

Free essay on to be is to be perceived

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



(George Berkeley)

Lots of animals (for instance, dogs and cats) are deemed to have a dark and white view of this world in comparison to a human being with a normal color vision who is capable of seeing it in various colors. Snakes are known to be able to see spectrums which a human eye cannot capture. If a dog's eyes cannot see colors usually caught by a human visual sense, does it mean that colors, like red, green, yellow etc. do not actually exist? Or, if a human does not perceive spectrums, can it be true to assert that they have no existence? It is not true, of course. Or take a mentally ill person. Everybody is likely to know from psychological and psychic literature of mentally ill person's mind creating different imagines and pictures not identified by persons being in a normal psychic condition. Another example: nobody will argue the fact that there are some people living on our planet who are able to see prophetic dreams and hear prophetic voices telling about what future holds us. However, there are a lot of ordinary people being incapable of getting such information from the universe.

Can it be told that if one is not able to perceive something, it does not actually exist? It is fairly unreasonable. Thus, George Berkeley appears to have been right about his statement that in order to be something or someone should be perceived. "To be is to be perceived" principle proves to have influenced different fields of human activities and studies. Consider law, for instance.

All the lawyers and advocates throughout the world are familiar with one of the main legal presumptions stipulated both in the domestic legislation and in international law. And this presumption reads the following: "Innocent

until proven guilty”. The abovementioned principle is recognized a major basis in any criminal case. To hold any person guilty in committing a crime, the judge must make it certain that there have been presented certain facts to accuse him and those facts are laid down by the law as those constituting a crime. If any essential fact has not been proved by the prosecutor to constitute the commission of a crime, the judge may not hold that person guilty. In another words, this person will not be perceived by the law system as a criminal.

Law is known to originate from philosophy and “ To be is to be perceived” principle by George Berkeley has also made its impact on it. And this is obvious.

Though, George Berkeley did not broach an issue whether something/someone exists in general if it is not perceived by someone? Probably, everyone (human, animal) has its own world picture depending on its ability to identify certain objects and situations? It is likely to be so. But who decides what we will be able to perceive and what our world picture will be like? George Berkeley would claim that when one opens his eyes in the daylight he cannot change the picture he perceives before him, it is not in his powers. And in such a situation George Berkeley assumed the existence of the divine power – the existence of God who decides for some reason what will be seen and perceived by every creature living on this planet, in what way and to what extent.

George Berkeley was at the same time a bishop and a philosopher. So, as a philosopher, he succeeded in setting up his own explanation of God’s existence which could be perceived by church people and people not

believing in high powers.

However, I partly agree with George Berkeley's principle " To be is to be perceived". The absence of perception of some object by one subject will not mean that this object cannot be perceived by another subject and thus cannot exist in general.