

# Berkeley's Arguments from the Relativity of Perceptions

“If ‘real’ is what you can feel, smell, taste, and  
see, then ‘real’ is simply electrical signals  
interpreted by your brain”

-Morpheus

# Berkeley's 3 Arguments for Idealism

- Argument from Sensibility of Objects
- Argument from the Relativity of Perceptions
- Reductive Arguments
- I will be focusing on the Argument from the Relativity of Perceptions.

# There is No Spoon

- Berkeley believes that there is no material world (No spoons)
- Argues that Locke's Primary Qualities are really Secondary Qualities
- Argument from the Relativity of Perceptions shows Primary Qualities are actually mental perceptions (Secondary Qualities)

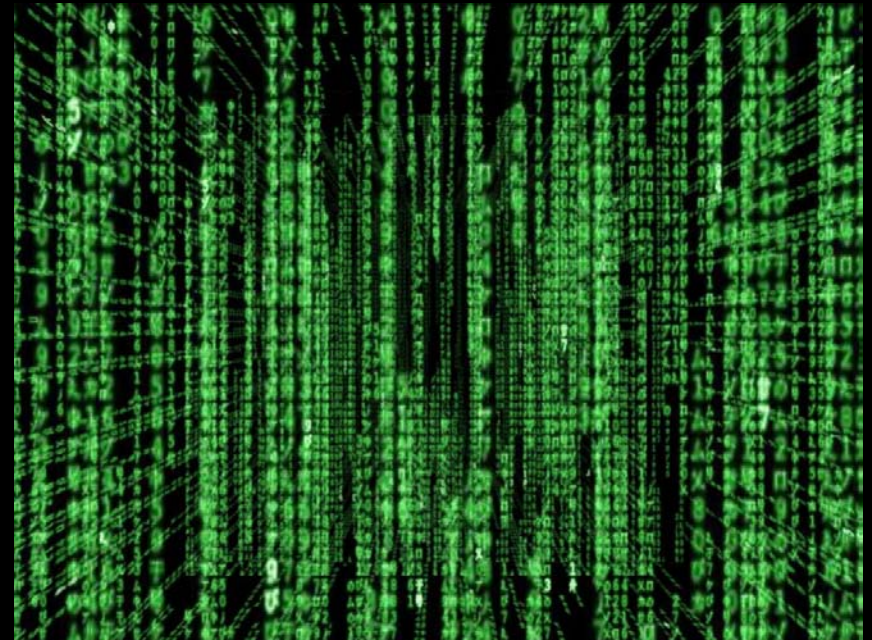


# Primary Qualities = The Matrix

- Berkeley accepts Locke's methodology of determining primary/secondary distinctions
- “Why may we not as well argue that figure and extension are not patterns or resemblances of qualities existing in matter, because to the same eye at different stations, or eyes of a different texture at the same station, they appear various and cannot, therefore, be the images of anything settled and determinate without the mind?” (*Principles* 14, AW 449b)
- No such thing as primary qualities because there are no properties that do not vary with the perceiver!

# Wait a Second...

- Numbers are Numbers!
- Besides, an object's extension, shape, motion and solidity do not vary with the Perceiver
- The world and its objects are real and not simply interpretations of sensation



# Do Not Try and Bend the Spoon

- Numbers ARE Relative (Deck of Cards)
- Extension (Perception of a Giant vs. a Mite)
- Shape (Microscope, Rectangular Table)
- Motion (Change in place over time, Perception of time varies with the succession of ideas)
- Solidity (Resistance to Touch, Strong vs. Weak, Tempurpedic Mattress)



# Do You Understand, Mr. Anderson?

- Berkeley has thus considered all of Locke's primary qualities as we experience them
- Perception of these Primary Qualities actually varies in the same way that perceptions of the Secondary Qualities do.
- Since all qualities are secondary, there are no veridical primary qualities representing a material world