

Synchronic Personal Identity

Ownership conception of SPID

- Ownership conception: A set of experiences are unified (i.e., form a person) if and only if there is some thing that is the subject of each of the experiences

Subject of an experience

- Subject of experience
 - _____ sees red
 - _____ is bored
 - _____ sees a cat
- So these experiences do not form a person
 - Adam sees red
 - Beatriz is bored
 - Casey sees a cat
- These experiences do form a person
 - Beatriz sees red
 - Beatriz is bored
 - Beatriz sees a cat

My Physics Exam

At 10.43 AM during the test, there are the following experiences:

- Righty sees a blue pen,
- Righty feels a finger cramp,
- Righty feels left hand moving to write the number '2'
- Lefty sees a red pen
- Lefty sees a red ink smear on the page
- Lefty feels right hand moving to write the number '1'

- On the ownership conception there are two separate persons:

- Righty who:

- sees a blue pen,
- feels a finger cramp,
- feels left hand moving to write the number '2'

- Lefty who:

- sees a red pen
- sees a red ink smear on the page
- feels right hand moving to write the number '1'

During the exam, who am I?

- The question:
 - During the exam, who am I?
- 5 possible answers
 1. I am Righty
 2. I am Lefty
 3. I am neither Righty nor Lefty
 4. I am both Righty and Lefty
 5. I do not exist.
- The example of My Physics Exam makes the Ownership Conception false if the best answer to our question cannot be true on the Ownership Conception.

~~I am both Righty and Lefty~~

Argument:

1. If $x=y$, then if x has a property, y also has that property.
2. Righty sees a blue pen
3. Lefty does not see a blue pen
4. Therefore, Righty \neq Lefty
5. I am both Righty and Lefty means that
 - Me = Righty
 - Me = Lefty
6. If Me = Righty and Me=Lefty, then Righty=Lefty
7. But, Righty \neq Lefty [premise 4]
8. Therefore, I am not both Righty and Lefty [(6) and (7) are a contradiction]

~~I am Righty/I am Lefty~~

- The argument against being both Righty and Lefty does not apply here.
- Objection:
 - There is nothing special about Righty that should make us think that I am Righty
 - There is nothing special about Lefty that should make us think that I am Lefty.
 - Therefore, I am not Righty and I am not Lefty

I am neither Righty nor Lefty

- If I am neither Righty nor Lefty, then there are three distinct entities existing during the test:
 - Me
 - Righty
 - Lefty
 - I am not the subject of Righty's experiences; I am not the subject of Lefty's experiences; therefore I am neither Righty nor Lefty.
 - What experiences am I the subject of?
 - The Ownership Criterion defines a person in terms of her unifying experiences. I do not unify any experiences (because in the example, Righty and Lefty's experiences are not unified).

I am neither Righty nor Lefty (obj 2)

1. If I am neither Righty nor Lefty, then there are three distinct entities existing during the test
2. Two of these entities are not persons
 - I am the only person; since I am neither Righty nor Lefty, neither Righty nor Lefty is a person.
3. Even if I were Righty, Lefty would not be a person (and vice-versa)
4. Therefore the life of a person can involve subjects of experiences that aren't persons.
5. Therefore, to explain unity of consciousness (SPID) there are only two alternatives
 1. Ascribe experiences in each stream to subject of experience that is not me and thus not a person.
 2. Reductionist: Experiences are united by a single state of awareness of various experiences. This is true in each stream. Thus in My Physics Exam, the mind is divided because there's no single state of awareness.