**The Mind/Body Problem**

and some solutions proposed by famous philosophers.

Learn these terms.

**The Mind/Body Problem** is that mind and body seem to have such radically different natures that it seems impossible for them to interact with each other. But in our everyday experience they appear to interact. How do we explain this?

**Interactionist dualism** is one proposed solution to the mind/body problem. Interactionist dualism holds that mind and body both exist and they interact with each other, even if we cannot explain how. Some philosophers who take this view are Descartes, John Locke, and David Hume.

**Non-interactionism** is another solution to the mind/body problem. It says that mind and body do not really interact. Non-interactionism admits that mind and body *appear* to interact, but the belief that they *do* interact is false.

Kinds of non-interactionism:

One kind of non-interactionism is **non-interactionist dualism**, which says that mind and body *both exist*, and *appear* to interact, but *they do not actually interact*.

Some examples of non-interactionist dualism come from Nicolas Malebranche and [Gottfried Leibniz](https://www.iep.utm.edu/leib-ove/). Malebranche’s view is called “[Occasionalism](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/malebranche/" \l "Occ)”; it holds that, for example, my willing my arm to move is the *occasion* for God to move my arm. Leibniz’s view is called “[Pre-established Harmony](https://www.iep.utm.edu/leib-ove/#SH3c)”; it holds that mind and body follow separate, synchronized programs which were established by God.

**Monism** is another kind of non-interactionism. It admits that mind and body *appear* to interact, but they do not really interact, *because only one substance really exists*.

Kinds of monism:

**Materialist monism (materialism)** says that everything is material; mental substance does not exist, and therefore mind and body cannot interact. One philosopher who holds this view is [Thomas Hobbes](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hobbes/#3).

**Immaterialist monism (sometimes called idealism)** says that everything is mental/spiritual; material substance does not exist, and therefore mind and body cannot interact. One philosopher who holds this view is [George Berkeley](https://www.iep.utm.edu/berkeley/).

Another kind of monism is **dual-aspect theory,** which says thatmental and physical things are just different “aspects” of one substance. [Baruch Spinoza](https://www.iep.utm.edu/spinoz-m/) holds this view; according to his “pantheism,” there is only one substance, God.