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The New Berkeley

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Throughout his mature writings, Berkeley speaks of minds as substances that underlie or support ideas. After initially flirting with a Humean account, according to which minds are nothing but 'congeries of Perceptions' (PC 580), Berkeley went on to claim that a mind is a 'perceiving, active being ... entirely distinct' from its ideas (P 2).[1] Despite his immaterialism, Berkeley retains the traditional category of substance and gives it pride of place in his ontology. Ideas, by contrast, are 'fleeting and dependent beings' (P 89) that must be supported by a mental substance. There is no doubt that Berkeley's conception of the relationship between minds and ideas is non-traditional, but that fact does not undercut his commitment to the traditional conception of substance. A robust literature has

1 All references are to A.A. Luce and T.E. Jessop, eds., *The Works of George Berkeley*, 9 vols. (London: Thomas Nelson 1949-58). When citing the *Principles*, the numbers given refer to paragraphs; when citing the *Philosophical Commentaries*, the reference is to a numbered entry; when other works are cited, the reference is to the page number of the relevant volume in Luce and Jessop. The following abbreviations are convenient: NTV, *New Theory of Vision*; PI, the published Introduction to the *Principles*; P, *Principles*, Part I; PC, *Philosophical Commentaries*; TD, *Three Dialogues*. References to Descartes are to John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch, eds., *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 1985) (hereafter 'CSM').

grown up around the thorny issue of reconciling Berkeley's endorsement of mental substance with his rejection of its material counterpart.[2]

Recent commentators such as Stephen Daniel and Robert Muehlmann have argued (on different grounds) that Berkeley in fact rejects the traditional conception of substance. Both see Berkeley as maintaining some version of the congeries account considered in the *Notebooks*, although their understandings of this account significantly diverge. For Daniel, Berkeleian minds '*are* the existence of ideas.'[3] Daniel connects Berkeley's views with those of Suárez and Gregory of Nyssa, arguing that a Berkeleian mind is 'not its ideas but the active, willful, particular, and determinate apprehension of things that results from God's designation of a unique and affective ordering of perceptions.'[4] In other words, minds are not traditional substances but collections of ordered activities. By contrast, Muehlmann reads these passages as offering a 'bundle analysis' of the self of the more familiar Humean variety. Unlike Daniel, Muehlmann recognizes that the *Notebooks* and the published writings present *prima facie* incompatible views and that Berkeley does in the *Principles* offer a substance account of the mind.[5] Muehlmann argues that Berkeley, a master of 'the arts of deflection and camouflage,'[6] merely 'conceals' the bundle analysis. In the end, minds play none of the roles traditionally accorded to substances, and so Berkeley's substance-talk is mere window-dressing.

We shall argue that these new readings of Berkeley are mistaken. In the end, none of the attacks against taking Berkeley at face value are persuasive. Both Daniel and Muehlmann must read away much of Berkeley's text as disingenuous or sloppy. This is too high an interpretative price to pay for a reading with so few virtues.

2 See especially Margaret Atherton, 'The Coherence of Berkeley's Theory of Mental Substance,' in *Critical and Interpretive Essays on Berkeley*, Walter Creery, ed. (London: Croom Helm 1991) and Kenneth Winkler, *Berkeley: An Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1989).

3 Stephen Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez, and the *Esse-Existere* Distinction,' *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* **74** (2000) 621-36, at 623

4 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 623.

5 *Berkeley's Ontology* (Indianapolis: Hackett 1992), 170. The core of this chapter is reprinted in a shorter form in Muehlmann, ed., *Berkeley's Metaphysics: Structural Interpretive, and Critical Essays* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press 1995).

6 Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology*, 188

I

Let us begin by characterizing the nature and roles of substance as traditionally understood. Philosophers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries operated within a substance/mode ontology largely inherited from Aristotle via the Scholastics. Initially, the distinction employed by the early moderns is rigid, exhaustive, and exclusive. Whatever is not a substance is a mode, and vice versa. Leibniz is particularly clear on this point, taking as an obvious premise in an argument concerning transubstantiation that 'Whatever is not substance is accident....'[7] Apparently the premise is so self-evident as not to require any justification at all.

Substances for the moderns are best characterized by two principal features. Something is a substance if it is both persistent and exists independently. Aristotle writes in the *Categories*: 'It seems most distinctive of substance that what is numerically one and the same is able to receive contraries.'[8] The essential thought behind this characterization — and one the moderns adopted — is the notion of something persisting through change. Chairs and persons persist without changing *qua* chair or person despite other alterations whereas wisdom and irritability do not. A wise but irritable person is still a person even after becoming less sagacious and more pleasant. This is the origin of the conception of substance as something that 'supports' qualities or accidents. As a result substances are ontologically prior to their accidents.

For the moderns, however, this is not enough. Substances are not merely things that support accidents. Since change can occur on many levels of analysis, there will be many different levels on which change can occur. One might want to deny that the Athenian state is a substance because, although it underlies and persists through changes it does not do so in a *basic* way.[9] Arguably, states depend on their citizens and perhaps their laws for their existence. Thus, the concept of a state can be further analyzed. In a real sense, therefore, it is not what ultimately persists without alteration as changes occur 'underneath' it. The citizens

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7 G.W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, Leroy Loemker, ed. (Boston: D. Reidel 1976), 116. Cf. Descartes, who invokes the same exhaustive distinction. *Principles* I:48, CSM I:208.

8 Jonathan Barnes, ed., *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 1, *Categories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1984), 4a10.

9 We borrow this example and analysis from William Kneale, 'The Notion of a Substance,' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 40 (1939-1940), 105.

(upon whom the existence of the state depends) change, both as a collection and individually, thus casting doubt on the supposition that states are substances.

The second element thus seems crucial to a proper understanding of substance. Substances must be the *ultimate* persistent underliers of change. The moderns capture this notion by positing that in addition to *persistence* substance needs *independence*. The moderns capture this thought in several ways. Some believe that independence is captured by simplicity, as Leibniz does when arguing that aggregates cannot be substances. The most common move, however, is to attach the notion of ontological or causal independence to substance. A substance requires nothing else for its existence. Thus, when we turn to examine Descartes' descriptions of substance, one can detect both forces at play. 'By *substance* we can understand nothing other than a thing which exists in such a way as to require nothing else to exist.'[10] Strictly speaking he argues that the word 'substance' applies multivocally to God and created substances. The only genuinely independent substance is God, but since created substances depend only upon God, for human purposes they are otherwise independent in the requisite sense.[11] Even Locke — who emphasizes the thing-ness of substance more than most — weds a notion of independence to substance as well. The following are typical of his descriptions of substance:

> Because, as I have said, not imagining how these simple *Ideas* can subsist by themselves, we accustom ourselves, to suppose some *Substratum*, wherein they do subsist, and from which they do result, which therefore we call *Substance*.
>
> ... [Yet] because we cannot conceive, how they should subsist alone, we suppose them existing in, and supported by some common subject; *which Support we denote by the name Substance*, though it be certain, we have no clear, or distinct *Idea* of that *thing* we suppose a Support.[12]

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10 We read 'require' instead of Cottingham's 'depends on' for *indigeat*. CSM I, 210, *Principles* 51.

11 It is worth noting that the sense in which properties depend on a substance is, for Descartes, quite different from that in which *substances* depend on God.

12 John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Peter H. Nidditch, ed. (New York: Clarendon Press 1991), 295 and 297 (II.23.1 and II.23.4). It is important in this connection to recall that Locke sometimes uses 'idea' to refer to the quality the idea is an idea of (see II.viii.8). In the former passage, for instance, Locke's point seems to be that there must be an extra-mental substance which supports the qualities, not the ideas. Similarly, in the latter passage the antecedent of 'they' is 'sensible Qualities' rather than 'ideas.' In any case, Locke clearly holds that both ideas and qualities (conflated or not) require an underlying continuant or support.

When he describes the nature of those things, however, it becomes clear that we do not know much about them, but we are told that they satisfy the independence criterion. 'The *Ideas of Substances* are such combinations of simple *Ideas*, as are taken to represent distinct particular things subsisting by themselves....'[13] Thus, even though Locke concerns himself primarily with the persistence of substance, he recognizes the necessity of the independence criterion as well.

As hinted earlier, oftentimes simplicity is used to capture independence, since ultimate simplicity guarantees that the 'thing' being considered will be of the lowest level. Generally this is thought of in terms of part-whole relations. Leibniz writes:

> It also seems that what constitutes the essence of a being by aggregation is only a mode of the things of which it is composed. For example, what constitutes the essence of an army is only a mode of the men who compose it. This mode therefore presupposes a substance whose essence is not a mode of a substance. Every machine also presupposes some substance in the pieces of which it is made, and there is no plurality without true unities. To put it briefly, I hold this identical proposition, differentiated only by the emphasis, to be an axiom, namely, *that what is not truly* one *being is not truly one* being *either*.[14]

Independence here is garnered through irreducible simplicity. The need for persistence remains, but only *simple* things are genuine substances.[15] If a substance is not a unity, then it is not a thing of the lowest level and it depends in some sense on its constituent parts. Now we say 'in some sense' as ontological dependence is not the only one invoked. Some philosophers prefer to marry causal independence with the notion of substance instead of, or perhaps in addition to, ontological independence. Leibniz defends the view that substances are partless unities, but denies that *ontological* independence is sufficient to capture inde-

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13 Locke, *Essay*, II.12.6. *Cf.* II.12.4, where he distinguishes modes from substances in virtue of the fact that the former cannot subsist by themselves.

14 Letter to Arnauld April 30, 1687. G.W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, Leroy Loemker, trans. and ed. (Boston: D. Reidel 1976), 86

15 Descartes seems to be an immediate exception, since he takes matter to be a substance yet attributes infinite divisibility to it. But since it is matter 'all the way down,' we actually never reach a lower *level* for the parts. Recall that in his definition of a substance (*Principles* 51), matter qualifies because it requires nothing *other* than itself to exist. For matter, parts are parts, and all parts are essentially homogeneous in their properties except for those associated with size and motion, and those are only accidental. We submit that what Descartes was chiefly concerned about was not simplicity *per se*, but rather the need for a continuant. Matter underlies change, regardless of how far down one needs to divide it to get an appropriate explanation.

pendence on the grounds that such a view drives one to Spinozism. God is the only substance that can be thought of as truly ontologically independent (despite Descartes's protests that this still leaves room for created substances). This in turn might lead one to conclude that God is the only substance and humans are but modifications of Him. On the other hand, Leibniz protests, if we accept Descartes's suggestion and restrict substance to created things, there are other things that seem ontologically independent yet ought not to be considered substances.

> For example, active force, life, and antitypy [the resistance of matter to penetration] are something essential and at the same time primitive, and one can conceive of them independently of other concepts, even of their subjects, by means of abstractions. Subjects, on the contrary, are conceived by means of such attributes. Yet these attributes are different from the substances of which they are attributes. So there is something which is not at all substance, yet which cannot be conceived as any more dependent than substance itself. Hence this independence on the part of its concept is not at all the mark of substance, since it must apply also to what is essential to substance.[16]

Leibniz's replacement is causal independence. He defines substance as 'being which subsists in itself,' but explains that by 'subsists in itself' he means 'that which has a principle of action within itself.'[17] Hence, if a thing is such that it requires no external cause for its being, then it is a substance.[18]

Thus, the moderns prior to Berkeley appear to operate with a common core conception of the nature of substance. Substances persist through change and are ultimately simple by being in some sense independent of every other kind of thing. We contend that Berkeley shared this conception and when he says that minds are substances, he means that minds are persistent, independent things. Given that this is the shared core conception of substance among the moderns, it is reasonable to suppose, *prima facie*, that when Berkeley says that the mind is a substance he has this traditional conception in mind.

To be sure, this tradition permits a great deal of variation. Some of the variation is present in Berkeley as well, which arguably has generated the present issue. To say that Berkeley shares a *core* conception of substance with other early moderns does *not* entail that he has the same

16 Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers*, 620

17 Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers*, 115

18 If we are being careful, no external cause for being might perhaps only be a necessary condition for substancehood. Leibniz, however, apparently thinks it sufficient as well.

complete conception of substance or anything else. *We cannot stress this point enough.* What sorts of things end up being substances, exactly how substances 'support' their accidents, and what causation amounts to are further questions. The answers given will dictate the direction in which the traditional account is refined. Nonetheless, we argue on both textual and philosophical grounds that none of these refinements can go so far as to push Berkeley away from the core conception of substance. We need not take a position on the particulars of these questions because Daniel and Muehlmann call into question the narrow issue of Berkeley's adherence to the traditional core conception of substance.

II

A general review of Berkeley's writings provides excellent evidence for the claim that Berkeley holds minds to be traditional substances. Minds persist through the changes in our ideas and Berkeley expresses this by saying that spirits *support* ideas.

> To which I shall here add that a spirit has been shown to be the only substance or support, wherein the unthinking beings or ideas can exist: but that this *substance* which supports or perceives ideas should itself be an *idea* or like an *idea*, is evidently absurd. (P 135)

One reason calling spirit an idea is absurd is that doing so would be to call a substance a mode. Ideas are fleeting beings that are nevertheless unified by a subject that remains despite the constant flow of changing ideas. Some might argue that Berkeley attacks the notion of support but that is a mistake. Berkeley attacks the notion of support *without the mind* (cf. P 37) and he is consistent about this.

In addition to being persistent, minds are also independent.

> We have shown that the soul is indivisible, incorporeal, unextended, and it is consequently incorruptible. Nothing can be plainer, than that the motions, changes, decays, and dissolutions which we hourly see befall natural bodies cannot possibly affect an active, simple, uncompounded substance: such a being therefore is indissoluble by the force of Nature, that is to say, *the soul of man is naturally immortal*. (P 141)

Here Berkeley shows plainly that his *core* conception of substance is traditional. Substances are 'indivisible' and 'simple' and 'uncompounded.' As we saw in the previous section, it was common to capture the independence criterion for substance through attributions of partless simplicity. Berkeley's sense of the independence of substance is, of course, the Cartesian sense of independent of all other *created* things.

Berkeleian minds clearly satisfy the traditional independence criterion of substancehood by being ultimately simple unities. '[Spirits] are *active, indivisible substances*' (P 89, cf. P 27). Minds also satisfy the requirement by being causally independent as well. Spirits require no other created things to explain their being. Although minds necessarily think (P 98), the particular ideas minds perceive do not explain the *existence* of the mind; they only characterize its essence. The only causal agents in the world are God and minds (TD 237).

The initial case for Berkeley adhering to the traditional core conception is strongly supported by the texts. It is worth repeating, however, that we make no claims about Berkeley's views concerning anything other than these core claims. In particular, we may remain neutral concerning the *nature* of the dependent relationship between ideas and minds.

Now Berkeley at one stage of his development does deny the need to posit substances as the independent support of ideas. If this were Berkeley's considered view, then it would constitute a rejection of the traditional conception of substance. He writes,

> \+ The very existence of ideas constitutes the Soul. 577
>
> \+ Consult, ransack yr Understanding wt you find there besides several perceptions or thoughts. Wt mean you by the word mind you must mean something that you perceive or yt you do not perceive, a thing not perceived is a contradiction to mean (also) a thing you do not perceive is a contradiction. We are all in this matter strangely abused by words. 579
>
> \+ Mind is a congeries of Perceptions. Take away Perceptions & you take away the Mind put the Perceptions & you put the Mind. 580
>
> \+ Say you the Mind is not the Perceptions. but that thing w^{ch} perceives. I answer you are abus'd by the words that & thing these are vague empty words without a meaning. 581

These entries from Berkeley's notebooks are all marked with a '+' and the meaning of this sign has engendered considerable controversy. Discovering the proper interpretation is all the more important now since a disproportionately large amount of the evidence used by Daniel and Muehlmann comes from entries with this symbol. Luce originally wrote of the sign that:

> I am inclined to think that Berkeley used it as a sort of *obelus*, setting it against those entries which he found he could not use, whether because (a) irrelevant to his final argument, or personal, or trivial, or (b) representing discarded views.[19]

19 Quoted from A.A. Luce, 'Another Look at Berkeley's Notebooks' *Hermathena* 110 (1970), 8.

He subsequently added that although he believed this to account for 95% of the occurrences of the sign, he was 'not entirely satisfied with it.' Much later he would back off from even this claim, reducing the number of 'clear' cases of rejection to about one third of the total entries marked with the '+' symbol. Nonetheless, arguably the standard reading of the sign still treats it as some form of rejection, whether an indication that Berkeley thought it false in some way or merely that he wanted to set that particular line of reasoning aside. In his introduction to Berkeley's philosophical works, Michael Ayers writes that 'The symbol '+' indicates a 'black list' consisting of entries for which Berkeley had no further use, often, but not always, expressing rejected possibilities.'[20]

There are some reasons for supposing that something like this might be an appropriate understanding of the symbol. Among the entries with the '+' are PC 422 and 356 ('No word to be used without an idea'), PC 450 ('Motion on 2nd thought seems to be a simple idea'), and PC 623 ('An extended [sic] may have passive modes of thinking, not active'), all claims that Berkeley goes on to vehemently reject. PC 378 is an ancestor of one of his arguments that eventually appears in the *Principles*. A portion of that entry is as follows:

\+ 1. All significant words stand for Ideas
2. All knowledge about our Ideas
\+ 3. All ideas come from without or from within.
4. If from without it must be by the senses & they are call'd sensations.
\+ 5. If from within they are the operations of the mind & are called thoughts.
\+ ... 8. All our ideas are either sensations or thoughts, by 3.4.5.
\+ ... 13. that thing wch is like unto another thing must agree wth it in one or more simple ideas.
14. whatever is like a simple idea must either be another
\+ simple idea of the same sort or contain a simple idea of that same sort. [by] 13.

Here Berkeley attaches the '+' symbol to certain premises and not to others. Tellingly, he attaches the sign to subsequent lines that depend on earlier premises marked with the plus sign. Here we wish to suggest that, at a minimum, Berkeley is being hesitant about endorsing the claims he marks with the '+' symbol. We do not need to argue that the '+' is univocally a rejection; we need only establish that *frequently* the sign is so used. The evidence is sufficiently compelling that one may not legitimately simply appeal to entries marked with a '+' as if they unproblematically reflect Berkeley's considered views.

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20 Michael Ayers, *Berkeley: Philosophical Works* (Dent: London 1975), xxi-xxii.

Bertil Belfrage has since cast doubt on the standard interpretation, arguing that Luce's reading of the sign as an *obelus* is mistaken.[21] Daniel has taken Belfrage's analysis seriously and as evidence to justify his liberal use of the notebook entries.[22] The 'black list' interpretation of the symbol is attacked as textually unsupportable. Of the 188 entries with the '+' sign only around 50 indicate *obvious* rejections. The rest are either unclear or controversial for various reasons.

So how does this apply to the entries in the notebooks concerning the congeries account of the mind? The passages containing references to the congeries view are marked with the '+' sign. That in itself, as Belfrage has argued, is not necessarily good reason to suppose that Berkeley later rejected them. But it is also no reason to suppose that Berkeley endorsed them either. Even Belfrage's own view stops short of that. He argues that the *Notebooks* should not be read as a single evolving philosophical position, but rather as a collection of 'different philosophical standpoints which were set forth at different times in Berkeley's life.'[23] While discussing the congeries passages Belfrage refuses to say that they represent Berkeley's mature views. Thus even given Belfrage's analysis concerning the *Notebooks* entries marked with a '+' sign there is good reason to be hesitant about uncritically accepting them as representing Berkeley's considered thoughts. This is an important point. Even if one fully accepts all of Belfrage's claims concerning the interpretation of the offending sign it does not follow that they represent Berkeley's mature, considered views. Absent additional evidence to confirm that these entries are among those Berkeley accepts, the countervailing evidence makes it more plausible to assume that they number among those he really did set aside or reject.

More importantly, we need not rely on these textual considerations to support the claim that Berkeley rejects the congeries account. He explicitly confronts it again in the *Three Dialogues*. Hylas argues that Philonous's position entails that 'you are only a system of floating ideas, without any substance to support them' (TD 233), to which Philonous

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21 Bertil Belfrage, 'A New Approach to Berkeley's *Philosophical Notebooks*,' in E. Sosa, ed., *Essays on the Philosophy of George Berkeley* (Boston: D. Reidel 1987), 217-30.

22 In private correspondence Daniel has asserted that Belfrage's article has 'refuted' Luce's interpretation of the '+' sign. More charitably, Daniel has the admirable desire to preserve as much of *Commentaries* as good scholarship will allow and thus believes that any possibility that we can employ the entries seriously compels us to do so. Although we are sympathetic, we believe that changes required elsewhere to accommodate this methodology come at too high a price.

23 Belfrage, 226

replies, 'How often must I repeat, that I know or am conscious of my own being; and that I am not my ideas, but somewhat else, a thinking active principle that perceives, knows, wills, and operates about ideas.' Since ideas are ontologically dependent, Berkeley goes on to 'affirm that there is a spiritual substance, or support of ideas.' To say that an idea exists in or is supported by a mind is just to say that it is perceived by that mind (P 2). This, to be sure, is a novelty: Berkeley seems here to identify support with perception, and this is a departure from the tradition.[24] But the fundamental point remains: ideas, as dependent beings, require an ontological support.[25]

All of this is strong *prima facie* evidence for thinking that Berkeley rejects the congeries account. Even were we to admit that the sections of the *Notebooks* marked with the '+' symbol do not necessarily represent rejected or abandoned lines of thought, one must explain why there is so much textual evidence in his published works that *explicitly* denies that minds are congeries of perceptions or ontically other than traditional substances. Let us turn now to Stephen Daniel's explanations and arguments in defense of his challenging interpretation of Berkeley.

III

Daniel argues that for Berkeley a mind is 'simply the consciousness of ideas as determinate real things.'[26] An idea, in turn, is 'the act of perceiving' and the existence of an idea is constituted by this act being an individuating or identifying act. Thus, the mind is consciousness of acts of differentiation. An individual mind ('I') is a set of differentiations made by God, where God is the sum total of all differentiating activities. As Daniel puts it,

> The mind is not its ideas but rather the active, willful, particular, and determinate apprehension of things that results from God's designation of a unique and affective ordering of perceptions. The active apprehension of ideas identifies and distinguishes individual souls and, as such, "the soul is the will properly speaking" (PC

24 See Ayers, 'Substance, Reality, and the Great Dead Philosophers,' *American Philosophical Quarterly* 7 (1970), 38-49.

25 For a detailed analysis of Berkeley's gradual rejection of the congeries account, see Charles McCracken, 'Berkeley's Cartesian Concept of Mind,' *The Monist* 71, 4 (1988), 596-611, at 597.

26 Daniel, 'Berkeley on the Meaning of *Idea*,' presented at the APA Pacific Division 2002, 4. See also 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 623.

> 478a).... In creating each finite mind, God communicates both a particular idea sequence and the sense of how those ideas are to be affectively appropriated. God thus inscribes each mind with the affective ideas that not only differentiate it from his and other minds but also link minds to one another in virtue of similar (and perhaps even the same) ideas.[27]

This is an imaginative and unusual reading of the congeries account of the mind; the mind is said to be a collection not of things, but of actions. According to Daniel, Berkeley does not want to think of minds as things in any sense, thus precluding them from being traditional substances. Minds cannot be separated from their ideas, which are the objects of the mind. Ideas similarly cannot be separated from minds because ideas constitute minds as collections of differentiating activities. Once clear about the basic views Berkeley holds, Daniel argues that we are driven to read the good bishop as rejecting the traditional ontological categories in favor of an ontology populated by pure activity and differentiations of the same. Ideas are 'objectifications of what the mind does' and minds are conscious orderings (by God) of ideas where the sequence of these orderings individuates minds. In essence, Daniel attributes to Berkeley the view that the mind is ungrounded activity. There is no 'thing' that thinks; there is only thinking.

Daniel has sought to defend this reading of Berkeley in several ways. In the main, however, he needs to establish that a particular kind of relation holds between the existence of the mind and the existence of its ideas and that Berkeley conceives of the mind as ungrounded activity in a way that is consonant with his other views. Daniel seems to offer two related arguments for his position. First, he gives a reading of Berkeley's position on existence, arguing that the existence of minds just is the existence of their ideas. Second, he appeals to P 98, where Berkeley claims that minds cannot be conceived apart from their cogitation. Although separating the arguments in this way is somewhat artificial, it is the clearest way to proceed.

Daniel claims that Berkeley draws on Suárez for insights into the nature of being but does not endorse Suárez's conclusions, nor is he necessarily aware of their Suárezian origins.[28] Daniel observes that in the *Notebooks* Berkeley claims that '*existere* is percipi or percipere' (PC 429) and deduces that Berkeley is appealing to Suárez's distinction between *existere* (subsistence) and *esse* (existence). '[Subsistence] is the way in

27 Daniel, 'Berkeley's Christian Neoplatonism, Archetypes, and Divine Ideas,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* **39**, 2 (2001) 239-58, at 245-6

28 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 624

which the substance exists,' while existence is 'absolute being.'[29] Berkeley's choice of *existere* over *esse* indicates that he does not think that minds are anything over and above the act by which a thing is identified as a particular reality.[30]

Much more work would need to be done in order to make clear the position Daniel is attributing to Berkeley on these grounds. But two difficulties are immediately apparent. First, Daniel's textual evidence, again, comes predominantly from the *Notebooks* and in particular relies heavily on the '+' marked passages. As indicated earlier, this is acceptable provided that there is independent evidence supporting the claim that Berkeley does not consider and then reject the views expressed there. We contend that the other published works to which Daniel appeals simply do not satisfy this requirement and justify his use of the *Notebooks*. Second, and more importantly, Berkeley simply does not observe the distinction between existence and subsistence in the *Principles* or elsewhere. In fact, he seems to use the terms interchangeably. According to Daniel, Berkeley should not say that minds exist, since 'that would imply that there is some thing that has a self-identity apart from its being the existence of ideas.'[31] Unfortunately for Daniel, this is precisely what Berkeley does say: in reflexion, we are said to comprehend 'our own *existence*' (P 98); the mind is a being 'whose *existence* consists not in being perceived but in perceiving' (P 139; our emphases). Daniel indicates that Berkeley only 'rarely' says that minds exist, but this seems false. In any case it is a strange procedure to infer from textual evidence that a given distinction is intended though not explicitly drawn and then read away the many texts in which that same distinction is not observed.

But Daniel marshals other textual evidence. In P 89, Berkeley writes,

> *Thing* or *being* is the most general name of all, it comprehends under it two kinds entirely distinct and heterogeneous, and which have nothing in common but the name, to wit, *spirits* and *ideas*. The former are *active, indivisible substances*: the latter are *inert, fleeting, dependent beings*, which subsist not by themselves, but are supported by, or exist in minds or spiritual substances.

Berkeley argues that unless we have a clear grip on what we mean by these words it will be useless to argue over the real existence of things. And here we begin to get a clearer idea of what Daniel has in mind. Here is his gloss on the passage:

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29 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 630

30 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 623

31 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 633-4

> In order to know whether something exists, Berkeley observes, we first have to know what existence is and what a thing is. But that, in turn, is not enough, since questions could always be raised about whether the things we claim to know really do exist. Given the possibility that the discursive structure in which we ask such questions is itself riddled with indeterminacy, the only thing we can do is to acknowledge that abstract ideas of quiddity, entity, or existence are incomprehensible apart from their recognized juxtaposition in the structure. So there must be "spiritual" juxtapositions of difference in the structure whereby things or beings (i.e., "ideas") come to have their identity as real, identifiable beings.[32]

Daniel is right to point out that for Berkeley there can be no abstract idea of existence; the question is what follows from this. Daniel infers that absent such an abstract idea there must be 'spiritual juxtapositions' that individuate ideas; these are contributed by the mind, or more accurately for Daniel, mind *just is* this differentiation and relating of ideas. Mind is the act whereby 'real or natural existence is engendered.'[33] Nothing can exist without existing *as* some particular reality and it is the mind that provides this particularity, according to Daniel. Some violence must be done to Berkeley's text, since he consistently maintains that minds must be agents rather than acts. A mind is 'an agent subsisting by itself' (P 137); a spirit is 'one simple, undivided, active being' (P 27; see also P 26, P 57, P 89, P 137). Daniel's reading strikes us as attributing to Berkeley a series of category mistakes. Can an *action* act? In what sense can action be simple as opposed to complex?

Daniel also cites P 17 and 81 for support. But in these passages Berkeley is simply denying that he has an abstract idea of existence, as he does in his correspondence with Johnson. But to say this is hardly to take a position on the nature of minds, or to claim that minds (for Daniel, mental *acts*) are that by which existence is engendered.

In fact, the passage Daniel is discussing (P 89) strongly suggests that Berkeley is holding on to the traditional account of substance. The Aristotelian tradition, which in this respect runs through Descartes, contrasts the kind of being had by substances with that had by those things that depend on substance for existence. 'Being' is predicated analogically of substance and accident.[34] If anything, Berkeley takes this further, declaring that the word applies not analogically but equivocally. Given Berkeley's repeated claims that minds must support ideas, it is

32 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 631-2

33 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 632

34 See, e.g., Aquinas's *de ente et essentia*, in *Selected Philosophical Writings*, T. McDermott, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1993).

natural for him to claim that minds and ideas are so different that we cannot even say they are both 'things' or 'beings' except by courtesy. As he explains, this simply means that substances are ontologically prior.

Daniel does not note that Suárez would likely object to Berkeley's position here. For Berkeley, there is no justification for applying 'being' or 'existence' to both substances and that which depends upon them. They share only a predicate, not a property, and it would be a mistake to infer that there is a common characteristic or state which justifies the application of this predicate. For Suárez, by contrast, the concept of being applies both to substances and accidents univocally, 'in so far as they agree with one another or are like to one another.'[35] However different substances and accidents are, they are nevertheless alike in some respect, and it is this shared characteristic that backs up our pre-theoretical claim that both kinds of thing exist in the same sense. This is far from claiming that substances and what they support 'have nothing in common but the name.' There is thus some cause for worry when trying to put Suárezian points into Berkeley's system.

Daniel agrees that when Berkeley says that ideas must be supported by minds he simply means that ideas are perceived. 'But as he [Berkeley] notes, this does not require that we think of the mind as if it is an Aristotelian substance that supports qualities and about which one predicates perceptions or sensations.'[36] There are two problems here. Daniel claims that it is *Berkeley* who says this, but he refers only to secondary literature. It is not Berkeley but Robert Muehlmann, whose arguments will be examined below, who 'notes' this. Second, Daniel is running together distinct conceptions of the relation between quality and substance. To be sure, Berkeley does not want to say that one predicates ideas of minds. The Cartesian tendency to treat the relation of thoughts to minds as parallel to that between determinate extensions and body is *prima facie* puzzling; while it is natural to say that a given determinate length is a mode (in Malebranche's language, a '*manière d'existence*') of material substance, it is odd to say that a thought is a mode of a mind, for it seems to entail that the mind itself takes on the properties of which it thinks.[37] Berkeley is anxious to make clear that his view in no way entails this: '[It] may perhaps be objected,' Berkeley writes, 'that if extension and figure exist only in the mind, it follows that the mind is extended and figured' (P 49). Berkeley replies: 'those qualities are in the

35 Suárez, *Metaphysical Disputations* 2, 1, 9, in *Opera* (Paris, 1856-78)

36 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 633

37 For Descartes's statement of this position, see *Principles* §63-4.

mind only as they are perceived by it, that is, not by way of *mode* or *attribute*, but only by way of idea.' But to reject this conception of the relation between mind and its thoughts, which grows out of Descartes and Malebranche,[38] is hardly to toss out the entire traditional framework. Berkeley can retain the ontological priority of substance by re-construing the relation of support as perception.

Daniel goes on to say that the support claim does not 'commit us to the belief that minds are substrata in which modes, attributes, or properties inhere. Rather, he [Berkeley] claims, we must describe the "substance" of souls as the consciousness of ideas.'[39] But where does Berkeley claim this? Only in the disputed passages from the *Notebooks*, which Daniel cites. Given that the entries from the *Notebooks* are suspect without independent evidence, we have no reason to believe that the interpretation Daniel advances is anything beyond a possibly considered but ultimately abandoned view.

What we are treating as Daniel's second argument seems stronger. Daniel cites P 98:

> Time, therefore, being nothing, abstracted from the succession of ideas in our minds, it follows that the duration of any finite spirit must be estimated by the number of ideas or actions succeeding each other in that same spirit or mind. Hence it is a plain consequence that the soul always thinks: and in truth whoever shall go about to divide in his thoughts, or abstract the *existence* of a spirit from its *cogitation*, will, I believe, find it no easy task.

Berkeley argues from considerations about the nature of time to a conclusion about the mind. The inference is not from our lack of an abstract idea of the existence of a spirit to its inability to exist without thinking. Instead, Berkeley infers from the absence of an abstract idea of *time* to this conclusion. The start of P 98 reads: 'Whenever I attempt to frame a simple idea of *time*, abstracted from the succession of ideas in my mind ... I am lost and embrangled in inextricable difficulties.' Daniel

38 This conception may be what leads Malebranche to say that 'the soul is painted with the colours of the rainbow when looking at it'; in such a case, the soul 'actually becomes blue, red, or yellow' (*The Search After Truth*, T.M. Lennon and P.J. Olscamp, trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997), Eleventh Elucidation, 634. Only ideas *qua* sensations are modifications; ideas *qua* 'pure perceptions' are, for Malebranche, eternal ideas in the mind of God. For a valiant attempt to make sense of Malebranche's claims about the former, see Nicholas Jolley, *The Light of the Soul* (Oxford: Clarendon 1990), 60. On Jolley's view, Malebranche is exploiting the tendency, found also in Descartes and Locke, to treat ideas of secondary qualities on analogy with pain. They, like pain, do not have representational content.

39 Daniel, 'Berkeley, Suárez,' 633

argues that, since minds cannot exist without ideas, and so cannot even be thought to exist without them, 'it is unnecessary, then, to portray the mind as some substance or substratum that is needed to unite or support perceptions.' He then says that Berkeley *on this basis* concludes that mind is a congeries of perceptions, again quoting PC 580-1. But the congeries account is not motivated in the *Notebooks* by considerations about time.

What is more important, Berkeley clearly *does* think it necessary to portray the mind as a substance required to support perceptions. There simply is no inconsistency here: it is perfectly plausible to hold both that the mind has thought as its essential property and that it is a substance that supports and cannot be identified with its ideas. The mere fact that minds cannot exist without ideas and vice versa does nothing to support Daniel's conclusions.

This is a key point, one consistently missed by Daniel. In another paper Daniel quotes *Siris* 309-10, where Berkeley claims that, on Plato's view, 'mind, knowledge, and notions, either in habit or in act, always go together.' Daniel infers from this that 'to refer to the subsistence or being of a mind is to refer to the existence of ideas.'[40] But this is a *non sequitur*. Even a logically necessary connection between *a* and *b* does not entail that *a* and *b* are identical. An example might make this clear. For Malebranche, God's act of will and its effects are necessarily connected: whatever God wills necessarily comes about. But no one takes this to mean that for Malebranche God's will just is its effects. This point holds whether we talk simply of two things or the being of the two things, as Daniel would have it.

In the same paper Daniel again quotes P 98, adding that '[m]ind cannot subsist apart from thinking because the mind is defined as volitionally conditioned perception.'[41] But the reason Berkeley actually gives for the inability of mind to exist apart from thought has to do with the nature of time. We do not see how one can leap from a necessary connection between mind and thought to Daniel's conclusion.

These positive arguments are not all that Daniel has to offer; he also gives a negative argument to the effect that reading Berkeley as accepting any form of the traditional account of substance would commit him to treating minds as ideas. Our reading of Berkeley thus would have the unwelcome consequence of turning minds into ideas in *God's* mind. Daniel seems to have two lines of argument here. First, he claims that to

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40 Daniel, 'Berkeley's Christian Neoplatonism,' 249

41 Daniel, 'Berkeley's Christian Neoplatonism,' 245

treat minds as *objects of thought* implies that minds are ideas.[42] This is puzzling, since it must assume that all thought for Berkeley involves ideas. Whereas it is true that Berkeley holds that only ideas are perceived, his doctrine of notions is designed precisely to provide for a means of knowing the mind (namely, through a 'reflexive act'; see TD 234; P 89) that does *not* involve ideas. Second, Daniel claims that to read Berkeley as saying that minds and ideas both exist in the same sense is to imply that minds are *things* like ideas.[43] But as we have seen, on our reading Berkeley does not claim that minds and ideas exist in the same sense. This is consistent, as far as we can tell, with denying that minds are themselves ideas or acts. Here again P 89 seems decisive: minds are indivisible substances whereas ideas are 'fleeting' and 'dependent.' If anything has a claim to be a persistent independent thing, it is the mind, not the ideas.

Although Daniel's arguments are intriguing, they are ultimately unpersuasive. The textual evidence from Berkeley's mature period is consistent in its endorsement of a version of the traditional account. Daniel's use of the *Notebooks* does not cohere with key sections of the published works and is simply unsupported there. We are not saying that on every point Berkeley is in accord with the tradition; for example, we have seen how he parts ways from it on the nature of support. Nevertheless, Berkeley's adherence to the bedrock features of the traditional account has not been called into question.

IV

Robert Muehlmann also endorses a congeries reading of Berkeley, but his position is entirely distinct and different from Daniel's. Unlike Daniel, Muehlmann recognizes the tension between the views Berkeley considers in the *Notebooks* and those found in the later works. Muehlmann's claim is that Berkeley conceals rather than rejects the congeries account; Berkeley follows merely the letter of the rival traditional account of substance. As Muehlmann reads the congeries passages, they suggest that the mind is not distinct from particular mental episodes, be they ideas or volitions; this picture is said to lie behind Berkeley's 'official' pronouncements in the *Principles*. So Muehlmann differs from Daniel on how the congeries account itself is to be under-

42 Daniel, 'Berkeley's Christian Neo-Platonism,' 245

43 Daniel, 'Berkeley's Christian Neo-Platonism,' 249

stood; but he also diverges from Daniel by providing an alternative understanding of how we are to interpret Berkeley's claims in the published works. For Muehlmann's mature Berkeley, substance plays none of the ontological roles traditionally assigned to it; the congeries account can be said to persist because the apparently novel talk of substances is just so much window-dressing or 'camouflage.' Thus Muehlmann dissolves the apparent conflict between Berkeley's early and late views by arguing that Berkeley 'conceals' the congeries account:

> in the sense that nearly all of the philosophical work provided in Berkeley's prepublication bundle, or *congeries*, account of finite mind is camouflaged as work now done by his published substance account: indeed it is difficult to find *any* ontological role, in Berkeley's two major works, that he explicitly and exclusively assigns to finite mental substances.[44]

Accordingly to Muehlmann, Berkeley did not undergo any change of heart about the congeries account. Berkeley resurrects 'substance' talk not because he finds he has to posit substances but simply because of his concerns about how his work would be received by the 'Church-men.'[45] The core of Muehlmann's claim, then, is that substance does no work in Berkeley's mature system that was not already done by the congeries account. Let us see whether this can be substantiated.

Muehlmann mentions three traditional roles substance is supposed to play: those of individuator, of causal agent, and of ontological support. We shall neglect the first of these since it is not at all clear that this role is 'traditional.' Aquinas, for example, argues that *materia signata*, matter thought of as underlying certain defined dimensions, is the principle of individuation, and no Aristotelian would be tempted to suppose that matter is a substance. Moreover, Locke himself explicitly denies that substances individuate; for him, existence is the *principium individuationis*.[46]

As Muehlmann recognizes, Berkeley often says that minds are causes; one's mind 'perceives, knows, wills, and operates about ideas' (TD 233). But if minds are just congeries of inert ideas, it seems hard to imagine a sense in which minds *could* be causes. What reason, then, does Muehlmann give us for reading away such passages? First, he claims that ideas can themselves be causal agents. This flies in the face of Berkeley's repeated avowals that 'it is impossible for an idea to do

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44 Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology*, 171

45 Cf. PC 715

46 See *Essay* III.xxvii.3, quoted in Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology*, 174.

anything, or, strictly speaking, to be the cause of anything' (P 25; see P 89). Nevertheless, according to Muehlmann, ideas can be said 'in an important sense'[47] to perceive other ideas, and so to act. In many places, Berkeley does claim that the mind can sometimes perceive things 'mediately,' that is, by means of another idea. Thus the 'passions in the mind' of other human beings are sometimes perceived by means of the colors they produce on the face (NTV 9).[48] This is simply an error. It is not the idea of the color that perceives these passions. Instead, the mind infers these passions on the basis of the idea of the color. Moreover, simply to claim that ideas can be causes does nothing to prove that mental substances are *not* causes on Berkeley's view.

Muehlmann seems to recognize the difficulty with his position on this question, but maintains that even if we were to grant that no idea can perceive another idea, it is possible to account for the sense in which *I* perceive a color on the congeries account. But how does this, even if it were true, establish the conclusion that Berkeley does in fact retain the congeries account? It does not. To say that a view can make sense of some proposition or other goes no distance at all toward showing that Berkeley in fact holds that view.

Muehlmann cites P 27 as supporting his claim that what acts is not a substance but a particular episode of volition. Again, the textual evidence does not support Muehlmann's reading. 'A spirit is one simple, undivided, active being: as it perceives ideas, it is called the *understanding*, and as it produces or otherwise operates about them, it is called the *will*.' Berkeley unambiguously claims that spirit can be called the will 'insofar as it produces or otherwise operates about' its ideas. Clearly, 'it' refers to spirit, not to an episode of volition. Spirit is 'that which acts.' Thus, if spirits were simply collections of ideas, then it would appear that there should be no bar to our perceiving spirits. After all, they are only ideas and we know that ideas can be perceived. Yet this is the point of P 27: to deny that we can perceive spirit because no idea can resemble a principle of activity. As a result, the very evidence to which Muehlmann appeals works against his view.

What of Muehlmann's third claim, that minds are not substances that are required to support ideas? Muehlmann argues that Berkeley 'explic-

47 Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology*, 176

48 Muehlmann cites the coach passage at TD 204 (176), where Berkeley seems to indicate that we can perceive the coach via the sound we hear. Muehlmann concludes that '[A] sound *does* sometimes "perceive a color" ....' In fact, Berkeley says that the sound *suggests* the coach. We think NTV 9 is a more charitable example for Muehlmann, even though we think it too fails to make his point.

itly dismisses'[49] this traditional role. The key text is P 49, which we have already examined in part. We saw that Berkeley there resists the Cartesian picture of the relation between mind and thought. But he also resists, according to Muehlmann, the entire substance-property ontology:

> As to what philosophers say of subject and mode, that seems very groundless and unintelligible. For instance, in this proposition, a die is hard, they will have it that the word *die* denotes a subject or substance, distinct from the hardness, extension and figure, which are predicated of it, and in which they exist. This I cannot comprehend: to me a die seems to be nothing distinct from those things which are termed its modes or accidents. And to say a die is hard, extended and square, is not to attribute those qualities to a subject distinct from and supporting them, but only an explication of the meaning of the word *die*. (P 49)

Muehlmann suggests that Berkeley's use of the example of a die is accidental in that Berkeley takes the point to apply to substances generally. But what grounds are there for thinking this? Berkeley's purpose in the passage in question is to resist the demand for a *material* substance that supports qualities; qualities being ideas in Berkeley's ontology, they require not a material but a mental support instead. Even where Berkeley explicitly attacks the notion of support he does so only with the qualification 'without the mind' (cf. P 37). And here is where Muehlmann's own reading of the condition that members of non-basic ontological categories require support comes into play. On his view, the support condition amounts to the claim that any given idea must be a member of an aggregate of the other ideas that join with it to constitute an object.[50] But this conflicts with the many texts in which Berkeley says it is minds, not other ideas, which provide the requisite support. For example, Berkeley writes, 'the unthinking beings perceived by sense, have no existence distinct from being perceived, and cannot therefore exist in any other substance, than those unextended, indivisible substances, or *spirits*, which act, and think, and perceive them...' (P 91). Muehlmann cites this passage and argues that the natural reading of it is mistaken. But his argument rests on treating P 49 as applying to all substances whatever, and, as we have seen, that is simply implausible.

If one were to allow that by 'spirit' Berkeley really means 'congeries of ideas' the texts become hopelessly confused. A mind, Berkeley tells us, is an active and indivisible (not merely undivided, although Berkeley

49 Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology*, 178

50 Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology*, 182

sometimes uses this word as well) unity. Appealing again to P 91, one wonders how a congeries of ideas could be *indivisible* and a unity given that ideas are distinct parts supported by the mind. Even if one accepts Muehlmann's analysis that the support of ideas is membership in the set of ideas, there is a real distinction among the members of the set. Such a set would be divisible and render Berkeley's claims in P 91 and elsewhere inconsistent. To read Berkeley in this way strikes us as decidedly uncharitable.

Muehlmann claims that 'the principal assumption' underlying his overall argument for his reading of Berkeley can be expressed as a conditional: 'if the notebooks' Berkeley manages to arrive at idealism without mental substance, it is unlikely that he needs mental substance to secure idealism.'[51] This encapsulation hardly does justice to Muehlmann's entire argument. Considered on its own, it does not support Muehlmann's reading. For even if we grant the conditional claim, the question remains whether Berkeley wished to introduce mental substance for some reason other than that of arguing for idealism. We have located just such reasons in our discussion above. Furthermore, we deny that Muehlmann has provided compelling evidence for the truth of the conditional. Simply because the notebooks' Berkeley proposes (and perhaps rejects) an alternative account of immaterialism is no *prima facie* reason for thinking that he therefore intends any other account to be camouflage for the alternate view. He might not *need* a traditional substance account to secure immaterialism, but that does not mean he does not *use* such an account. Indeed, we have reason to believe that there are philosophical reasons Berkeley might have had for preferring the substance account.

Consider one final problem. For Berkeley, God is an 'infinite mind' (TD 212). This infinite mind has intelligence (P 62), perceives ideas (P 71, 76), and has genuine (efficient) causal power (P 53). Thus, we know that God is a mind in the same sense (though not in degree) that we are minds. 'Hence it is evident, that God is known as certainly and immediately *as any other mind or spirit whatsoever*, distinct from ourselves' (P 147; my emphasis). He frequently refers to God as the 'supreme spirit' in the same sense as we are mere spirits.[52] Muehlmann's reading suffers because one cannot reasonably attribute the congeries account of mind to God. In addition to the worries addressed earlier concerning the nature of the mind as a causal agent, one might wonder how a congeries account of

51 'Introduction,' in *Berkeley's Metaphysics*, 15

52 Cf. P 57

the divine mind could accommodate God's unity and simplicity. Worse yet, we know that God is an essentially active being whereas ideas are utterly passive and inert. God's status as an active agent and unity precludes Him from being a congeries of even divine ideas.

Muehlmann, sharply aware of these difficulties, simply denies that his congeries account applies to the divine mind.

> God must be a reality independent of, an entity "entirely distinct" from, not only "all those bodies which compose the [mighty] frame of the world" (PR 6), but also His own volitions and archetypal "ideas." In the final analysis, it is God who must be a mental substance.[53]

Naturally, we draw the opposite lesson, the one that Berkeley rather clearly seems to draw in *Principles* 147, quoted a short while ago ('as *any other mind or spirit whatsoever*...'). Because God, *qua* mind, must be distinct from its ideas, *all* minds must be distinct from their ideas. As we have already seen, this in no way denies the appropriate sense of dependence of ideas on minds. The issue thus revolves around the nature of the similarity between a finite mind and the divine mind. As already indicated, by our lights Berkeley speaks as if God's mind differs from our minds only in degree and not in kind. Muehlmann himself analyzes the Berkeleian concept of causal power and concludes that what separates humans from God is that only divine volitions necessitate their effects.[54] The nature of causal power must be the same else we could have no understanding of causal power at all. We can find no evidence presented by Muehlmann or elsewhere that Berkeley reasonably believes that there is a substantive distinction in kind. As a result, one should take Muehlmann's own analysis concerning God's nature to heart and conclude that finite minds must be traditional substances as well. The case for supposing finite minds to be congeries of ideas carries with it serious philosophical and textual difficulties. Thus, despite Muehlmann's efforts, it is impossible to cast Berkeley in the role of a radical dissimulator who hides his true doctrine to avoid ruffling theological feathers. The feathers, indeed, seem to be Berkeley's own.

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53 Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology*, 261

54 Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology*, esp. 265-7

V

A careful study of both Daniel's and Muehlmann's interpretations of Berkeley reveals that, although their readings are interesting and challenging, in the end they are both unsustainable. We thus conclude that there is no compelling reason for thinking that Berkeley abandoned the traditional substance view of the mind in favor of a congeries account. Ample textual evidence in his published works denies these rival views and the only evidence that might undercut the substance view comes from the *Notebooks*, which is unreliable except when independently corroborated. What support can be derived from the published works rests on passages interpreted in light of the controversial *Notebooks* entries, yielding an unpersuasive case. The philosophical motivations for a congeries reading strike us as doubly weak; not only does the congeries account require bending Berkeley in ways that engender new philosophical difficulties, it appears to make his position concerning the nature of God simply untenable. Daniel and Muehlmann deserve praise for generating such original views. Unfortunately, originality is no guarantee that an interpretation is correct.[55]

55 The authors would like to thank Robert Muehlmann, Stephen Daniel, and two anonymous referees.