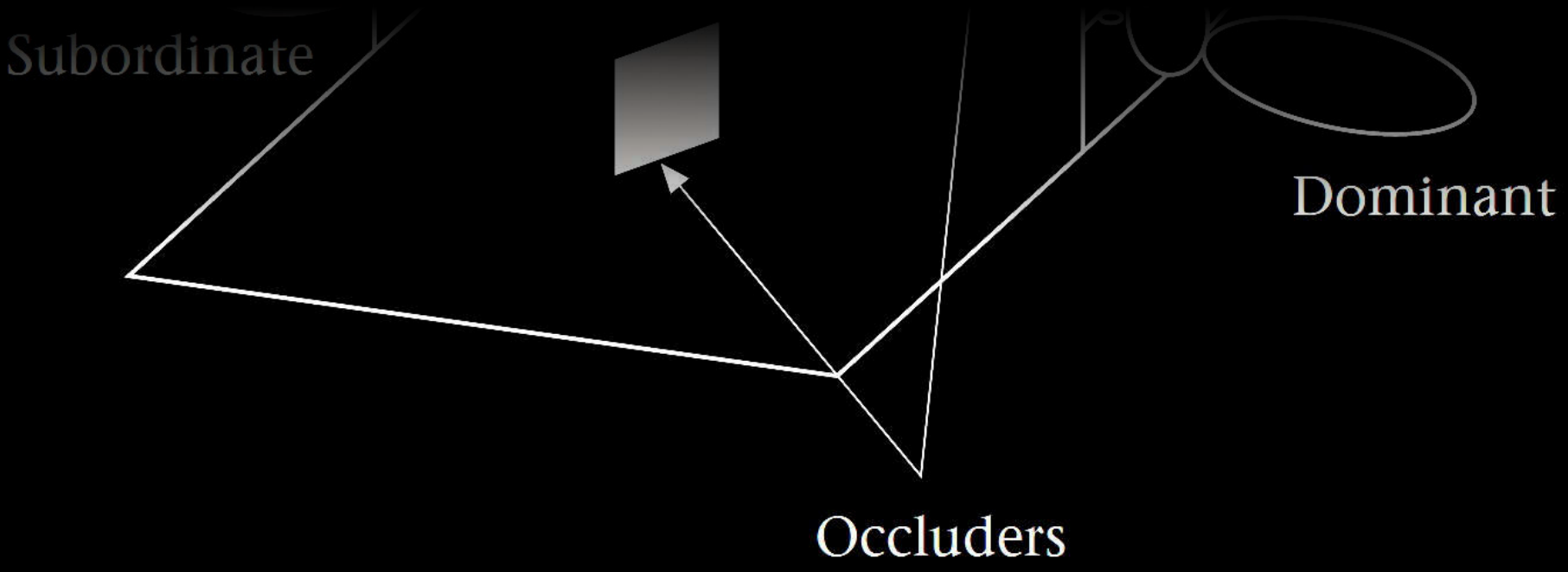
Mindreading & Joint Action
2. What are mental states?
butterfillS@ceu.hu

‘chimpanzees understand … intentions … perception and knowledge … Moreover, they understand how these psychological states work together to produce intentional action’

(Call & Tomasello 2008:191)



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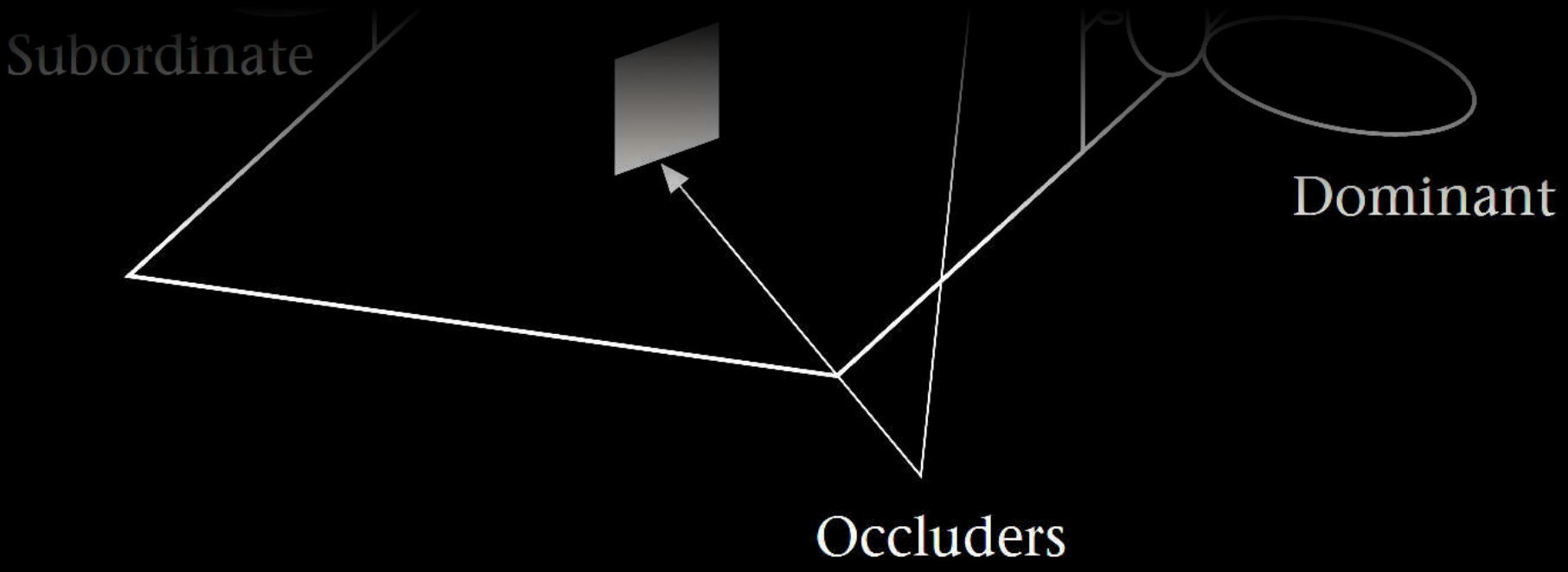

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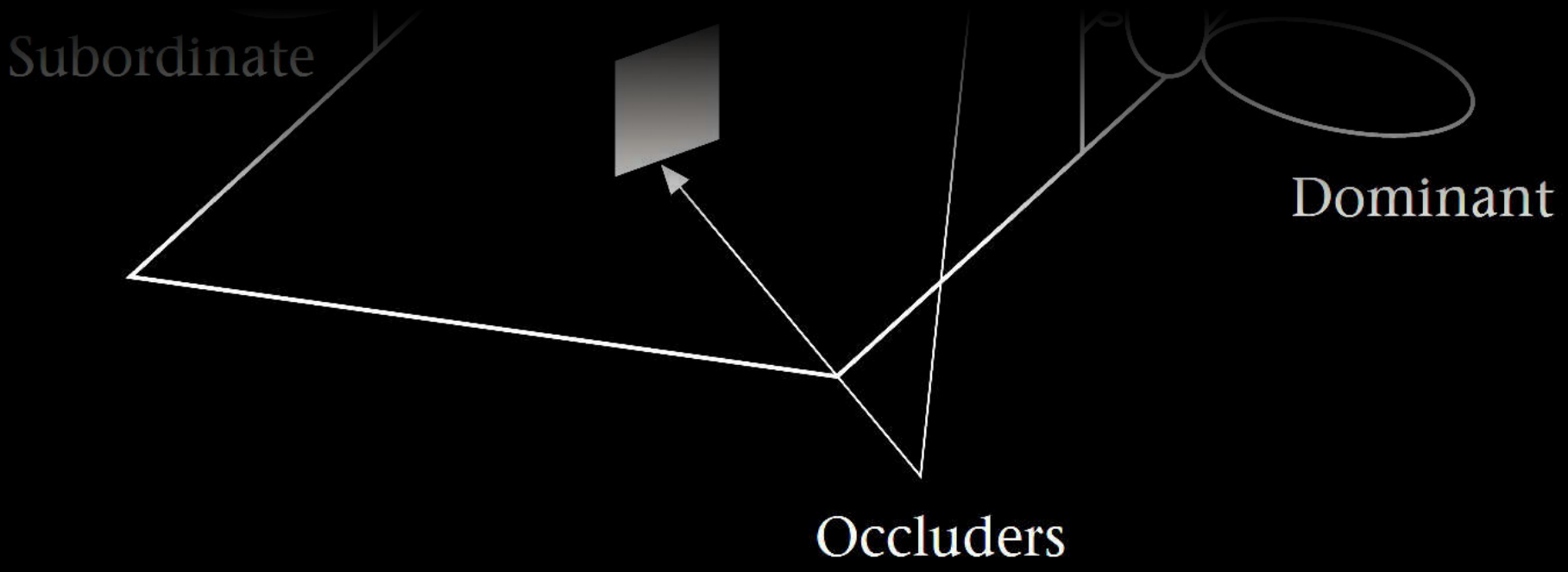


‘chimpanzees understand … intentions … perception and knowledge … Moreover, they understand how these psychological states work together to produce intentional action’

(Call & Tomasello 2008:191)

‘our fundamental conception of what it is to know that P is itself an explanatory conception […] we think of S’s knowledge that P as something that can properly be explained by reference to what S has perceived or remembered or proved or ...’

(Cassam 2007: 356)

Henry desires that Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill

Henry desires that Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill

Subject *Attitude* *Content*

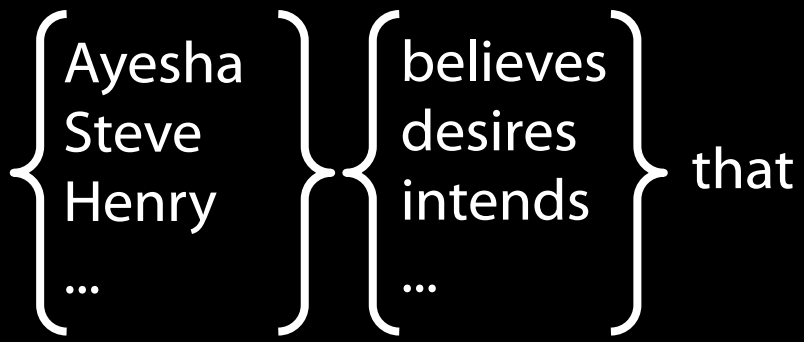
Ayesha
Steve
Henry
...

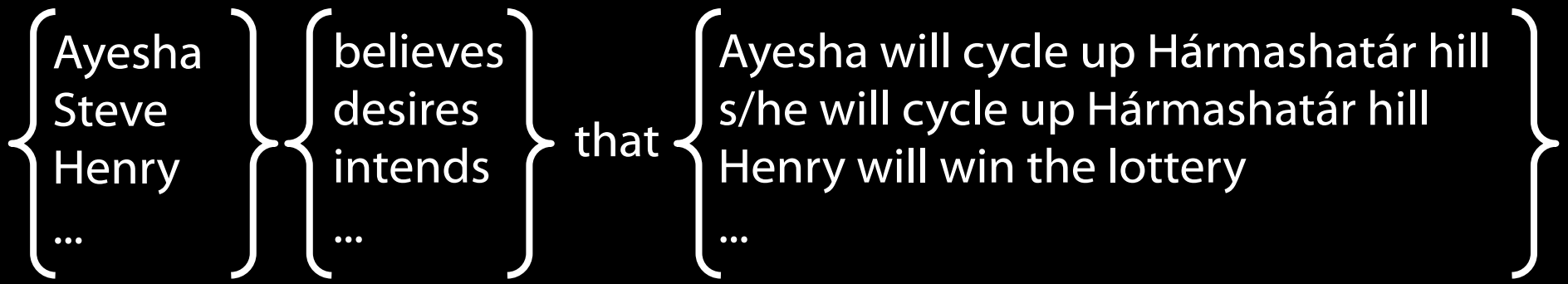
desires

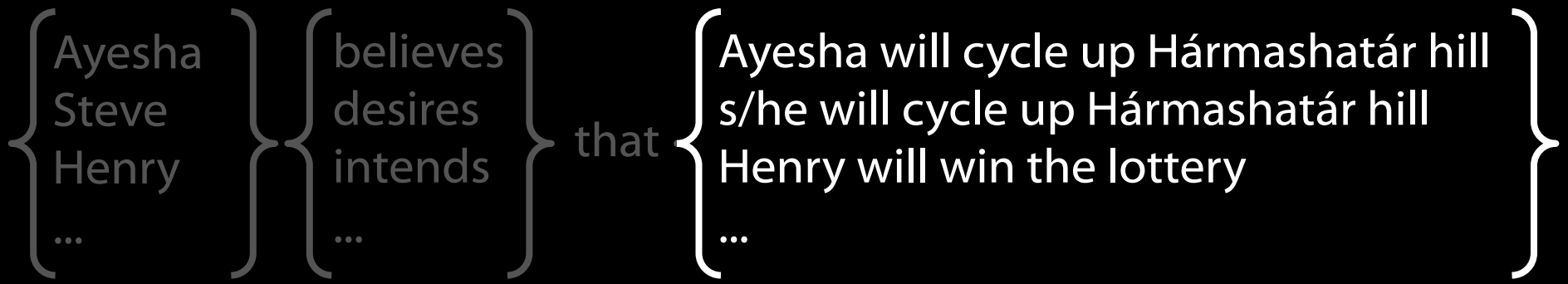
that

Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill

Subject *Attitude* *Content*


Ayesha
Steve
Henry
...
believes
desires
intends
...
that
Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill
Subject
Attitude
Content


Ayesha
Steve
Henry
...
believes
desires
intends
...
that
Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill
s/he will cycle up Hármashatár hill
Henry will win the lottery
...
Subject
Attitude
Content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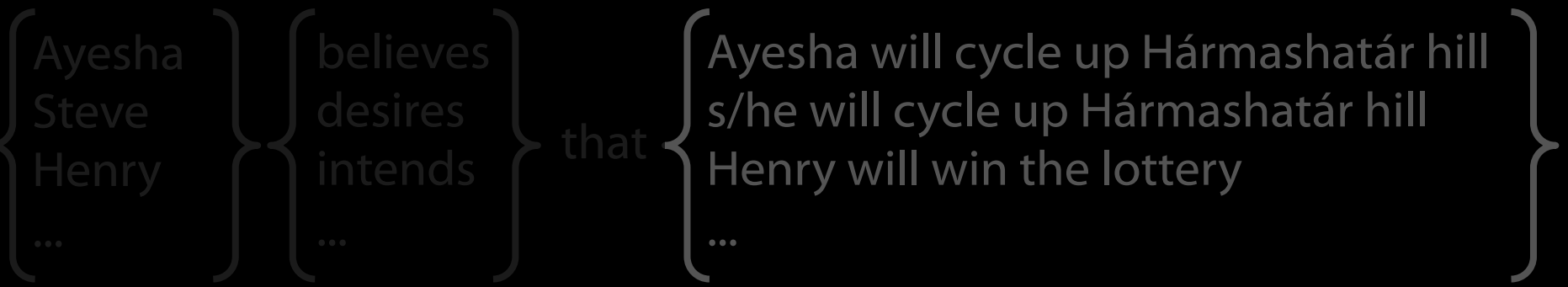
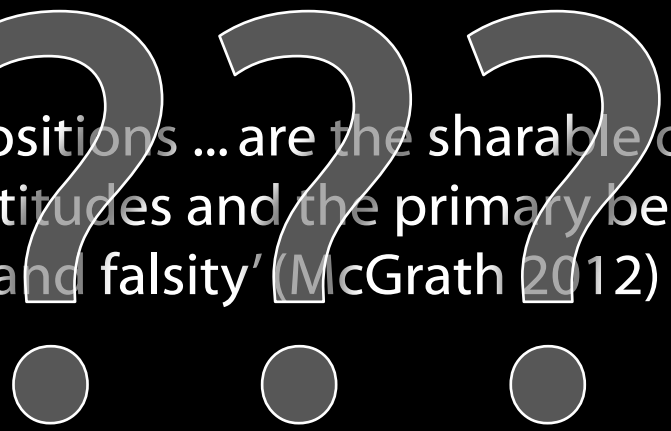
‘Propositions ... are the sharable objects of the attitudes and the primary bearers of truth and falsity’ (McGrath 2012)

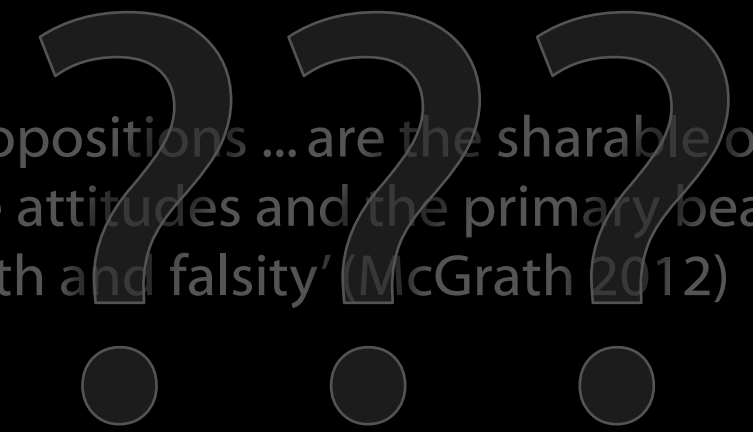




‘Propositions ... are the sharable objects of the attitudes and the primary bearers of truth and falsity’ (McGrath 2012)

{ Ayesha / Steve / Henry / ... } { believes / desires / intends / ... } that { Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill / s/he will cycle up Hármashatár hill / Henry will win the lottery / ... }

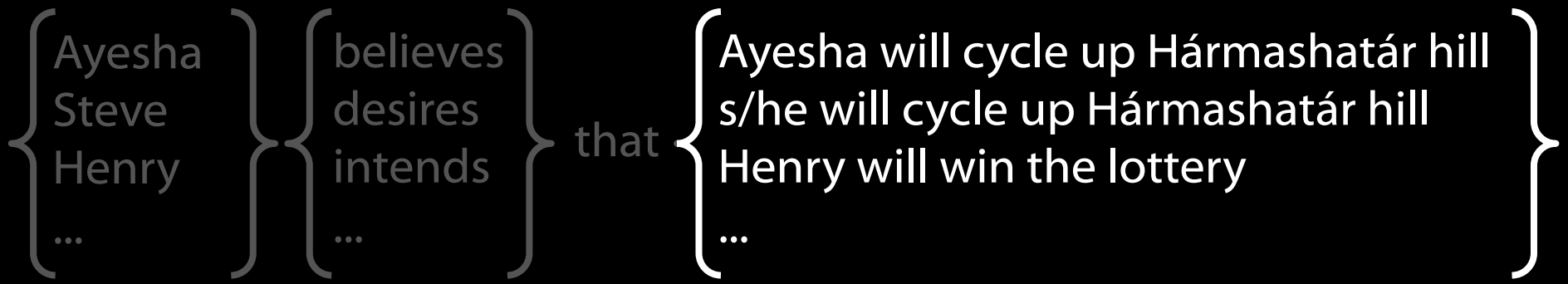
Subject *Attitude* *Content*



‘Propositions ... are the sharable objects of the attitudes and the primary bearers of truth and falsity’ (McGrath 2012)

Subject	Attitude		Content
Ayesha Steve Henry ...	believes desires intends ...	that	Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill s/he will cycle up Hármashatár hill Henry will win the lottery ...

proposition-1 : a set of possible worlds



Subject *Attitude* *Content*

proposition-1 : a set of possible worlds

{ Ayesha / Steve / Henry / ... } { believes / desires / intends / ... } that { Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill / s/he will cycle up Hármashatár hill / Henry will win the lottery / ... }

Subject *Attitude* *Content*

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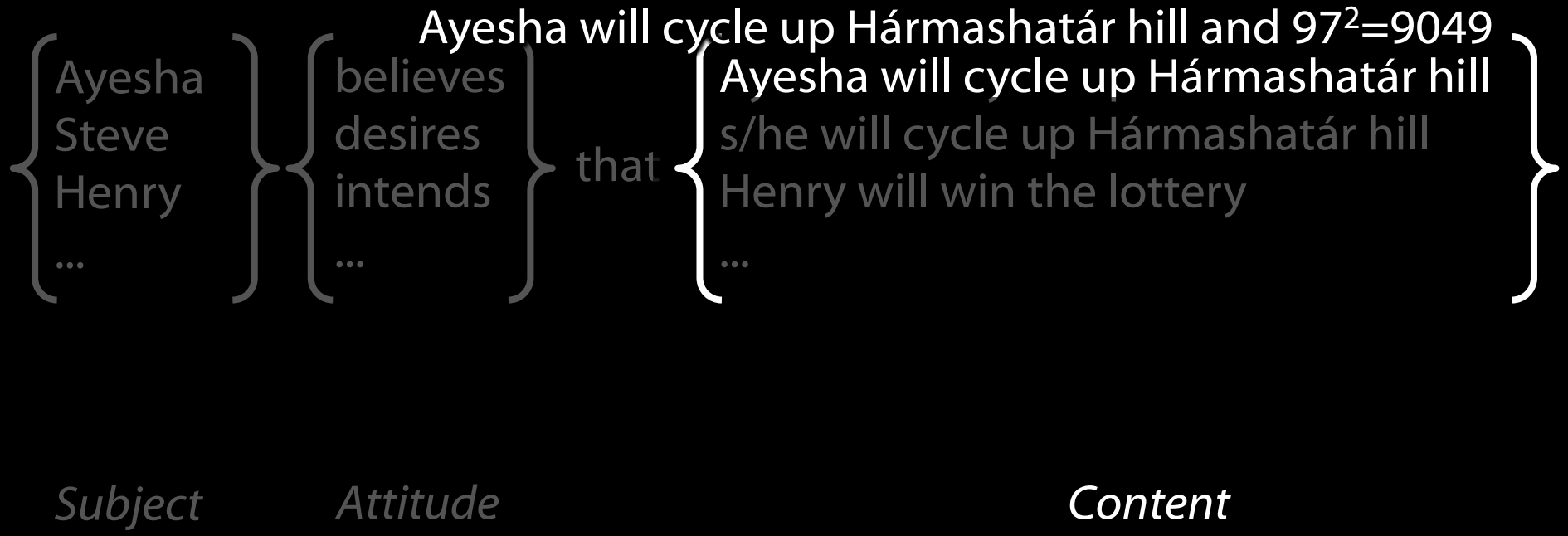
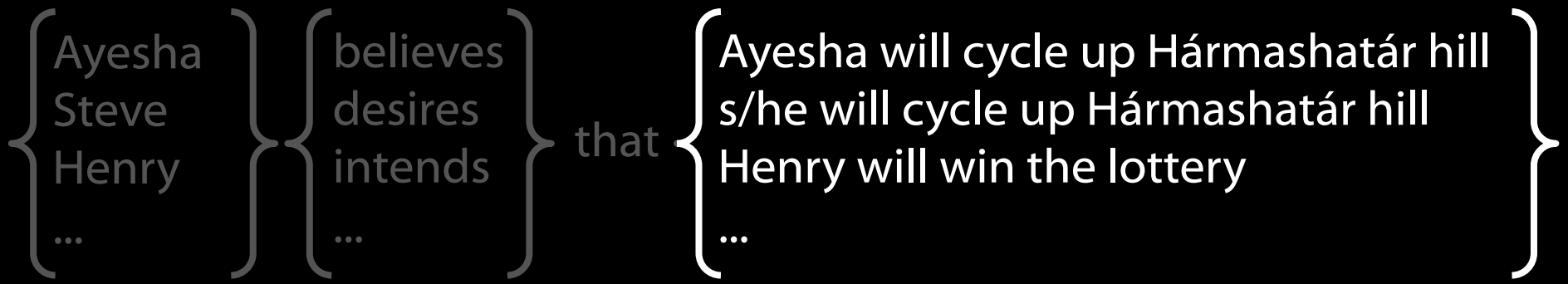


proposition-1 : a set of possible worlds

proposition-2 : a (nested) sequence of objects and properties



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< < Ayesha , Hármashatár hill >, cycle >

{ Ayesha / Steve / Henry / ... } { believes / desires / intends / ... } that { Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill / s/he will cycle up Hármashatár hill / Henry will win the lottery / ... }

Subject *Attitude* *Content*

proposition-1 : a set of possible worlds

proposition-2 : a (nested) sequence of objects and properties

< < Ayesha , Hármashatár hill >, cycle >

< < Steve , Hármashatár hill >, cycle >

{ Ayesha, Steve, Henry, ... } { believes, desires, intends, ... } that { Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill; s/he will cycle up Hármashatár hill; Henry will win the lottery; ... }

Subject *Attitude* *Content*

proposition-1 : a set of possible worlds
proposition-2 : a (nested) sequence of objects and properties
proposition-3 : a (nested) sequence of modes of presentations of objects and properties

{ Ayesha / Steve / Henry / ... } { believes / desires / intends / ... } that { Ayesha will cycle up Hármashatár hill / s/he will cycle up Hármashatár hill / Henry will win the lottery / ... }

Subject *Attitude* *Content*

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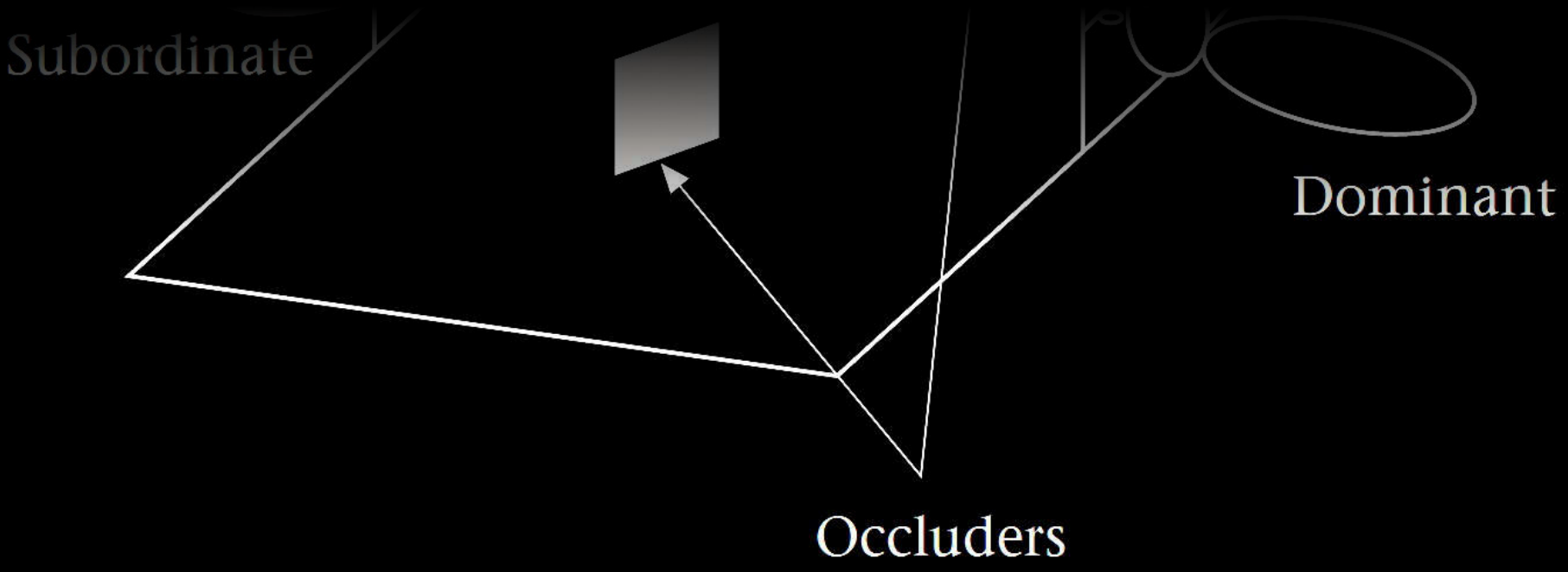

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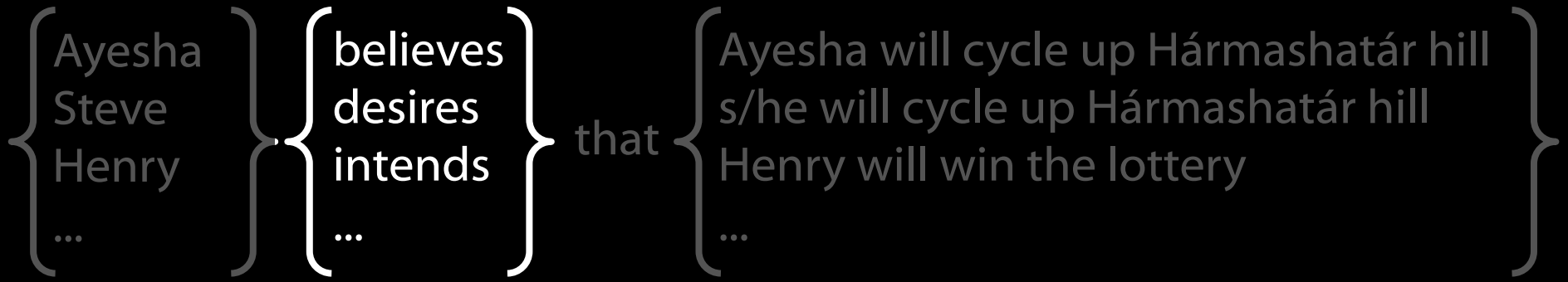
‘from 7 months on ... humans automatically compute other’s beliefs and seem to hold them in mind as alternative representations of the environment.’

(Kovács et al 2010: 1834)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...
Subject
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‘(4) For any p: One ought to believe that p only if p.

‘the holding of this norm is one of the defining features of the notion of belief [...] That [...] is what makes it the state that it is.’

(Boghossian 2003: 37, 38-9)

‘(4) For any p: One ought to believe that p only if p.

‘the holding of this norm is one of the defining features of the notion of belief [...] That [...] is what makes it the state that it is.’

(Boghossian 2003: 37, 38-9)

‘Aside from our purposes in forming beliefs or in using beliefs as guides to action, there is nothing they should or shouldn’t be. … The only fault with fallacious reasoning, the only thing wrong or bad about mistaken judgements, is that, generally speaking, we don’t like them. We do our best to avoid them. They do not—most of the time at least—serve our purposes’

(Dretske 2000: 247-8)

‘Rational intentions should be agglomerative. If at one and the same time I rationally intend to A and rationally intend to B then it should be both possible and rational for me, at the same time, to intend to A and B.’

(Bratman 1999: 220)

‘chimpanzees understand … intentions … perception and knowledge … Moreover, they understand how these psychological states work together to produce intentional action’

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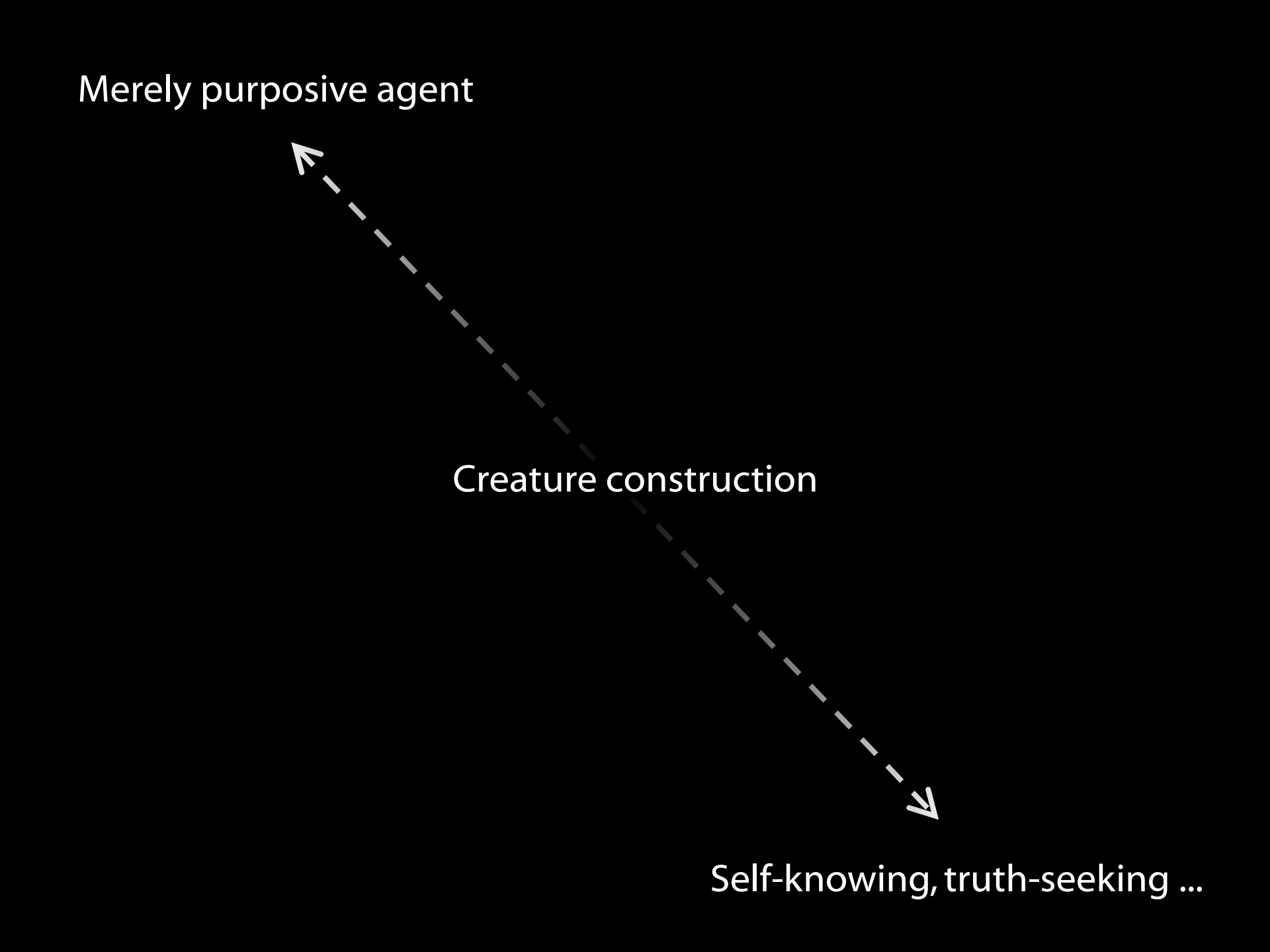
Merely purposive agent
Creature construction
Self-knowing, truth-seeking ...

Actions, outcomes & conditions

get exercise and stay dry
get no exercise and stay dry

get exercise and get wet
get no exercise and stay dry

Actions, outcomes & conditions

action		
cycle	get exercise and stay dry	get exercise and get wet
take bus	get no exercise and stay dry	get no exercise and stay dry

Actions, outcomes & conditions

action		
cycle	get exercise and stay dry	get exercise and get wet
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Actions, outcomes & conditions

action		
cycle	get exercise and **stay dry**	get exercise and **get wet**
take bus	get no exercise and stay dry	get no exercise and stay dry

Actions, outcomes & conditions

	condition	
action	no flooding	flooding
cycle	get exercise and stay dry	get exercise and get wet
take bus	get no exercise and stay dry	get no exercise and stay dry

Actions, outcomes & conditions

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Actions, outcomes & conditions

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action	no flooding	flooding
cycle	get exercise and stay dry	get exercise and get wet
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	condition	
action	no flooding	flooding
cycle	probability of no flooding if we cycle: 0.3	probability of flooding if we cycle: 0.7
take bus	probability of no flooding if we get the bus: 0.3	probability of flooding if we get the bus: 0.7

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‘Suppose that A and B are [outcomes] between which the agent is not indifferent, and that N is an ethically neutral condition [i.e. the agent is indifferent between N and not N]. Then N has probability 1/2 if and only if the agent is indifferent between the following two gambles.

B if N, A if not

A if N, B if not'

(Jeffrey 1983: 47)

‘modern philosophers ... have no theory of thought to speak of. I do think this is appalling; how can you seriously hope for a good account of belief if you have no account of belief fixation?’

(Fodor 1987: 147)