests an especially straightforward way in which Berkeley might have reasonably hoped to accommodate commonsense views concerning the persistence of ordinary objects while nonetheless remaining true to his deepest metaphysical principles.

There is clear textual evidence that Berkeley at least entertained an idealist account of the persistence of ordinary objects. At *Principles* 48, he writes:

> [T]hough we hold indeed the objects of sense to be nothing else but ideas which cannot exist unperceived: yet we may not hence conclude that they have no existence except only while they are perceived by us, since there may be some other spirit that perceives them, though we do not. Wherever bodies are said to have no

> existence without the mind, I would not be understood to mean this or that particular mind, but all minds whatsoever. It does not therefore follow from the foregoing principles, that bodies are annihilated and created every moment, or exist not at all during the intervals between our perception of them.

A clearer general statement of the idealist strategy could hardly be hoped for. Nor is this the only passage in which Berkeley suggests that ordinary objects might persist in virtue of being perceived by other minds and by God in particular. In *Principles* 6, for example, Berkeley, having affirmed that "all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind, that their being is to be perceived or known," immediately goes on to emphasize that if those bodies "do not exist in my mind or that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all, *or else subsist in the mind of some eternal spirit*" (italics added).

Additional evidence that Berkeley took seriously an idealist response to the problem of the persistence of ordinary objects can be found in a novel argument he offers for the existence of God. Responding to Hylas's charges that his immaterialist philosophy is, in fact, a version of external world skepticism, Berkeley's spokesperson Philonous begins by reaffirming his commitment to the *esse* is *percepi* doctrine, stating "sensible things cannot exist otherwise than in a mind or spirit" (DHP 212). Philonous goes on to concede, however, that sensible things exist independently of *his* perceiving them, and implies that the same must hold for any finite perceiver. He infers that there must therefore "be some other mind" wherein sensible objects exist, and concludes "As sure therefore as the sensible world really exists, so sure is there an infinite, omnipresent spirit who contains and supports it" (DHP 212). Summarizing his novel argument for God's existence, he proudly declares that "Men commonly believe that all things are known or perceived by God, because they believe the being of a God, whereas I on the other side, immediately and necessarily conclude the being of a God, because all sensible things must be perceived by him" (DHP 212). Insofar as this argument takes for granted the idealist strategy in order to reach its conclusion, Berkeley's endorsement of the argument lends support to seeing him as committed to the idealist strategy as well.

Even if it is granted, however, that ordinary objects might persist through gaps in our perceptions in virtue of their being perceived or known by God, an important objection, forcefully raised by George Pitcher, remains. Since human perception is passive, and God himself is wholly

active, the nature of our perceiving must be very different from the nature of God's perceiving (Mabbot 1931, 24; McCracken 1979, 282-287; Thomas 1977). Having concluded that God's perception of an object must amount to his merely thinking it, or having an idea of it, Pitcher declares of the idealist response:

> I have to remark that I think the doctrine is by no means an attractive one. Anyone who wants to, or does, believe that objects continue to exist when no finite creature is observing them – and this includes at least all of mankind who are sane – should not be satisfied with the statement that they merely continue to exist in God's mind . . . God must have ideas of all possible worlds in His mind, in addition to ideas of this actual world. The kind of existence that Berkeley accords to unperceived objects of this world, then, is precisely the kind that objects in merely possible, but non-actual worlds, have – e.g. the kind and amount that a purple man with three heads has. No one, I say, should be satisfied with so little. (Pitcher 1977, 171-172)

Pitcher's objection is that if an object were to count as existing merely in virtue of God's having some idea of it, then given God's omniscience, every possible object should count as existing. In short, an idealist account would appear to be overly permissive in supposing that God's having an idea of an object is sufficient for that object's having a real and full-blooded existence. As we'll see below, this objection leaves open the possibility that being perceived by God might nonetheless be a necessary condition for an object's continued existence.

4. A Phenomenalist Response

In addition to the idealist strategy, Berkeley's texts also suggest another approach to the difficulty presented by the persistence of ordinary objects. In his early notebooks, he writes:

> The trees are in the park, that is, whether I will or no, whether I imagine anything about them or no, let me but go thither and open my eyes by day and I shall not avoid seeing them. (N 98)

Similarly, in the *Principles* he tells us:

> The table I write on, I say, exists, that is, I see and feel it; and if I were out of my study I should say it existed, meaning thereby that if I was in my study I might perceive it, or that some other spirit actually does perceive it. (PHK 3)

These and other passages suggest that statements about the continued existence of objects might be understood at least partially in terms of conditional statements about what we would perceive in various circumstances (see also, N 52, 185a, 282, 293, 293a, 408; PHK 58). That is to say, they suggest that Berkeley seems to have entertained a *phenomenalist* account of ordinary things like trees and parks, tables and chairs.

Further evidence of a phenomenalist strain in Berkeley's thinking about ordinary objects can found in his response to a difficulty originally raised by Lady Percival shortly after the publication of the *Principles*. She points out that according to the bible, God created trees prior to the creation of sentient beings. But how, she wonders, if idealism is true, could trees exist before there were sentient beings to perceive them? In his reply, Berkeley invokes not only God's eternal perception of ideas, but also an element that clearly smacks of phenomenalism:

> I do not deny the existence of any of those sensible things which Moses says were created by God. They existed from all eternity in the Divine intellect, and then became perceptible (i.e. were created) in the same manner and order as is described in *Genesis*. For I take creation to belong to things only as they respect finite spirits, there being nothing new to God. Hence it follows that the act of creation consists in God's willing that those things should be perceptible to other spirits, which before were known only to Himself. (*Works* 8:37; see also DHP 3:251-254, 3:253)

In this passage, Berkeley implies, in keeping with the idealist thread discussed above, that sensible things have always existed in the divine intellect. But the passage also introduces an additional consideration, namely, that the *creation* of sensible things relative to finite spirits involves God's decreeing that they should become perceptible to sentient perceivers. That further element may be seen as betraying a phenomenalist strain in Berkeley's thinking insofar as it suggests that the existence of ordinary objects, perhaps relative to us, or in the fullest sense, depends on the truth of conditionals involving the circumstances under which they would be perceived by finite spirits.

In spite of passages such as those just cited, however, any attempt to read Berkeley as a straightforward phenomenalist must face serious difficulties. Some of those difficulties are of a general philosophical nature. It has long been objected, for example, that the conditional truths involved in phenomenalist analyses of ordinary objects inevitably become unmanageably and implausibly complex in short order. Thus, for example, the statement that I will see my desk if I open my office door helps itself to

"office door." "Office door" will therefore itself have to be analyzed, in turn, in terms of conditional statements, e.g. "if I were in Emerson Hall with the lights on I would see my office door." But that statement, in turn, makes reference to a building – to another ordinary object that will therefore also stand in need of further analysis. Phenomenalist analyses of even the most banal statements involving ordinary objects, such as "I will see my desk if I open my office door," thus threaten to quickly become wildly, even unimaginably, complex. Other difficulties in attributing a straightforward phenomenalist account of ordinary objects to Berkeley concern more directly matters of textual interpretation. It has been noted, for example, that several key phenomenalist-sounding passages may be read as being conjectural or pragmatic, rather than as expressing clear statements of considered doctrine (see, for example, DHP 3:253; PHK 52). Likewise, it has often been suggested that strict phenomenalism is, at any rate, inconsistent with the letter of Berkeley's *esse* is *percepi* doctrine insofar as it implies that objects may exist when they are not, in fact, actually being perceived (see, for example, Dicker 2011, 271; Stoneham 2002, 288-291).

A rather different, and I think ultimately more revealing objection might be called the "wrong answer objection." When Berkeley is pressed to give an account of how sensible objects can persist when no finite being senses them, he frequently says, as we have seen, that they can persist in virtue of God's perceiving them. Such a reply, however, does not merely lend support to an idealist interpretation, but also seems to be altogether the wrong sort of response for a phenomenalist to offer. For a proponent of phenomenalism there is a straightforward answer to the challenge presented by continuity: sensible objects continue to exist because they would be perceived if such and such conditions were to obtain; that answer, it would seem, has absolutely nothing to do with God's having the relevant ideas in mind. The "wrong answer objection" thus suggests that Berkeley's sympathy for an idealist solution militates against attributing a phenomenalist response to him.

5. Complimentary Threads?

One might not unreasonably suppose that the three accounts just sketched represent irreconcilable strains in Berkeley's thinking about ordinary objects – that while he recognized the persistence of things like tables and chairs as a prima facie difficulty for his system, he never settled upon a consistent response to it. Alternatively, however, one might endeavor see the responses just sketched as complementary threads in an inclusive, if

perhaps not fully articulated, account of ordinary objects. Such an approach holds out the promise of seeing Berkeley's treatment of things like bats, balls and baubles as being in essence coherent.

As a first step towards such a conciliatory account, it should be conceded, in the spirit of the dismissive response, that ordinary objects like tables, books and lamps do not, for Berkeley, belong to the fundamental ontology of the world. He may therefore allow the identity conditions of ordinary objects to differ from the identity conditions of ideas and spirits and he may even grant that they might be determined at least in part by convention and commonsense. Such concessions, however, are perfectly consistent with Berkeley's taking the project of reconciling his fundamental metaphysics with the existence of ordinary objects very seriously, and, indeed, with his having considered views concerning how his fundamental metaphysics and commonsense might best be reconciled.

Second, in the spirit of the idealist response, it should be conceded that, for Berkeley, an object's being continuously perceived is a necessary condition for its persistence. That is to say, having identified ordinary objects with collections of ideas, Berkeley may insist that things like tables and chairs can exist only as long as at least one of their members is perceived – an insistence most likely rooted his ground-floor conviction that it is impossible to even conceive of a sensible thing existing unperceived. Such a concession to idealism, however, should not be taken to imply that an object must be continually perceived by the same finite agent, or, indeed, by any finite agent at all. Berkeley may thus allow that the requirement of being continuously perceived may be satisfied by a higher spirit, or even by God himself. In this regard, one should not, I think, be overly worried that God's perception of ordinary objects must be quite different from our sensory perception of ordinary objects insofar as the former must be active and the latter must be passive. For such a concern represents a standard worry confronting essentially all Christian philosophers of the past, and Berkeley would have been in good company in allowing that God may perceive in some sense even if not in exactly the same sense in which creatures perceive (McCracken 1979, 287-290; Pitcher 1977, 175-179; Winkler 1989, 235-236).

Finally, in the spirit of the phenomenalist response, it should be granted that the truths of certain counterfactual statements play an important role for Berkeley as necessary conditions for the existence, or full existence, of ordinary objects. Indeed, his proposal that the "steadiness, order, and coherence" of a collection of ideas contributes to its qualifying as an ordinary object, as well as his analysis of perceptual error in terms of

mistaken inferential judgments, suggests that such truths play a constitutive role in the existence of what we take to be ordinary objects (PHK 30; DHP 3:235). It should be quickly added that such a view does not commit Berkeley to the position that the truth of various counterfactual statements by itself is sufficient for the existence of ordinary objects. As a result, one may see the idealist and phenomenalist threads in Berkeley's treatment of ordinary objects as reinforcing one another; as together laying out a pair of individually non-sufficient, but mutually necessary conditions for the existence of ordinary objects (see especially, Winkler 1989, 204-237).

Woven together, these threads may considerably strengthen what is essentially one side of Berkeley's account of ordinary objects. On offense, Berkeley famously argues that what exists most fundamentally in the world are spirits and ideas, extols the virtues of his immaterialism, and attacks what he sees as the confused and pernicious postulation of a mind-independent material world. On defense, however, Berkeley engages in secondary project aimed at showing how his immaterialism may be reconciled as far as possible with accepted philosophical doctrine, theological commitment, and commonsense belief. His treatment of the problem of the persistence of ordinary objects belongs firmly to this secondary project, but it is a serious treatment nonetheless, directed at showing how many – if perhaps not all – of our commonsense convictions concerning things like apples and trees, chairs and desks can be recaptured in a framework laced with both idealist and phenomenalist threads.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Atherton, Margaret, "The Books are in the Study as Before: Berkeley's Claims about Real Physical Objects," British Journal for the History of Philosophy, vol. 16, no. 1 (2008): pp. 85-100.

Bennett, Jonathan, "Berkeley and God," *Philosophy*, vol. 40 (1965): pp. 207-221. Reprinted in C.B. Martin and D.M Armstrong (eds), *Locke and Berkeley: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), pp. 380-99.

-----, *Locke, Berkeley, Hume: Central Themes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

-----. *Learning from Six Philosophers, Volume 2, Locke, Berkeley, Hume* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Dicker, Georges, *Berkeley's Idealism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Flage, Daniel, "Berkeley, Individuation, and Physical Objects," in Kenneth F. Barber and Jorge J.E. Gracia (eds), *Individuation and Identity in Early Modern Philosophy* ((Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 133-54.

Glauser, Richard, "The Problem of Unity of a Physical Object in Berkeley," in Stephen H. Daniel (ed), *Reexamining Berkeley's Philosophy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), pp. 50-81.

Mabbot, J. D., "The Place of God in Berkeley's Philosophy," *Journal of Philosophical Studies*, vol. 6, no. 21 (1931): pp. 18-29.

McCracken, C. (1979). "What *Does* Berkeley's God See in the Quad?" *Archiv fur Geschichte der Philosophie*, 61: 280–92.

Pitcher, George, *Berkeley* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977).

Stoneham, Tom, *Berkeley's World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Thomas, George H., "Berkeley's God Does not Perceive," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 14, no. 2 (1977): 163-179.

Winkler, Kennth P., *Berkeley: An Interpretation* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1989).