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By George Berkeley

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Whether viewed as extreme skepticism or enlightened common sense, the writings of Berkeley are a major influence on modern philosophy. Bishop Berkeley (1685-1753) was one of the great British empirical philosophers. He believed that the existence of material objects depends on their being perceived and *The Principles of Human Knowledge* sets out this denial of non-mental material reality. At first his views were unfavorably received by the London intelligentsia, and the entertaining *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* are a clarification of the Realist argument and a response to accusations of atheism and skepticism. In the nineteenth century John Stuart Mill wrote that he considered Berkeley's work to be of "greatest philosophic genius," and it is true to say that its Immaterialism has influenced many recent philosophers.

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About the Author

Bishop Berkeley (1685-1753) was one of the greatest British philosophers. Roger Woolhouse is a Professor in the Philosophy Department at York University. He has written extensively about philosophy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries - mainly focusing on metaphysics and the philosophy of science. He is currently working on Leibniz and on Spinoza.

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