

Berkeley, *Dialogues*, Part II

The brain is not the cause of ideas, since it is itself only an idea.

(Note too that ideas are inert – they can't be the cause of anything. Only minds or spirits are active.)

Berkeley's *idealism* is not a skeptical hypothesis

We are certain of our ideas, and they *are* the "real things."

The source of skepticism is the belief that the real things possess "absolute existence" outside all minds. For then ideas are reduced to a "false imaginary glare." (255)

God is the cause of all our ideas.

Sensible things do not depend on *my* perceiving them. So "*there must be some other mind wherein they exist.*" (256)

"*Sensible things do really exist: and if they really exist, they are necessarily perceived by an infinite mind: therefore there is an infinite mind, or God.*" (256-7)

Our ideas are not present in God's mind.

Ideas are "passive and inert," whereas God is "an impassive, indivisible, purely active being."

Archetypes of our ideas are present in God's mind. (259)

God's perfection

Given the variety and order of our sensible impressions, we can conclude that their author is "*wise, powerful, and good, beyond comprehension.*" (259)

Matter is not the cause of our ideas.

By "matter," philosophers mean an "extended, solid, moveable, unthinking, inactive substance." (260) But no such thing can exist, much less be the cause of our ideas.

Volitions or acts of will are the only actions (261), but only minds or spirits have will. So only minds or spirits can cause ideas.

Further hypotheses about matter rejected

Not an instrument. (262-3)

Nor an "occasion," (263ff)

Thought for the day (!)

"Few men think yet all will have opinions. Hence men's opinions are superficial and confused." (258)