

Divided Brains

Day 6 - Identity

Three criteria for personal identity

We'll examine cases of brain division from three philosophical perspectives:

Three criteria for personal identity

We'll examine cases of brain division from three philosophical perspectives:

- Advocate of the Brain Criterion

Three criteria for personal identity

We'll examine cases of brain division from three philosophical perspectives:

- Advocate of The Brain Criterion
 - Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Three criteria for personal identity

We'll examine cases of brain division from three philosophical perspectives:

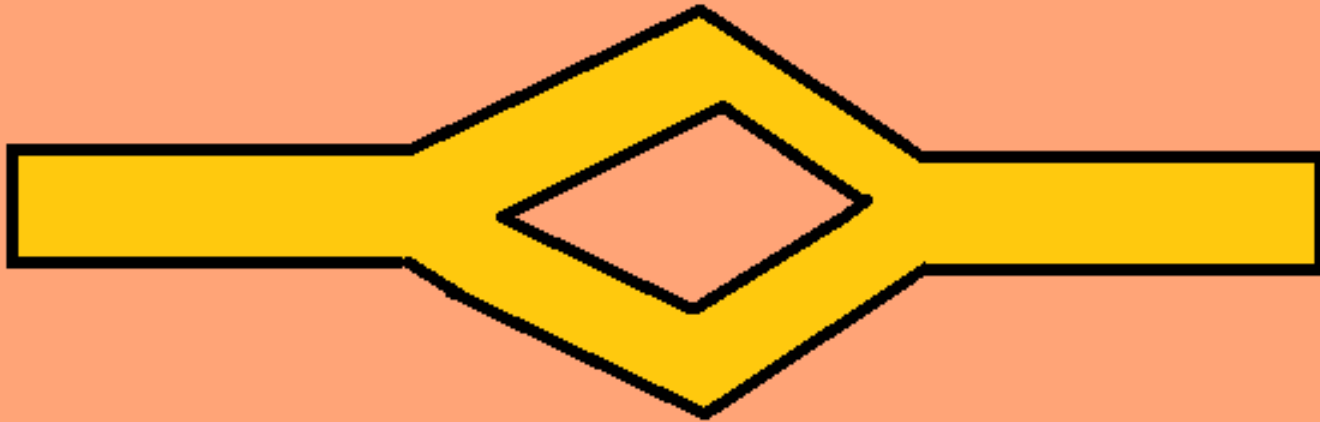
- Advocate of The Brain Criterion
- The Cartesian
 - Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B are the same immaterial thinking subject

Three criteria for personal identity

We'll examine cases of brain division from three philosophical perspectives:

- Advocate of The Brain Criterion
- The Cartesian
- The neo-Lockean
 - Person A is identical to person B if and only if person A is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person B

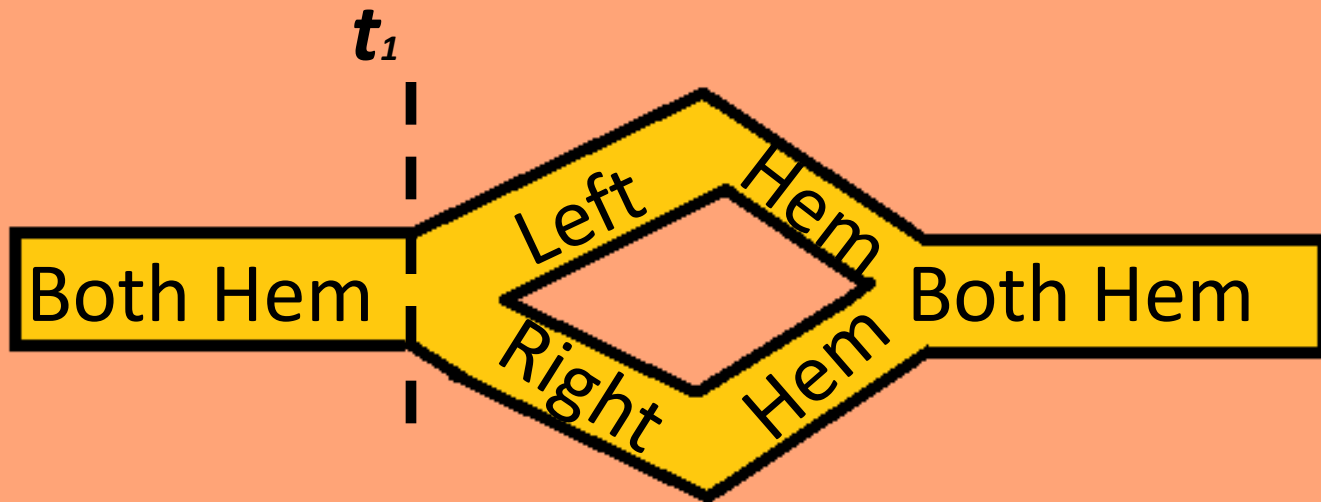
Temporary division



You are able to temporarily separate the hemispheres of your brain by disconnecting the bundle of nerves which connects them.

You do this at time t_1 .

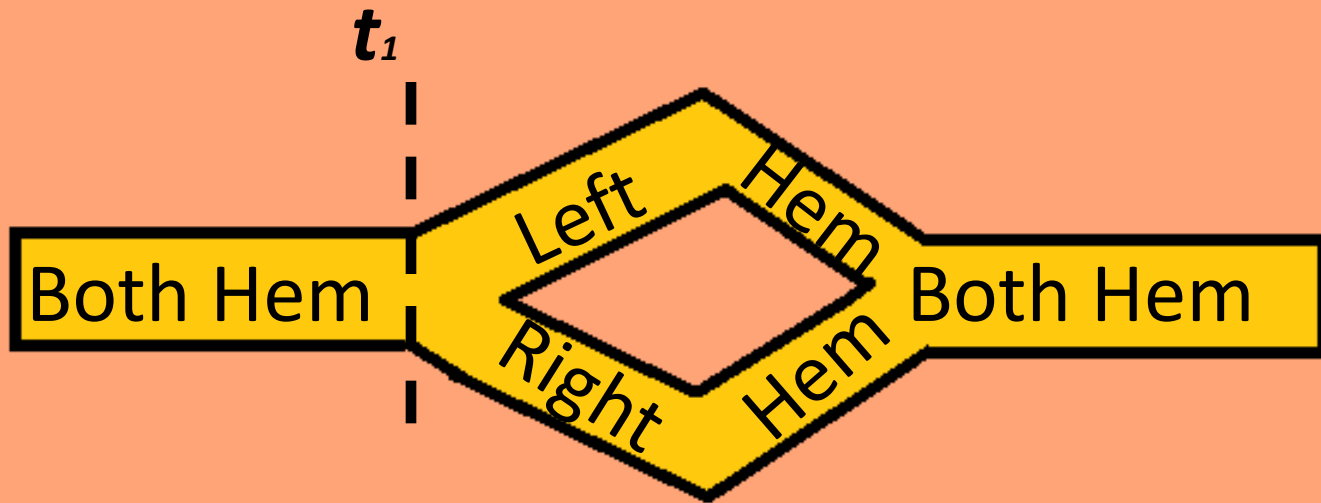
Temporary division



You are able to temporarily separate the hemispheres of your brain by disconnecting the bundle of nerves which connects them.

You do this at time t_1 .

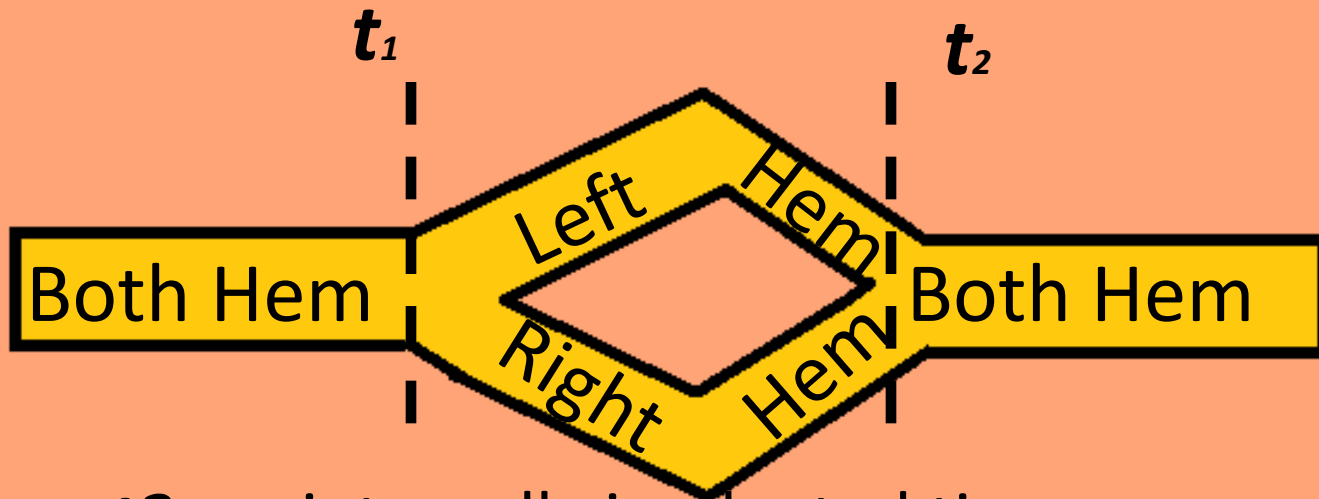
Temporary division



The left and right hemispheres now

- share the same memories of times prior to t_1
- are not aware of each others thoughts
- control opposites sides of the same body

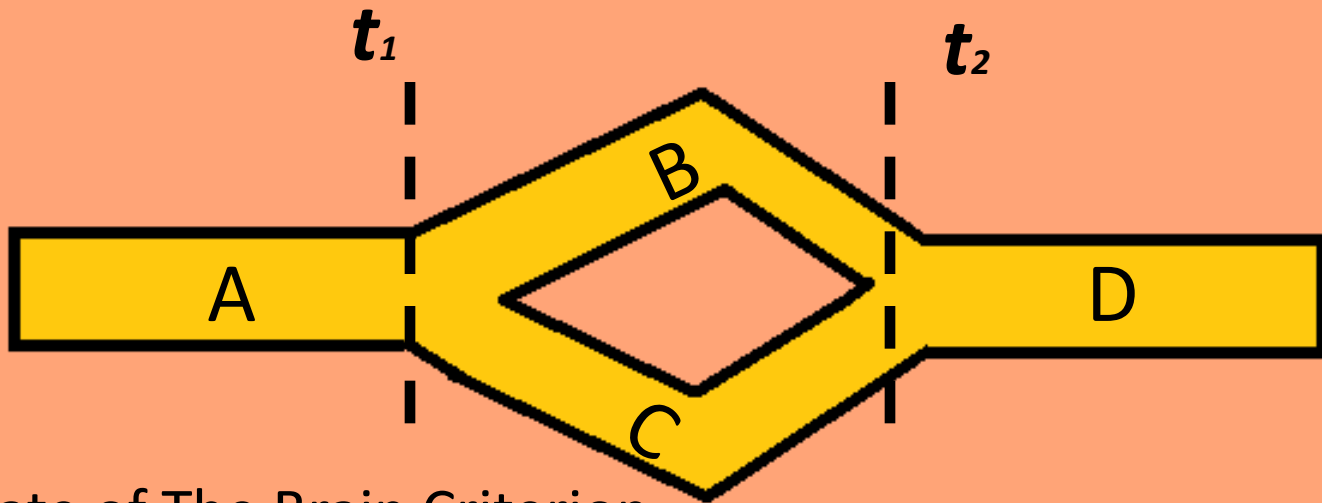
Temporary division



At time t_2 , an internally implanted timer reconnects the two hemispheres. Now there is once again

- A single stream of consciousness which remembers what both the left and right hemispheres did and thought

Temporary division

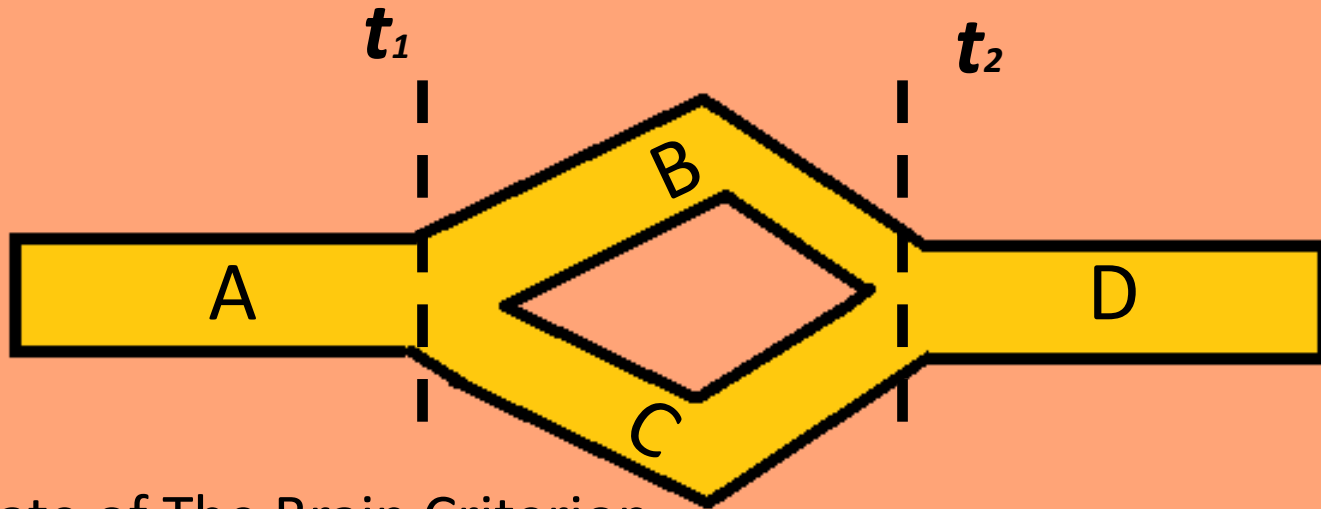


Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are A and B the same person on the Brain Criterion?

Temporary division



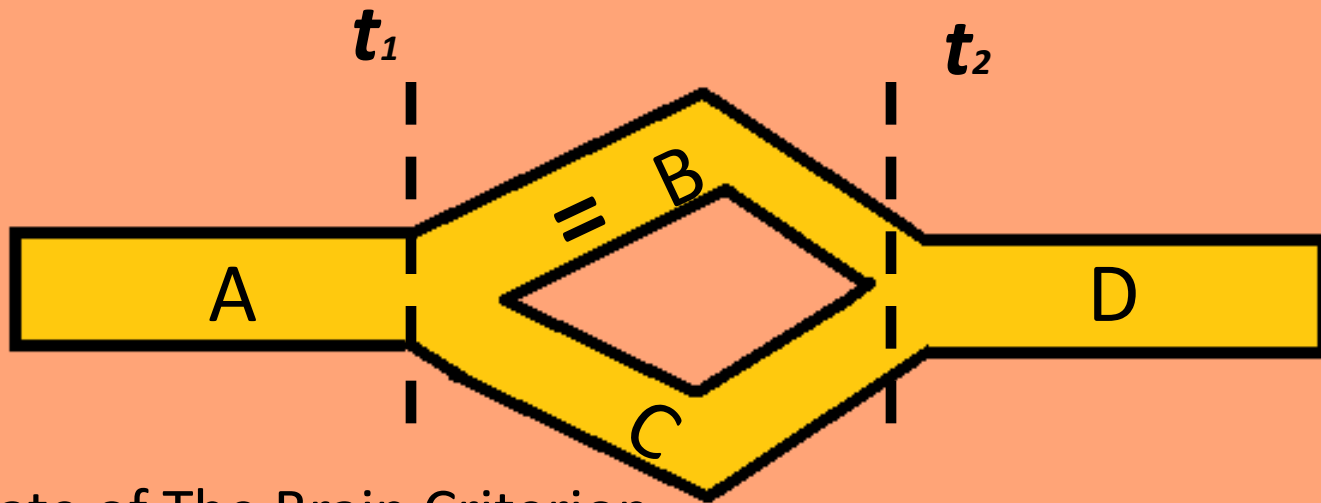
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are A and B the same person on the Brain Criterion? **Yes.**

They both share the left hemisphere, which is enough to be a thinking person.

Temporary division



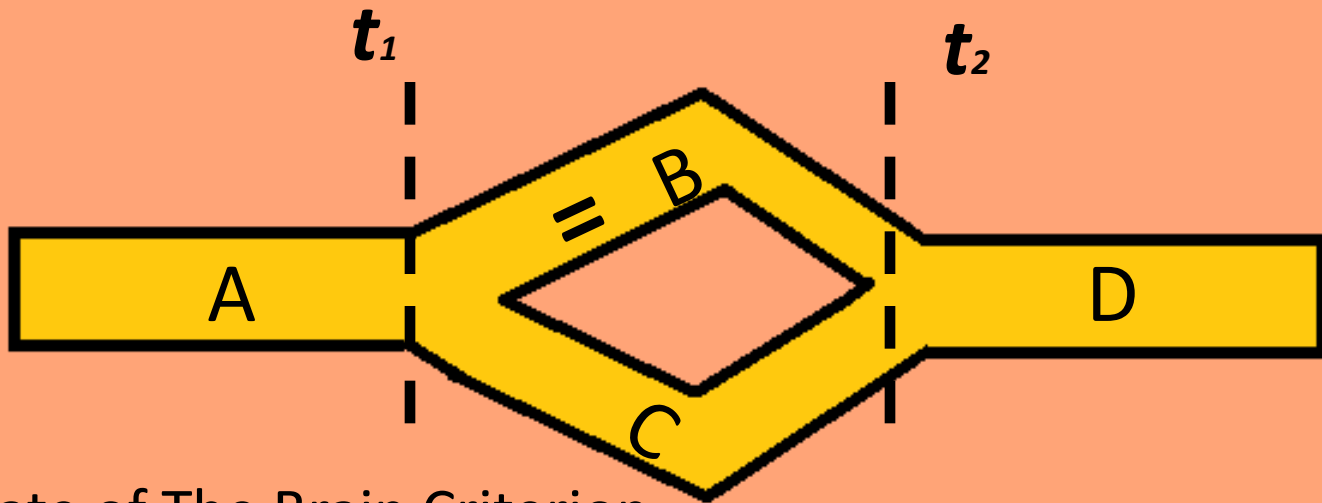
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are A and B the same person on the Brain Criterion? **Yes.**

They both share the left hemisphere, which is enough to be a thinking person.

Temporary division

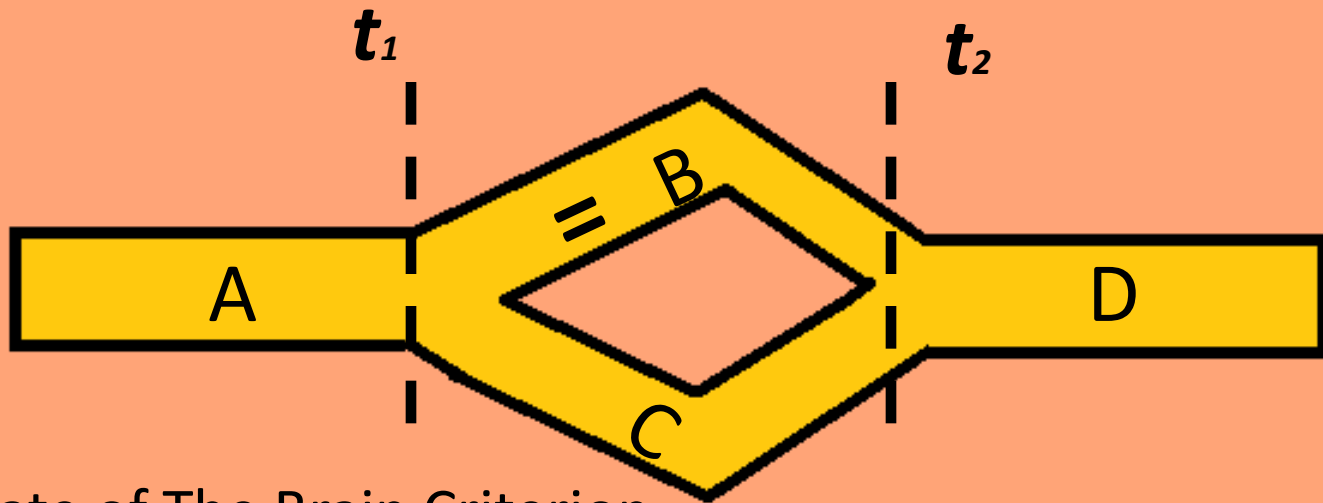


Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person A is identical to person C if and only if persons A and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are A and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

Temporary division



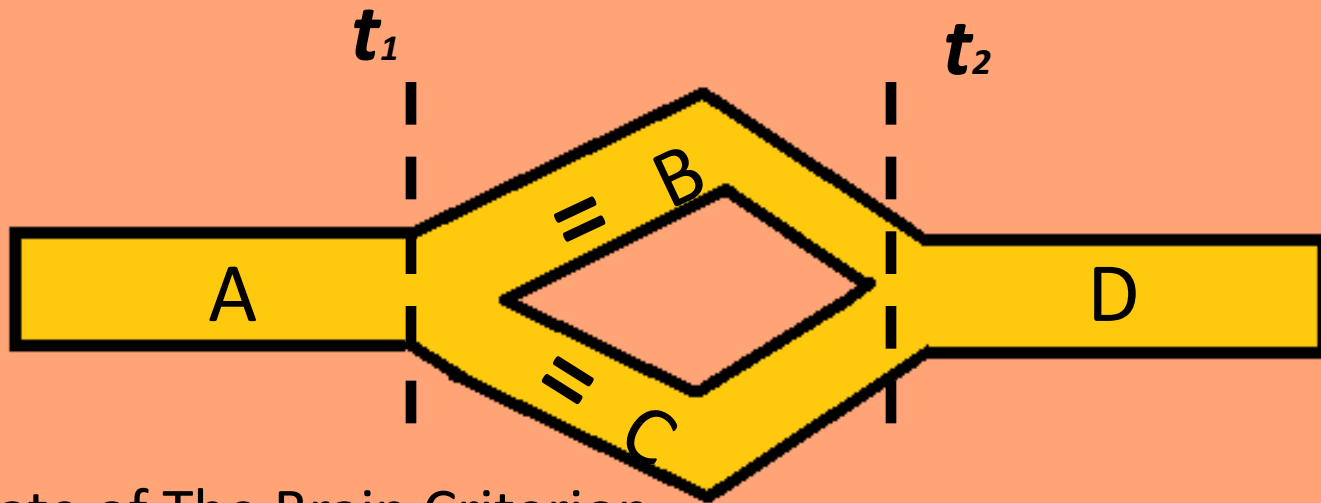
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person A is identical to person C if and only if persons A and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are A and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

Yes. They both share the right hemisphere, which is enough to be a thinking person.

Temporary division



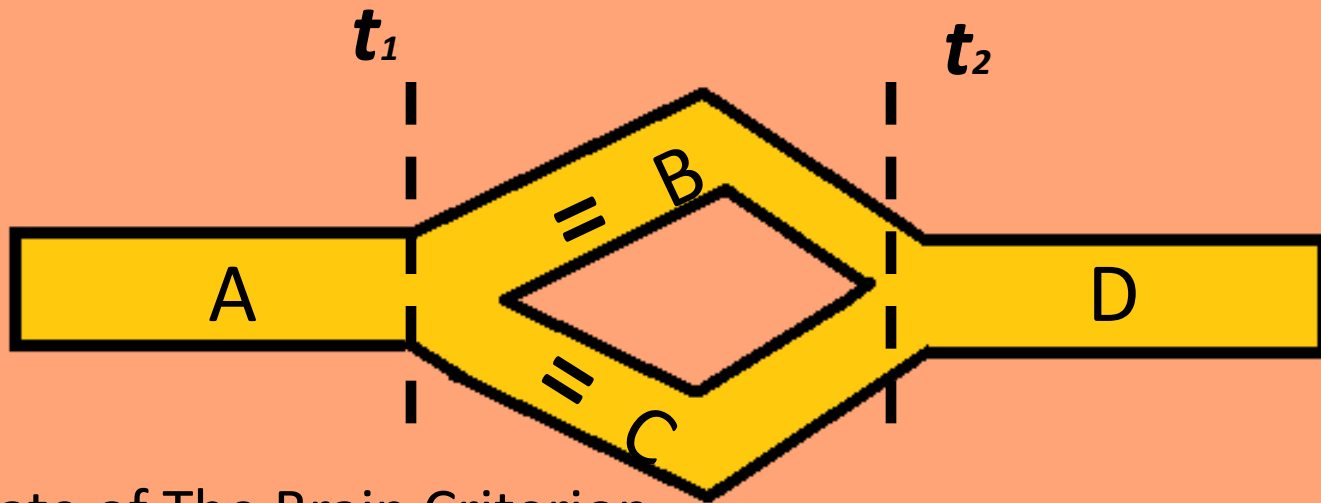
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person A is identical to person C if and only if persons A and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are A and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

Yes. They both share the right hemisphere, which is enough to be a thinking person.

Temporary division

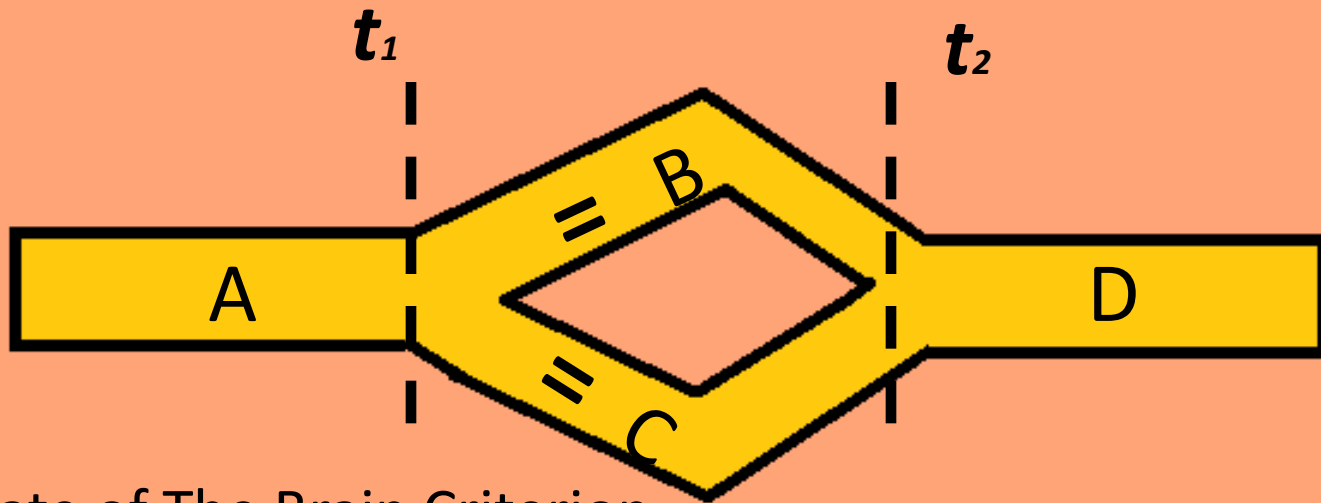


Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

Temporary division



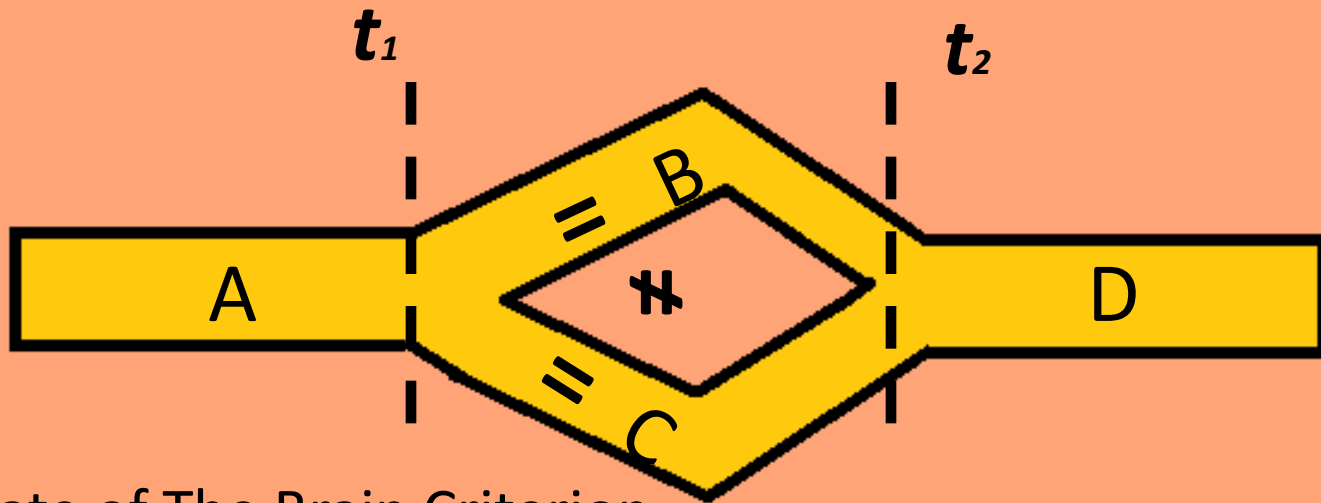
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

NO. The two hemispheres share only the lower brain, which is not involved in thinking.

Temporary division



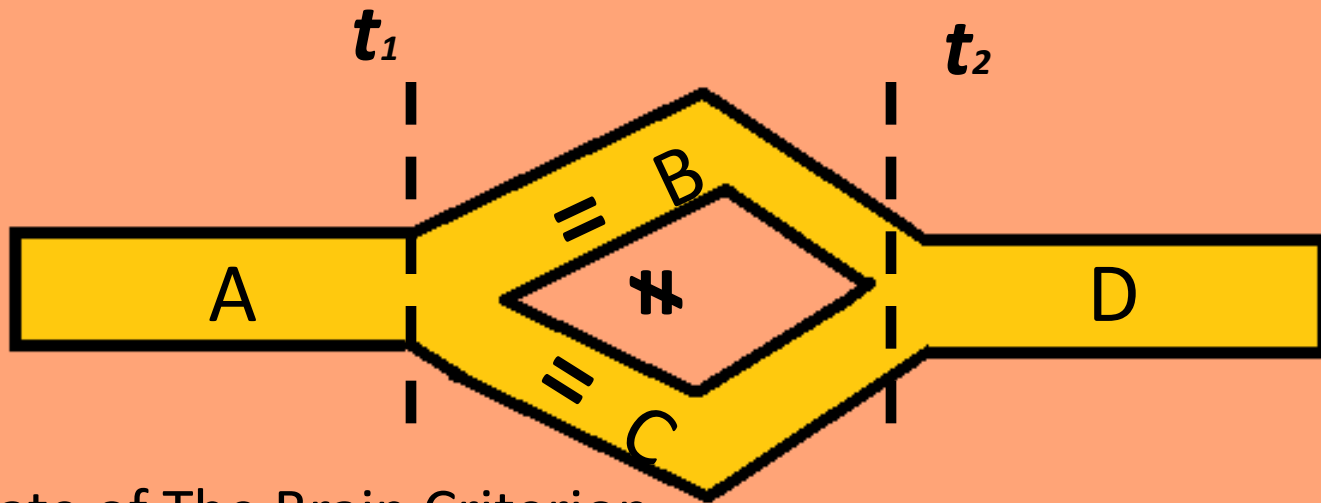
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

NO. The two hemispheres share only the lower brain, which is not involved in thinking.

Temporary division



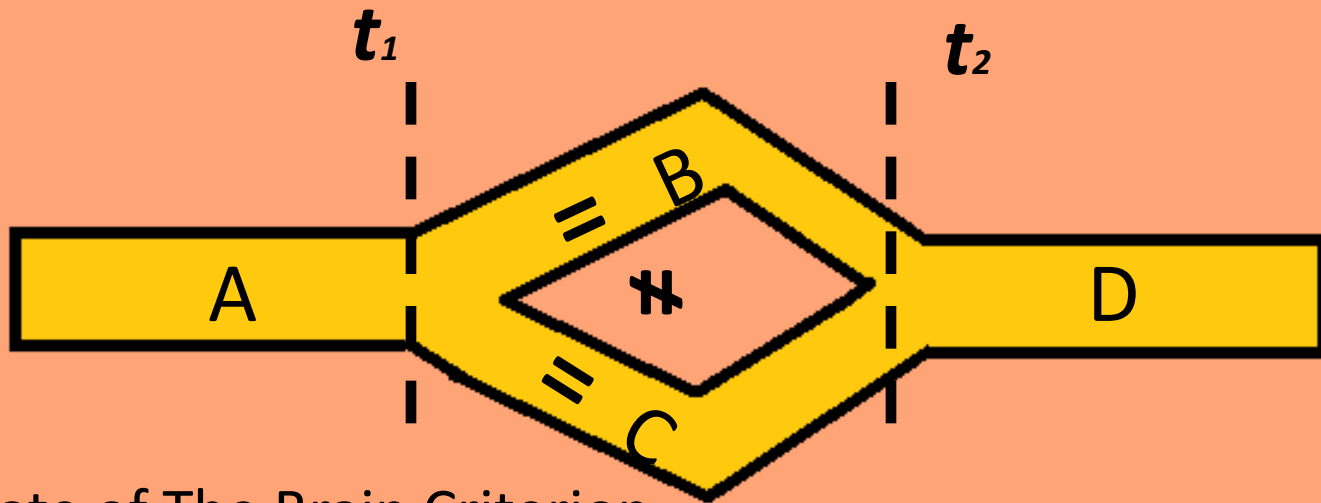
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

But wait!

Temporary division



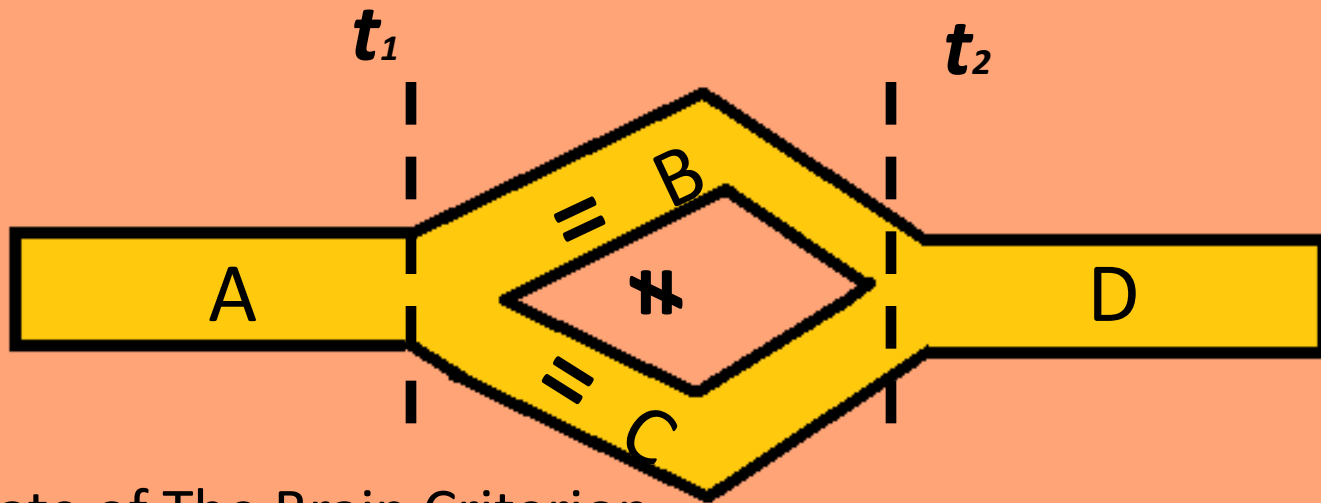
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

But wait! We said $A = B$ and $A = C$.

Temporary division



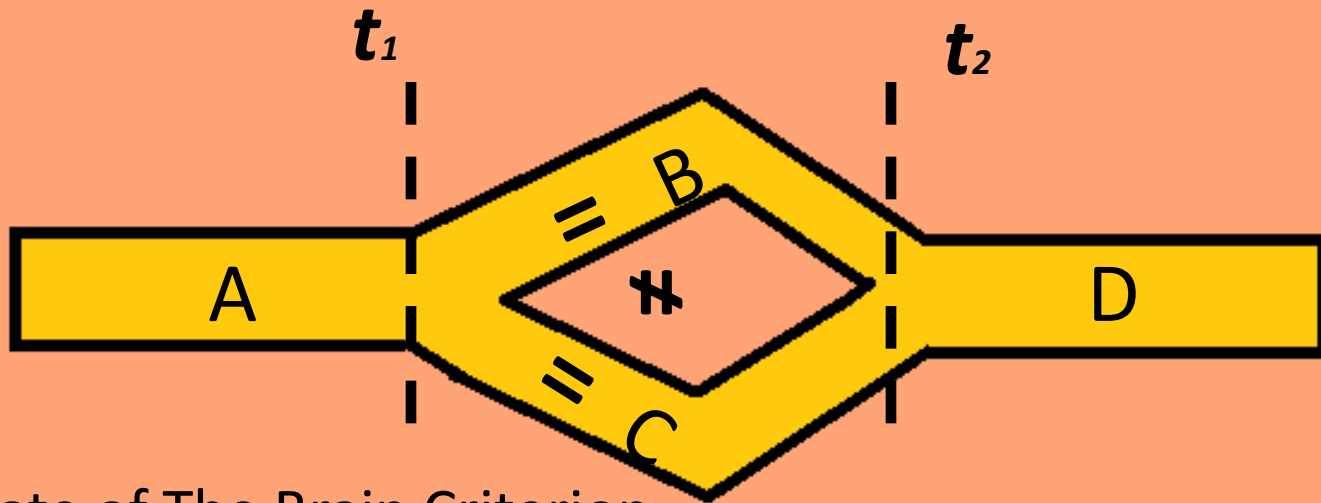
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

But wait! We said $A = B$ and $A = C$. Then $B = A$ by the reflexive property of identity. So $B = A$ and $A = C$.

Temporary division



Advocate of The Brain Criterion

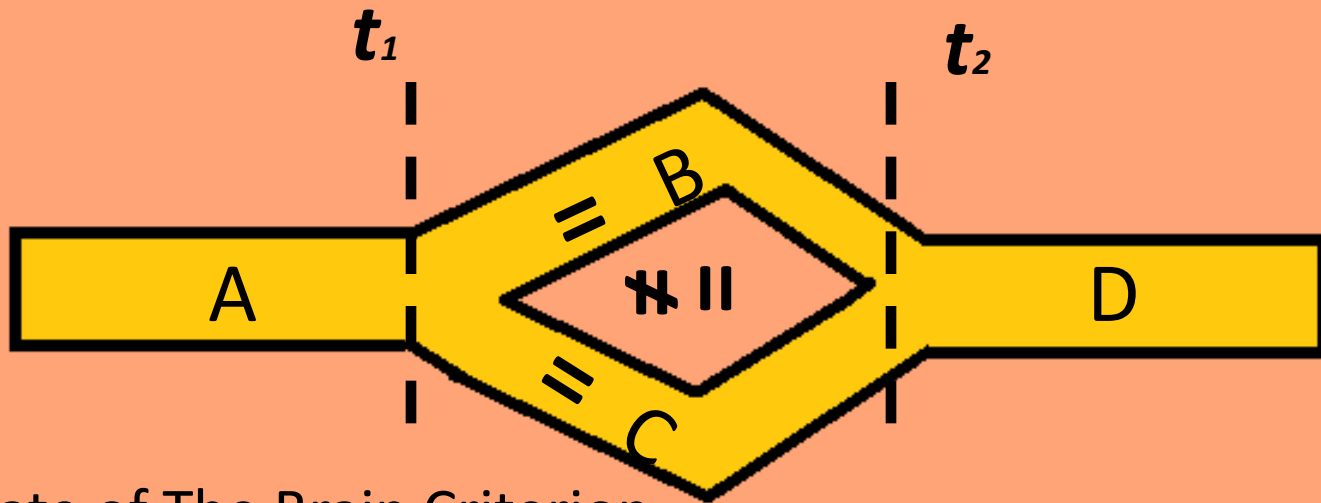
Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

But wait! We said $A = B$ and $A = C$. Then $B = A$ by the reflexive property of identity. So $B = A$ and $A = C$.

Therefore $B = C$, by the transitive property of identity.

Temporary division



Advocate of The Brain Criterion

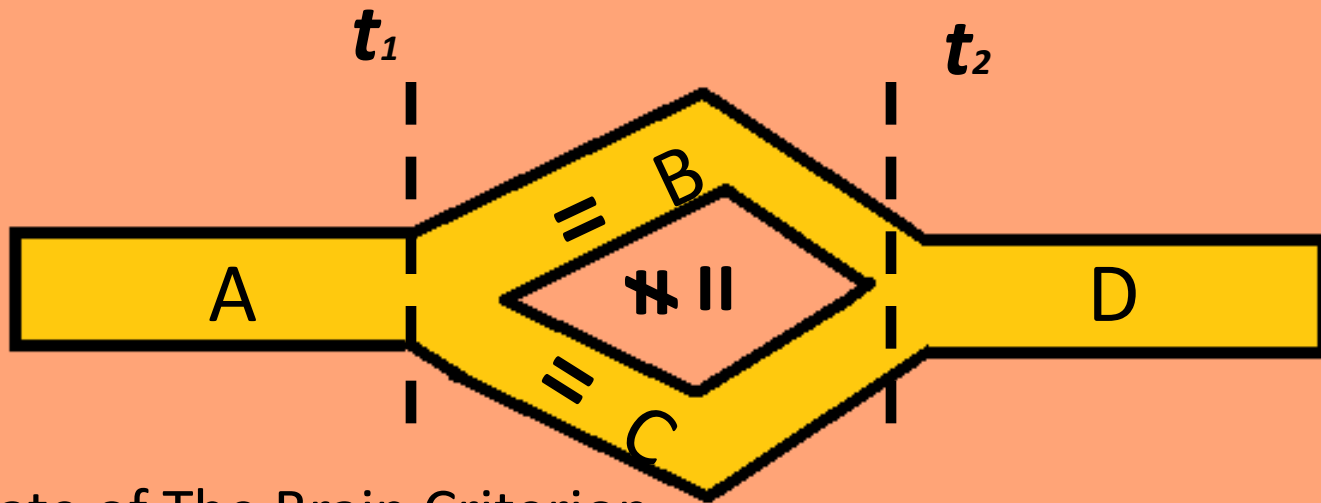
Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

But wait! We said $A = B$ and $A = C$. Then $B = A$ by the reflexive property of identity. So $B = A$ and $A = C$.

Therefore $B = C$, by the transitive property of identity.

Temporary division



Advocate of The Brain Criterion

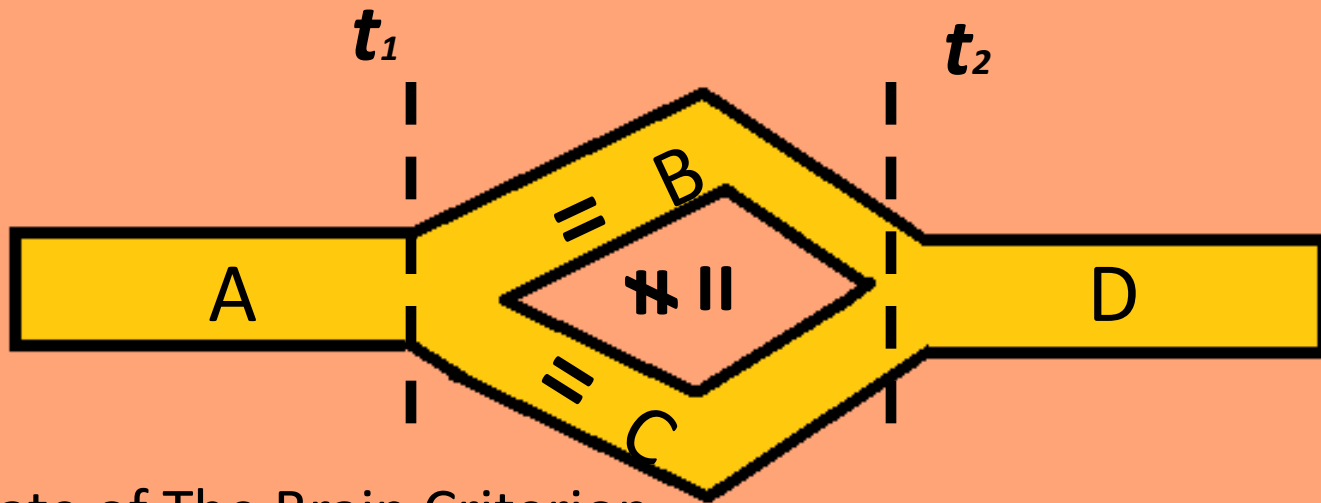
Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

Therefore $B = C$, by the transitive property of identity.

This is a contradiction.

Temporary division



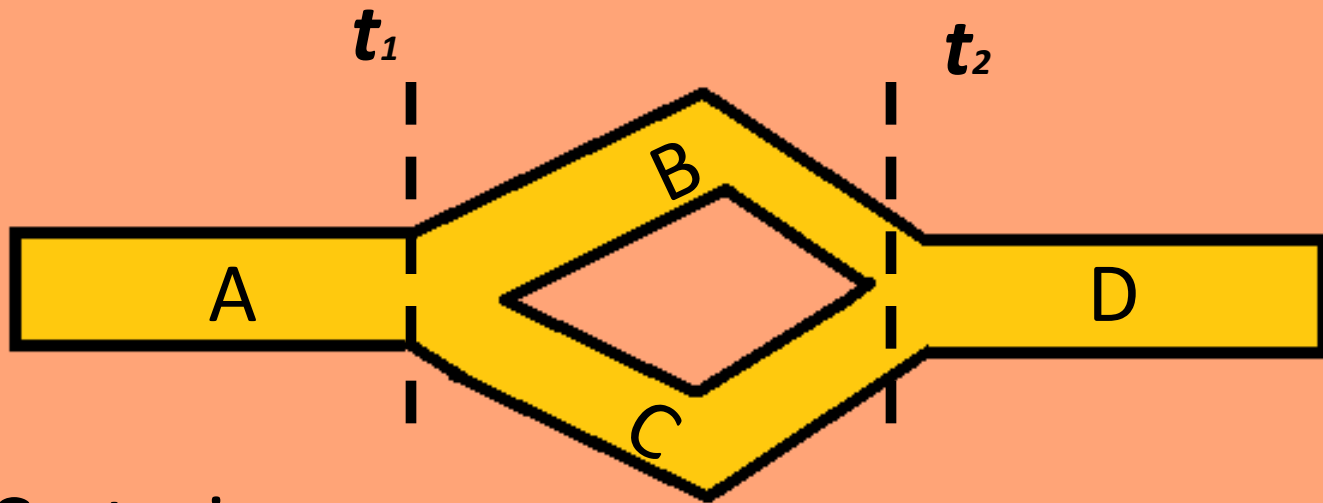
Advocate of The Brain Criterion

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C share enough of the same brain to both be thinking persons

Are B and C the same person on the Brain Criterion?

The advocate of the brain criterion owes us an account of temporary division which does NOT lead to this contradiction.

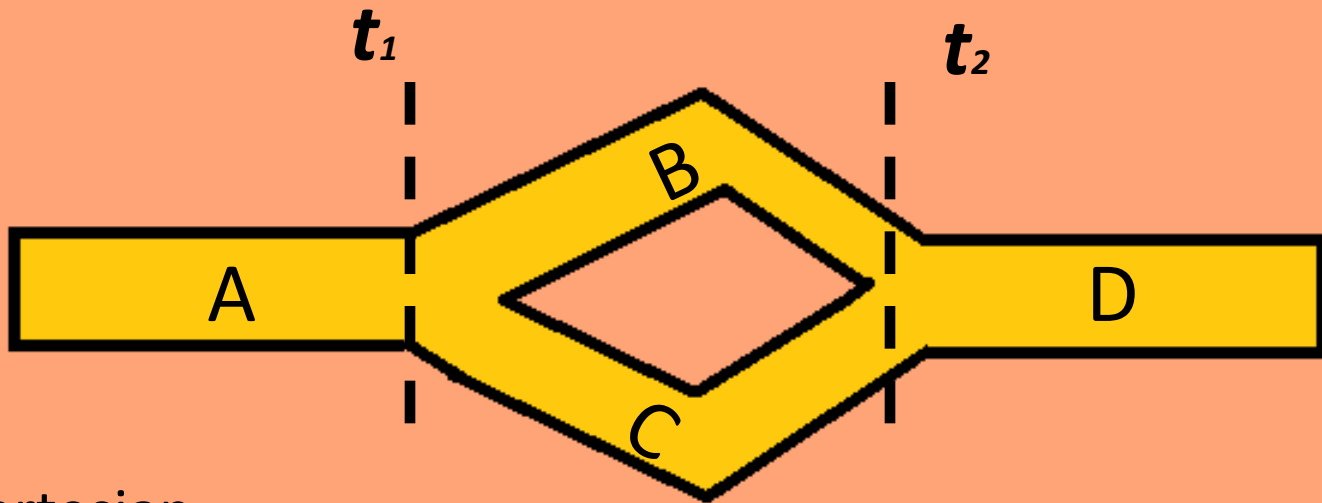
Temporary division



The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B are the same immaterial thinking subject

Temporary division

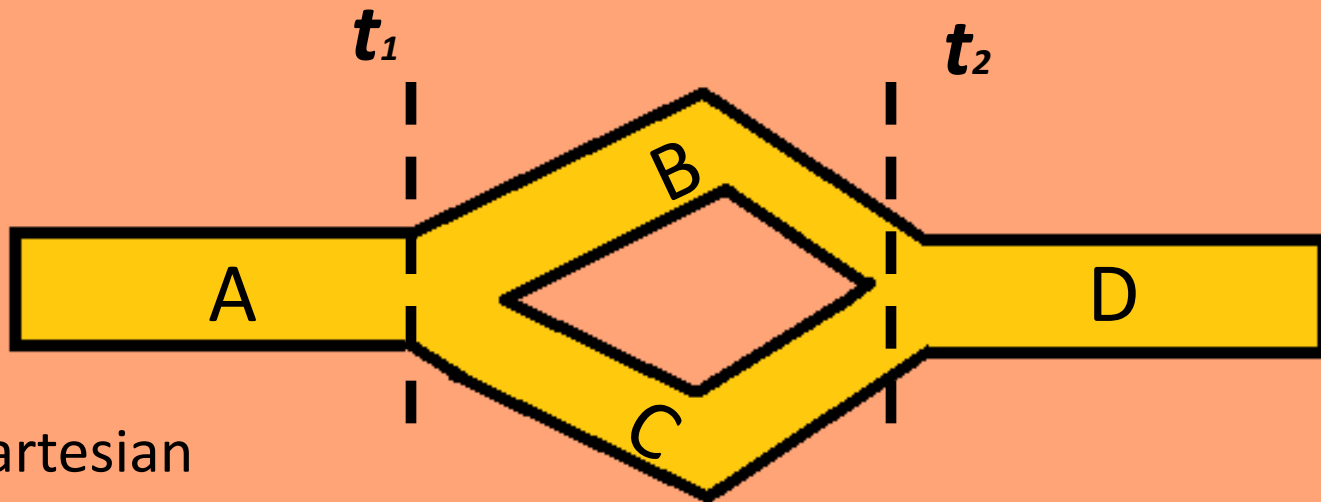


The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are A and B the same person for the Cartesian?

Temporary division

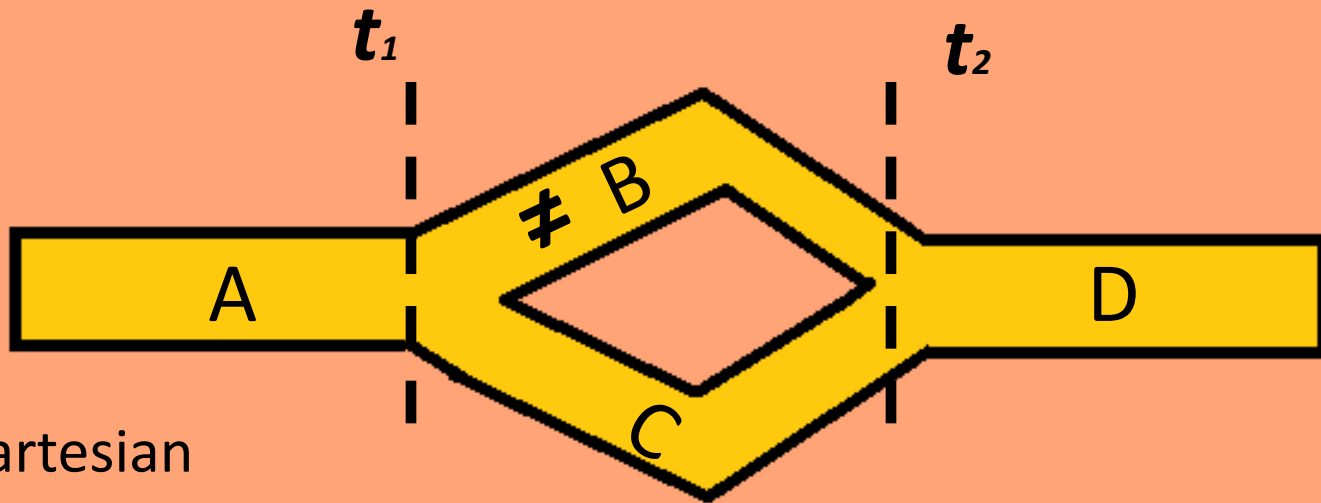


The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are A and B the same person for the Cartesian? **NO.** While B cannot doubt her own existence, she can conceive of A as not existing. Therefore A and B are distinct, by the conceivability argument.

Temporary division

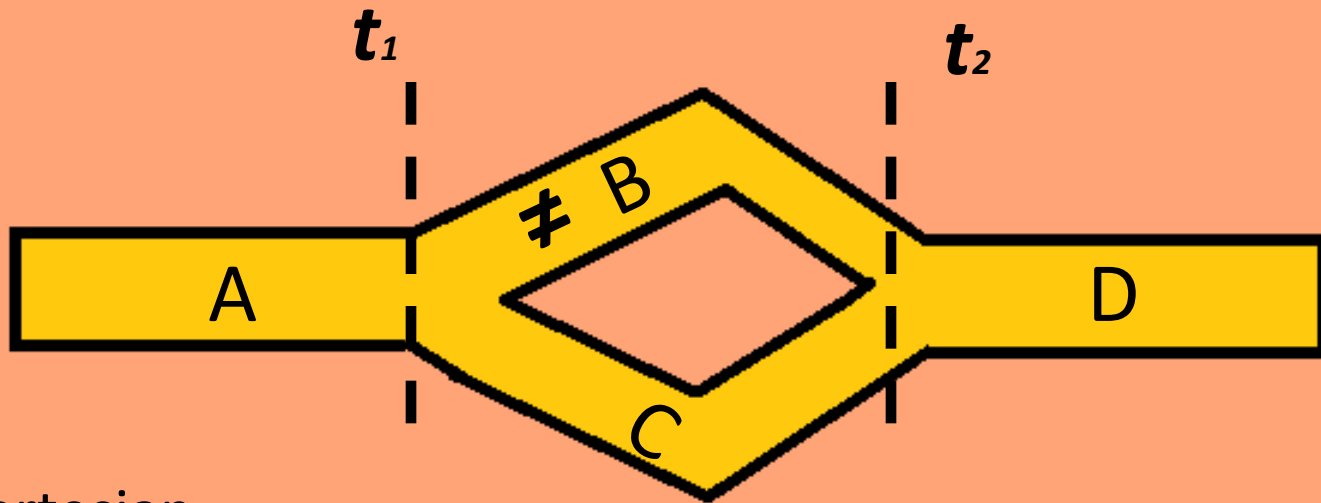


The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person B if and only if persons A and B are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are A and B the same person for the Cartesian? **NO.** While B cannot doubt her own existence, she can conceive of A as not existing. Therefore A and B are distinct, by the conceivability argument.

Temporary division

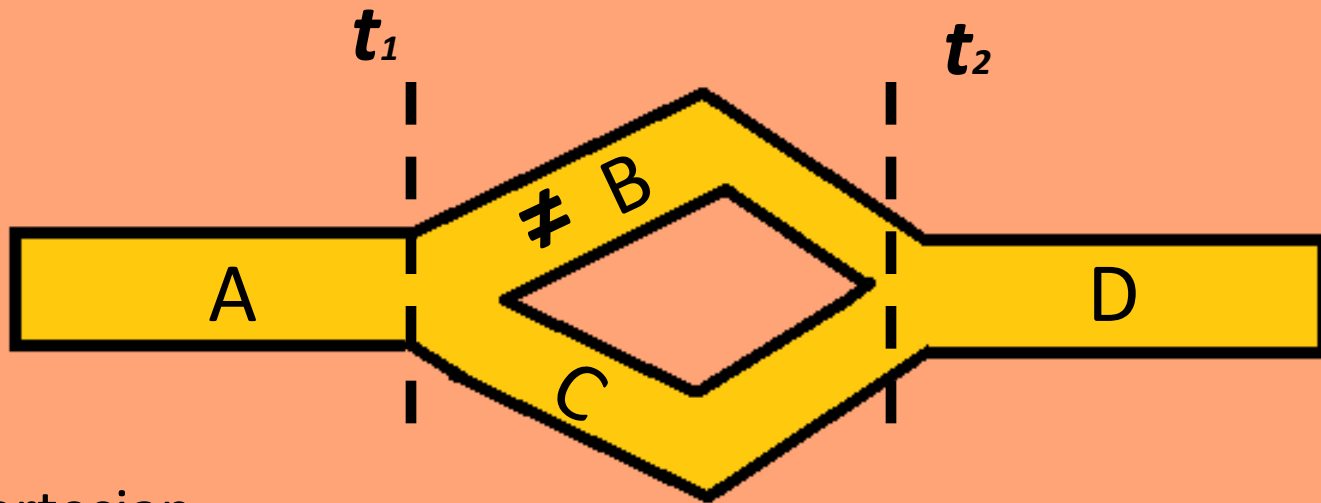


The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person C if and only if persons A and C are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are A and C the same person for the Cartesian?

Temporary division



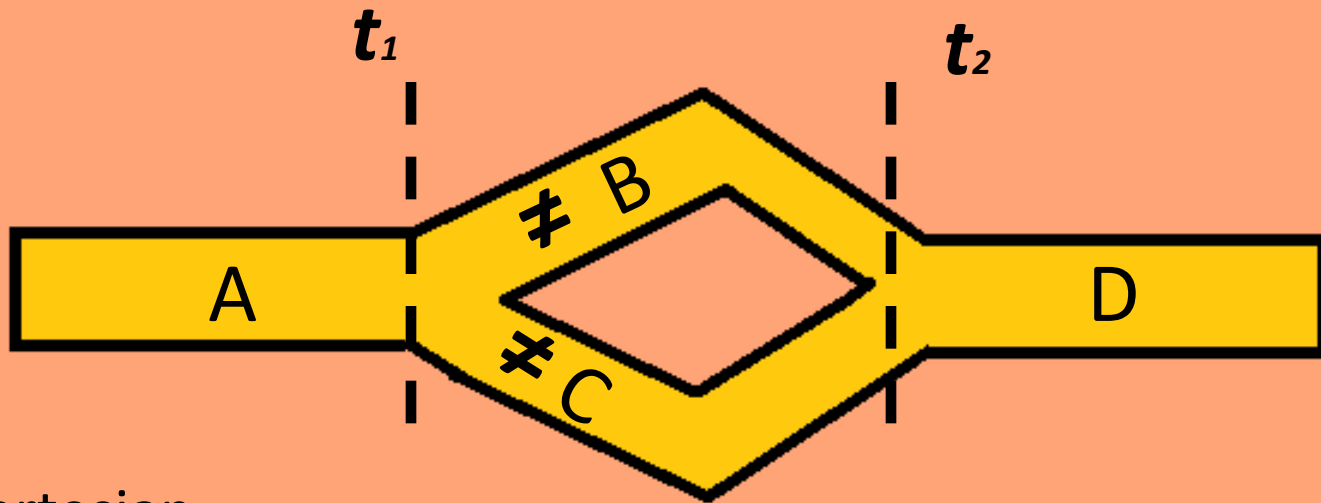
The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person C if and only if persons A and C are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are A and C the same person for the Cartesian?

NO, for the same reason that $A \neq B$.

Temporary division



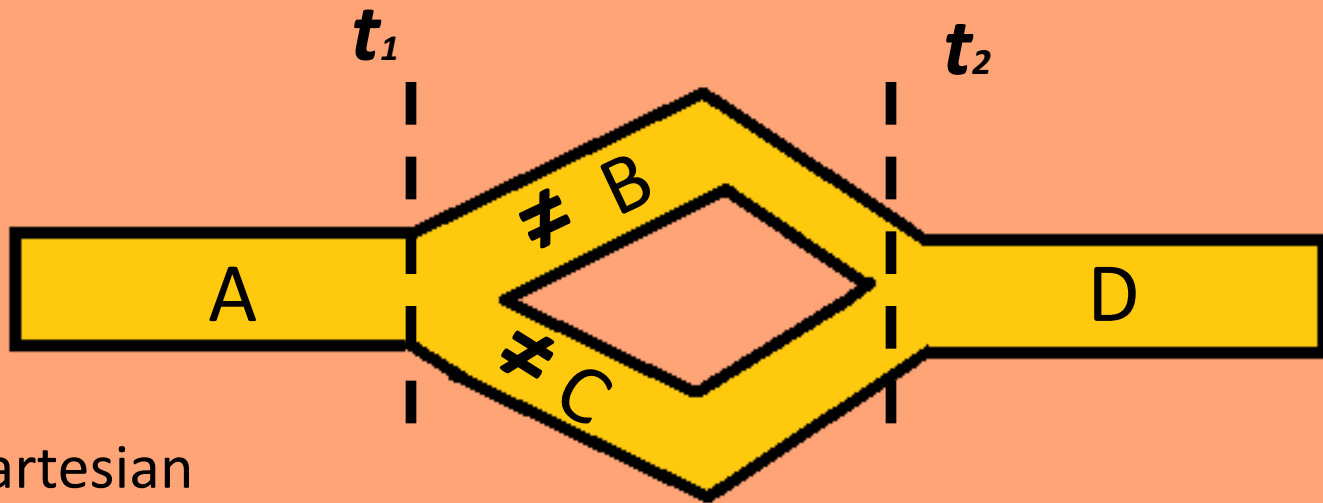
The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person C if and only if persons A and C are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are A and C the same person for the Cartesian?

NO, for the same reason that $A \neq B$.

Temporary division

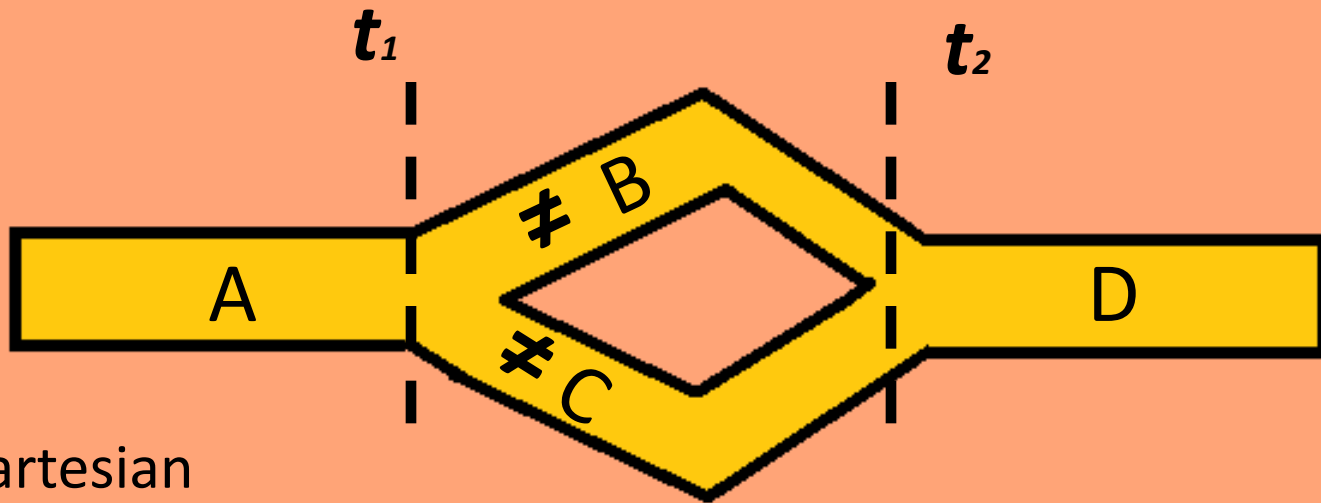


The Cartesian

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and C the same person for the Cartesian?

Temporary division

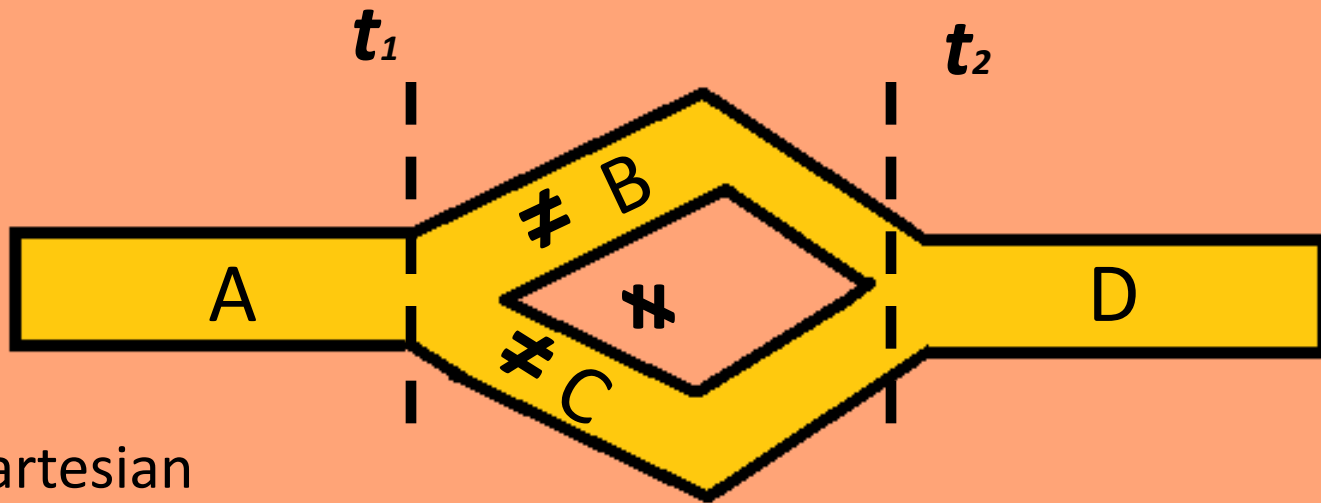


The Cartesian

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and C the same person for the Cartesian? **NO**, since B and C can each doubt the existence of the other. So each subject conceives of itself as existing separately from the other.

Temporary division

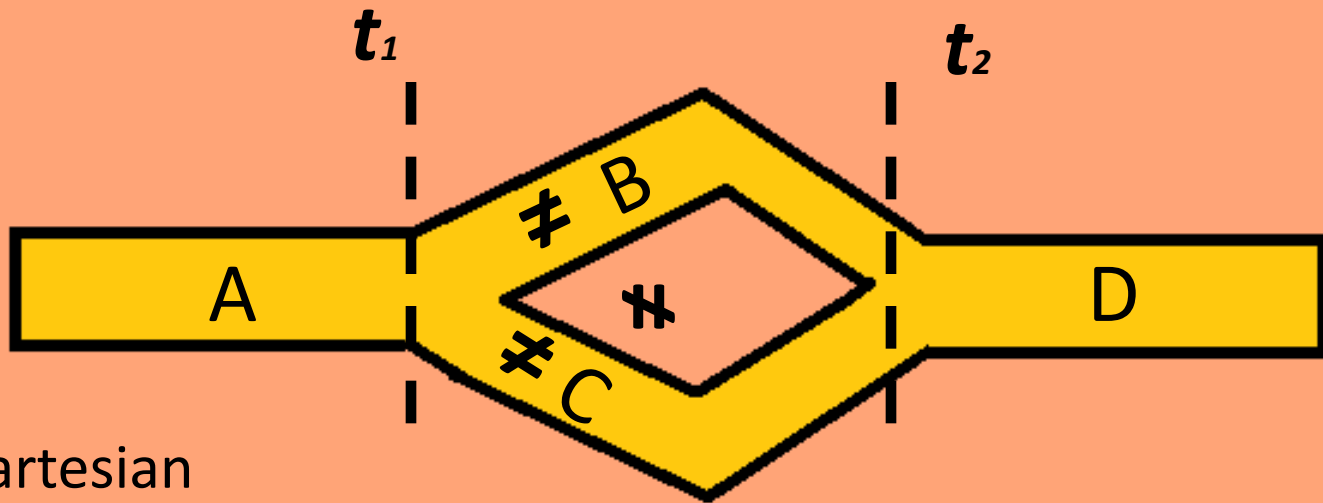


The Cartesian

Person B is identical to person C if and only if persons B and C are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and C the same person for the Cartesian? **NO**, since B and C can each doubt the existence of the other. So each subject conceives of itself as existing separately from the other.

Temporary division

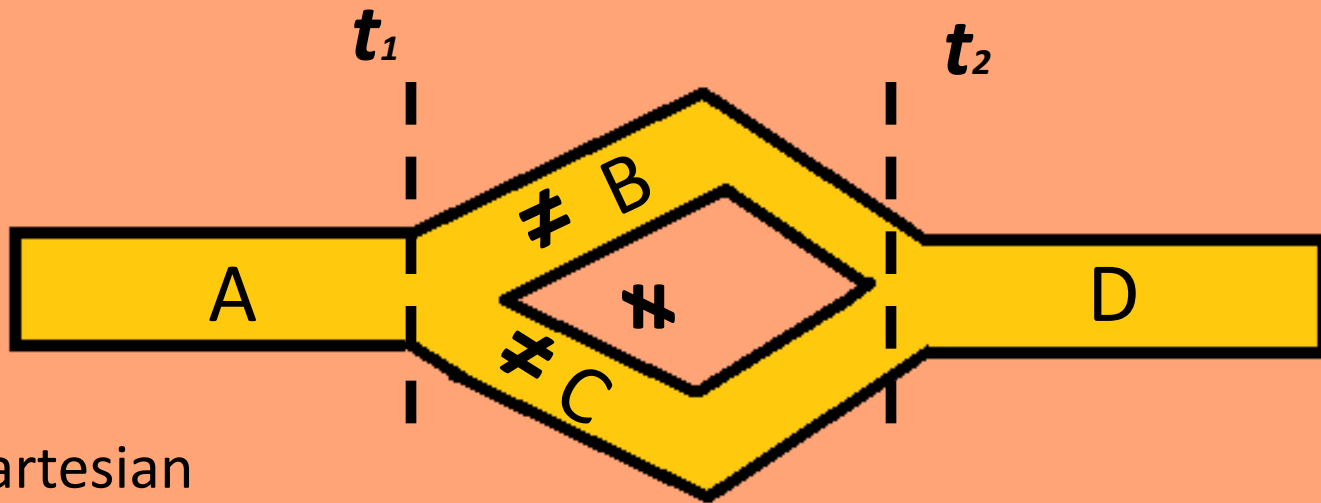


The Cartesian

Person B is identical to person D if and only if persons B and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and D the same person for the Cartesian?

Temporary division

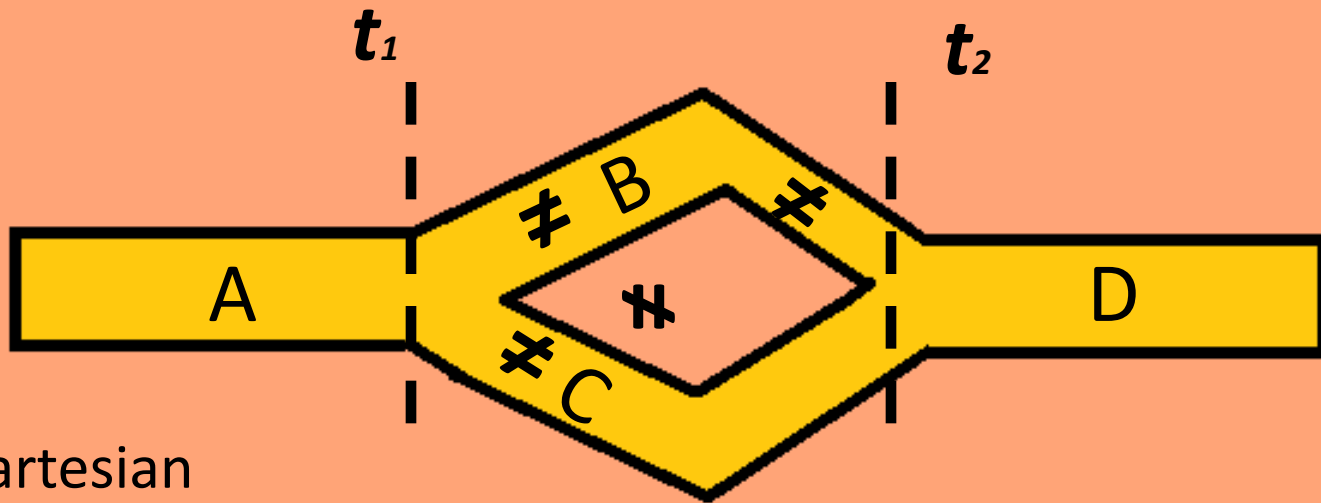


The Cartesian

Person B is identical to person D if and only if persons B and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and D the same person for the Cartesian? **NO**,
for the same reason that $A \neq B$, $A \neq C$ and $B \neq C$.

Temporary division

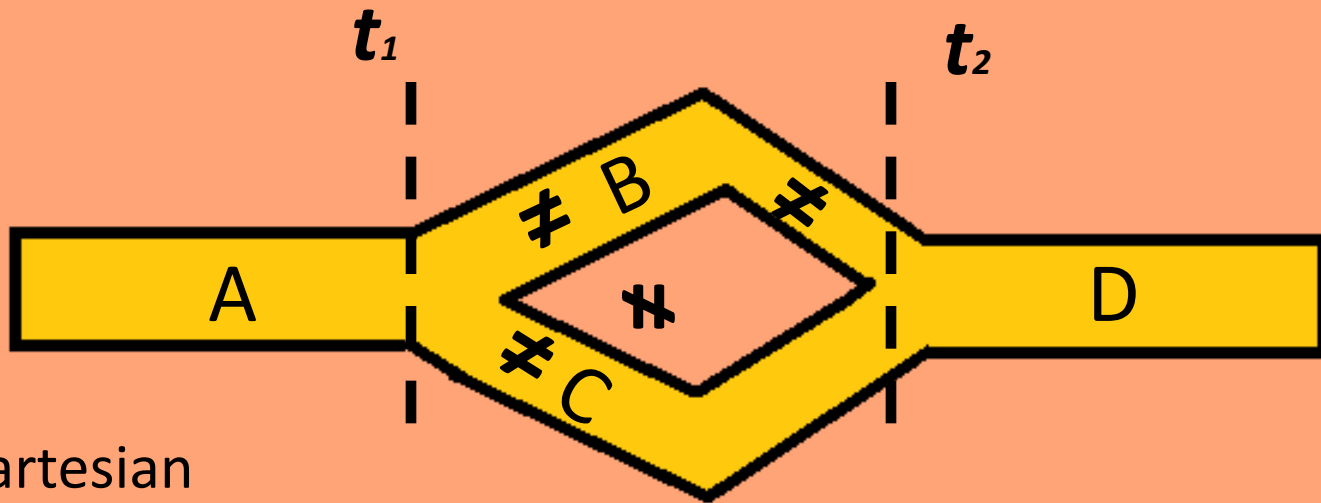


The Cartesian

Person B is identical to person D if and only if persons B and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and D the same person for the Cartesian? **NO**,
for the same reason that $A \neq B$, $A \neq C$ and $B \neq C$.

Temporary division

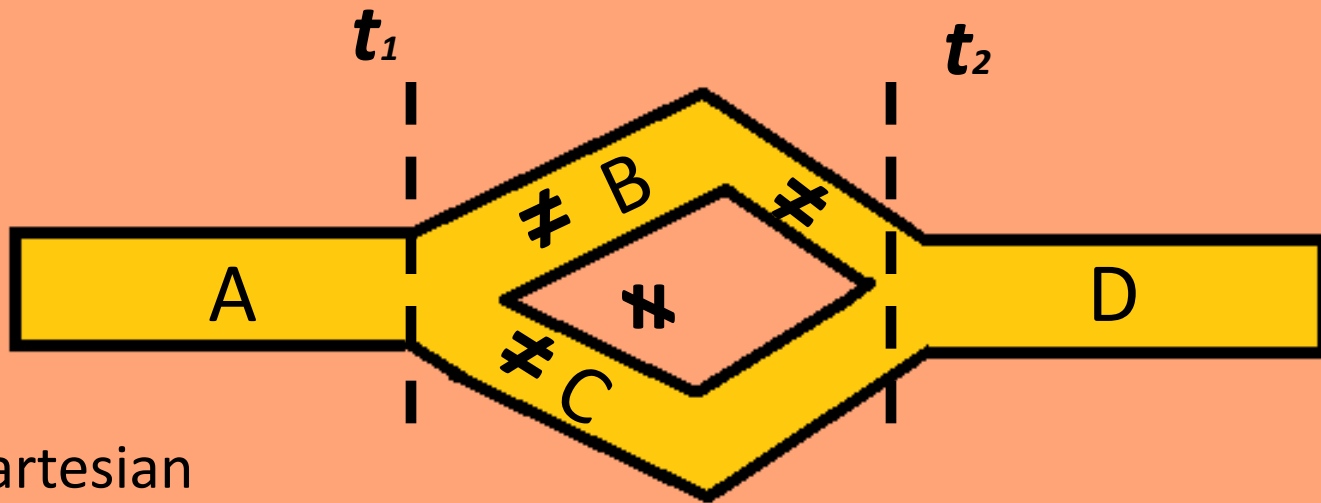


The Cartesian

Person C is identical to person D if and only if persons B and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are C and D the same person for the Cartesian?

Temporary division

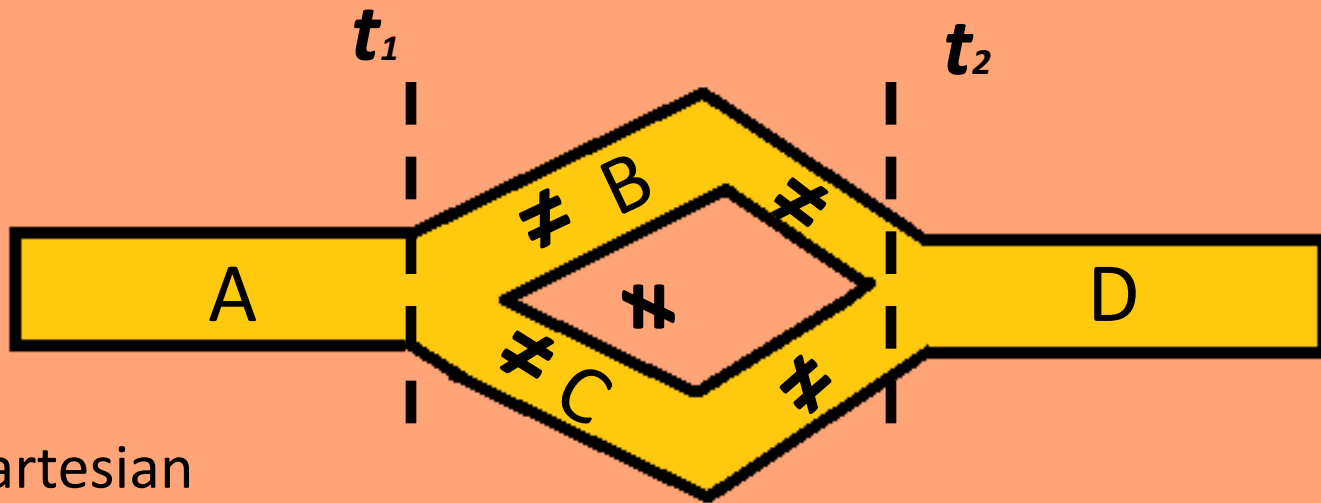


The Cartesian

Person C is identical to person D if and only if persons B and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and D the same person for the Cartesian? **NO**, for the same reason that $A \neq B$, $A \neq C$, $B \neq C$ and $B \neq D$.

Temporary division

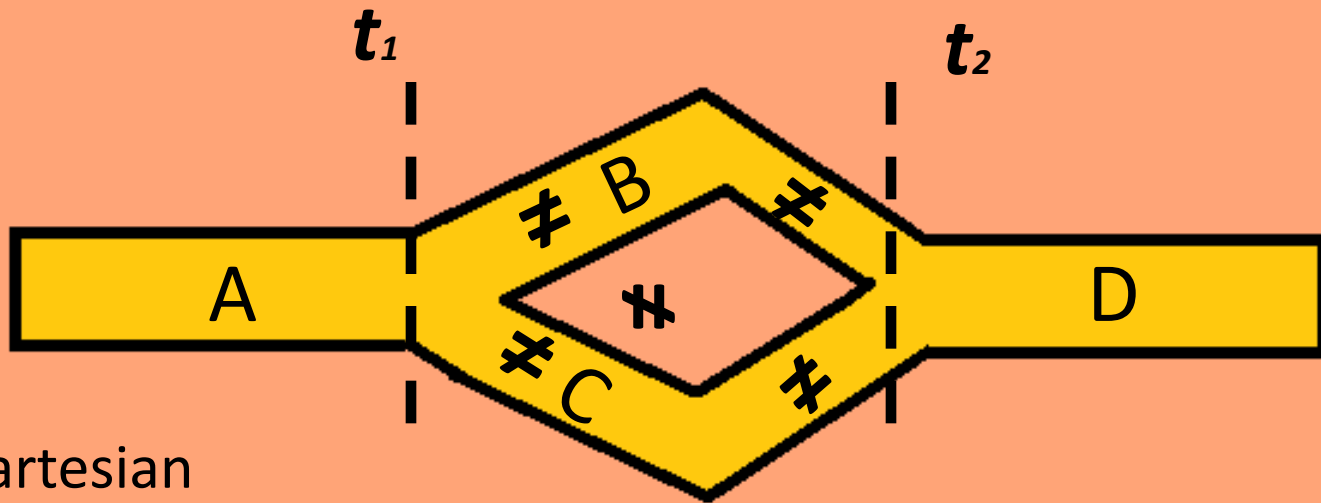


The Cartesian

Person C is identical to person D if and only if persons B and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and D the same person for the Cartesian? **NO**,
for the same reason that $A \neq B$, $A \neq C$, $B \neq C$ and
 $B \neq D$.

Temporary division

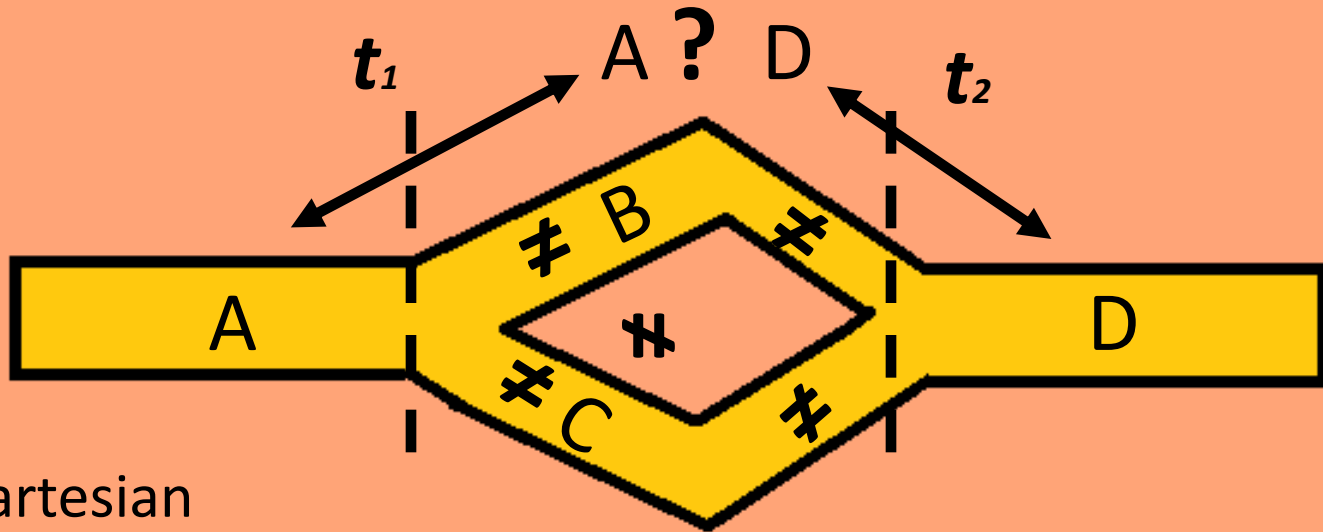


The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person D if and only if persons A and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are A and D the same person for the Cartesian?

Temporary division

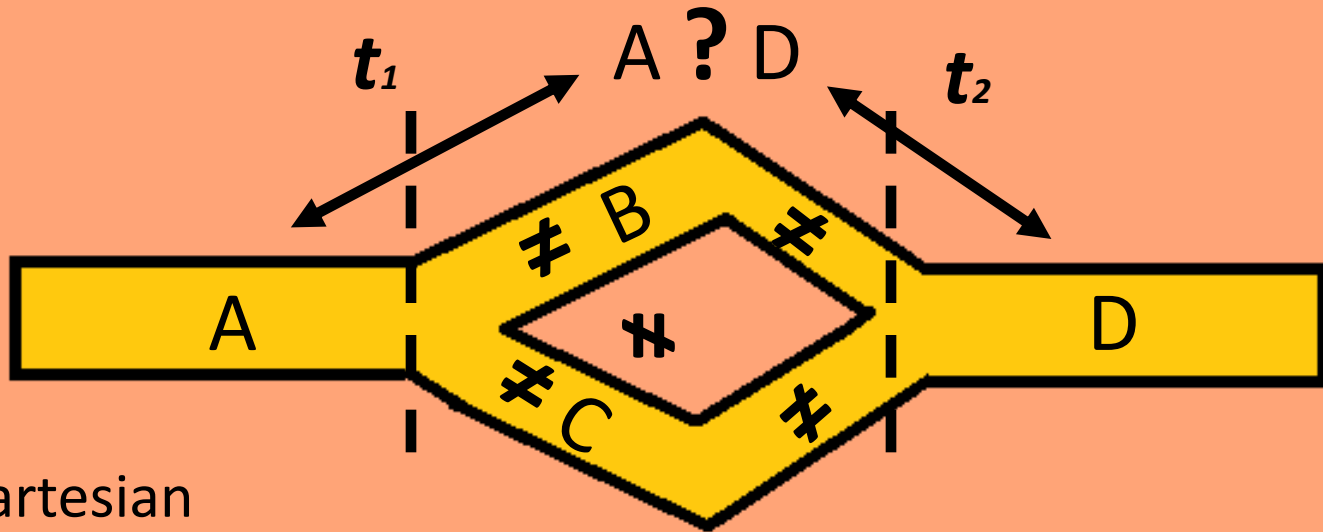


The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person D if and only if persons A and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are A and D the same person for the Cartesian?

Temporary division

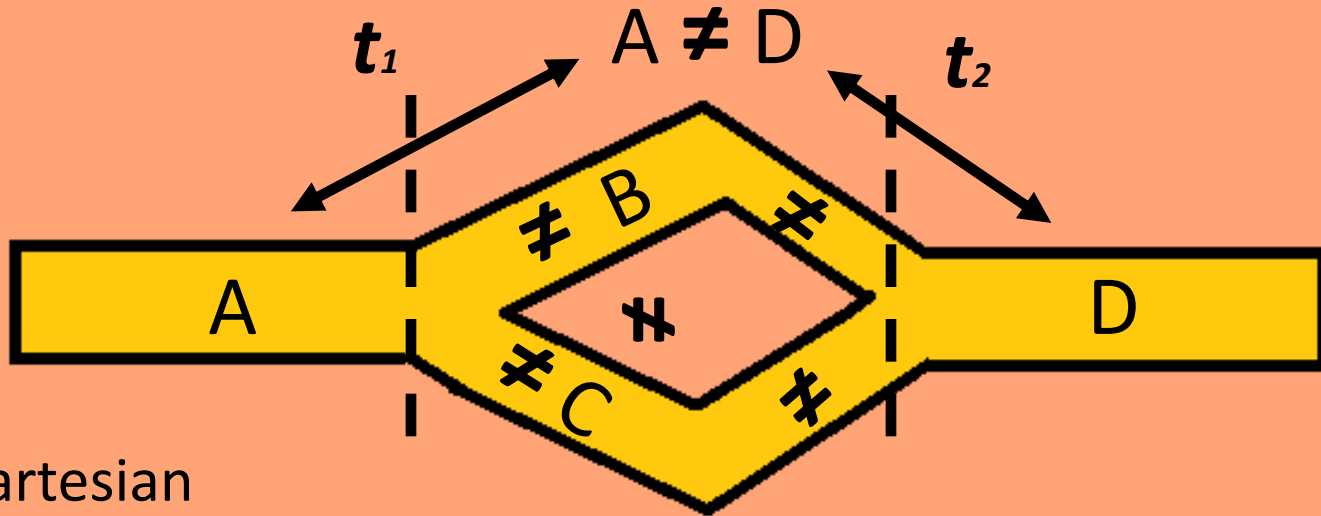


The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person D if and only if persons A and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and D the same person for the Cartesian? **NO**, for the same reason that $A \neq B$, $A \neq C$, $B \neq C$, $B \neq D$ and $C \neq D$.

Temporary division

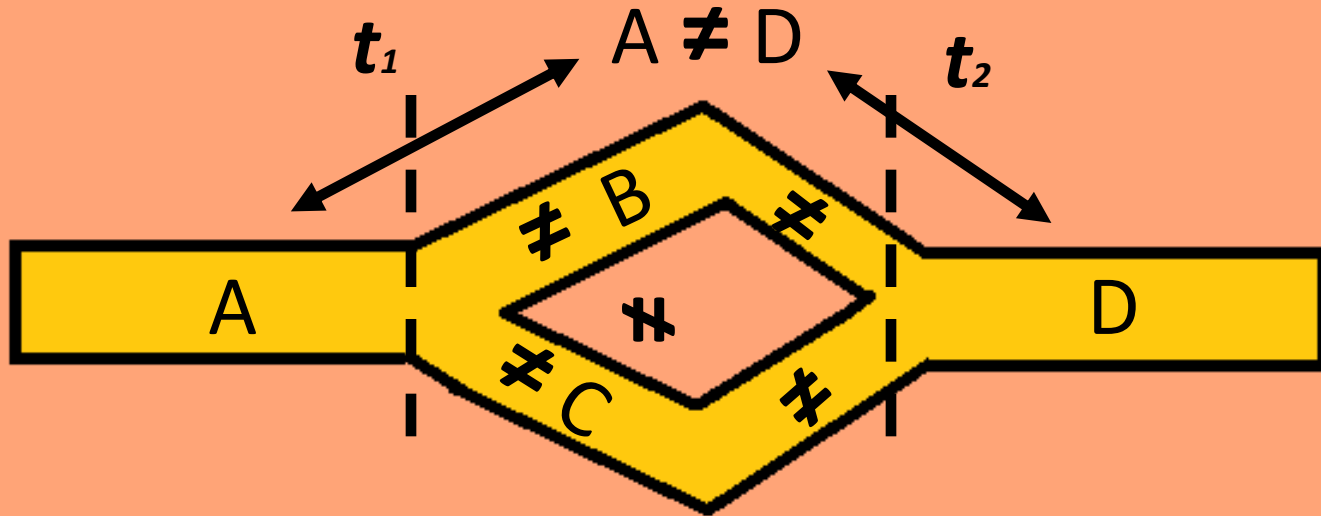


The Cartesian

Person A is identical to person D if and only if persons A and D are the same immaterial thinking subject

Are B and D the same person for the Cartesian? **NO**, for the same reason that $A \neq B$, $A \neq C$, $B \neq C$, $B \neq D$ and $C \neq D$.

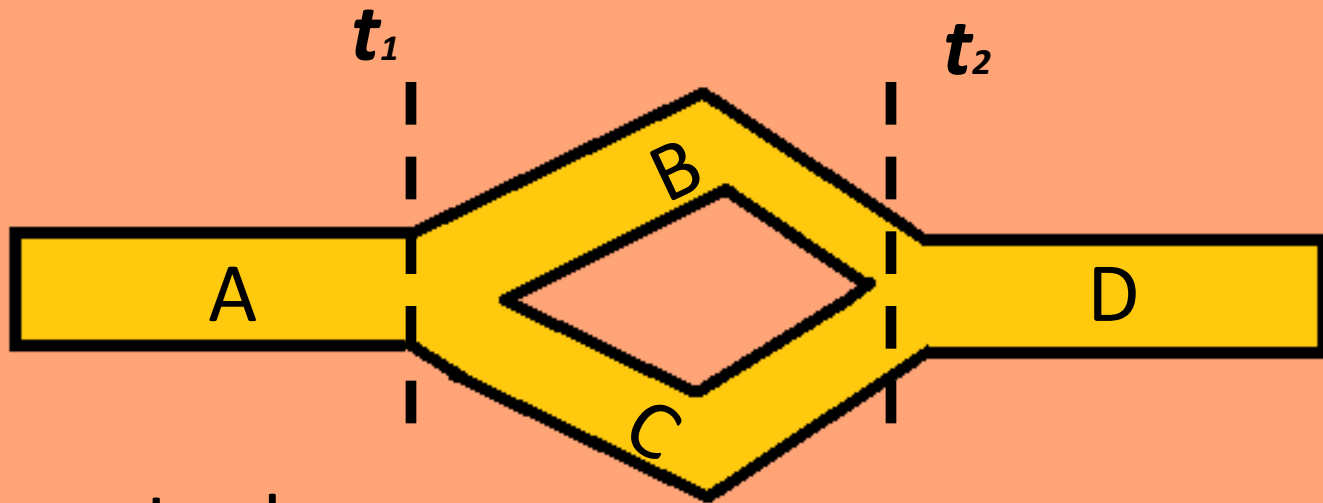
Temporary division



This result is at least consistent. But it leads to what some philosophers call ***overpopulation*** – an implausibly large number of thinking subjects.

A, B, C and D are all distinct thinking things. So three new thinking things come into existence, and three perish, each time this division occurs.

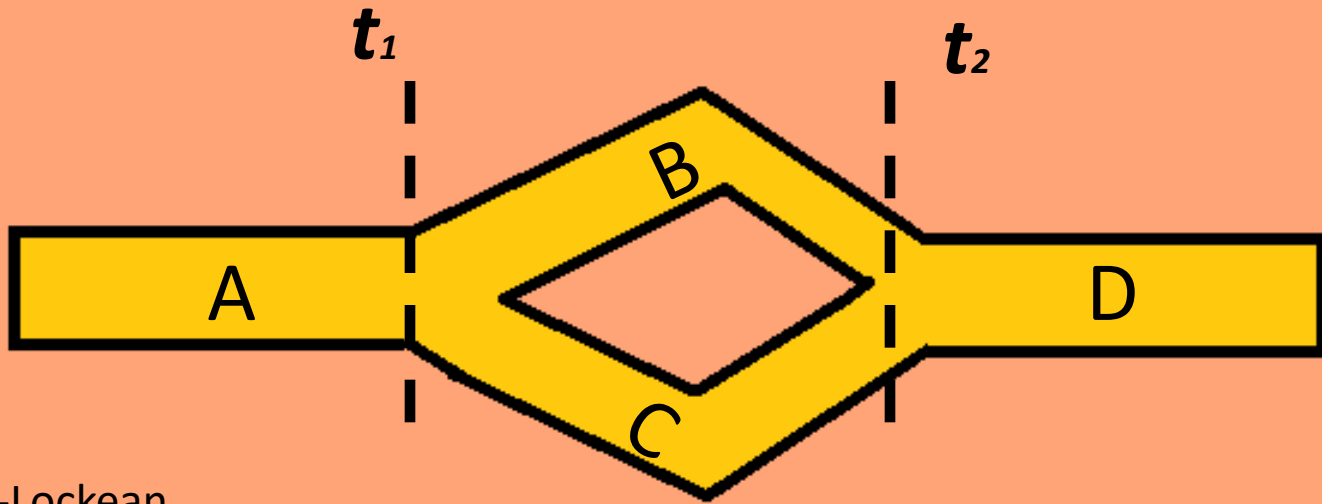
Temporary division



The neo-Lockean

Person A is identical to person B if and only if person A is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person B

Temporary division

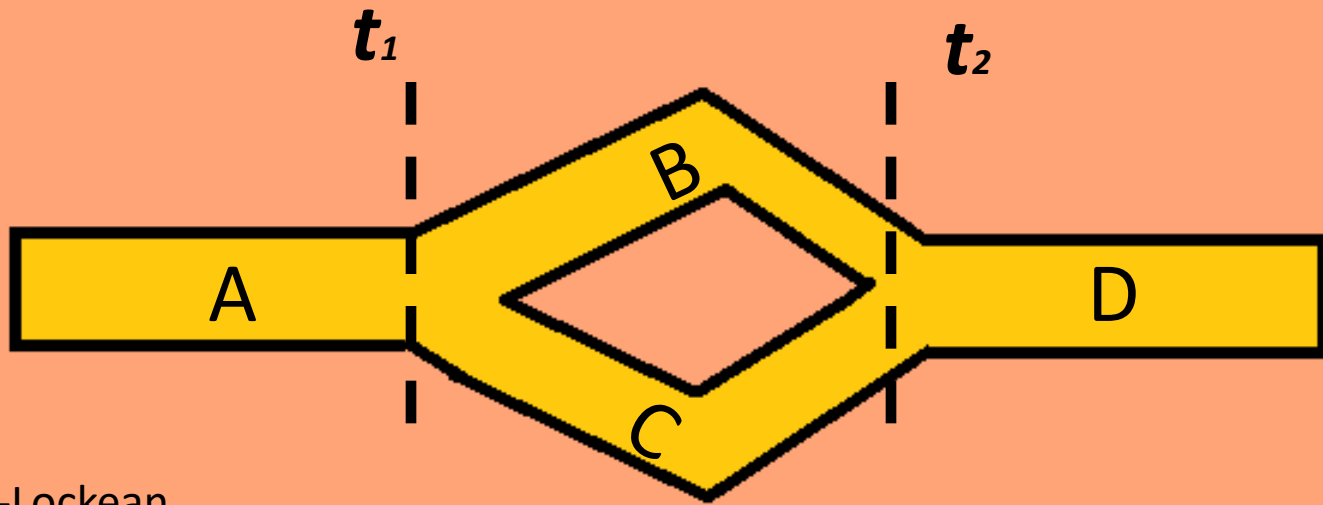


The neo-Lockean

Person A is identical to person B if and only if person A is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person B

Are A and B the same person for the neo-Lockean?

Temporary division



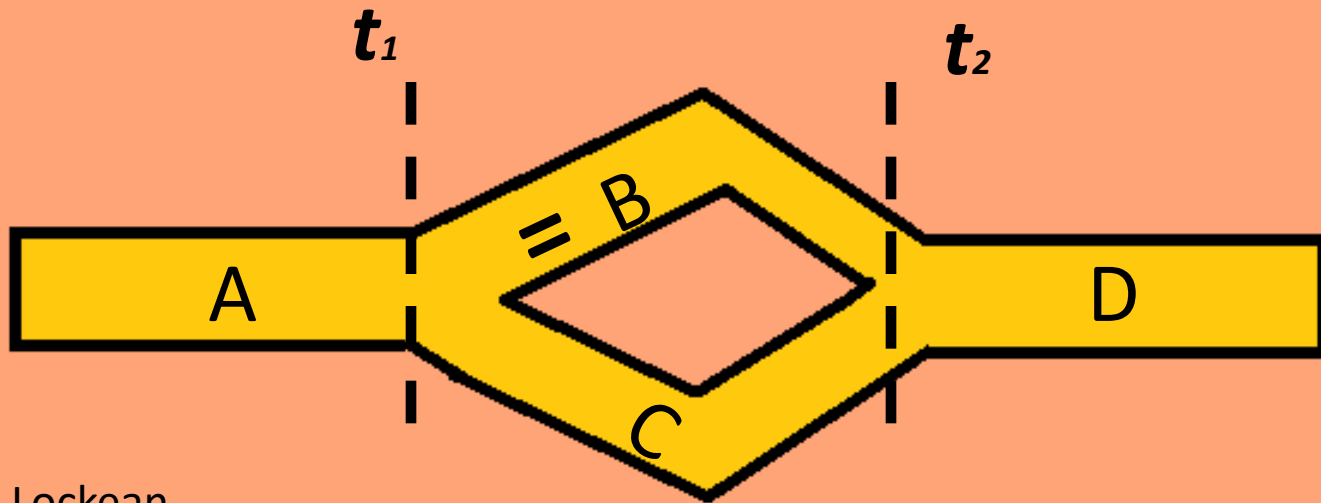
The neo-Lockean

Person A is identical to person B if and only if person A is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person B

Are A and B the same person for the neo-Lockean?

Yes, since B shares memories, beliefs, and intentions with A.

Temporary division



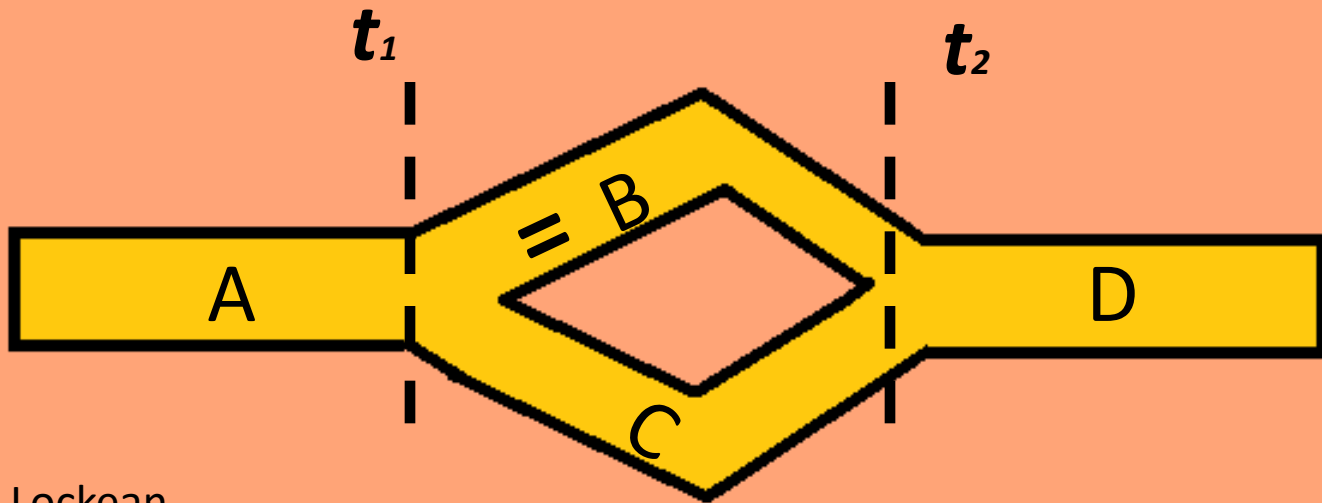
The neo-Lockean

Person A is identical to person B if and only if person A is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person B

Are A and B the same person for the neo-Lockean?

Yes, since B shares memories, beliefs, and intentions with A.

Temporary division

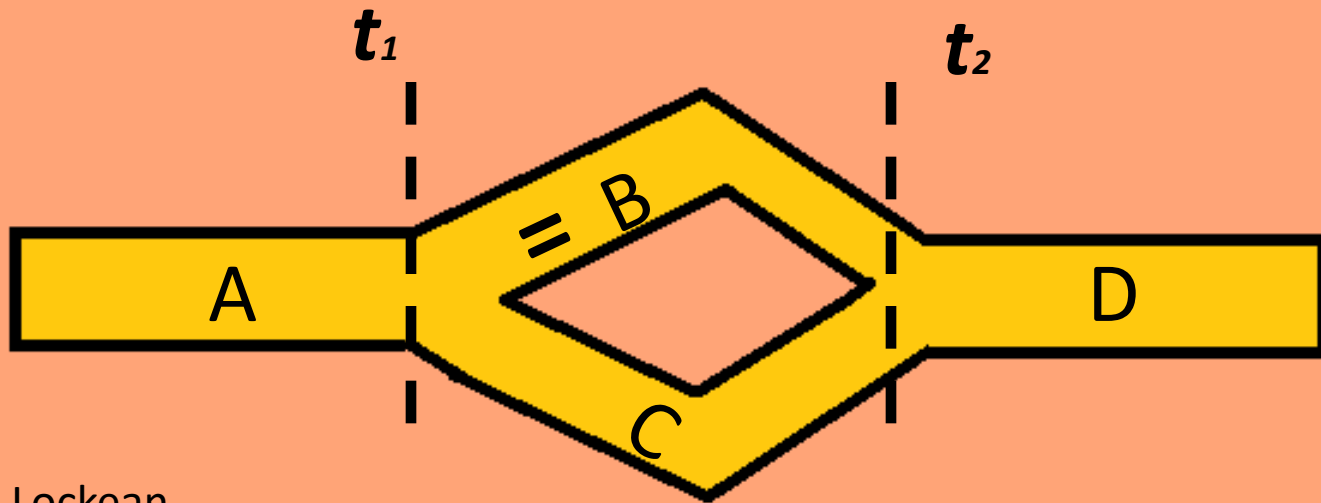


The neo-Lockean

Person A is identical to person C if and only if person A is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person C

Are A and C the same person for the neo-Lockean?

Temporary division



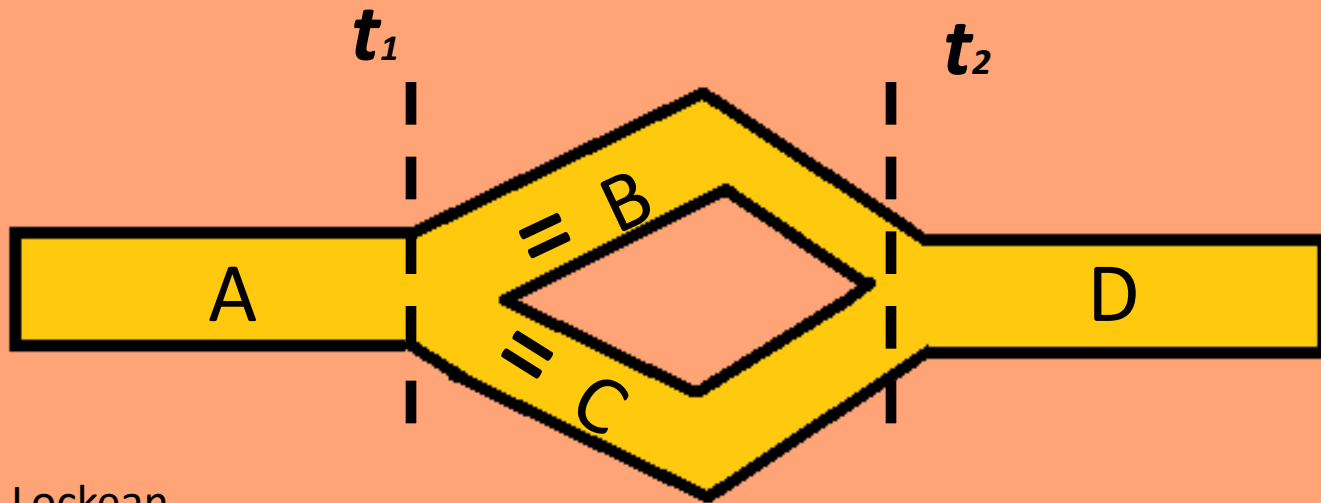
The neo-Lockean

Person A is identical to person C if and only if person A is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person C

Are A and C the same person for the neo-Lockean?

Yes, since C shares memories, beliefs, and intentions with A.

Temporary division



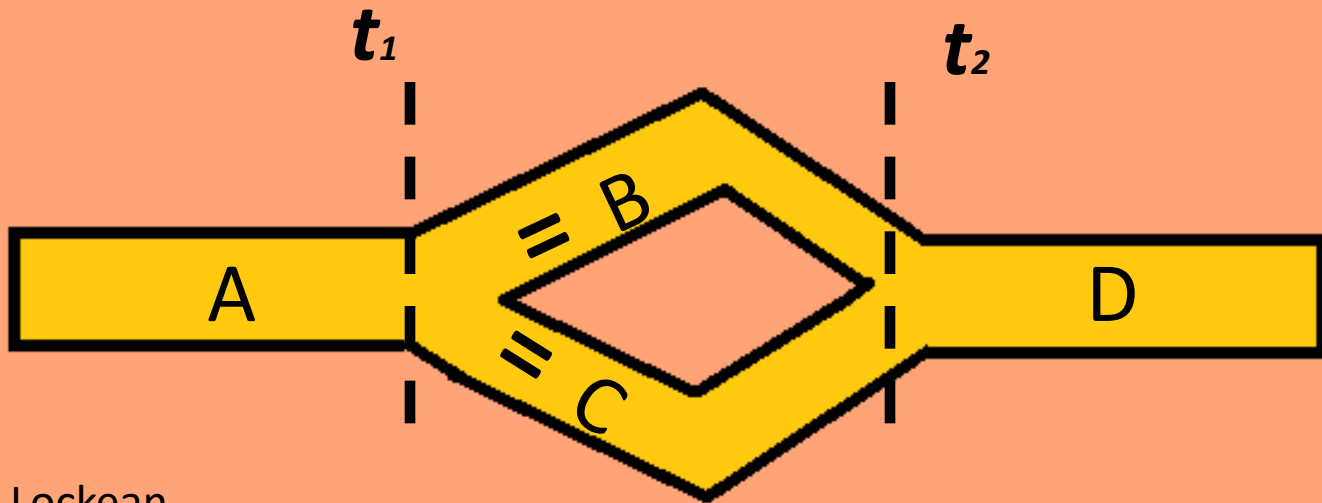
The neo-Lockean

Person A is identical to person C if and only if person A is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person C

Are A and C the same person for the neo-Lockean?

Yes, since C shares memories, beliefs, and intentions with A.

Temporary division

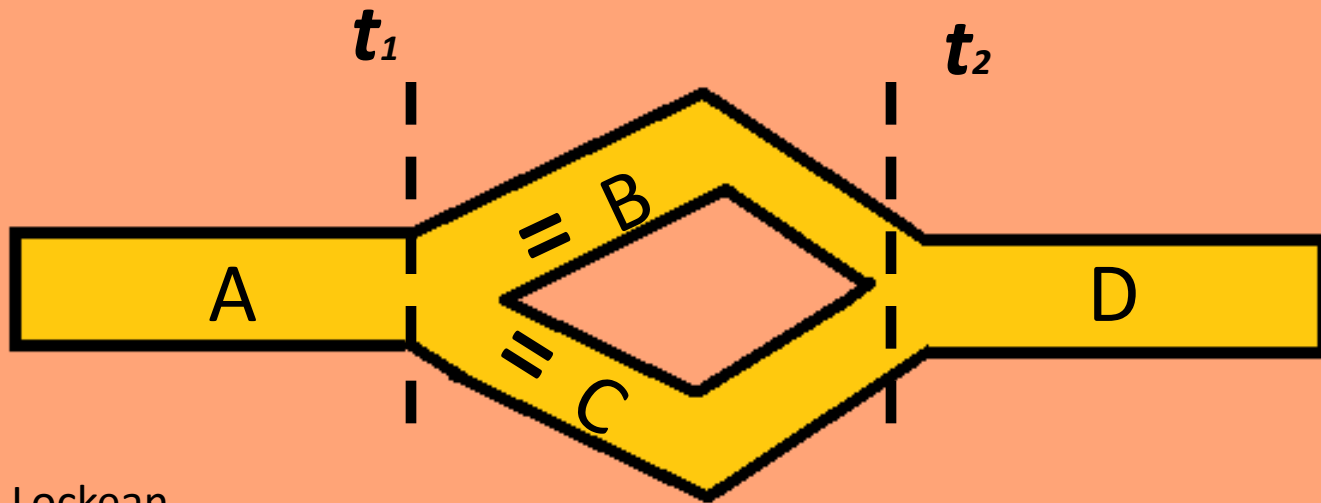


The neo-Lockean

Person B is identical to person C if and only if person B is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person C

Are Band C the same person for the neo-Lockean?

Temporary division

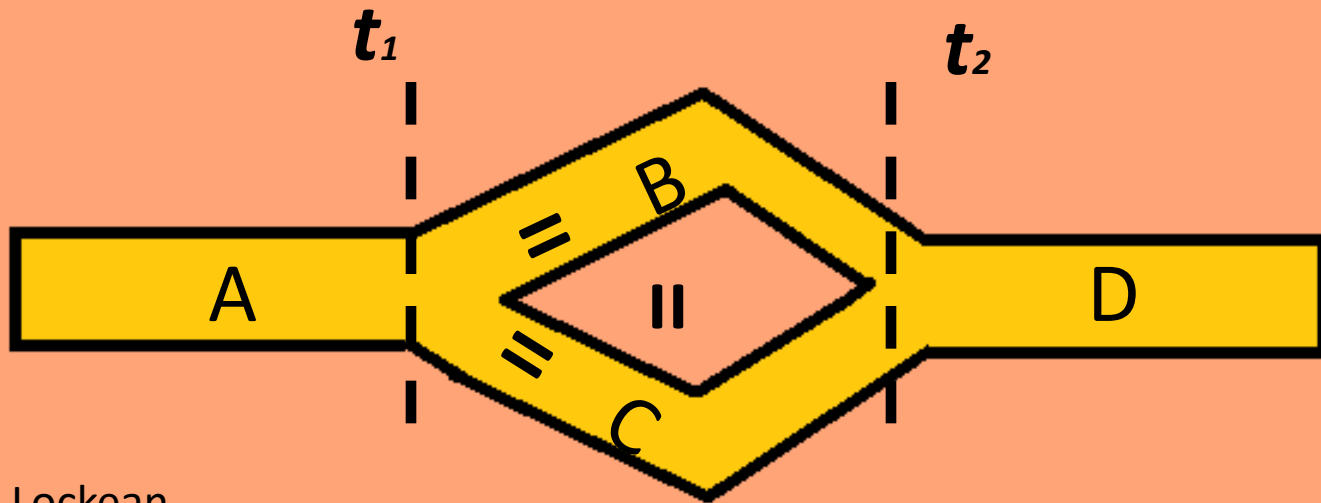


The neo-Lockean

Person B is identical to person C if and only if person B is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person C

Are Band C the same person for the neo-Lockean?
Some neo-Lockeans (like Parfit) believe that, just as a river can split into separate branches which later reunite, so can the consciousness of a single person.

Temporary division

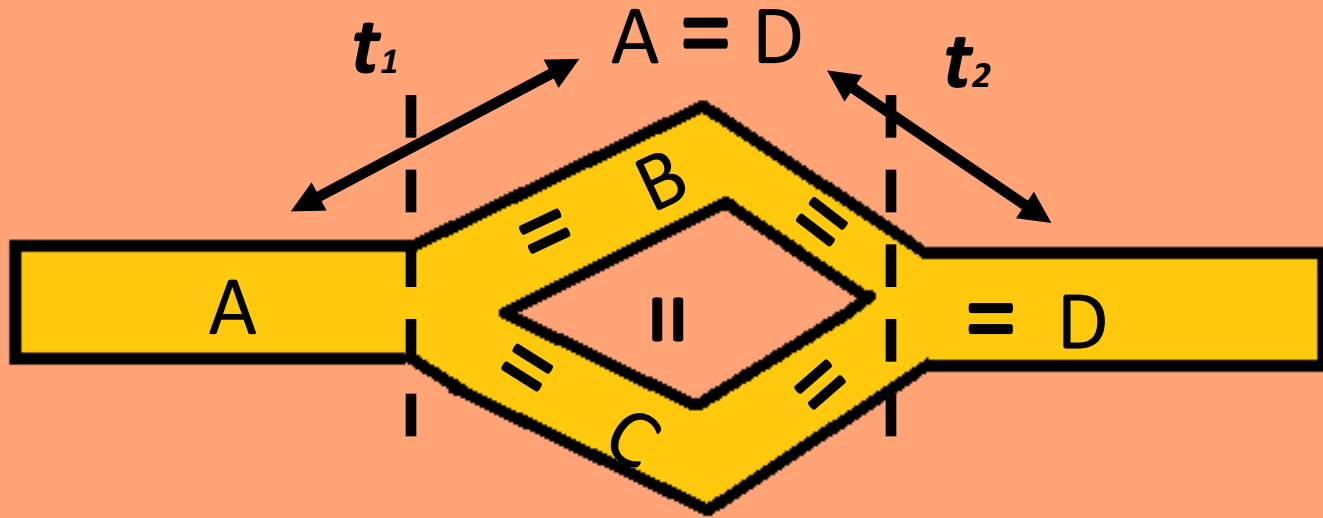


The neo-Lockean

Person B is identical to person C if and only if person B is part of the same overlapping stream of memories, beliefs, intentions, and character traits as person C

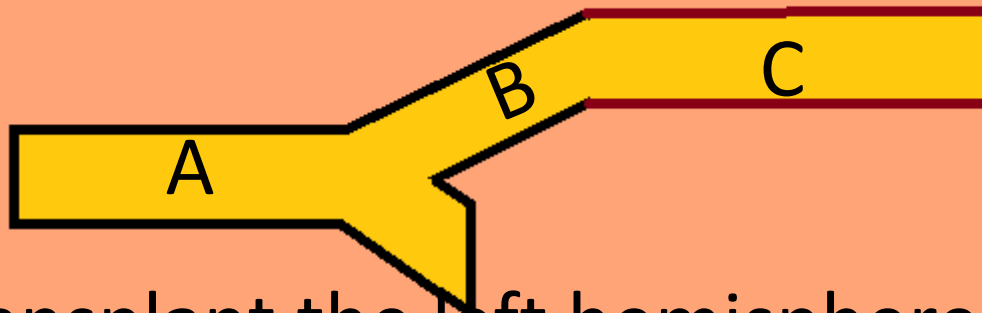
Are Band C the same person for the neo-Lockean?
Some neo-Lockeans (like Parfit) believe that, just as a river can split into separate branches which later reunite, so can the consciousness of a single person.

Temporary division



Similar considerations lead the neo-Lockean to make these additional identity claims: $B = D$, $C = D$, and $A = D$.

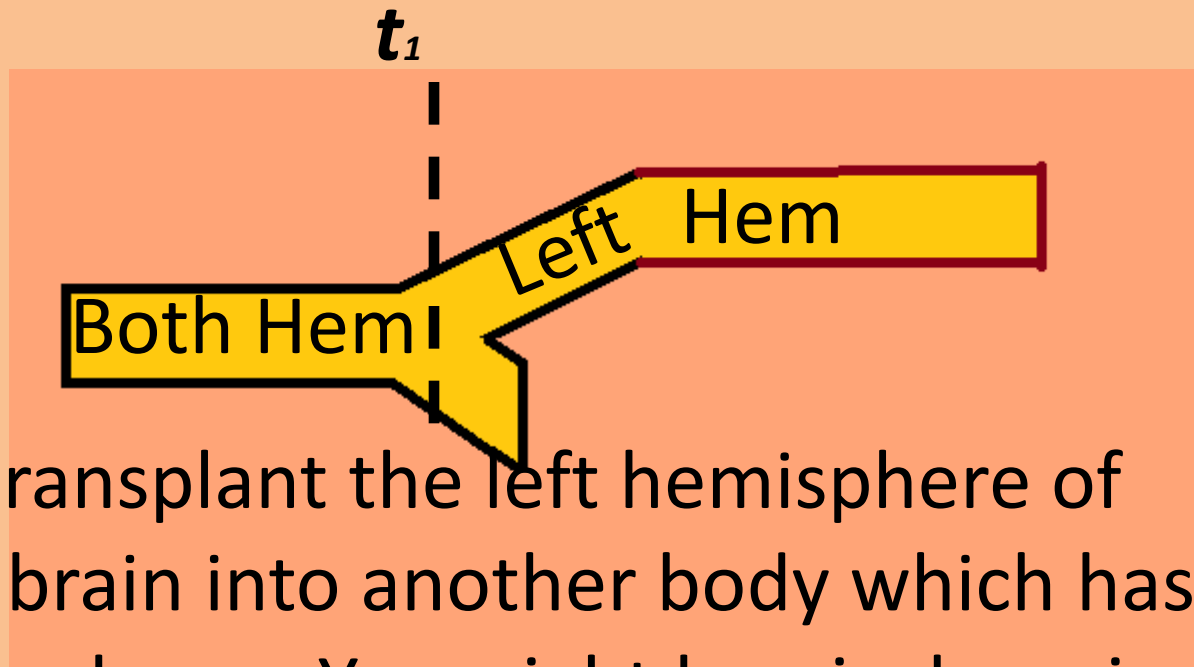
Permanent Division without Branching



You transplant the left hemisphere of your brain into another body which has no cerebrum. Your right hemisphere is left behind in your original body, which dies.

You do this at time t_1 .

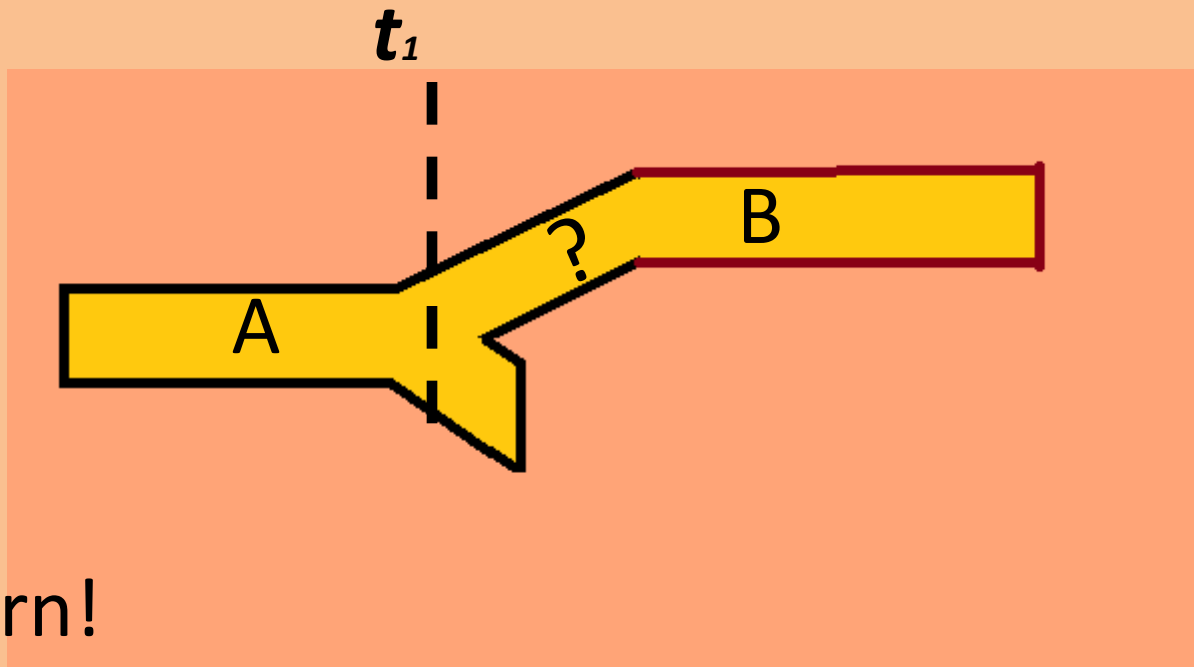
Permanent Division without Branching



You transplant the left hemisphere of your brain into another body which has no cerebrum. Your right hemisphere is left behind in your original body, which dies.

You do this at time t_1 .

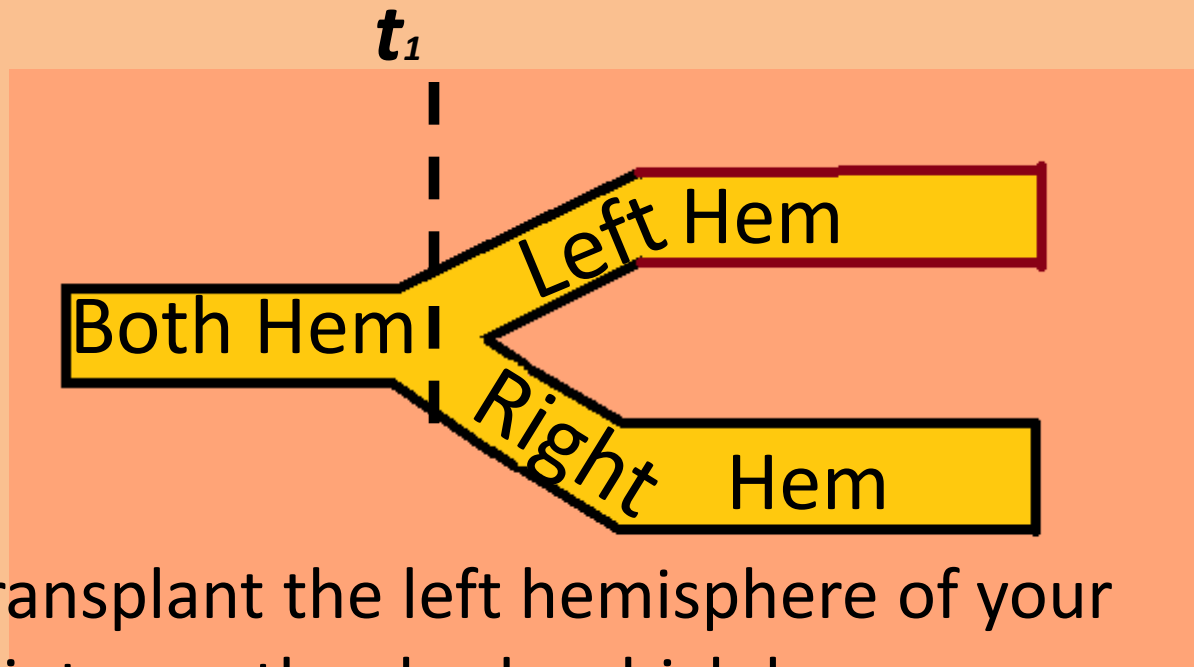
Permanent Division without Branching



Your turn!

On the *Cerebral Fission* handout, record your own views about the results for **The Advocate of the Brain Criterion** and **The Cartesian**, and **The neo-Lockean**.

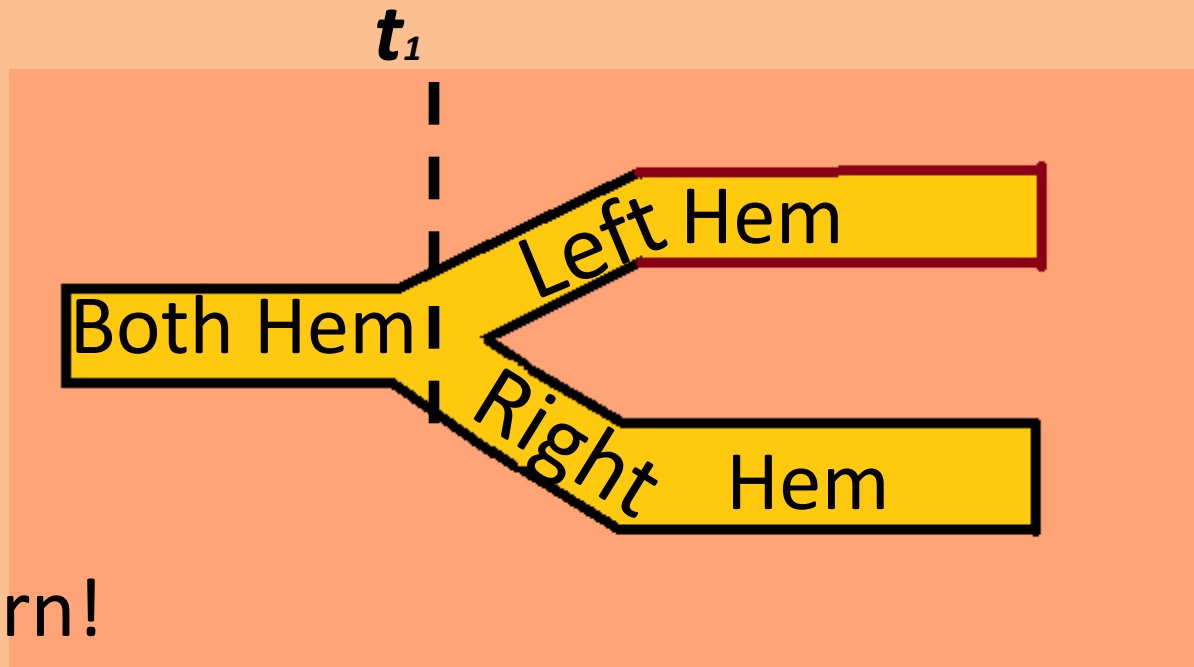
Permanent Division with Branching



You transplant the left hemisphere of your brain into another body which has no cerebrum, and transplant your right hemisphere into another body.

You do this at time t_1 .

Permanent Division with Branching



Your turn!

On the *Cerebral Fission* handout, record your own views about the results for **The Advocate of the Brain Criterion** and **The Cartesian**, and **The neo-Lockean**.