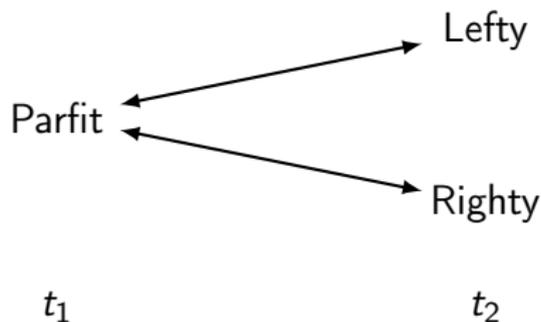


The Multiple-Occupancy Thesis

Johan E. Gustafsson

Parfit's Puzzle

It is possible that Parfit stands in the relation that matters in survival to two people at a future time.



But identity cannot hold from one to many only from one to one.

So the relation that matters in survival cannot be identity.

Persistence

Persistence

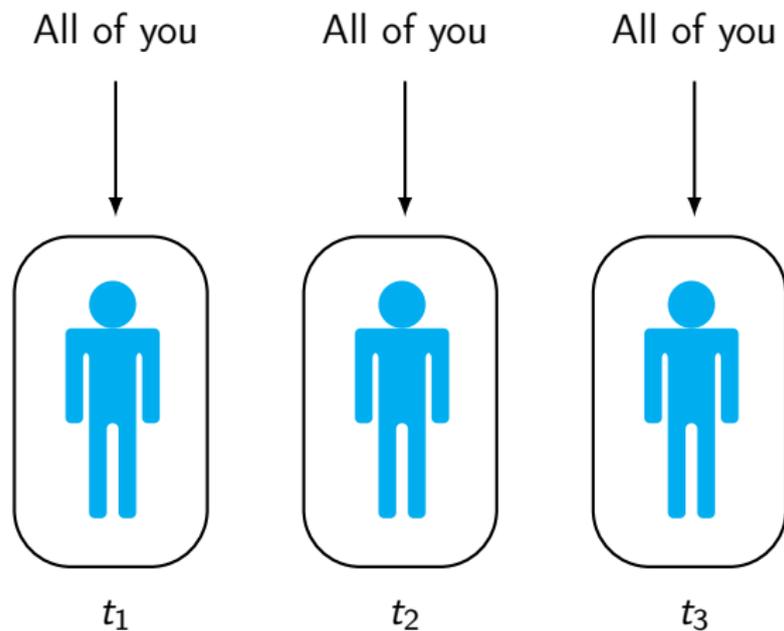
Something persists if and only if it exists at different times.

One view on how things persist:

Endurance

Something endures if and only if it persists by being wholly present at more than one time.

Endurance

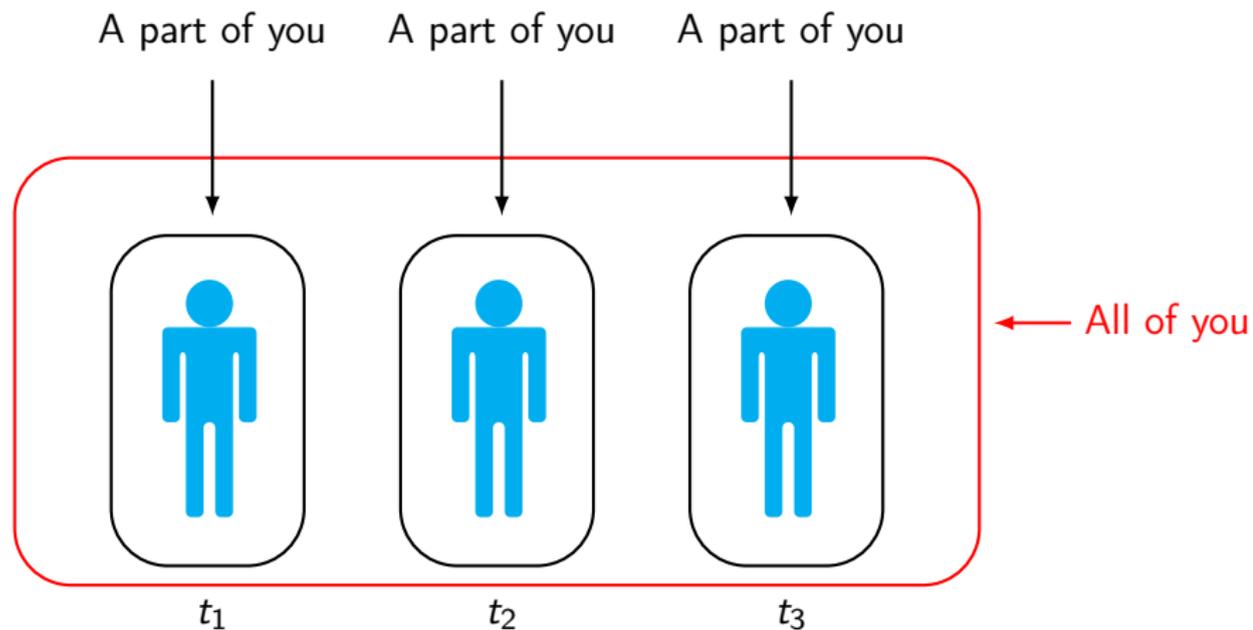


Another view on how things persist:

Perdurance

Something perdures if and only if it persists by having different temporal parts, or stages, at different times, though no one part of it is wholly present at more than one time.

Perdurance



The Problem of Temporary Intrinsic

The problem is that our intrinsic properties seem to change over time.

For example, my shape is bent when I am sitting down, and my shape is straightened when I am standing up.

The problem is how to make sense of this very plausible claim on endurance theory.

Intrinsic and extrinsic properties

An extrinsic property of a thing is a property which the thing has in relation to some external thing or things.

For example, my property of being a little brother.

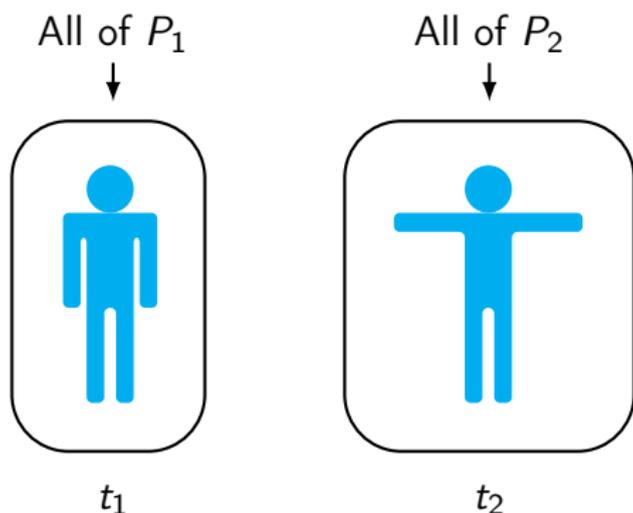
An intrinsic property of a thing is a property which the thing has in virtue of the way that thing itself, and nothing else, is.

For example, the property of being round, or the property of being square.

A property F is an extrinsic property of an object o if o having F implies that something distinct from, and not a proper part of, o exists.

A property F is an intrinsic property of o if and only if o having F is compatible with nothing apart from o and its proper parts existing, and also compatible with something apart from o existing.

The Problem of Temporary Intrinsic and Endurance



Suppose that P_2 at t_2 has the intrinsic property of having arms wide open and that P_1 at t_1 does not.

The Indiscernibility of Identicals

If x is identical with y , then any property of x is a property of y .

Since they do not have the same properties P_1 and P_2 cannot be identical.

Possible Solution: Shapes are relational

The idea is that seeming temporary intrinsic relations like shapes are really relational extrinsic properties in disguise. So for example I might have a bent-shape relation to some times, and a straitened-shape relation to some other times.

Lewis thinks that this is too incredible. If we know what a shape is, we know that it is an intrinsic property not a relation.

Another Solution: Different shapes belong to different things

Lewis favours the solution that different shapes and different temporary intrinsics belong to different things.

This solution works given that we persist by perdurance rather than endurance.

We are made up of temporal parts, and our temporal intrinsics are properties of these parts, wherein they differ from another.

There is no problem at all about how different things can differ in their intrinsic properties.

It not problematic that one has a bent-shaped part and also a straightened-shaped part.

Person-stages

Lewis (1983, p. 76):

A person-stage is a physical object, just as a person is. (If persons had a ghostly part as well, so would person-stages.) It does many of the same things that a person does: it talks and walks and thinks, it has beliefs and desires, it has a size and shape and location. It even has a temporal duration. But only a brief one, for it does not last long.

The I-Relation

Lewis (1983, p. 59):

identity among continuant persons induces a relation among stages: the relation that holds between the several stages of a single continuant person. Call this the I-relation.

Continuant people

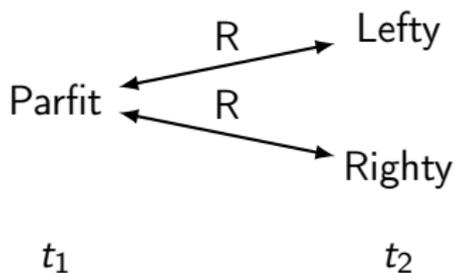
Lewis (1983, p. 59):

A continuant person is an aggregate of person-stages, each one I-related to all the rest (and to itself). For short: a person is an I-interrelated aggregate. Moreover, a person is not part of any larger I-interrelated aggregate; for if we left out any stages that were I-related to one another and to all the stages we included, then what we would have would not be a whole continuant person but only part of one. For short: a person is a maximal I-interrelated aggregate. And conversely, any maximal I-interrelated aggregate of person-stages is a continuant person.

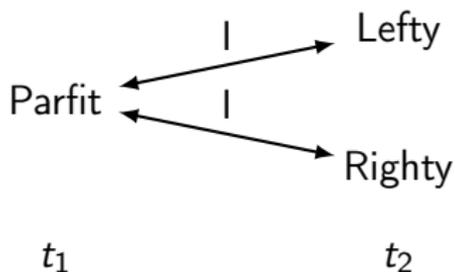
Parfit claimed that R , psychological continuity or connectedness, and not identity, is what matters in survival.

Lewis agrees that R is what matters but he also thinks that identity is what matters, because $R = I$

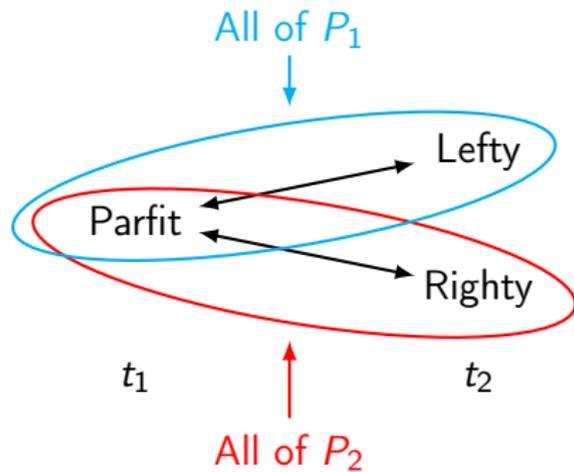
Lewis agrees that R , the relation that matters, holds from Parfit to both of Lefty and Righty.



But, since the I -relation is not identity, it can hold from one to many just like R .



This is possible since Parfit at t_1 and Lefty and Righty at t_2 are just person-stages not persons.



Parfit at t_1 is a person-stage of both P_1 and P_2 .

Lefty at t_2 is just a person-stage of P_1 .

Righty at t_2 is just a person-stage of P_2 .

Parfit's Objection to Lewis

Parfit (1976):

- (1) For any person P_1 and for any person P_2 existing at some time in the future, P_2 matters for P_1 if and only if $P_1 = P_2$.
- (2) For any person P_1 and for any person P_2 existing at some time in the future, P_2 matters for P_1 if and only if P_1 's current stage bears the *I*-relation to P_2 's stage at that time

Problem with 1: Captures the common-sense idea that identity is what matters, but is incompatible with the idea that the relation that matters can hold from one to many.

Problem with 2: Allows for the idea that the relation that matters can hold from one to many, but is incompatible with the common-sense idea that identity is what matter.

Problems with Lewis's Solution to the Temporary-Intrinsics Problem

Lewis's solution to the problem of temporary intrinsics violates a plausible principle about change:

An object that changes shape must itself have a shape simpliciter.

Mark Hinchliff (1996, p. 120):

If the candle never has the shapes itself, it cannot change its shape.

Furthermore, Lewis's objection to the view that shape is a relational property, was that it is clear that a shape is an intrinsic property, that things have simpliciter.

But if a person is an aggregate of person-stages which can have different shapes, then it seems that persons do not have shapes simpliciter.

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- Lewis, David (1983) *Philosophical Papers: Volume 1*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
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