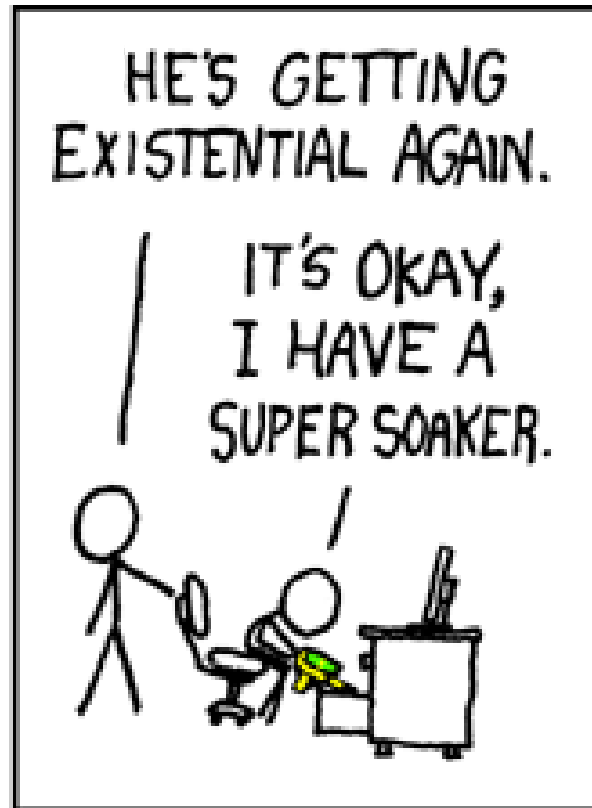


David Hume's "The Self"



Andrew Rippel

Hume's dealeo with the Self

Some philosophers 'feel' the self intimately, are certain of its existence "beyond the evidence of a demonstration, both of its perfect identity and simplicity" [Hume, 349].

That statement is a contradiction in itself.

Hume's dealeo with the Self

Instead, Hume cites 'impressions'

- Emotion
- Physical sensation
- Any discernable perception

“For from what impression could [the self] be derived? This question ‘tis impossible to answer without a manifest contradiction and absurdity; and yet ‘tis a question, which must necessarily be answered, if we would have the idea of self pass for clear and intelligible” [Hume, 349].

English translation:

If everything falls into the category of an 'impression', then which one represents the self?

Hume's dealio with the Self

“Don't be dumb.

There is no impression that represents the self because to be aware of an impression, we must already be conscious of it as a unique entity. Duh.”

One might then reason that the self must not be an impression, and must
English translation:
be that which resides in the absence of all impression.
If everything falls into the category of an 'impression', then which one
represents the self?

Hume's dealeo with the Self

“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 anything but the perception” [Hume 349].

So, instead,

To Hume, the self is “that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have a reference...

If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same through the whole course of our lives, since self is supposed to exist after that manner. But there is no impression constant and invariable” [Hume 349].

Hume's dealio with the Self

Breakin' it down...

Hume says:

Emotions and sensations occur a few at a time, ever changing, and never all exist equally all at once.

Since the self must be omnipresent, he decides...

“It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impressions or from any other that the idea of self is derived, and, consequently, there is no such idea” [Hume, 349].

Hume has no reason to believe in a self,

Thus, his theory is the ‘no-self’ theory of the self.

The “Bundle” Theory

Hume:

The self is perpetually identical and omnipresent.

If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same through the whole course of our lives, since self is supposed to exist after that manner. But there is no impression constant and invariable” [Hume 349].

BUT:

What if he was right? [He still can be]

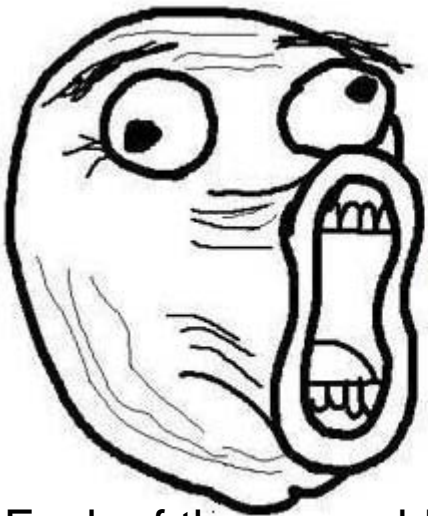
Common perception of the self can, in reality, be rationalized as a collection of constant, omnipresent instances of selves.

or, a ‘bundle’ of selves

Each of these would be constant and valid selves [by Hume’s definition] for the duration of one moment.

The “Bundle” Theory

Take, for example, a delicious apple:



Each of these would be constant and valid selves [by Hume’s definition] for the duration of one moment.

The “Bundle” Theory

“YOU” ARE AN ILLUSION

The “Bundle” Theory

...just like the Ship of Theseus

-Practical

-Reasonable

-Logical

-Comforting

HOWEVER:
Still false

...sorry



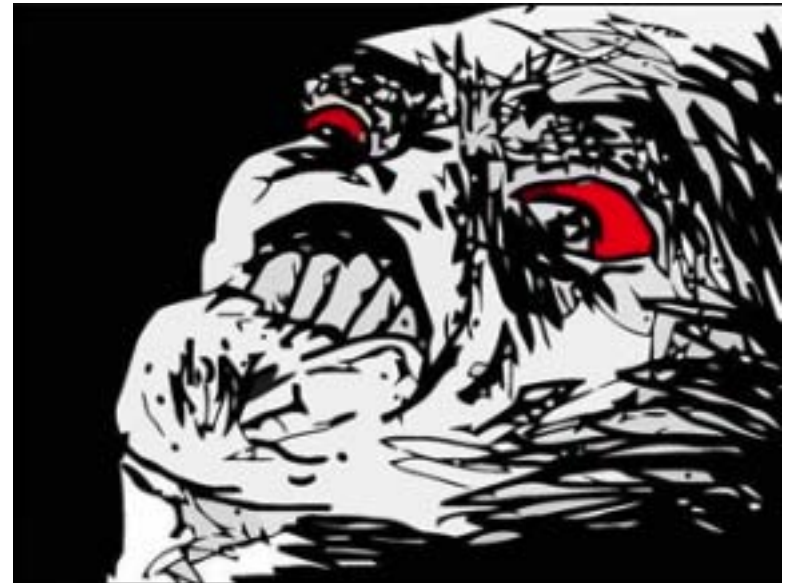
Stay with me here please



Remember, if you will:

Hume's definition of an 'impression'

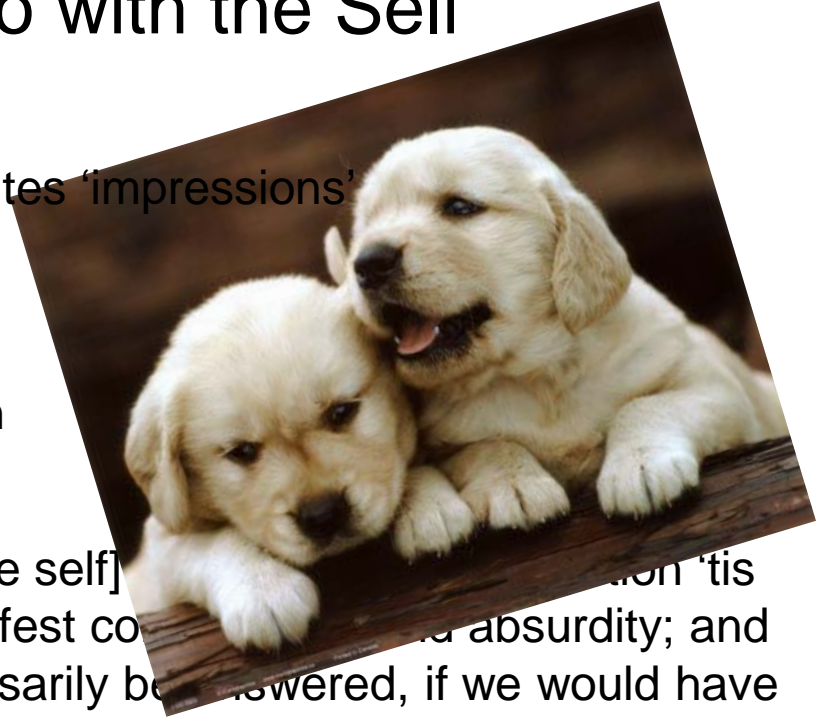
FLASHBACK



Hume's dealeo with the Self

Instead, Hume cites 'impressions'

- Emotion
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“For from what impression could [the self] be derived? This question ‘tis impossible to answer without a manifest contradiction and absurdity; and yet ‘tis a question, which must necessarily be answered, if we would have the idea of self pass for clear and intelligible” [Hume, 349].

“For from what impression could [the self] be derived? This question ‘tis impossible to answer without a manifest contradiction blah blah blah blahrhfusenblansoiguemfoisteriffis blah etc. ” [Hume, 349].

Hume considers emotions and perceptions to be in the same category of general 'impressions'

Is this okay to do?

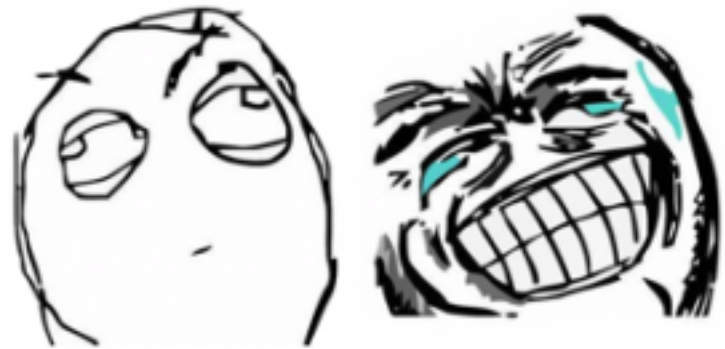
What would the Bundle Theorist have to say about it?

END

hey dad.. did you get a haircut?



actually, son...



i got them all cut

