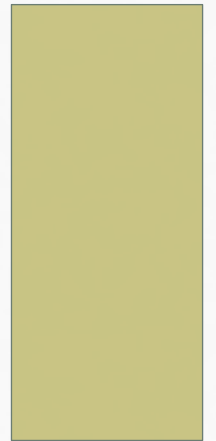# THE EXISTENCE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

EVANIE PETERS, BEN HALL, HILLARY KOLODNER, EMI BIRCH

OUR ARGUMENT

- Hume's argument on the existence of the external world is the most **reasonable**

- Descartes and Berkeley rely too heavily on inferences of God

- Theology is not philosophy

RECAP: 3 PHILOSOPHERS ON THE EXISTENCE OF EXTERNAL WORLD

- Descartes

- Berkeley

- Hume

GOD AS A FINAL CAUSE

- God as a final cause is not a suitable justification for our belief in the external world
  - Descartes
    - Fallibility of criterion of clear and distinct perception of God
  - Berkeley
    - Principle of sufficient reason as an inference

BERKELEY VS. HUME ON REJECTION OF LAWS OF SCIENCE

- Berkeley
  - Esse is percipi – there are no general laws in nature
  - God as ultimate cause

- Hume
  - No justification for projecting laws of nature into future
  - Denial of principle of universal causation and principle of induction

…OR ABANDON HUME'S SKEPTICISM

- Agree that our understanding of the causation is what Hume disproved
- Abandon skepticism, we can still trust science
  - No reason to question what has been so consistent in the past
- Argument for law of contradiction
- Agree with Locke and Descartes' primary and secondary distinction

AGREEMENT WITH SKEPTICAL HUME

- Unavoidable flaw in the principle of universal causation and principle of induction

- Hesitation to be exposed to inconsistencies that we find in Descartes and Berkeley

- The only way to disprove the internalization of causation is to reside in beliefs (in God or that the future will remain like the past)

CONCLUSION

- Weakness in Descartes' and Berkeley's arguments on the existence of the external world is found in their dependence on God

- Hume appeals to more logical and reasonable arguments in his avoidance of God

- Ultimately, diverging beliefs in external world
  - Emi: hesitant to avoid Hume's skepticism
  - Evanie, Hillary, Ben: can't accept argument on science as sufficient reason to deny existence of material world