

# Cartesian Dualism



Will Newman

# Dualism



- ✓ Mind
  - ✓ Thinking
  - ✓ Essentially not physical
- ✓ Body
  - ✓ Mechanical
  - ✓ Extended
  - ✓ Physical

# Two Kinds of Monism



- ✓ Materialist monists
  - ✓ No immaterial mind
- ✓ Idealist monists
  - ✓ No material world, no bodies at all.

# Thinking Things



- ✓ We can't doubt our existence.
  - ✓ We are thinking things.
  - ✓ Consciousness makes a mind.
- ✓ We can doubt our body as material
- ✓ We can't doubt our mind.
- ✓ Descartes believes this is indicative of our nature.

# What is thinking?



- ✓ “But what then am I? A think that thinks. what is that? A thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, is willing, is unwilling, and also imagines and has sensory perceptions” (MII, AT 28).

# Eradicating Doubt



- ✓ Can't find an argument immune to doubt.
- ✓ The deceiver arguments consistently gives him reason to doubt.
- ✓ Ruining the deceiver:
  - ✓ There is a benevolent God so we don't need to worry about systematic deception as long as beliefs are acquired properly.

# Descartes: “There is a God”



- ✓ Two reasons for Descartes to think there is a God
  - ✓ Every effect needs a cause.
    - ✓ Cartesian effect is God
  - ✓ Having a thing with all perfections
    - ✓ More perfect to exist than to not exist thus the concept of a God is such that it must exist.
- ✓ God must be all good.

# Mind independent from Body



- ✓ Argues that mind is distinct from the body because we allegedly have enough knowledge about both to feel as if they are separate.
  - ✓ The mind is what thinks.
  - ✓ The body is an extension.
- ✓ The fact that our body and mind seem unified is misleading
  - ✓ We can live without sensory perceptions
- ✓ Mind is indivisible, Body is divisible
  - ✓ Thus they are separate.

# Arnauld



- ✓ We can doubt our bodies existence but not our minds.
- ✓ Descartes argument is unsound.
  - ✓ He has not proved the separate nature of the body and mind.
- ✓ Clear and distinct understanding?

# Versus



- ✓ Descartes

- ✓ We understand in some special way that the body and mind are separate thus they must be.

- ✓ Arnauld

- ✓ Is what we know about the mind sufficient enough to rule out a link?

# Problem of Interaction



- ✓ Our bodies and minds **DO** affect each other.
  - ✓ Takes place at the pineal gland: the seat of the soul.
  - ✓ Doesn't solve the problem, merely locates it.