

Descartes' Divisibility Argument

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Descartes' argues that the mind and body are two separate entities. The body occupies space, and so it is always divisible, while the mind is made up of thoughts that are immaterial and cannot be divided, thus it is indivisible. Using the idea behind Leibniz's Law, "different properties, different things", Descartes' begins to construct his argument for the reasons he believes that the [mind](#) and body are completely different things. I will go over the reason he thinks the body can be divided, while the mind cannot. Furthermore, I will explain why I agree that the body is divisible, but disagree that the mind is always indivisible. Finally, I will support why Descartes' views of mind and body dualism is a plausible argument, even if I do not think it is a sound argument with what I know about modern advancements in science.

One of Descartes premises for his divisibility argument is that the body can always be divided. Descartes says that any extended thing, in other words, anything that takes up its own space can always be divided (Descartes59). Using properties of extended substances, Descartes concludes that extended substances must have size, shape, weight, location and be capable of physical motion either from direct or indirect interaction. With the principles of extended properties in mind, I agree that every part of the body has these properties. I will prove this by choosing one part of the body and applying each property to that chosen body part. For instance, take my hand, for example, if I put my

hand in a custom size baseball glove, my hand will roughly take up all the space in the glove. This shows that my hand has a certain size that fills a pre-determined amount of space at full capacity. Not only does my hand, take ...

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... proves the mind is not divisible. However, I have shown with Identity Disorder that the mind may be physically whole, but it's thoughts can at the same time be split. In the view of this, I bring to a close that the mind is not always indivisible, even if the body is. And since, Descartes' argument was to use the difference of properties to prove Leibniz's Law to show that mind and body are separate. I conclude that if Descartes wants to prove dualism, he will need to follow one of his other stronger arguments, because his divisibility argument will not stand alone.

Works Cited

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