

# INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

WHO AM I ?

# PERSONAL IDENTITY

What makes each of us **the**  
**same person** over time?



# WHO AM I?

THE SCHOOL OF LIFE

0:01 / 7:46

## Who Am I?



The School of Life

**ติดตาม** 1,263,694

ดู 506,935 ครั้ง

เพิ่มลงใน แชร์ เพิ่มเติม

21,015 260



## Personal Identity: Crash Course Philosophy #19



CrashCourse ✓



ติดตาม

4,620,934

ดู 222,919 ครั้ง

+ เพิ่มลงใน

แชร์

••• เพิ่มเติม

👍 7,859

💬 82



**PHI-LOL-SOPHY!**

Hummmmmme...  
I believe you're mistaken.

fig 20.1

**DAVID HUME**



0:34 / 9:43



# Arguments Against Personal Identity: Crash Course Philosophy #20



CrashCourse



ติดตาม

4,620,934

ดู 188,410 ครั้ง



เพิ่มลงใน



แชร์



เพิ่มเติม



7,958



95

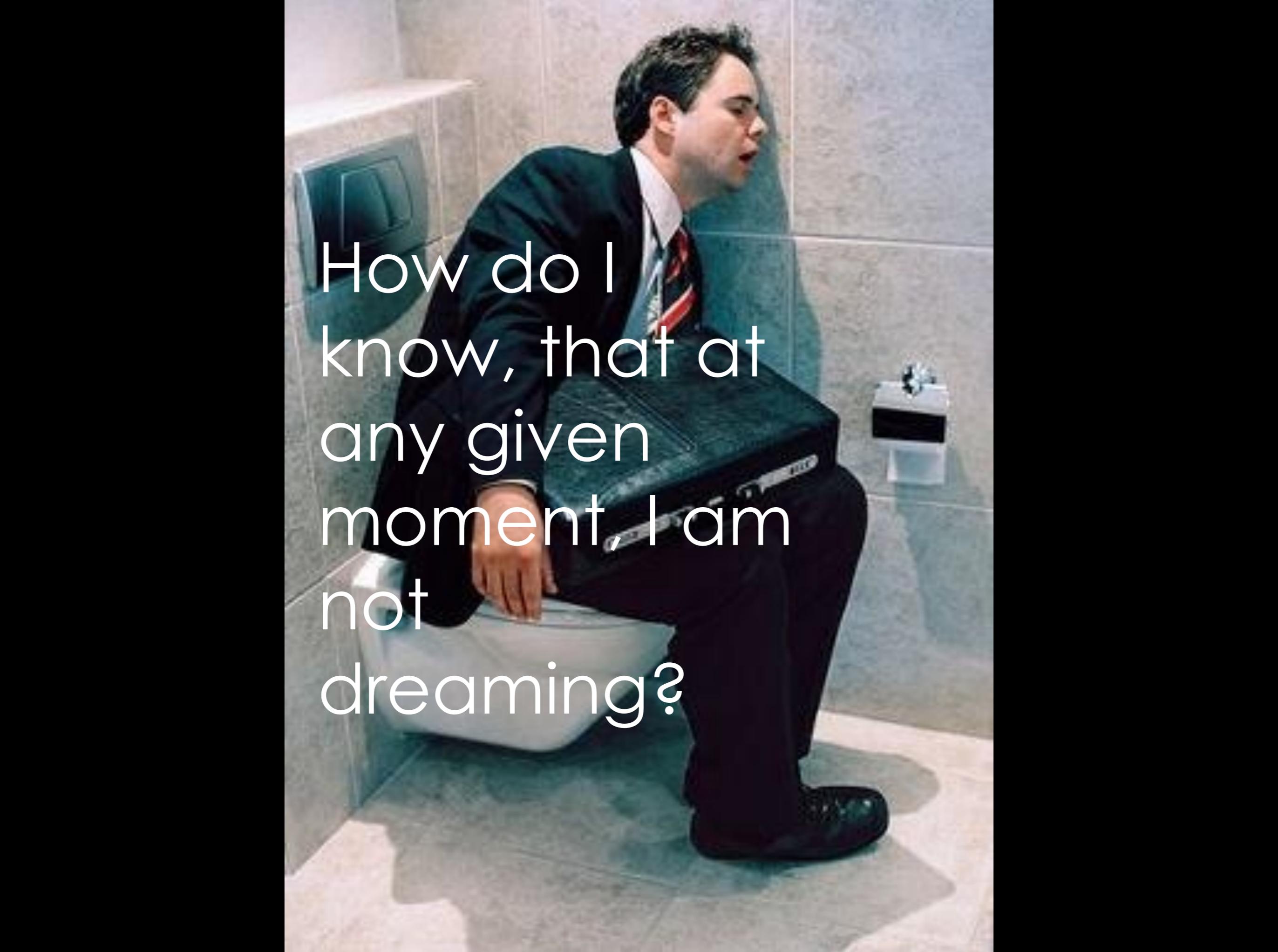
RENE DESCARTES





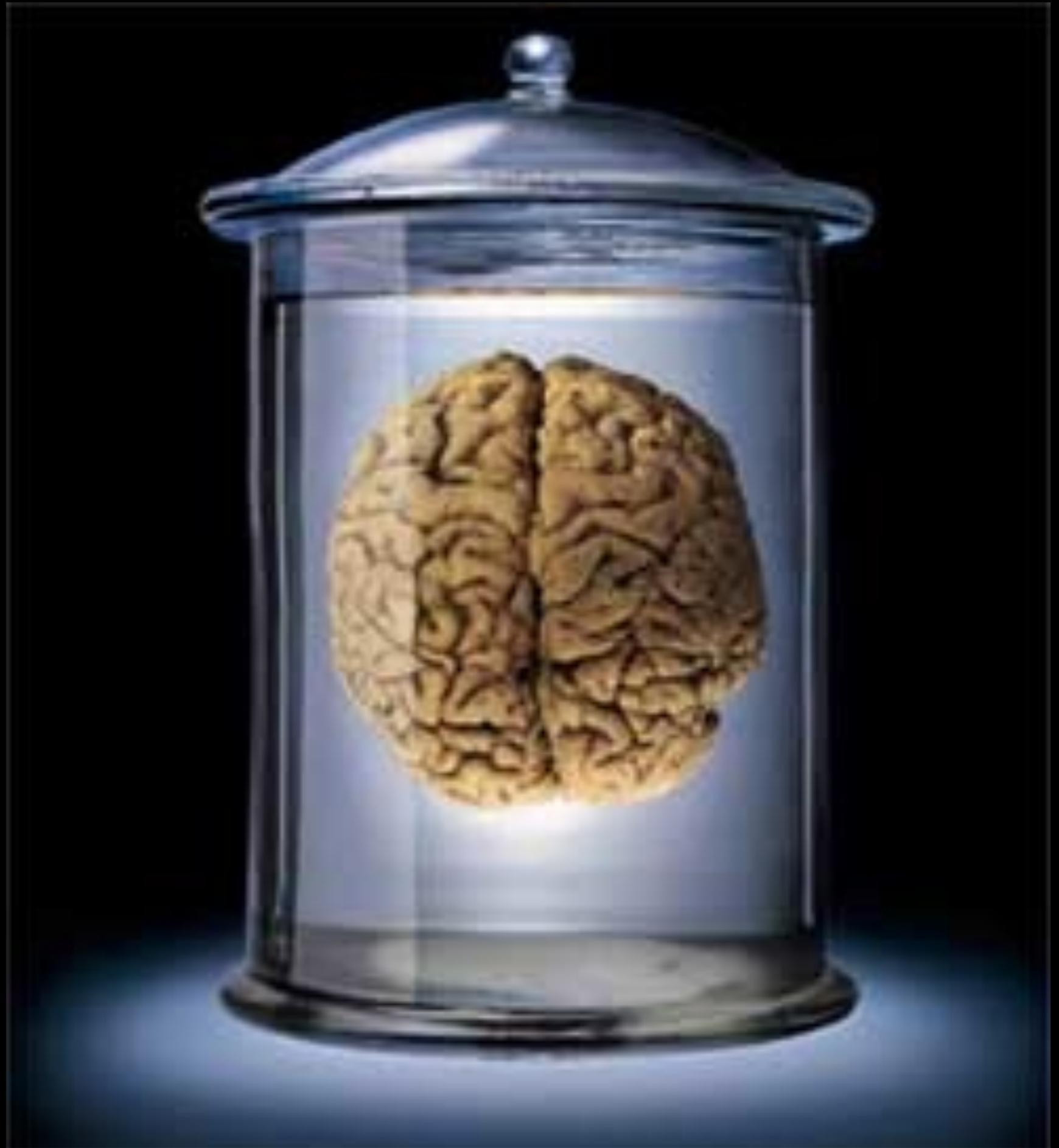
How can I trust my  
senses when they  
deceive me?



A man in a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie is sitting on a white toilet in a public restroom. He has a black briefcase resting on his lap. He is looking to the right with a thoughtful expression. The restroom has light-colored tiled walls and a paper towel dispenser is visible on the wall to the right. The floor is also tiled.

How do I know, that at any given moment, I am not dreaming?

How do I  
know that  
I'm not  
just a  
brain in a  
jar?





Can I even trust my  
memories?

# The Mind/Body Problem

**AT THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM OF PERSONAL IDENTITY LIES THE MIND/BODY PROBLEM.**

**ARE WE OUR BODIES? OR ARE WE OUR MINDS? OR SOME SORT OF COMBINATION OF BOTH?**

# Rene Descartes (1596-1650) – The Father of Modern Philosophy

- Brilliant mathematician impressed by the precision and certainty of mathematics.
- Started out full of doubt (scepticism) but wanted certainty in life.
- He rejected everything he had previously believed to look for a basis of certainty in his own rational powers.
- He ditched God, the church, Aristotle and all previous philosophers and literature in search of rational principles from which to construct a secure system of knowledge.

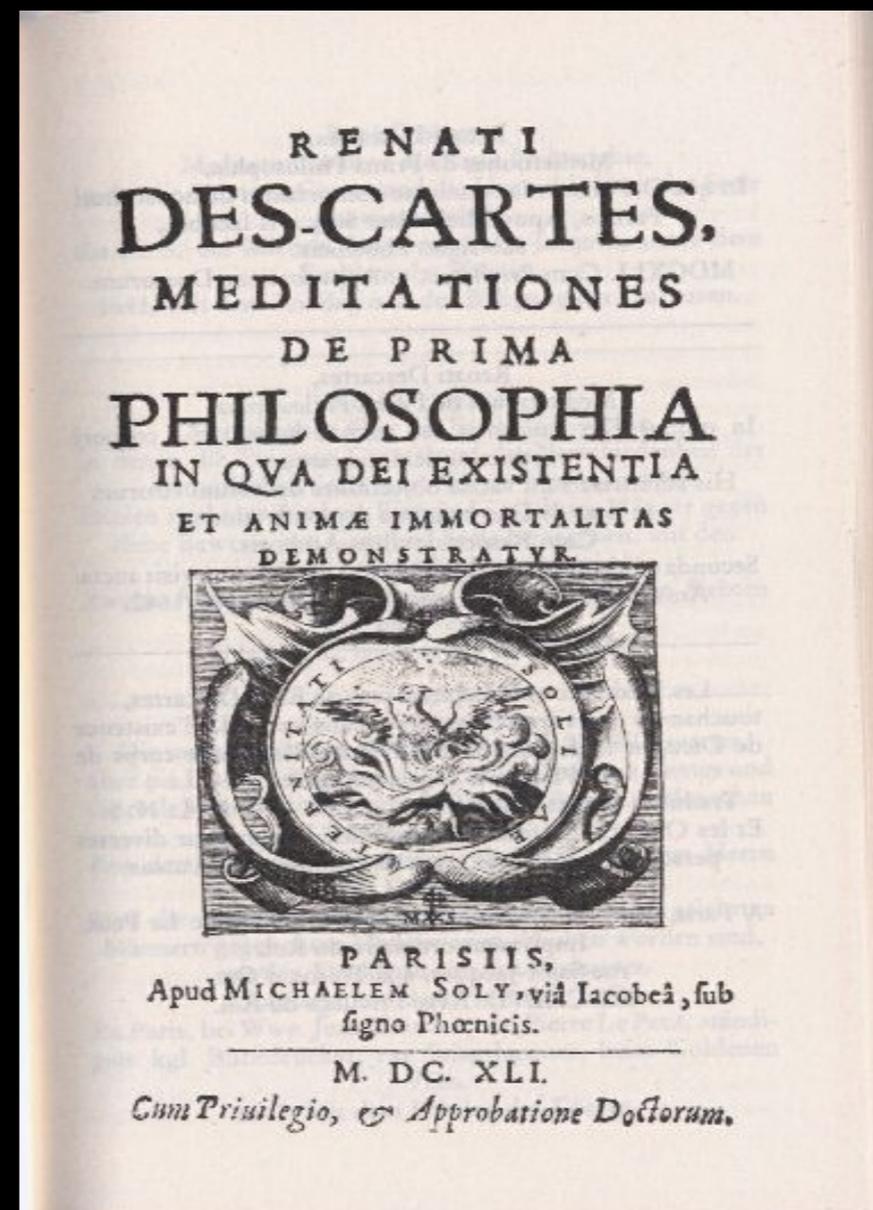
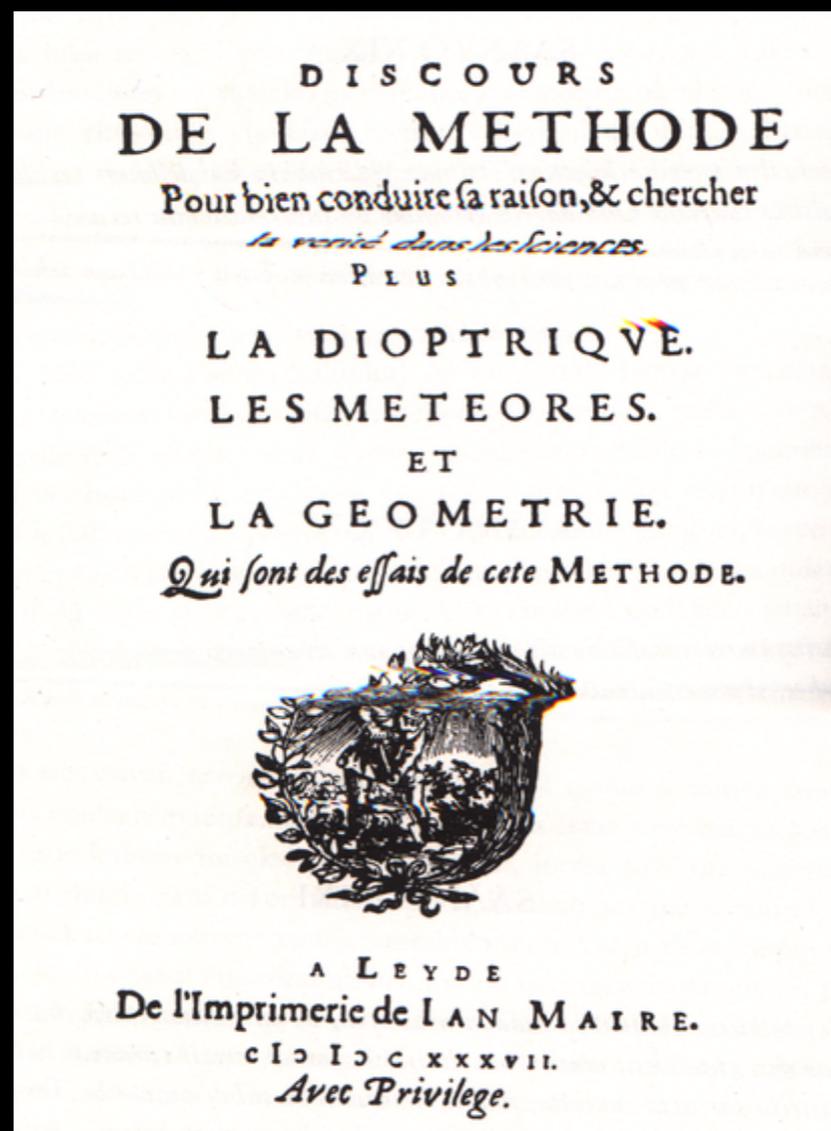




‘ All I am saying is that all past philosophy is without foundation until we’ve examined it’s premises, and shown a method of advancing from them.....in fact I had a dream that convinced me that **true knowledge** must come from **human reason** alone’

# His two most important books are:

- Discourse on Method (1637)
- Meditations (1642)



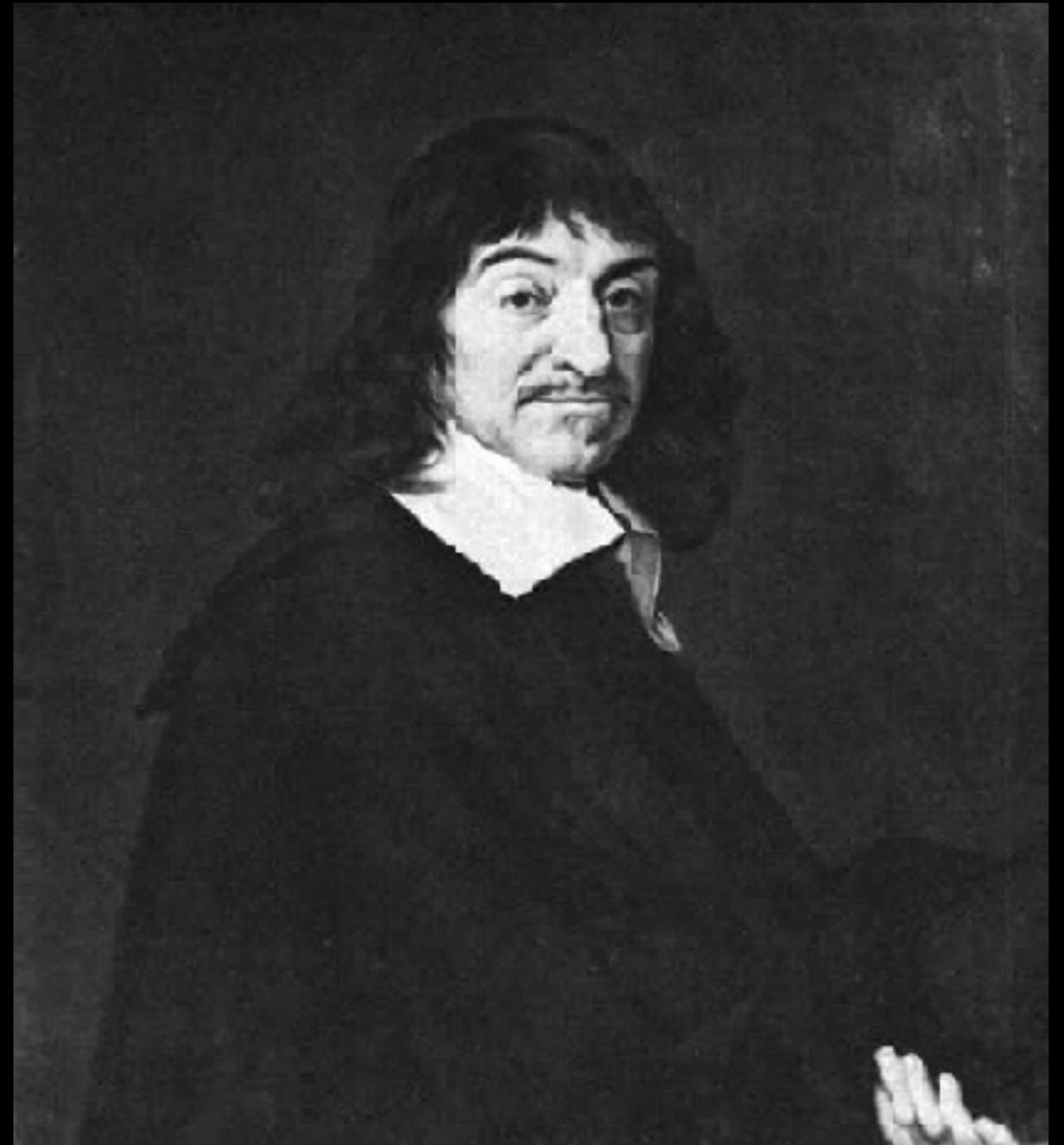
# His system of Cartesian Doubt was based on 4 rules

- Never accept anything except clear and distinct ideas.
- Order your thoughts from the simple to the complex
- Divide each problem into as many parts as needed to solve it.
- Always check thoroughly for oversights.
- Because our senses sometimes deceive us, I must suppose nothing is as it appears’.
- ‘How do I know I am sitting here in this room’
- ‘I cant be certain, I could be dreaming or hallucinating’.
- ‘A wicked demon could be tricking me’.
- ‘The only thing I cannot doubt is that I think something, even if its thinking I’m dreaming or being tricked, or thinking I don’t have a body’

From here he went on to ...

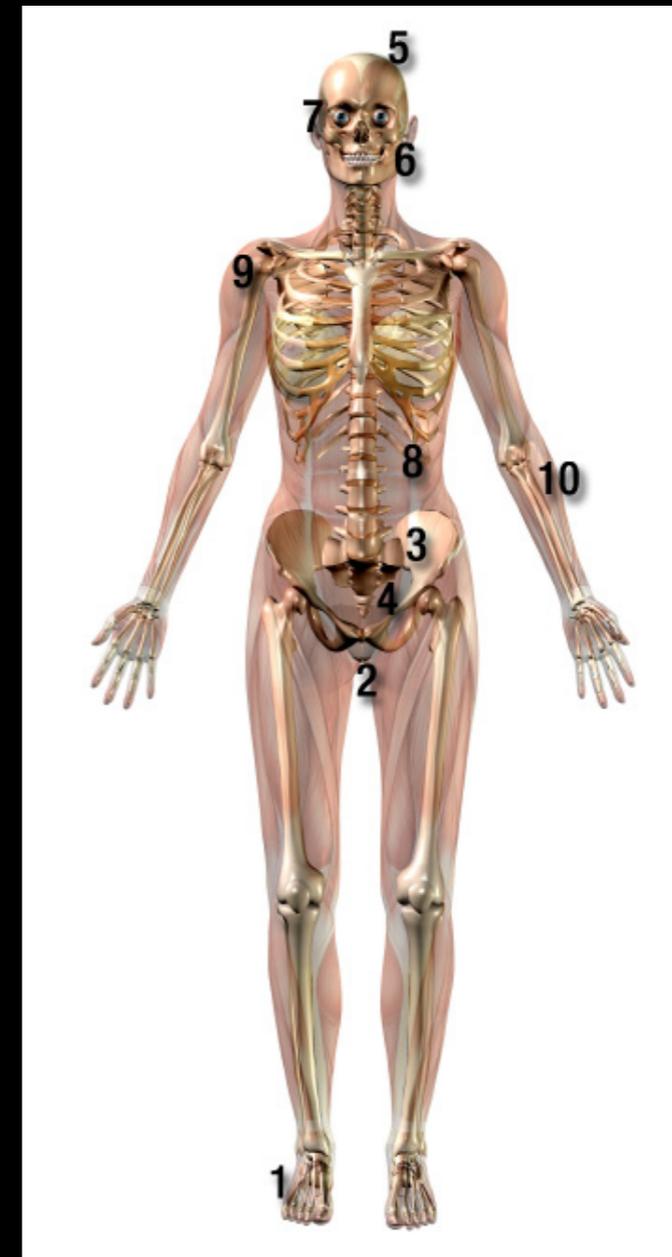
‘That’s it !  
*I think, therefore I  
am !*

Or in Latin  
*‘Cogito Ergo  
Sum !’*



*I think, therefore I am !*

**This lead Descartes to suppose that the essence of being was thinking, and that the mind was separate from the body - Dualism**



**He believed that all knowledge of external things is in the mind**

‘Bit isn’t that a bit solipsistic?’



...and doesn't that just prove that only I exist, not the outside world?’

DO YOU EVER WONDER HOW WE CAN REALLY KNOW THAT THE EXTERNAL WORLD EXISTS?

HOW COULD I TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THAT AND THE WAY THINGS WOULD SEEM IF EVERYTHING WAS REAL?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, NESTER?

I MEAN, WHAT IF THIS IS ALL A DREAM? OR A HALLUCINATION? OR WHAT IF I'M IN SOME SORT OF MATRIX SCENARIO, OR BEING FOOLED BY A SUPERNATURAL BEING?

GEE NESTER, I GUESS YOU CAN'T! I GUESS I COULD JUST BE A CHARACTER IN YOUR DREAM, A FIGMENT OF YOUR OWN MIND! **I GUESS YOU'LL NEVER KNOW!**

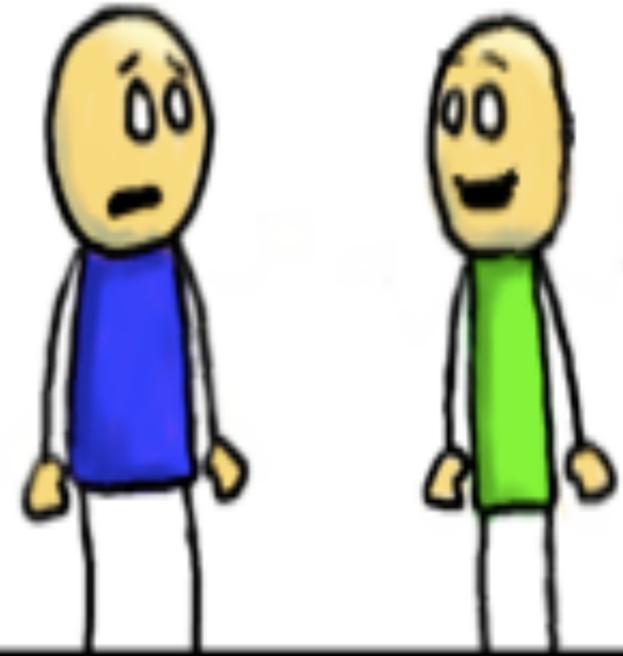
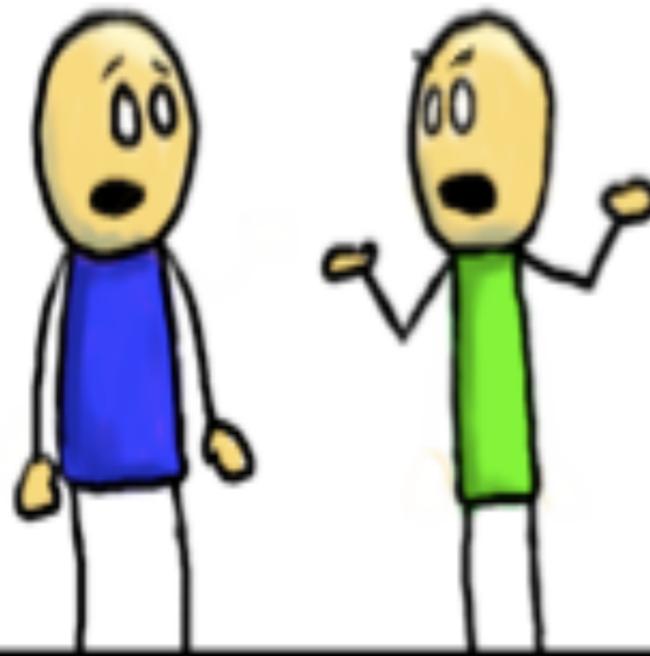
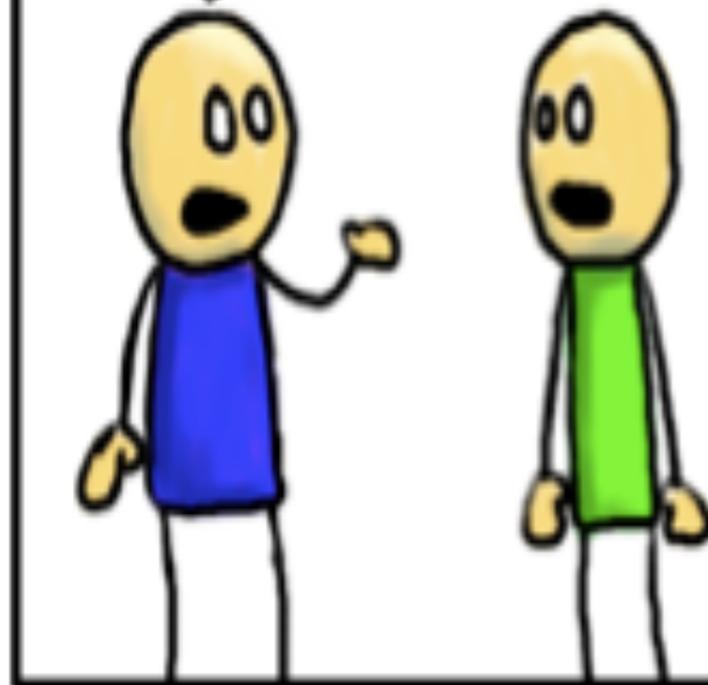
IF YOU ARE JUST A PIECE OF MY MIND, THEN WHY AM I FREAKING MYSELF OUT SO MUCH?

BECAUSE IT'S FUNNY?

MAYBE TO YOU!

SHUT UP!

YOU MEAN, MAYBE TO YOU!



In order to escape the critique of solipsism Descartes had to prove God's existence since God could be the only guarantee that:

1. Our clear and distinct ideas are true.
2. We are not being tricked by an evil demon.

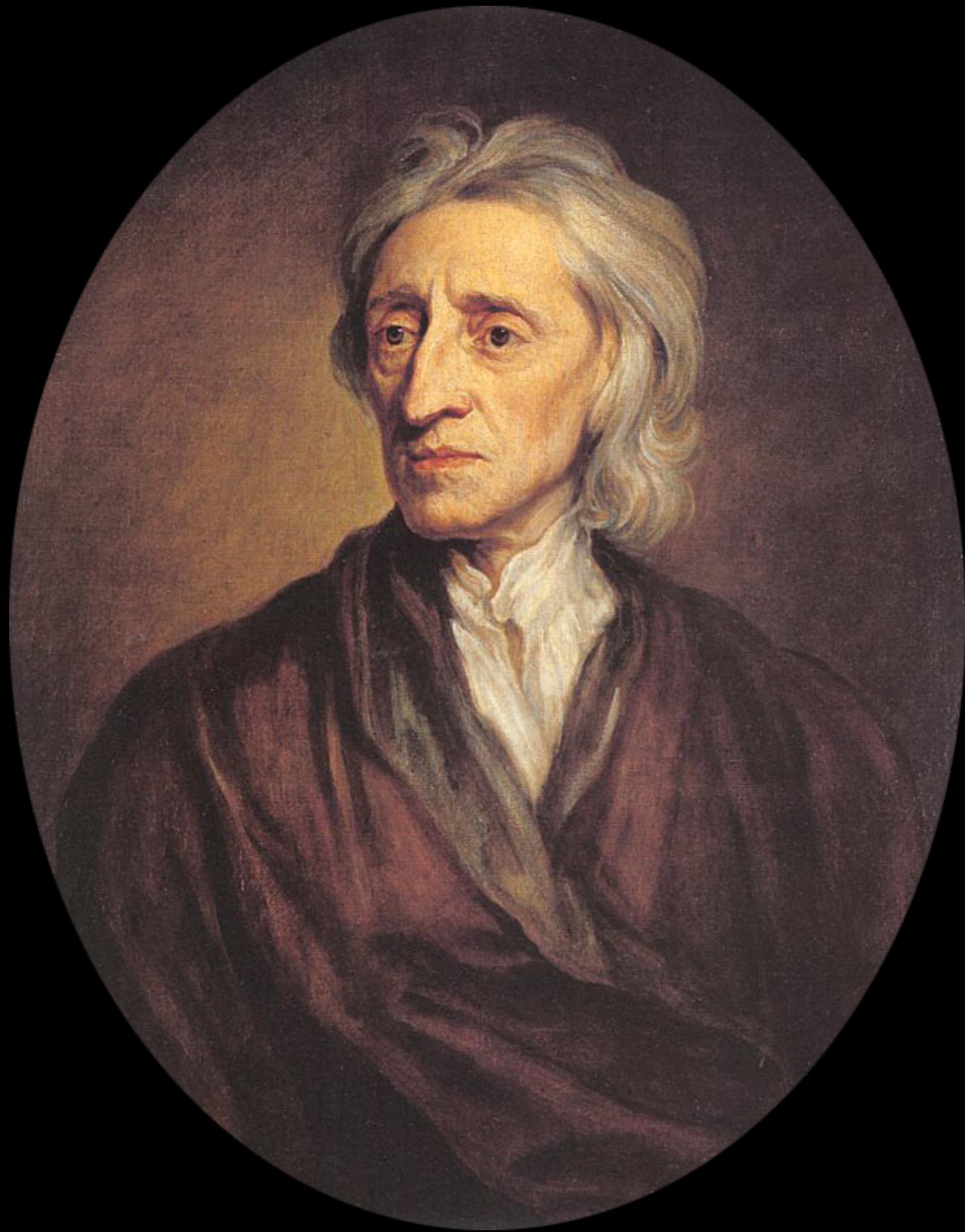
Descartes accepted the physical world but it was inferior to the mental rational soul aspect of our being.

Man was clearly and distinctly 2 things – Mind and Body

This dualism is inherent in all Descartes' thinking and stems from his distinction between *thought* and *extension*. Because he was convinced that thinking had its own principle of motion and that *things* had a separate physical motion he concluded that animals were automata and the human body acted in a mechanical way.



JOHN LOCKE



# John Locke (1632-1704)

- An early British Empiricist, wrote *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690)
- An important enlightenment figure.
- Developed influential views on the 'social contract' and ideas about property.



# The puzzle of identity

- We all change over time.
- What changes certainly doesn't stay *qualitatively identical*, that is, it doesn't have the same properties at all times.
- But we also say that we remain one and the same person through our changes.
- This notion of *personal identity* (a form of numerical identity) is important to much of what we do.
- But it's hard to say just what makes me the same person from one day to the next...

# Locke's criterion

- Lots of things continue over time, despite changing in various ways.
- Our bodies are an obvious example.
- But what binds us together as one being over time, for Locke, is not sameness of body.
- The same body could fail to 'contain' the same person. (cf. Sheckley, "Mindswap")

# What about souls, then?

- Souls, or minds as Descartes might prefer, also seem to persist as one and the same thing over time.
- So could possessing or 'being animated by' the same soul over time be what makes us the same person?
- Locke rejects this response as well: what counts is not the *substance* in which our consciousness inheres, but the continuity of *consciousness*, whether in one substance or many: "Which... concerns not *personal* identity at all." (366)

# Locke's view

“For as far as any intelligent being *can* repeat the idea of any past actions with the same consciousness it has of any present action; so far it is the same personal self.” (366).

- For Locke, this link of consciousness and memory is the basis for responsibility, too:

“I being...as justly accountable for any action that was done a thousand years since, ... as I am for what I did the last moment.”

# Corollaries

- Loss of memory (complete permanent) constitutes a different person.
- A madman is not accountable for what he did when sane.
- A sane person is not accountable for what she did when insane.
- We have to be careful about our meanings here, since we tend to muddle together sameness of soul (same spirit), sameness of living body (same animal or man), and sameness of consciousness (same person).

DAVID HUME



# David Hume (1711 – 1776)



# [Hume Review]

i) All ideas are copies of [sensory] impressions

SO: any notion which cannot be traced to the impression from which it is derived is

“sophistry and illusion”

ii) Only 2 forms of reasoning:

matters of fact

relations of ideas

# SELF: the very “idea”

Three essential properties [by relations of ideas]:

i) it is continuous through time

ii) it is perfectly [numerically, strictly] identical from one time to the next

iii) it is perfectly simple [no parts: cannot lose part of self,  $\frac{1}{2}$  self makes no sense, etc.]

# HUME'S ARGUMENT

There is [as matter of fact] no impression from which the idea of the SELF can be copied, since no idea is

i) continuous

ii) unchanging, and

iii) simple

SO: there is no such idea.

# HUME'S EPIGRAM

“For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception”

# Is Hume Right?

Note that Hume's method does not allow us to accept any *theory* in order to explain what we experience, since we can only derive ideas from experience.

Are the self, the external world, causality, etc., concepts *we create* in order to explain what we *experience*?

Inference to Best Explanation: IBE

**SIDDHARTHA GAUTAMA**



# anatta

- The Buddha taught a doctrine called anatta, which is often defined as "no-self," or the teaching that the sense of being a permanent, autonomous self is an illusion. This does not fit our ordinary experience. Am I not me? If not, who is reading this article right now?
- The Buddha is not explaining whether you do or don't "have" a "self"; he is saying that such intellectual speculation is not the way to gain understanding.

*I have no self!*

# anatta

- Very basically, anatta is the teaching that there is no permanent, eternal, unchanging, or autonomous "self" inhabiting "our" bodies or living "our" lives.
- Anatta is one of the Three Marks of Existence. The other two are dukkha (roughly, unsatisfying) and anicca (impermanent). In this context, anatta often is translated as "egolessness."

# anatta

- Of critical importance is the teaching of the Second Noble Truth, which tells us that because we believe we are a permanent and unchanging self, we fall into clinging and craving, jealousy and hate, and all the other poisons that cause unhappiness.

“According to the teaching of the Buddha, the idea of a self is an imaginary, false belief which has no corresponding reality, and it produces harmful thoughts of 'me' and 'mine', selfish desire, craving, attachment, hatred, ill-will, conceit, pride, egoism, and other defilements, impurities and problems.”

“In fact, the one place where the Buddha was asked point-blank whether or not there was a self, he refused to answer. When later asked why, he said that to hold either that there is a self or that there is no self is to fall into extreme forms of wrong view that make the path of Buddhist practice impossible.”

“In this sense, the anatta teaching is not a doctrine of no-self, but a not-self strategy for shedding suffering by letting go of its cause, leading to the highest, undying happiness. At that point, questions of self, no-self, and not-self fall aside.”

# THE FIVE AGGREGATES

- The teaching of The Five Aggregates or The Five Skandhas, is an analysis of personal experiences and a view on cognition from a Buddhist perspective.
- The teaching also provides a logical and thorough approach to understand the Universal Truth of Not-self.
- we conclude that self is just a convenient term for a collection of physical and mental personal experiences, such as feelings, ideas, thoughts, habits, attitude, etc. However, we should go on to analyse all our personal experiences in terms of **The Five Aggregates**.

# THE FIVE AGGREGATES

- The Five Aggregates are:
- Form
- Sensation
- Perception
- Mental Formation
- Consciousness

# THE FIVE AGGREGATES

- They are called aggregates as they work together to produce a mental being.
- Impermanence is one of the characteristics of emptiness. and the aggregates are also governed by the principle of impermanence. Therefore each of the aggregates is undergoing constant changes. Aggregates are not static things; they are dynamic processes.

“By understanding the Five Skandhas, we attain the wisdom of not-self. The world we experience is not constructed upon and around the idea of a self, but through the impersonal processes. By getting rid of the idea of self, we can look at happiness and suffering, praise and blame, and all the rest with equanimity. In this way, we will be no longer subject to the imbalance of alternating hope and fear.”

**FILM SCREENING # 1**

# BEING JOHN MALKOVICH



Philosophical Activities

Discussion About

“PERSONAL IDENTITY”