

Why My Chair Is Not Merely a Congeries: Berkeley and the Single-Idea Thesis

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A centrepiece of Berkeley's immaterialism is his treatment of ordinary objects (which I shall call 'commonsense objects').¹ Unfortunately, understanding this crucial area of his thought has been clouded by the dubious assumption that the only non-phenomenalist reading of Berkeley is the view that commonsense objects are straightforwardly nothing more than collections of ideas.² My intent here is to demonstrate that there are textual as well as philosophical reasons for believing that Berkeley holds a slightly more sophisticated view. *From the perspective of finite minds*, commonsense objects are single ideas associated with collections of sensory ideas. Metaphysically, commonsense objects are collections, but when we recognize Berkeley's inclusion of an explicitly distinct epistemic element, a superior theory emerges. The word 'chair,' for instance, names a single idea that is in turn associated with a collection of sensory ideas. The word we use to name a putatively macro object names the single idea and only indirectly the set of the sensory ideas with which the single ideas are associated. In our ordinary lives single ideas serve as epistemic unifiers of diverse possible sensory experiences. In this epistemic sense, commonsense objects are single ideas. In metaphysical reality, commonsense objects are collections associated with these single ideas. I will not argue here against phenomenalist interpretations³ except insofar as to note that my arguments are incompatible with them.

1. Collections and Names

Berkeley appears to hold that the *only* things we perceive are ideas.⁴ He also vociferously claims that his theory preserves the intuitions of ordi-

nary people ('the vulgar'). One might then expect him to reconcile his immaterialism with ordinary beliefs. The interpretation that strikes many as an obvious candidate to satisfy vulgar intuitions about sensible objects is the collections view (hereafter 'CV'). Commonsense objects are collections of immediately perceived sensory ideas. Berkeley's first discussion of ordinary objects seems to lend initial support to this reading:

Smelling furnishes me with odours; the palate with tastes, and hearing conveys sounds to the mind in all their variety of tone and composition. And as several of these 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 consistency having been observed to go together, are all accounted one distinct thing, signified by the name *apple*. (PHK 1)

The traditional advocate of the collections view thus interprets Berkeley as arguing that perceiving sensory ideas is just to perceive the object itself. A typical argument schema would run this way:

- (1) Commonsense objects are collections of sensible ideas.
- (2) Sensible ideas and collections of sensible ideas are immediately perceivable.
- (3) Thus, commonsense objects are immediately perceived.

The point is that when one perceives some object, that it is perceived *as* something (an apple, for example) is not an additional fact. Perceiving the red shape on the table *is* perceiving the apple, and there is no conceptual gap to be bridged from one to the other. George Pappas, a recent proponent of the collections view, argues in precisely this way:

For instance, if person S immediately perceives a 'collection' of ideas O, and this collection of ideas is identical to a physical object R, then S will immediately perceive R. And if S immediately perceives a cluster of ideas O, and the ideas in the cluster are constituents of the physical object R, then S will also immediately perceive R.⁵

Pappas holds that commonsense objects are non-ideas that are also immediately perceived. I will engage this view subsequently in my essay. What I want to underscore for the moment is that on CV read-

ings, perceiving a group of sensory ideas and perceiving the object are the same perceptual process.

Now Berkeley certainly seems to write as if he espouses the collections view on several occasions. Committing him to this view, however, runs afoul of at least two difficulties. First, a careful reading of the passages where he mentions collections reveals that they do not necessarily commit him to such a view. Second, there are significant tensions between CV interpretations and what Berkeley says about ideas and how we come to perceive sensible things.

Let us turn first to the texts themselves and convince ourselves that Berkeley was up to more than a simplistic collections view. Consider PHK 1 again. Although he clearly calls objects collections, in what sense does he do so? He notes that a group of ideas attend one another. Put together, they are labelled a distinct object and 'signified by the *name apple*' (my italics). Analysis suggests that Berkeley's apple involves a single idea whose name is associated with (i.e., ranges over) a group of sensory ideas. A cautious study of Berkeley reveals that this is not just a random slip of the pen. Virtually all of the passages explicitly dealing with collections of ideas invoke the commonsense object as a single idea, under either names or words. Consider the following prominent passages:

PHILONOUS: Therefore to avoid this as well as other inconveniences which are obvious upon a little thought, men combine together several ideas, apprehended by divers senses, or by the same sense at different times, or in different circumstances, but observed however to have some connection in nature, either with respect to coexistence or succession; *all which they refer to one name*, and consider as one thing. (DHP 245; my italics)

PHILONOUS: Since it is not a being distinct from sensations; a *cherry*, I say, is nothing but a congeries of sensible impressions, or ideas perceived by various senses: which ideas are united into one thing (*or have one name given them*) by the mind; because they are observed to attend each other ... But if by the word *cherry* you mean an unknown nature distinct from its being perceived, then indeed I own, neither you nor I, nor anyone else can be sure it exists. (DHP 249; my italics)

As it turns out, Berkeley rarely speaks of commonsense objects as collections of ideas independently of some reference to a unifying name.⁶ Thus, *for us*, the single idea *is* the commonsense object (we consider that

idea or name to be the object), even though in metaphysical strictness the story is more complicated. Even in those instances where Berkeley is not directly concerned with collections of ideas, he nonetheless remains consistent in his attaching names to objects as signifiers and single ideas:

[Those] things which pass for abstract truths and theorems concerning numbers, are, in reality, conversant about no object distinct from particular numerable things, except only names and characters; which originally came to be considered, on no other account but their being *signs*, or capable to represent conveniently whatever particular things men had need to compute. (PHK 122)

The context here is his attack on abstract ideas, but it is important to note how names function even here with numbers. A single idea, a name, represents a plurality of particular things. Berkeley consistently uses names as single ideas that range over groups of particulars.

A word of warning is required when we examine all of Berkeley's writings. He has a tendency to treat words in two overlapping senses. Often words (and names) are signifiers; they signify ideas. However, he also uses them as bearers of meaning and sometimes as both. The potential for confusion does not pose a problem for this analysis, for at least on one occasion Berkeley is clear about the position he wants to stake as his own.

PHILONOUS: You indeed, who by *snow* and *fire* mean certain external, unperceived, unperceiving substances, are in the right to deny whiteness or heat to be affections inherent in them. But I, who understand by those words the things I see and feel, am obligated to think like other folks. (DHP 230)

Hylas has his words *mean* something (in addition, perhaps, to their functioning as signifiers), while Philonous uses words to represent sensory perceptions. 'Snow,' for instance, does not *mean* having certain perceptions (of coldness and whiteness etc.); rather, Berkeley understands by the word 'snow' a set of sensory ideas with which the name is associated. This is a subtle point for which Berkeley deserves some praise. Many commonsense objects are cold and white; thus merely having those sensations is not in itself sufficient to perceive snow as opposed to something else. This explains why Berkeley uses the word

'name' so frequently: he is careful not to confuse signifiers with meaning-bearers.⁷ Evidence of the subtlety of the point may also be found in the frequent assertion that Berkeleian sensible objects are 'constructed' or 'made' by the mind. The word 'snow' stands for a collection of sensory perceptions but does not *mean* that collection. Since Berkeley notes that sensory ideas are volitionally independent of finite minds, it would be difficult to reconcile the claim that commonsense objects are collections with the assertion that they are essentially contingent mental constructs. The idea we use as a name is selected by us; what sensory ideas are proper members of the collection associated with the single idea is determined by God.⁸

With the textual evidence before us it becomes apparent that when Berkeley speaks of the status of commonsense things, he is not *directly* identifying them with collections. Instead, some unifying single idea, represented by a name, intervenes. Thus, what is strongly suggested by our first careful pass at the texts is that Berkeley's considered view is that commonsense objects involve single ideas and not simply collections of sensory ones.

Before we turn and attempt to construct a positive theory of how this works, it is worthwhile to stop and reflect briefly on some of the well-known difficulties that accompany collections-view readings of Berkeley. What I would like to emphasize, however, is that the problem is not merely that the collections view commits him to untenable philosophical positions.⁹ Rather, the difficulty stems from the fact that, assuming Berkeley holds this view, the problems that arise are both *obvious and ignored by Berkeley*. This suggests that if Berkeley had another option that neatly avoided these concerns, he likely adopted it. At a minimum it is a useful philosophical exercise in charity to see whether such an option can preserve (more of) his system without undue violence to its spirit.

One obvious problem with the collections reading concerns the conditions required for successfully perceiving some sensible object. Assume that person P perceives sensible object O. X, Y, and Z are member (sensory) ideas in the collection that constitutes O at that time. How many of the member ideas must P perceive to genuinely perceive O? Too few and we have no way to distinguish between putatively distinct sensible objects. Too many and one can reasonably argue that we never really perceive sensible objects at all. I do not believe that this problem is insurmountable; but what strikes me as significant is that Berkeley at no time squarely addresses this problem. One would expect him to say *something* about the membership conditions of collections if he adopted

the view. After all, the worry is sufficiently obvious that even beginning philosophy students frequently pick up on it.

A second problem concerns the stability of the collections. If the collections view were correct we should expect that the member ideas in a collection ought to remain relatively stable and continuous over time. If not, we face two immediate worries: (1) If the membership of a collection is not stable, how do we identify and then re-identify the collection over time? It is not the focus of this discussion to answer this problem. I raise this as a concern because it is a deep and difficult issue, perhaps best solved by avoiding it altogether. And (2) how could one distinguish between collections if the membership is in constant flux? If I taste a cherry, then I should have that sensation as long as I think I am tasting a particular cherry (as opposed to some other object or nothing at all). We would expect this for several reasons. Since my perceiving the cherry is nothing more than my having certain sensory perceptions, when I cease to have those sensations I cease perceiving the cherry. Thus, if the ideas were to come and go during the time that I was chewing on my cherry, it would seem to follow that the cherry would be 'blinking' in and out of existence inside my mouth. Given that no two distinct sensory perceptions, strictly speaking, are of the same object, it would be different cherries that I would be tasting had I numerically different sensory perceptions. The result is a position with serious consequences for Berkeley's system. We not only appear to perceive collections of ideas; we also appear to have the power to call them to mind at various times in the future and to count them (both at a time and over time). If commonsense objects are merely collections and nothing else, Berkeley needs to provide an account for how we can meaningfully accomplish tasks like counting over time and re-identifying things. Unless these collections are at least relatively stable with respect to the minds that perceive them, there is no clear way that Berkeley can account for these actions we perform.¹⁰

2. The Single-Idea Thesis

The position I want to ascribe to Berkeley is the one we have already seen is strongly suggested by his treatment of commonsense objects. Recall that an apple, for instance, is a cluster of sensory ideas that have been observed to go together and have been signified by the *name* 'apple' (PHK 1). Drawing on passages like these, we arrive at the following thesis:

Single-Idea Thesis (SIT): Finite minds consider commonsense objects to be single ideas (of the imagination) represented by names that signify diverse collections of sensible ideas.

An apple, then, is a single idea suggested by certain particular sensory ideas. That is, the name 'apple' attaches to a single idea that signifies a collection of apple-like sensory impressions. We discover that these sensory ideas attend one another, so that by experience we find upon having certain apple-like visual perceptions we are apt to have certain apple-like tactile perceptions, and so forth. Berkeley thus invokes an important distinction between the commonsense object *per se* and the object *as we perceive it qua object*. In our ordinary lives, we unify the sensory perceptions we have over time into a single idea that we consider as the object. We are, in truth and strictness, mistaken about what we say, but as I shall argue subsequently, Berkeley makes a clean distinction between what is said about the world and what is true about the world.

What then is this single idea? What kind of idea is it? The single ideas to which we attach names are sensory ideas of the imagination.¹¹ Berkeley makes a distinction between ideas of sense (as distinct from sensory ideas, which concerns the *content* of the ideas) and ideas of imagination (PHK 30, cf. NB 582). The former come to us involuntarily from without the mind, while the latter are voluntarily generated by the mind and are under the control of our will. So whereas we cannot control the ideas of sense we receive from the sensible world, we can conjure up all sorts of images at will. We perceive one or more sensory ideas and slide insensibly to a single idea of the imagination (Berkeley says the latter are 'suggested' by the former). This single idea, in turn, is associated with a collection of sensory ideas. Thus, upon having a particular tactile sensation, I slide to the single idea of the imagination that names the object, which in turn leads me to expect other members of the collection with which it is associated.

Ideas which are observed to be connected with other ideas come to be considered as signs, by means whereof things not actually perceived by sense are signified or suggested to the imagination, whose objects they are, and which alone perceives them. And as sounds suggest other things, so characters suggest those sounds; and, in general, all signs suggest the things signified, there being no idea which may not offer to the mind another idea which hath been frequently joined with it. (TVV 39)

Although this passage does not explicitly discuss commonsense objects, it does lay out the mechanism and how it works. It even goes so far as to explicitly note that some objects are perceived *only* by the imagination. We have, at this early stage in our discussion, at least an initially plausible reading.

A number of minor worries and/or consequences must be addressed. One initial worry a critic might raise concerns the nature of ideas of imagination. Berkeley introduces the distinction between ideas of the imagination and those of sense in the *Principles* by appealing to levels of vivacity. Ideas of sense are more 'strong, lively, and distinct' (PHK 30). If this were the crucial distinction then one might wonder at the selection of ideas of the imagination to be commonsense objects. But this is only one axis of difference. Another difference lies in their dependence or independence from the will. The dependence distinction is the crucial one for our purposes. Ideas of the imagination can be conjured at will. This allows us to attach such an idea with a collection of sensory ideas by convention – just as Berkeley indicates is actually the case. Note, for instance, the similarity here with how he claims how general ideas function. A particular idea (image) becomes general by how it is *used* and not by being abstract. The details of my sensory idea (*not* the idea of sense) may potentially differ from yours even though our respective single ideas range over the same collection (and hence in every relevant respect are the same commonsense *object*). Thus the features of commonsense objects are not arbitrary even if the single ideas (names) we attach to similar collections might be.¹² More significantly, making objects single ideas of the imagination allows us to conjure up objects even when we are not confronted via sensory perception with members of that object's collection.

Another superficial worry is the 'real sun' passage from the *Principles*. There Berkeley writes:

These [ideas of sense] are said to have more *reality* in them than [ideas of the imagination]: by which is meant that they are more affecting, orderly, and distinct, and that they are not fictions of the mind perceiving them. And in this sense, the sun that I see by day is the real sun, and that which I imagine by night is the idea of the former. (PHK 36)

One might think that this passage does not cohere with the single-idea thesis. How are we to maintain Berkeley's distinction between real and fictive objects if we take ordinary objects to be ideas of the imagination?

Berkeley has already provided the answer. There is actually no difference in the reality of *the idea itself* – Berkeley needs that point to defend his anti-scepticism – but rather in the place the idea has in the order of ideas we perceive. After all, our remembered idea of the sun must have similar content in order for it to be about the sun at all. The remembered idea at night is less real because what drives one to have that idea is not an immediate sensory idea. It is thus already detached to a certain degree from the order of ideas of sense. Berkeley's account of the distinction between the real and imaginary does not actually impact on whether the ideas perceived are of the imagination or not. It so happens that our ideas of sense are more orderly and regular, which is why we take them to be 'real' in the first place. But that implies nothing about the nature of idea *qua* of the imagination or *qua* of sense.

One consequence of my reading deserves mention.¹³ It follows on my account that any seriously pre-linguistic mind does not in fact perceive commonsense objects. Infants at birth perceive colours and shapes, textures and sounds, but not tables and chairs. They must *learn* to make the associations between collections of sensory ideas and single ideas of the imagination that signify them. I find this, however, entirely Berkeleian. We learn the language of the Author of Nature like we learn any other normal language.

The resultant picture preserves Berkeley's core metaphysics, avoids the well-known problems with the collections view, and independently has greater explanatory power. When two persons perceive a commonsense object, they do not have to perceive the same (numerically or qualitatively) ideas of sense so long as the ideas they do perceive are all a part of the same collection. The actual content of the idea of the imagination (the single idea) might well vary between distinct individuals, but that matters not at all. The idea serves simply to signify the content of the collection. As a result, whether your particular image matches mine qualitatively is irrelevant so long as the ideas we have are associated more or less with the same collection of sensory ideas.¹⁴ The same analysis explains how Berkeley can address objections concerning how one identifies and re-identifies commonsense objects. When we perceive one or more sensory ideas, we have learned to associate certain groupings with single ideas (what we think of as unified objects). An object is (re-)identified when we attach the same single idea to another grouping of sensory ideas we perceive. Sometimes we err; but so long as the Author of Nature makes the groupings well ordered, we will have a generally reliable mechanism for picking out what we consider to be objects, even if the actual collections are different or in flux.

I do wish to be up-front about the deeper problems with which this interpretation has to deal. There are, so far as I can see, two principal hurdles. First, if SIT is correct, then Berkeley must directly challenge some plain views that the vulgar hold, despite his loud noises to the contrary. My strategy here will be to simply deny that Berkeley firmly adheres to the beliefs of the vulgar. His commitment to ordinary intuitions is largely a rhetorical device. When he has on his careful philosophy cap, it is just not possible to construe his words as conforming to commonsense intuitions. This is of particular importance when applied to the issue of commonsense objects, and I am not the first to notice this.¹⁵ In any event, the collections view suffers from conflicts with vulgar intuitions as well, precluding this issue from being truly decisive.

The second problem is both more serious and more interesting. On a number of occasions Berkeley seems to indicate that commonsense objects are immediately perceived. A number of scholars have recently made much of this.¹⁶ In one sense, the single-idea thesis denies that this is strictly true. Metaphysically, ordinary objects are not immediately perceived by the senses but instead are suggested subsequently by some sensory ideas that are not themselves the proper objects of the imagination. But I deny that there is really a problem here. I agree that Berkeley takes commonsense objects to be perceived immediately; the evidence is significant and compelling, and Berkeley's system seems to require it. The solution here lies in a deeper analysis of immediate and proper perception (beyond the proliferation of distinctions already invoked with respect to it). I argue that there are two kinds of immediacy that are relevant; I call these *perceptual* and *process* immediacy.¹⁷ Although we perceive *all* of our ideas immediately in the perceptual sense, frequently we also perceive ideas *process* mediately. This insight, when coupled with a careful application of Berkeley's use of the concept of proper perception, will ultimately provide additional justification for the single-idea thesis.

I will engage each of these problems in turn. If a satisfactory accounting can be provided for each, then, given the other virtues of this reading, we will be able to conclude at a minimum the plausibility of the addition to the collections reading that commonsense objects are considered by finite minds to be single ideas.

3. The True and the Said

As regards the first of our two hurdles, Berkeley does make it a point to argue that his philosophy 'vindicates common sense' (DHP 244). Yet it

is important to note that he does draw a firm distinction between what is (philosophically) correct and what is held to be true by the vulgar, as in one of his most famous lines, 'Think with the learned, and speak with the vulgar' (PHK 51). In an obvious sense, Berkeley is challenging *at least* one common view right off – that ordinary things have a material existence independent of our perceiving them. One should be suspicious, then, when Berkeley goes on to say that he sides in all things with the mob. It is just not true.

In fact, there is reason to believe that Berkeley knows it is not true. The most prominent divergence from ordinary intuitions is Berkeley's claim that we do not see the same thing we feel (see DHP 245). Here he does not even attempt to argue that this coheres with the plain person's conception of the world. Instead, in those moments in which he is engaged in defending his philosophical views, Berkeley takes the importantly weaker tack of defending how the vulgar *speak* about the world, not how they conceive it to be. In the same passage where he speaks with the vulgar, it is significant that he restricts his claim as to how far his views match those of ordinary folk. 'A little reflection on what is said here will make it manifest, that the common use of language would receive no manner of alteration or disturbance from the admission of our tenets' (PHK 51). He makes no mention of whether what they say is *true*.

When responding to Hylas's question about whether two persons see the same object, Berkeley (through Philonous) answers by reconciling his view with how ordinary people use the *word* 'same':

PHILONOUS: If the term *same* be taken in the vulgar acceptance, it is certain (and not at all repugnant to the principles I maintain) that different persons may perceive the same thing; or the same thing or idea exist in different minds. Words are of arbitrary imposition; and since men are used to apply the word *same* where no distinction or variety is perceived, and I do not pretend to alter their perceptions, it follows, that as men have said before, *several saw the same thing*, so they may upon like occasions still continue to use the same phrase, without any deviation either from propriety of language, or the truth of things. (DHP 247)

Worries about this response aside, Berkeley says that his theory is acceptable because it does not alter how ordinary people *speak*. In this case, we can say that two people see the same thing without violating Berkeley's theory since it has a mechanism to allow for, strictly speaking, false utterances.

In general, Berkeley is far more circumspect in his siding with the vulgar than many believe. He is, however, adamant about two closely related issues: the mob is correct in trusting their senses and in rejecting scepticism (these are not quite the same, since scepticism can be generated for reasons other than those owing to doubts about perception). Outside of these two claims, Berkeley is less wedded to his vulgar allies. Most of the specific claims Berkeley makes with respect to the vulgar involve trusting the senses. He remarks in the *Notebooks* that 'we must with the Mob place certainty in the senses' (NB 740), and he sums it up well with Philonous: 'In short you [Hylas – a materialist] do not trust your senses, I do' (DHP 245).

Closely allied with this strain is Berkeley's desire to fight scepticism. Here the real villain is materialism, and Berkeley is using the mob as a club both to combat materialists and to buttress his own theory. When Berkeley is trying to 'vindicate commonsense,' it is most often in the context of how materialism commits people to scepticism whereas immaterialism does not (see DHP 229–30). Berkeley is selective in his invoking of the mob, which strongly suggests that he is consciously using it as a ploy and not as a guiding principle for his mature theory.

Before we turn to the second problem, however, it is enlightening to note that the collections view also forces Berkeley to abandon ordinary intuitions. If the collections view is his position, then to perceive some commonsense object is to perceive some sensory idea (or ideas) in that object's collection. But this entails that I can perceive an object via some of its ideas and not others. Ideas not perceived do not exist. Thus, sensible objects would be able to exist, as it were, incompletely. I can perceive the top of a table without its legs actually existing. It is precisely these sorts of problems that have driven some interpreters to accept a phenomenological reading of Berkeley.

Other similar minor problems plague the collections view, but it is sufficient to note here that the collections view has nothing over the single-idea thesis with respect to preserving the intuitions of ordinary people. In fact, there is good reason to suppose that SIT is superior in this respect. When we speak about ordinary objects in common parlance we typically do so without immediately appealing to their sensory properties. When I mention the book on my desk I might subsequently take note of its size or colour, but I usually do so only after invoking the idea of the book. The single-idea thesis allows this to be an accurate description of how we engage the world. Although we must initially learn to match collections of sensory ideas with single ideas of the imagination that signify those collections, once the correspondences have been

established we can simply invoke the single idea of the object and then slide to the members of its associated collection. I do not think of a blue, rectangular, yellowed sensation which is *ipso facto* my book; I think of my book and *then* I remember that it is blue and rectangular and has yellowed pages. Berkeley can more honestly preserve this way of speaking if he endorses something like the single-idea thesis. In any event, whether or not SIT conforms completely to vulgar opinions about objects is not a good test as to whether it is an acceptable idealist interpretation of Berkeley. Rivals to the present account fail to uphold commonsense, and we have good reason to think that Berkeley was not, in his careful philosophy, focused on remaining consistent with all of our ordinary intuitions.

4. Immediate Perception

The more intriguing obstacle to the acceptance of the single-idea thesis concerns the nature of immediate perception and what sorts of things are actually so perceived. We are presented in the texts with an initial tension. On the one hand, (1) Berkeley seems to hold that *only* ideas are immediately perceived. Physical objects are mediately perceived via these sensory impressions. On the other hand, (2) there are numerous places in the texts where Berkeley seems to explicitly say that commonsense objects are nonetheless immediately perceived. The single-idea thesis requires that there be some kind of mediacy between our sensory ideas and the single idea that signifies the collection. The single idea is distinct from the member ideas of the collection; thus some sort of inference or suggestion must be taking place. I must explain how the single-idea theorist can hold both that ordinary macro-objects are immediately perceived and that only ideas are immediately perceived.

At first glance the resolution seems relatively obvious. Berkeley claims that *only* ideas are immediately perceived in a sense that straightforwardly excludes ordinary macro-objects like tables and chairs. Philonous is quite clear: 'For whatever is immediately perceived is an idea' (DHP 202). And this is not an isolated point.

PHILONOUS: This point then is agreed between us, that *sensible things are those only which are immediately perceived by sense*. You will further inform me, whether we immediately perceive by sight anything beside light, and colours, and figures: or by hearing, anything but sounds: by the palate, anything besides taste: by the smell, beside odors: or by touch, more than tangible qualities. (DHP 175)

Although we might be misled by his initial claim that ‘sensible things’ are immediately perceived (which might include commonsense objects), he corrects any possible misunderstanding in the remainder of the passage. According to Berkeley here, I do *not* immediately see a chair; I see light and colours from which I infer the existence of a chair. The same point is made at the start of the *Principles*, where commonsense objects are again apparently excluded from the list of things immediately perceived.

More importantly, Berkeley frequently speaks as if the perception of putatively physical objects involves some sort of inference from sensory ideas. Consider first Philonous’s response to Hylas’s question about someone perceiving an oar in the water which appears bent:

PHILONOUS: But his mistake lies not in what he perceives immediately and at present, but in the wrong judgment he makes concerning the ideas he apprehends to be connected with those immediately perceived: or concerning the ideas that, from what he perceives at present, he imagines would be perceived in other circumstances. (DHP 238)

If an error is made in thinking that the oar is really bent, the mistake lies in connecting the sensory perception of a bent figure with the object-idea of a bent oar instead of with a straight one. Note that Berkeley explicitly draws a link between ideas and ideas immediately perceived. He is *not* merely talking about how commonsense objects appear in differing circumstances, as is indicated by the careful disjunction he creates between the two cases. Thus, Berkeley is simply admonishing us to be careful about the commonsense objects we infer from certain sensory perceptions – a common warning even in materialist theories.

An even more lucid passage comes earlier in the *Dialogues*:

PHILONOUS: For instance, when I hear a coach drive along the streets, immediately I perceive only the sound; but from the experience I have had that such a sound is connected with a coach, I am said to hear the coach. It is nevertheless evident, that in truth and strictness, nothing can be *heard* but *sound*: and the coach is not then properly perceived by sense, but suggested from experience. (DHP 204)

While ‘strictly speaking,’ Berkeley is clear that an inference (or a suggestive slide) is made from sensory experience to the idea of an object (the coach). This is not an isolated passage. Berkeley makes essentially the same point in the *Alciphron*:

ALCIPHON: Do we not, strictly speaking, perceive by sight such things as trees, houses, men, rivers, and the like?

EUPHRANOR: We do indeed, perceive or apprehend those things by the faculty of sight. But will it follow from thence that they are the proper and immediately objects of sight? (*Alc* IV.10, 154)

ALCIPHON: I see, therefore, in strict philosophic truth, that rock only in the same sense that I may be said to hear it, when the word *rock* is pronounced.

EUPHRANOR: In the very same. (*Alc* IV.11, 155)

We do perceive commonsense objects by our senses, but strictly speaking only in a derivative manner.

If all of the texts were like these, there would be no deep interpretative problem. Commonsense objects would be the mediate objects of perception (we perceive the single idea we consider to be the object after 'sliding' to it from a sensory experience), and the single-idea thesis would be a straightforward improvement over the collections view. But Berkeley often makes remarks that strongly suggest that commonsense objects are themselves directly perceived. Pappas persuasively presents this case in his recent book. He cites texts like the following: 'But to fix on some particular thing; is it not a sufficient evidence to me of the existence of this *glove*, that I see it, and feel it, and wear it?' (DHP 224). The pronoun 'it' cannot reasonably be taken to refer to anything other than the glove – a common, ordinary object. Part of the allure of these passages is that they do seem to more strongly cohere with Berkeley's protestations about siding with our ordinary ways of speaking.

Lastly, whether the premises considered, it be not the wisest way to follow Nature, trust your senses, and laying aside all anxious thought about unknown natures or substances, admit with the vulgar for real things, which are perceived by the senses? (DHP 246)

Here it must be admitted that Berkeley does not say that we *immediately* perceive these objects by the senses. But he does elsewhere. Consider the two following passages, also invoked by Pappas in support of his position that commonsense objects are immediately perceived:

But, say you, it sounds very harsh to say we eat and drink ideas, and are clothed with ideas. I acknowledge it does so, the word *idea* not being used in common discourse to signify the several combinations of sensible qual-

ities which are called *things*: and it is certain that any expression which varies from the familiar use of language will seem harsh and ridiculous. But this doth not concern the truth of the proposition, which in other words is not more than to say, we are fed and clothed with those things which we perceive immediately by the senses. (PHK 38)

Wood, stones, fire, water, flesh, iron, and the like things, which I name and discourse of, are things that I know. And I should have not known them, but that I perceived them by my senses; and things perceived by the senses are immediately perceived. (DHP 230)

Like Pappas, I grant that these passages straightforwardly seem to say that we really do immediately perceive commonsense objects. The trouble now, of course, is to reconcile the conflicting passages. Traditionally there have been two ways to do this. We might seek either (1) to deny that Berkeley is speaking carefully when he says that we perceive ordinary objects or (2) to build a case such that Berkeley, strictly speaking, believes that we immediately see more than just sensory ideas. George Pitcher defends the first view; George Pappas has recently endorsed the second.

In accordance with an explanation I first encountered in Pitcher's work, one might read Berkeley here as drawing a line between his careful philosophy and his appeals to ordinary intuitions when we talk about the world. That is, Berkeley did not really mean to imply that we immediately perceive tables, chairs, wood, and stones. He was, as it were, speaking with the vulgar. Pitcher fastens on Berkeley's tendency to qualify his discussions of his careful philosophy with phrases like 'in truth and strictness.' A careful review of the coach passage and others like it reveals that when Berkeley denies that we immediately perceive things like coaches, he invokes a higher philosophical standard. As he notes, it is evident, 'in truth and strictness,' that nothing can be heard but sound. In the initial passages cited by Pappas, no such qualifiers occur. This strongly suggests that we have been misled by Berkeley's rhetorical strategy. There is nothing wrong with saying – in everyday speech – that we immediately see chairs and so on. But that does not make such claims *true*.

Pitcher's analysis, however, has not dissuaded others from pursuing the second course. Pappas, following a line of analysis first advanced by Kenneth Winkler, has argued that these passages contain yet another important qualifier. The key is not the 'truth and strictness'

clause but rather the claim that objects like coaches are not the *proper* and immediate objects of the senses.¹⁸ In analysing these same passages where Berkeley makes claims about the strict truth of matters, they draw a distinction between immediate objects proper to a single sense and immediate objects common to multiple sense modalities. This is the same distinction invoked by Aristotle in *De Anima*, and in the relevant texts cited by Pitcher Berkeley appears to be calling on this very distinction. Consider two passages we have already examined: the coach passage and the one from *Alciphron* where Euphranor notes, 'We do indeed, perceive or apprehend those things by the faculty of sight. But will it follow from thence that they are the proper and immediate objects of sight?' Things like coaches are immediate objects common to several senses (sight and hearing), whereas things like sounds are immediate objects proper to a single sense modality. Euphranor is making the same point with respect to trees, houses, men, and rivers. According to Winkler and Pappas, the 'in truth and strictness' is a reference to *this* distinction and not the mediacy of the perception generally.¹⁹ When he says that 'strictly speaking' nothing can be heard but sound, he intends that what is immediately and properly perceived by one modality is not immediately perceived by another. *This* claim is technically consistent with commonsense objects being immediately perceived. The distinction is thus between objects immediately *and* properly perceived as opposed to objects merely immediately perceived.

I think there can be little doubt that Pappas and Winkler are right on this score. In *The Theory of Vision Vindicated and Explained* Berkeley makes his intentions clear:

By a sensible object I understand that which is properly perceived by sense. Things properly perceived by sense are immediately perceived. Besides things properly and immediately perceived by any sense, there may be also other things suggested to the mind by means of those proper and immediate objects. Which things so suggested are not objects of that sense, being in truth only objects of the imagination, and originally belonging to some other sense or faculty. Thus, sounds are the proper objects of hearing, being properly and immediately perceived by that, and by no other sense. But, by the mediation of sounds or words all other things may be suggested to the mind, and yet things so suggested are not thought the object of hearing. (TVV 9)

Here the distinction is laid out in its entirety. Strictly speaking, sensory

objects are immediately perceived only by the sense modality to which they are proper.

Although this does leave open the possibility that there are objects that are immediately perceived, it does *not* establish that said items can be non-ideas. Pappas's position is stronger than the mere denial of Pitcher's claim; he seeks to positively establish that things other than (proper) ideas can be immediately perceived:

Here an equally important but distinct thesis is explored: that if something is immediately perceived, then that thing is an idea. Contrary to a common and traditional interpretation, I argue that Berkeley also did not accept this latter thesis ... Berkeley held that, in addition to ideas, ordinary physical objects – what he called 'sensible objects' or 'sensible things' – are immediately perceived.²⁰

What is distinctive about this view is that Pappas takes physical objects to be non-ideas that are immediately perceived. This seems directly at odds with Berkeley, as when he says 'I take the word idea for any immediate object of sense or understanding' (NTV 45). Anything that is an immediate object (not merely a proper one) is automatically an idea. Some textual wrangling might follow, but I am content to let this worry slide. A larger problem looms: the distinction Pappas uses against Pitcher also seems to apply against his own analysis.

In the passages where Berkeley invokes proper and immediate perception, he does so always with respect to a particular sense modality. The coach is not immediately perceived *by hearing* (and Berkeley emphasizes the word 'hearing') because coaches are not the proper objects of hearing. A glance back at the other relevant passages reveals the same pattern with respect to sight. Recall Euphranor's words quoted above: 'We do indeed, perceive or apprehend those things by the faculty of sight. But will it follow from thence that they are the proper and immediate objects of sight?' We may mediate perceive *by hearing* something proper to sight (as when we conjure up a visual image of a bell when we hear a ringing sound), but as it turns out *all* immediate perception is proper to some sense modality or faculty.

The importance of the assertion that all immediate perception is proper to something does not surface until one remembers that Berkeley adheres to the heterogeneity thesis. There are no common sensibles. As Berkeley phrases it, there is no 'such thing as one idea or kind of idea common to both senses' (PHK 127). So unless there is some sense modality specific to ordinary objects, they cannot possibly be immedi-

ately perceived. Pitcher's insightful analysis now returns with a vengeance – was Berkeley just engaging in more rhetoric? Pappas can produce all of the passages he likes that imply that commonsense objects are immediately perceived, but unless he can explain how this works without contradicting the seriously held heterogeneity thesis, his argument is in jeopardy. Even if physical objects are not ideas, they must be proper to some sense modality or faculty. Berkeley tells us what objects are proper to the traditional senses – light, colour (and perhaps shape) for sight, sound for hearing, and so on – and commonsense objects are nowhere to be found in these lists. Pappas provides many texts where Berkeley seems to say that commonsense objects are immediately perceived, but he does not provide the mechanism for how this works. At best he gives us a quick passing appeal to the collections view. Perceiving an ordinary object *is* to perceive some of the members of its collection of sensory ideas:

In all then, based on these many passages, we have ample support for the view that Berkeley holds that physical objects are immediately perceived. Of course, when one immediately perceives an object one must also immediately perceive one or more of its sensible qualities; so, these, too, will count as entities that are immediately perceived.²¹

We *do* have ample support for the claim that commonsense objects are immediately perceived, and Pappas's textual analysis is first-rate. What we lack is an explanation of *how* this can be, given our tension and the rest of Berkeley's philosophical system. Given that there is a serious initial philosophical difficulty with this position, it would be unwise to accept his view absent some persuasive story about how the perception of physical objects can be reconciled with these concerns.

5. All Is Not Lost

Fortunately all is not lost, for the single-idea thesis has the resources to address this problem. In one respect the single-idea thesis provides an easy solution to the original tension with which we started. Only ideas are immediately perceived. What we take to be commonsense objects can be immediately perceived because they are also ideas. What remains, of course, is to explain exactly how this works within Berkeley's system.

The key lies in separating immediate perception from the process of perception. It is convenient to refer to this as the difference between

perceptual immediacy and process immediacy. In one sense saying that there are two kinds of immediacy here is a bit misleading. Rather, there is one genuine sense of immediacy (perceptual) and a different aspect of perception that is easy to conflate with immediate perception.

I am happy to follow Pappas's analysis of what constitutes immediate perception.²² If we omit some complicating details that are not relevant at the moment, a particular act of perception is immediate when there is no third thing present during an act of perception. An act is otherwise perceptually mediate. Thus, for example, my perceiving the martial virtues of Caesar from reading a book is perceptually mediate. But we (including Berkeley) also use the word 'immediate' as an indicator of time. Something that happens immediately happens *right now* or *at this instant*. Perception, like any act of the mind, can occur over time. The mind's engagement with an idea of sense is not only immediate in the sense of not involving some *tertium quid*; it is also temporally immediate. It happens, as it were, in an instant. But we do not perceive every idea of sense all at once. We perceive them in an order over time. Sometimes we perceive some ideas of sense at one time *because* we perceived a distinct idea at an earlier time. Had we not perceived the earlier idea we would not have perceived the latter. In this way one might say that the latter idea is *process mediate* even though it is immediately perceived.

What I wish to suggest is that our perception of commonsense objects works in exactly this way. We immediately perceive the single ideas that signify various collections of sensory ideas – there is no third thing in virtue of which it is perceived at the time in which it is perceived – but there is a process involved in so doing. It is still possible to immediately perceive the idea without the suggestive sensation, so the idea is not being perceived mediately through the sensation. The story is fairly simple. We learn to associate a particular idea of the imagination with a collection of sensory ideas.²³ We give that idea a name which signifies that collection. Thereafter, the mind 'slides' insensibly *over time* (no matter how short a span) from the perception of a member of the collection to the single idea (which in turn signifies the entire collection). Naturally, this does not deny that other inferences may be made to things perceived mediately, just as Berkeley indicates. This distinction allows us to reconcile those passages where Berkeley seems to say that we immediately perceive commonsense objects with those where he explicitly claims that we only immediately perceive ideas, *without* forcing us to accept the implausible collections view. Furthermore, it supports the single-idea thesis generally.

It might be objected that Berkeley blocks this view. Philonous agrees with Hylas when the latter proclaims that '[the senses] make no inferences' (DHP 174). That is certainly right. No inference is being made. We attach single ideas to collections (and *vice versa*) by constant conjunction from experience. Eventually this connection becomes so familiar that we insensibly slide from one to the other. Berkeley himself explicitly describes this process and separates suggestion from judgment or inference:

ALCIPHRON: You would have us think, then, that light, shades, and colours, variously combined, answer to the several articulations of sound in language; and that, by means thereof, all sorts of objects are suggested to the mind through the eye, in the same manner as they are suggested by words or sounds through the ear, that is, neither from necessary deduction to the judgment, nor from similitude to the fancy, but purely and solely from experience, custom, and habit. (*Alc* IV.10, 154)²⁴

Euphranor affirms this, adding only that he obliges Alciphron to submit to nothing more than the force of truth. The truth is that we are driven to our ideas of objects by the habit and custom of constant conjunction. This is not an inference but a 'suggestion' and so does not technically require an act of judgment. Importantly, Berkeley even claims (at the end of NTV 77) that suggestions can occur immediately (in the temporal sense), as with the perception of distance: 'I say they [ideas that suggest distance] do not first suggest distance, and then leave the mind from thence to infer or compute magnitude, but suggest magnitude as immediately and directly as they suggest distance.'²⁵

The last piece of the puzzle is the problem with which I confronted Pappas's view. It would seem that all ideas perceived immediately are proper to a sense modality or faculty. That is exactly right. Berkeley tells us that some ideas are the objects of the imagination and not of any sense modality:

The peculiar objects of each sense, although they are truly or strictly perceived by that sense alone, may yet be suggested to the imagination by some other sense. The objects therefore of all the senses may become objects of the imagination, which faculty represents all sensible things. (TVV 10)

The proper objects of the senses become the secondary objects of the imagination. That is, a particular colour is the secondary object of the

imagination. But the idea of a book, which is secondary to sight, is the *proper* object of the imagination:

EUPHRANOR: Thus, for example, in reading we run over the characters with the slightest regard, and pass on to the meaning. Hence it is frequent for men to say, they see words, and notions, and things in reading of a book; whereas in strictness they see only the characters which suggest words, notions, and things. And, by parity of reason, may we not suppose that men, not resting in, but overlooking the immediate and proper objects of sight, as in their own nature of small moment, carry their attention onward to the very thing signified, and talk as if they saw the secondary objects? which, in truth and strictness, are not seen, but only suggested and apprehended by means of the proper objects of sight, which alone are seen. (*Alc* IV.12, 156)

Notice the careful distinctions that are made here. We immediately and properly *see* a certain bit of light and colour and then insensibly slide to the commonsense object, which is secondary to *that sense*. The idea of the imagination – the single idea of the object – is not properly *seen* at all:

What we immediately and properly perceive by sight is its primary object, light and colours. What is suggested or perceived by mediation therefore, are tangible ideas which may be considered as secondary and improper objects of sight. (TVV 42)

The idea is secondary to the sense but *proper* to the imagination. Berkeley might not say this as perspicuously as one might like, but his analysis is clear enough:

Ideas which are observed to be connected with other ideas come to be considered as signs, by means whereof things not actually perceived by sense are signified or suggested to the imagination, whose objects they are, *and which alone perceives them*. (TVV 39; my italics)

The ideas that serve as signs are perceived by the imagination alone. That is, they are proper to the imagination. The analysis is not difficult to extend generally to Berkeley's system, and I am at a loss as to how this could work any other way. The idea of a colour or a sound is *not* proper to the imagination; hence something *else* is proper to it. Berkeley tells us that the imagination can conjure up ideas itself and these ideas are not

perceived by the senses (PHK 28–30). Imagining is a species of perceiving or, yet more broadly, of thinking. I thus independently defend this move on the grounds of charity. It is both consonant with the spirit of Berkeley's overall project and an emendation that improves its strength.

These objects of the imagination are certainly strange. They depend on the sensory perceptions we have but are not proper to any *sense* modality (cf. NB 582). They are connected by custom and habit with our sensory perceptions but are not necessarily constructed by judgment from them. I do not pretend to have a robust theory about the nature of these ideas, nor do I suppose Berkeley had a clear story to tell. But the position *is* consistent with the rest of his metaphysics and neatly avoids the problems we have been discussing.

The single-idea thesis ties all of these elements together in a way that is strikingly consistent with the texts. Consider one extended bit of text from the *New Theory*. Berkeley tells us that the *only* immediate objects of sight are light and colour (NTV 129). Then he invokes the strictness language to fix the proper objects of a sense modality: 'I am not able to attain so great a nicety of abstraction: in a strict sense, I see nothing but light and colours' (NTV 130). Nothing else is immediately perceived by sight. And then Berkeley goes on to invoke the single-idea thesis in the same paragraph:

It must be owned that by the mediation of light and colours other far different ideas are suggested to my mind: but so they are by hearing, which beside sounds which are peculiar to that sense, doth by their mediation suggest not only space, figure, and motion, but also all other ideas whatsoever that can be signified by words. (NTV 130)

The last phrase is delightful. Tables and chairs, as ideas, can be suggested by the mediation of ideas of sense. These, in turn, are signified by words that range over the collection of ideas associated with that single idea of the imagination. Thus, even though metaphysically all that exists to constitute commonsense objects are collections of ideas (and Berkeley admits this), *we* (finite minds) use single ideas as commonsense objects to provide a coherent unity we can utilize to manipulate, and function in, the world.

Conclusion

With our obstacles safely behind us, we can now conclude that the single-idea thesis is a plausible interpretation of Berkeley's account of

commonsense objects. The chairs and tables that we perceive are considered by us to be single ideas that signify collections of sensory ideas. When I say that I now perceive a book, the word 'book' refers to a single idea that functions as a signifier.

Reading Berkeley this way enables us to neatly avoid some of the philosophical and textual problems of the traditional collections view. To perceive a book is not 'just' to perceive some of the members of its collection. Perceiving some of the members of the collection leads us (by habit learned by prior constant conjunctions) to have an idea of the imagination associated with the entire collection. This view allows us to explain error: some sensory ideas (or their qualitative duplicates) are members of more than one collection, and that might prompt us to slide to the 'wrong' idea.²⁶ Worries about speaking with the vulgar either do not apply specially to this theory or, as is more likely, do not apply at all given that Berkeley separates *speaking* with the vulgar from *what is true*. Our concerns about the nature of proper and immediate perception ultimately turn out to provide support for the single-idea thesis, given that only this hypothesis can cleanly reconcile Berkeley's diverse philosophical claims.

It is now no longer sufficient to dismiss idealist interpretations of Berkeley's views on perceptions by simply attacking the weak collections view. This, in turn, reopens the possibility that Berkeley's overall theory has more to be said for it than has previously been thought. Although this is not the place to pursue such inquiries, a more savvy understanding of Berkeley concerning commonsense objects reveals the potential for uncovering other insights formerly hidden by the simple collections view.

Notes

I am indebted to many of the participants at the Berkeley Conference at Texas A&M University for their critical discussion of this paper. In particular, Richard Glauser, Ian Tipton, and Steve Daniel gave generously of their time to pursue these and other themes in Berkeley scholarship.

- 1 I avoid using the term 'physical object' because one might be tempted, inadvertently, to make materialist assumptions about their nature in Berkeley's ontology. The OED, for instance, first associates 'physical' with material, a connection Berkeley would not allow. I do not dispute that others may use the word 'physical' innocently as a sortal term.
- 2 This is the standard interpretation of Berkeley. As just a small sample, see

- A.C. Grayling, *Berkeley* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1986), 53, 63; I.C. Tipton, *Berkeley: The Philosophy of Immaterialism* (London: Methuen, 1974), 185; J.O. Urmson, *Berkeley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 41; and G.J. Warnock, *Berkeley* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953), 130. In this collection, see the essay by Richard Glauser.
- 3 For a defence of a phenomenalist reading of Berkeley, see Kenneth Winkler, *Berkeley: An Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), esp. 191–203.
 - 4 Recent commentators have argued against this claim, and I will engage that issue subsequently. George Pappas in particular denies that *only* ideas are immediately perceived; see his *Berkeley's Thought* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), especially 172–8.
 - 5 Pappas, *Berkeley's Thought*, 12. In his essay in the current volume, Pappas also argues that representative theories of perception need not always require an inference (cf. especially his section 5).
 - 6 Cf. NTV 96, 97, 106, and especially 109 for representative examples.
 - 7 One passage might mislead here. Compare his NB 763: 'Numbers are nothing but Names, meer Words,' and Berkeley to Molyneux, 8 December 1709: 'Truth on't is Numbers are nothing but Names' (W 8: 25). The former is the corrected version of the *Notebooks*, which is much less suggestive than what appears in the Luce and Jessop edition: 'Numbers are nothing but Names, never Words.' But this correction does not weigh against my claims here, since Berkeley does not believe that there is any *thing* 'a number' to be signified. Douglas Jesseph has fairly clearly made this point already; cf. his *Berkeley's Philosophy of Mathematics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 107–11.
 - 8 See Glauser's 'The Problem of the Unity of a Physical Object in Berkeley' in this volume for an excellent analysis engaging the constructionist position.
 - 9 Many such difficulties have been adequately explored elsewhere. See Jonathan Bennett, *Learning from Six Philosophers*, 2 vols. (New York: Clarendon Press, 2001), 2: secs. 172–7, 226–7.
 - 10 Cf. Glauser's essay in this collection.
 - 11 Although I agree in the main with Glauser's analysis on the nature of Berkeleyan commonsense objects, I take my thesis to be an extension and improvement to his view, which unhappily concludes that Berkeley is 'unwittingly blurring the distinction between ideas of sense and imagination.' If we note the distinction between the single ideas that name objects and the collections with which they (the single ideas) are associated, I believe we may avoid attributing this confusion to Berkeley.
 - 12 I thus hope to confirm and reinforce Glauser's analysis.
 - 13 My thanks to Doug Jesseph for raising this point in private conversation.

- 14 An additional potential complication might need to be sorted out at some point. Following Locke, are these single ideas of the imagination simple or complex? Fortunately my view can remain neutral with respect to these options (I believe a case can be made for both alternatives). A detailed analysis of the consequences of each reading lies outside the scope of this discussion.
- 15 George Pitcher is the first (of whom I know) to make a sustained argument against the collections view based on dividing Berkeley's apparent endorsement of it against his explicit denials of the same thesis. My reasons and ultimate position are distinct from his, although our views are broadly consonant and I owe no small bit of inspiration to his work. See George Pitcher, *Berkeley* (Boston: Routledge, 1977), 99–100.
- 16 Pappas is one, cited earlier (see also the Pappas essay in this collection). Winkler (*Berkeley*, 149–60) is another.
- 17 I owe the label 'process mediacy' to Lex Newman, whose suggestion greatly clarified this position.
- 18 Winkler, *Berkeley*, 155; Pappas, *Berkeley's Thought*, 180–2.
- 19 See Winkler, *Berkeley*, 154–61, for an extended analysis of these passages.
- 20 Pappas, *Berkeley's Thought*, 172–3.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 176.
- 22 *Ibid.*, ch. 6, esp. 159.
- 23 On this point, see Genevieve Migely's essay in this collection.
- 24 Cf. TVV 42: 'To perceive is one thing; to judge is another. So likewise, to be suggested is one thing, and to be inferred another.'
- 25 The rest of the paragraph provides yet more evidence of my point concerning suggestion and constant conjunction that becomes habitual movement among ideas.
- 26 I am not implying that we ever *perceive* incorrectly, only that we might make errors in judgments about what ideas might attend to others. One error of this sort is to associate a sensory idea with an inappropriate single idea (name). Thus I might see an image which suggests a chair to me when in fact (revealed later after I have had additional sensory experiences) the commonsense object is a picture.