Reduplication Problem

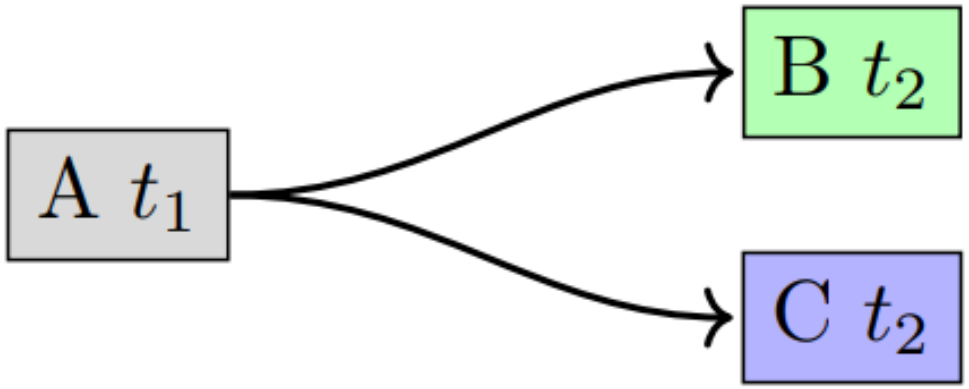
Reduplication problem

- The psychological-connectedness theory faces a variety of problems
  - We might question the reality of psychological states
  - We might question the reality of connections between psychological states
- We'll focus on one problem in particular: the reduplication problem

Reduplication problem

Reduplication problem

One of the central problems for the psychological-connectedness theory of personal identity is that **psychological consciousness can be duplicated and duplication can lead to contradiction**



Reduplication problem

- Suppose it is 2075. Current forms of transportation are obsolete.
- Tele-transporter 9000 (or the **reduplication machine or tele-transporter machine**) takes a 3D scan of your body, stores this information, incinerates your body, then send the information off to another location, where you are assembled using *new* materials.
- Call this process of copying and creating persons: **reduplication process**

Reduplication problem

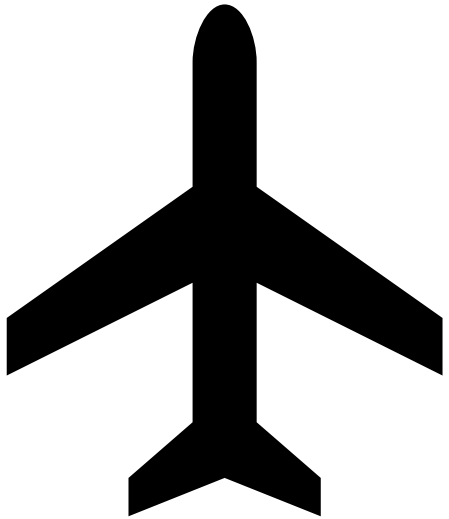
- Suppose Tek enters a teletransporter machine. The machine scans Tek in Chicago. Call this **Tek-Chicago**.
- The teletransporter dematerializes him, sends the information about Tek to **Paris**, and then finally, Tek is rematerialized in Paris. Call this person **Tek-Paris**

Reduplication problem

When Tek-Paris awakes in Paris, Tek is **psychologically connected** to Tek pre-transport.

- **Memory connections:** Tek-Paris can recall buying a ticket at the teletransporter station and remembers entering the teletransporter machine in Chicago
- **Continuation of goals**: Tek-Paris has the same goals, agenda, plans as Tek-Chicago
- **Same desires**: Tek-Paris has the same desires as Tek-Chicago.
- **Same behaviors:** Tells the same jokes, has the same personality quirks, uses the same problem-solving solutions

Reduplication problem



Suppose that this sort of transportation is **rampant**.

- Tek has undertaken teletransportation many times.
- Friends and family have undertaken this mode of transportation, and it has greatly increased the productivity and joy of society.
- Father dying? No longer must you take off a week of work to travel to your father's home in rural Montana. Instead, after work you use the teletransporter to materialize in the hospital. Thus, travel by teletransporter has become a commonplace in society.
- We can imagine how beneficial and popular such a form of transportation would be since you could visit far away locations in seconds!

Reduplication problem

Two conclusions might be drawn:

1. Persons **survive** the reduplication process
2. Per the psychological-connectedness theory: **Tek-Chicago is the same person as Tek-Paris.**

Reduplication problem

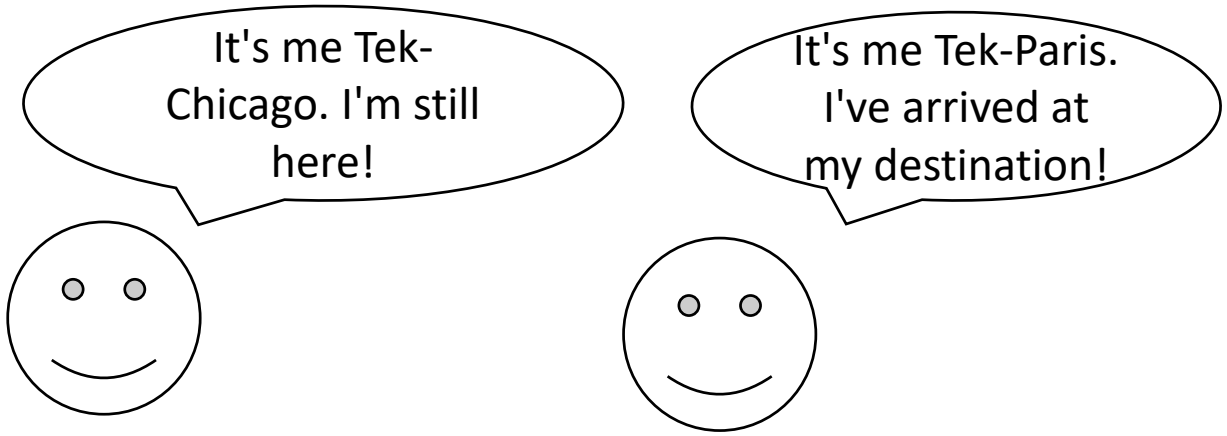
- However, this futuristic example poses problems.
- Let’s consider two versions.

First version of reduplication problem

Reduplication problem

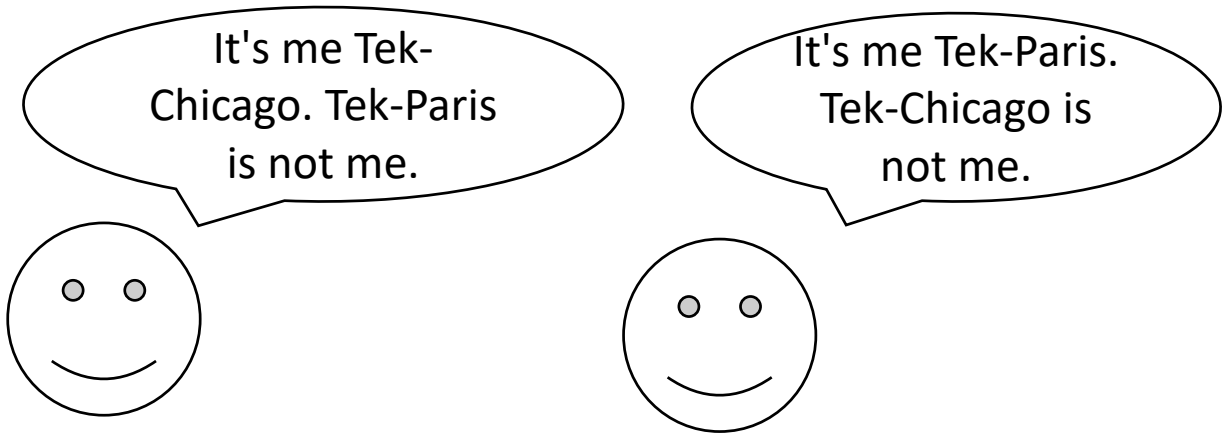
Reduplication Problem 1: Contradiction

- Suppose Tek in Chicago enters the teletransporter and Tek-Paris finds himself in Paris. So **Tek-Chicago = Tek-Paris**
- But suppose there is a **malfunction**. Tek is not destroyed in Chicago! Instead, **Tek-Chicago still exists**.



Reduplication problem

- If PC-theory is true, then **Tek in Paris is Tek** AND **Tek in Chicago is Tek**
- And so: Tek-Paris = Tek-Chicago
- But intuitively: a person cannot be in two places at the same time
- And so: Tek-Paris is not identical to Tek-Chicago



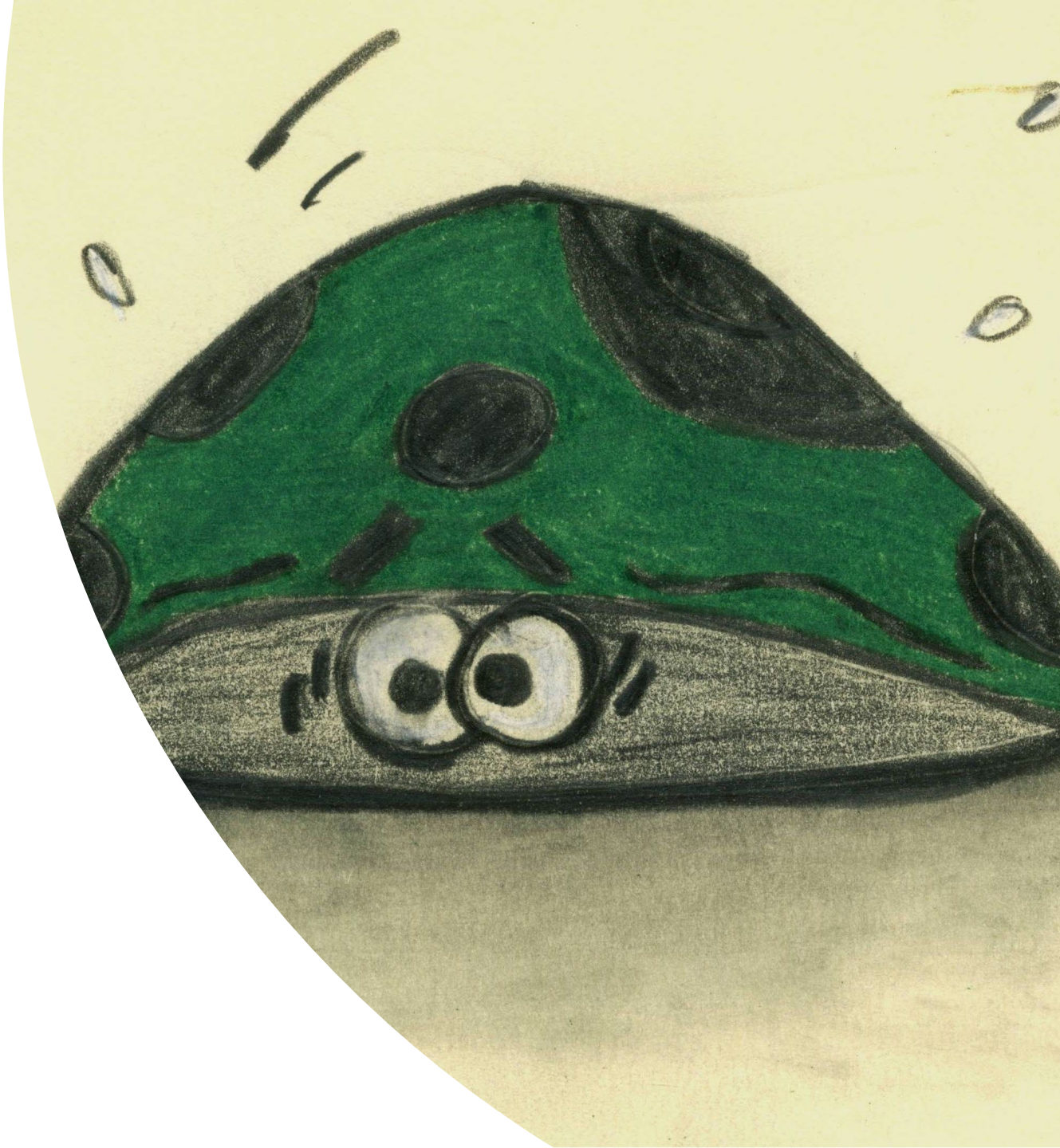
Reduplication problem

- P1: If PC is true, then Tek-Chicago and Tek-Paris are the same person.
- P2: A single person cannot be in two places at once.
- P3: But Tek-Chicago and Tek-Paris are in two different places at the same time.
- C: Therefore, PC is false.

Reduplication problem

Which one of the following is **false and why**:

1. PC-theory implies that Tek-Chicago and Tek-Paris are the same person
2. The PC-theory
3. A single person cannot be in two places at once.

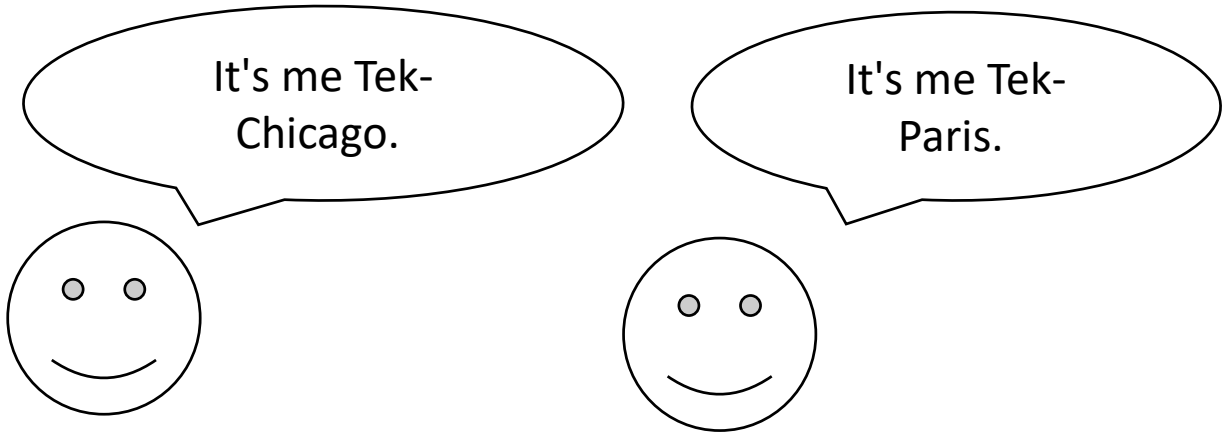


Second version of reduplication problem

Reduplication problem

Reduplication Problem 2: Another contradiction

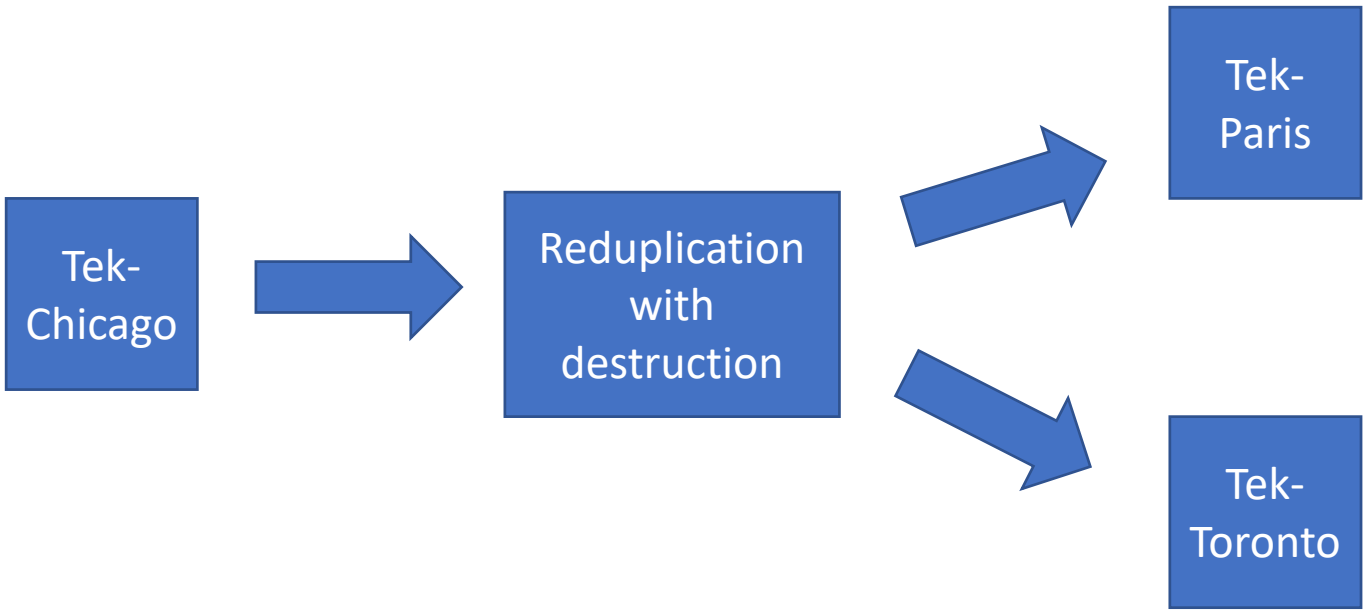
- Suppose you have the intuition that
  - Tek-Chicago survives and so Tek-Chicago is the real Tek and
  - Tek-Paris is not the real Tek. This is a clone or imposter.
- There is another version of the reduplication problem.



Reduplication problem

- Suppose Tek is scanned in Chicago, destroyed, and reduplication occurs
- Tek is duplicated in two locations: Paris and Toronto
- Per the PC-theory, **Tek-Paris** and **Tek-Toronto** are psychologically connected to **Tek-Chicago** and so
  - Tek-Chicago = Tek-Paris
  - Tek-Chicago = Tek-Toronto
  - By transitivity: Tek-Paris = Tek-Toronto
  - But, since a person cannot be in two places at once: **Tek-Paris is not the same person as Tek-Toronto.** **CONTRADICTION!**

Reduplication problem



Reduplication problem

Reduplication Problem 2: Another contradiction

Assuming Tek survives transportation, there is nothing we can use to say Tek-Paris is Tek-Chicago over Tek-Toronto

- Both have the **exact same psychological features**
- Both remember passwords, future meetings, have the same desires, who they love, and both feel just as strongly that ***they are the REAL TEK***

Reduplication problem

Reduplication Problem 2: Another contradiction

There is strong reason to believe that Tek-Paris and Tek-Toronto are **not** the same person.

- They are in two different locations at the same time
- One of them can exist while the other one perishes
- Neither can tell what the other one is thinking

Responses to Reduplication

Five Responses to Reduplication

What are some of the responses to the problem of reduplication?

1. Tek-Paris, not Tek-Toronto is identical to Tek-Chicago
2. Tek-Toronto, not Tek-Paris, is identical to Tek-Chicago
3. Neither Tek-Toronto nor Tek-Paris are identical to Tek-Chicago
4. Both Tek-Toronto and Tek-Paris are identical to Tek-Chicago
5. There is no fact to the matter

Reduplication problem

Consider the following five responses to the reduplication problem:

1. Tek-Paris, not Tek-Toronto is identical to Tek-Chicago
2. Tek-Toronto, not Tek-Paris, is identical to Tek-Chicago
3. Neither Tek-Toronto nor Tek-Paris are identical to Tek-Chicago
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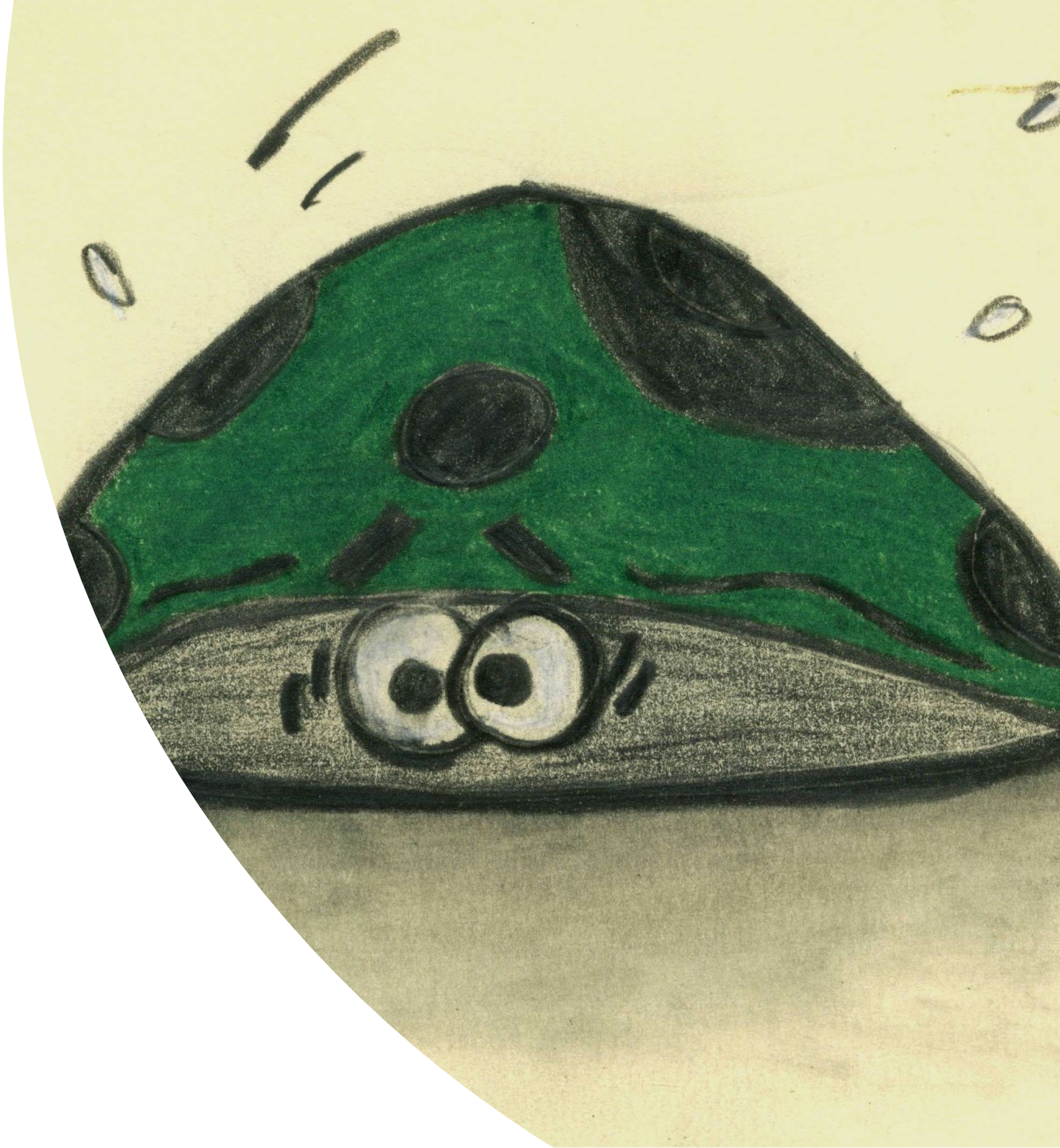
5. There is no fact to the matter

Pick one of the 5 responses. State why that response is true. The best response receives an extra point.



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Five Responses to Reduplication

Let's look at some quick responses to reduplication.

Reduplication problem

Options 1 and 2 seem completely **arbitrary** since neither has any *greater* **physical** or **psychological** claim to being Tek-Chicago.

Reduplication problem

Option 3: Neither Tek-Toronto nor Tek-Paris are identical to Tek-Chicago

1. Both Tek-Toronto and Tek-Paris are psychological connected to Tek-Chicago so PC is committed to saying
    1. They are the **same person as Tek-Chicago**
    2. If they are not the same then it seems that Tek-Chicago-t1 and Tek-Chicago-t2 are not the same (equally as psychologically connected)
2. You might say that you perish in using the teletransporter so personal identity is not preserved – you **cease to exist upon every use of the teletransporter machine**. But why? This would imply you don't preserve your identity from moment to moment. You die every second!

Reduplication problem

Option 4: Both Tek-Toronto and Tek-Paris are identical to Tek-Chicago

Seems to require giving up several intuitive principles, e.g.
that *a person cannot be in two places at once.*

- *How could a Tek-Paris and Tek-Toronto both be Tek-Chicago yet be in different locations?*
- *Seems impossible!*

Option 5: There is no fact to the matter

- There may be **no fact to the matter** as to who is identical with Tek-Chicago
- It is hard to think **why** this would be the case
- There may be some questions that have no answer, but we would expect (at minimum) some explanation as to why this question has no answer (beyond: *we don't know* or *woah this seems hard*)

Option 5: There is no fact to the matter

- Sometimes people point to the fact that **there is no answer for X** because **there is no answer for Y.**
- Impossible to determine the tallest short person because vague terms like "short" are inherently fuzzy and so there is no precise answer to this question
- But this doesn't explain why there would be no fact to X.

Option 5: There is no fact to the matter

- Not impossible option, just requires more explanation

More responses to the reduplication problem

Objection: Option 3 is still viable

Kind structures her chapter around possible defenses of option 3 (**Neither Tek-Toronto nor Tek-Paris are identical to Tek-Chicago**)

1. **the non-branching requirement:** identity consists not merely in psychological continuity but *psychological continuity of a non-branching variety*
2. **identity doesn't matter:** the survival of our identity shouldn't matter to us, what matters is the survival of our psychological continuity
3. **four-dimensionalism:** individuals do not exist all at once in time and so the reduplication issue can be addressed by using the doctrine of temporal parts

Non-branching

PC: Non-branching

Save the PC-theory by add a non-branching condition to the theory.

PC with non-branching condition: If A is a person at time t1 and B is a person at t2, then B is the same person as A iff there is psychological continuity between B and A and *there is no other person C who is psychologically continuous with A (non-branching condition)*

PC: Non-branching

- PC with non-branching gets us the right results with respect to the teletransporter case.
- Tek-Chicago is Tek-Paris iff (1) Tek-Chicago is destroyed and (2) there isn't another Tek out there.
- However, in the case of reduplication, personal identity is not preserved. That is, in cases that involve branching of psychological continuity, Tek in Chicago does not survive.

Objection: ad hoc.

This revision is completely ad hoc. There is no other motivation for why personal identity should be non-branching except to combat the objection

Objection: temporary branching

- Suppose Tek enters the teletransporter in Chicago and wants to be transported to Paris
- He is scanned, falls asleep for a moment, and awakens. The tech working the machine says that Tek-Paris is alive and well
- The only issue is there is a short wait for the incinerator to be repaired
- After the repair, Tek-Chicago is incinerated
- Here we have **temporary branching** and so Tek-Paris is not identical to Tek-Chicago AND Tek-Chicago-t2 is not Tek-Chicago-t1

Objection: denies the only x and y principle

- **The only x and y principle:** if x and y are identical, then this identity only depends upon x and y, and not some third item z.

- Example: If Superman is Clark Kent, then this depends upon facts about Superman and Clark Kent, and not on some other fact.

Objection: denies the only x and y principle

- P1: If A and B are the same person, then they are the same person in virtue of the only x-and-y principle
- P2: The non-branching psychological continuity theory denies the only x-and-y principle
- C: Therefore, the non-branching psychological continuity theory is false.

Identity doesn’t matter

Identity doesn't matter

A second solution to the reduplication problem is put forward by British philosopher Derek Parfit.

- He puts forward the **identity doesn't matter (IDM) theory.**
- He contends that the non-branching psychological connectedness theory is true for personal identity
- BUT personal **identity does not matter** for matter for survival, memory, or moral responsibility

Identity doesn't matter

PC-non-branching w/ IDM: If A is a person at time t1 and B is a person at t2, then B is the same person as A iff

1. there is psychological continuity between B and A and
2. *there is no other person C who is psychologically continuous with A (non-branching condition)*
3. There is survival without identity

Cases involving psychological continuity are split into two cases:

Case 1: psychological continuity accompanied by identity.

- Psychological connection where we (i) retain identity over time and (ii) survive
- **Survival with identity:** Tek survives some change c iff there is at least one person alive after c who is identical to Tek.

Case 2: psychological continuity that is not accompanied by identity.

- Psychological connection where we (i) lose our identity over time and (ii) survive
- **Survival without identity:** Tek survives some change c iff there is at least one person alive after c who is psychologically continuous with Tek.

Identity doesn't matter

- The basic idea behind this theory is that non-branching cases where we are committed to saying that Tek-Chicago is neither Tek-Paris nor Tek-Toronto **shouldn't bother us**. Preserving identity isn't important
- What is important is whether the important parts of Tek survive
- The answer is "yes, they do" as Tek-Paris and Tek-Toronto

Identity doesn't matter

Consider Tek-Chicago at t1 and Tek-Paris at t2

- Tek-Paris at t2 is psychologically connected to Tek-Chicago. Tek-Paris has the same feelings, the same memories, same goals and dreams
- What Tek-Chicago wants is for Tek-Paris to visit Paris, to have a good vacation, to see the Eiffel tower
- Thus, Tek-Chicago gets everything he wants in Tek-Paris. *All of his memories survive, his feelings stay the same, etc.*

Identity doesn't matter

What is the upshot of this distinction?

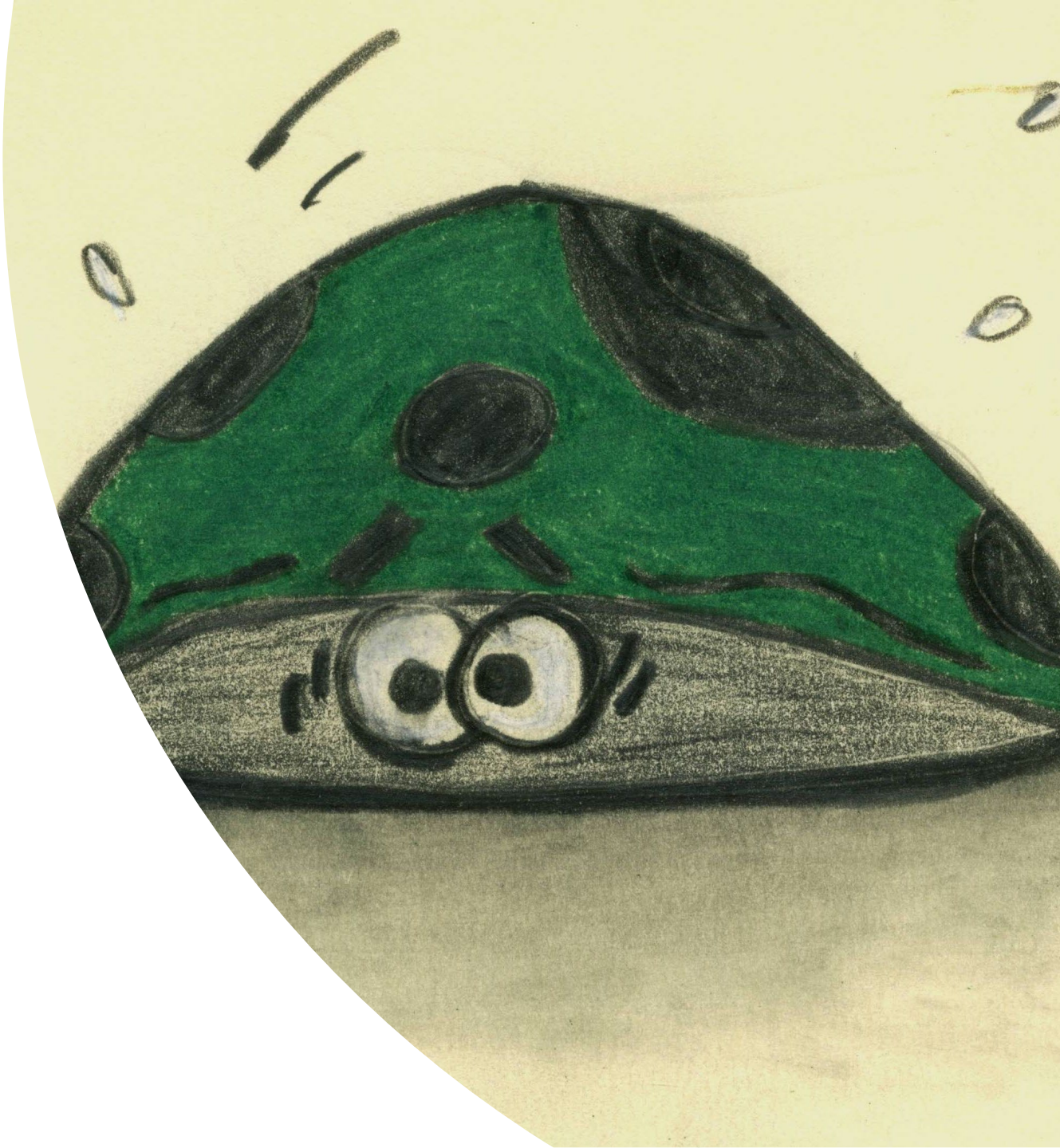
- what we care about is whether our **psychological traits** is carried (survives) forward, not whether our **identity** is carried forward.
- Similar to:: the author that cares about whether their works are read, a politician cares whether their ideas are implemented, etc.
- Reduplication with branches causes us to worry that we no longer exist when we lose our personal identity, but there is no need to worry.
- Loss of personal identity doesn't matter, what matters is survival!

Objection: identity does matter

- I don't merely want someone who has my memories and my feelings and my dreams to survive
- I also want that person to be me!
- If I am Tek-Chicago, I want Tek-Paris to be me not to be someone simply psychologically connected to me.

Parfit says that ``survival'' (continuation of psychological connectedness) is what matters, not continuation of personal identity.

- Does the preservation of your identity matter?
- Is all that matters is that there is the continuation of your ideas, your memories, your feelings?



4D

The problem with the example is that of thinking there is a single thing that persists through time.

- 4D approach says you are the totality of time slices (temporal-spatial parts)
- Tek-Paris and Tek-Toronto are **not** the same person as Tek-Chicago
- But also Tek-Chicago-t1 is not the same person as Tek-Chicago-t2
- These are just **spatiotemporal parts** of Tek
- Recall that for the 4D theory, objects perdure (spread out in time rather than sweep through time)

- A 4D perduring person is thus a set of temporal parts that are psychologically connected

Objection: Overpopulation. The 4D-PC theory may solve the reduplication problem, but at what cost?

- P1: Intuitively at t1, Tek-Chicago is one person.
- P2: At t2, we discover that Tek-Chicago was not one person, but was two people: Tek-Toronto and Tek-Paris
- P3: This is extremely counterintuitive since I may be two people
- C: Therefore, 4D-PC theory is false.

4D PC solution:

- **Spatial parts of objects can be shared:** two roads can temporarily converge
- **Temporal parts of objects can be shared:** Tek-Toronto and Tek-Paris shared the temporal part of Tek-Chicago until they diverge during the transportation event.
- Tek-Toronto and Tek-Paris are not the same person (they have different parts) and they are not Tek-Chicago (that is just a part). *Although Tek-Toronto and Tek-Paris share the overlapping part that is Tek-Chicago.*

We have looked at three possible ways to save the PC-theory:

- Add a non-branching condition
- Try to mute our worries about loss of identity when branching occurs (identity doesn't matter)
- 4D

Are any of these viable responses?