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Introduction to Philosophy

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Reading Question Week 4

Locke, "Qualities and Ideas" (Essay...) - pp. 86-90

1. Locke states that the 'quality' of matter has two parts to it which are 'primary and secondary qualities.' He refers to quality as 'utterly inseparable from the body in whatsoever state it be.' This means that the qualities of the body are the things that are not able to be removed from the body and the primary purpose it has.
2. Some examples of primary qualities are solidity, extension, and figure (shape). Some secondary qualities are by the bulk, texture, and motion. Locke distinguishes the two as one; the primary qualities being inseparable from the body and secondary qualities as being various sensations in us by their primary qualities. Without the primary qualities, secondary qualities do not exist.
3. One of Locke's examples of both qualities is: " ideas of primary qualities of bodies are resemblances of them, and their patterns do really exist in the bodies themselves; but the ideas produced in us by these secondary qualities, have no resemblance of them at all instead it leaves a sensation.

Berkeley, "Nothing Outside the Mind" (Principles...) - pp. 97-102

1. Berkeley refers to 'existence' as objects being perceived in the mind before they could exist. Without an idea in the mind about that object it does not exist. According to his statement, " He does not deny the reality of such things but asserts that their 'existence consists' in their being perceived."
2. Berkeley suggests that we should not believe in Locke's definition of qualities because those examples of qualities have to be perceived in the mind before they exist or are considered to be in existence. He also stated that when applying thoughts it brings existence. According to Berkeley, " Hence it is plain that the very notion of what is called matter or corporeal substance involves a contradiction in it."
3. Based on his critique of 'materialism' Berkeley is basically saying that these qualities of objects are perceived by the mind and without us receiving these thoughts in the mind it is almost impossible to believe they exist. In order to have these qualities about an object our mind perceive them first. He believes that only the mind and ideas bring reality.