

24.09 Minds and Machines

Fall 11 HASS-D CI

Kripke's objection to
the identity theory

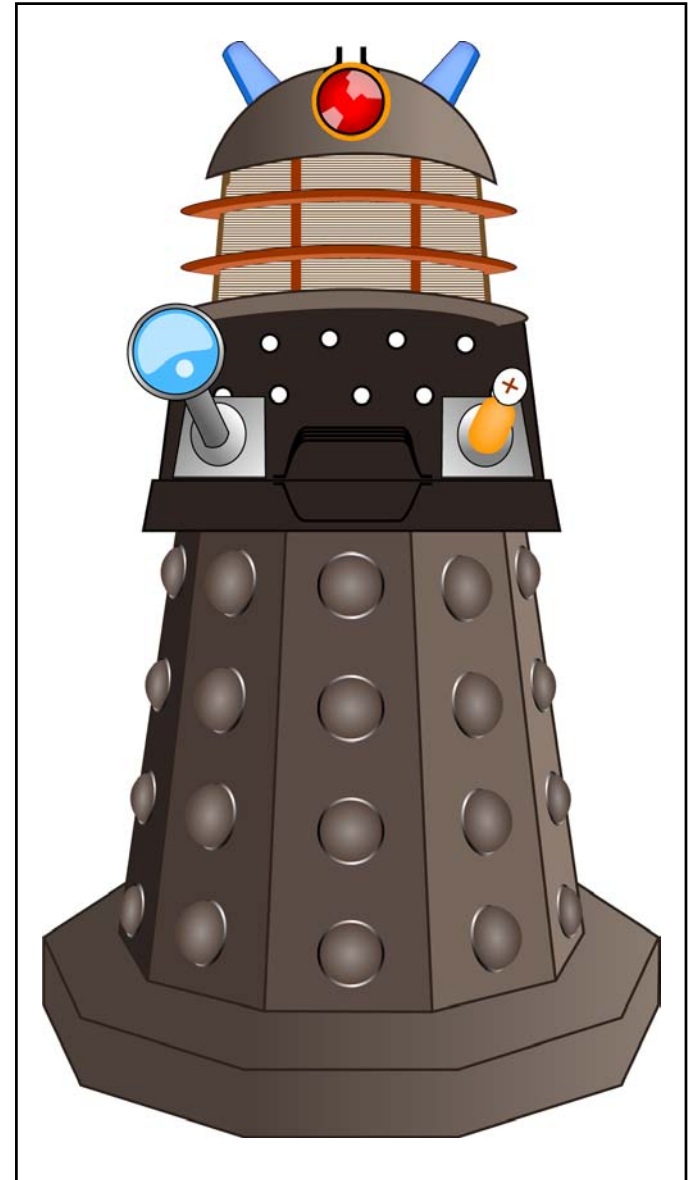


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the necessity of identity

consider any object **o**

o is identical to itself

further, **o** couldn't possibly have been identical to something else

in other words, necessarily **o** is identical to itself
(in every possible world, **o** is identical to itself)*

do not confuse this thesis with the claim that names or other expressions in natural languages are 'rigid designators'—the necessity of identity is not a thesis about language at all

*don't worry about worlds in which **o** does not exist

rigid designators

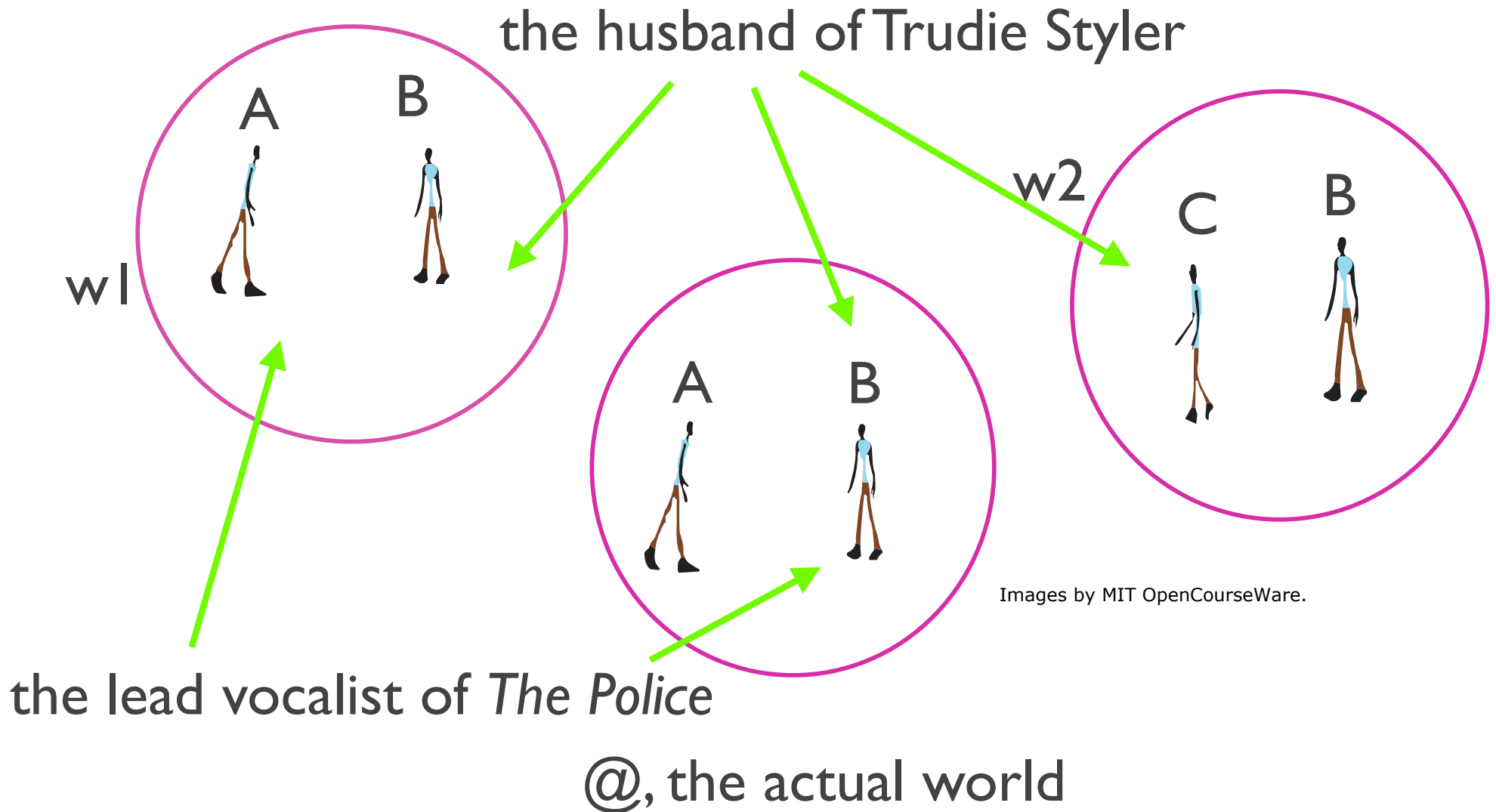
take a term 'T' and imagine some possible world w
consider the questions: 'who (or what) is T in w ?',
and 'who/what is T in the actual world?' (or, simply,
'who/what is T?')

if, for every world w , these questions have the
same answer—namely, 'a certain object \bullet '—then
'T' is rigid (is a rigid designator)*

if the questions can be read so that the answer to
one is 'a certain object \bullet ', and the answer to the
other is 'a certain object $\bullet\#$ ', and $\bullet \neq \bullet\#$, then 'T'
is not rigid

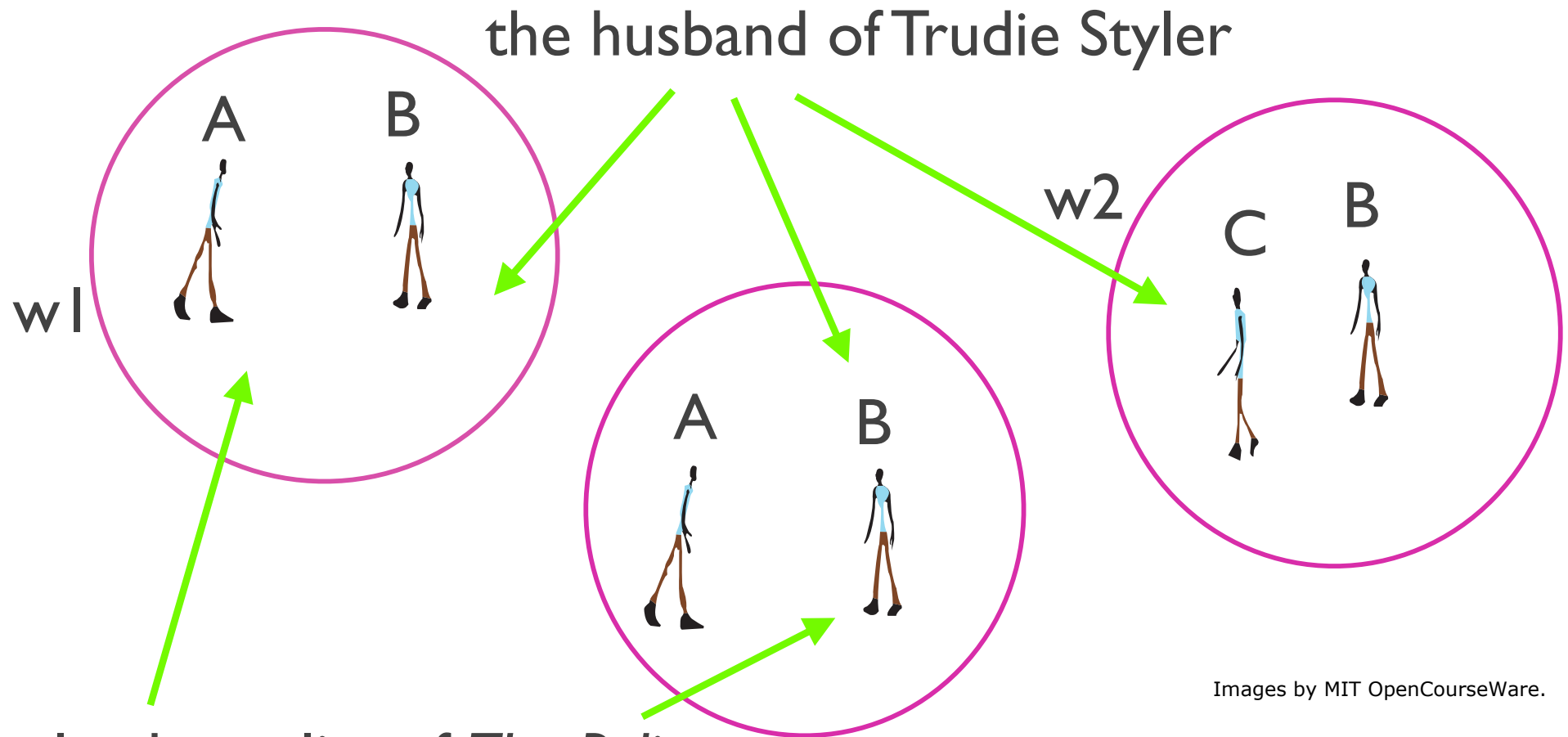
*again, we are ignoring worlds in which \bullet does not exist

some possible worlds



who is Trudie's husband in @?

answer: B



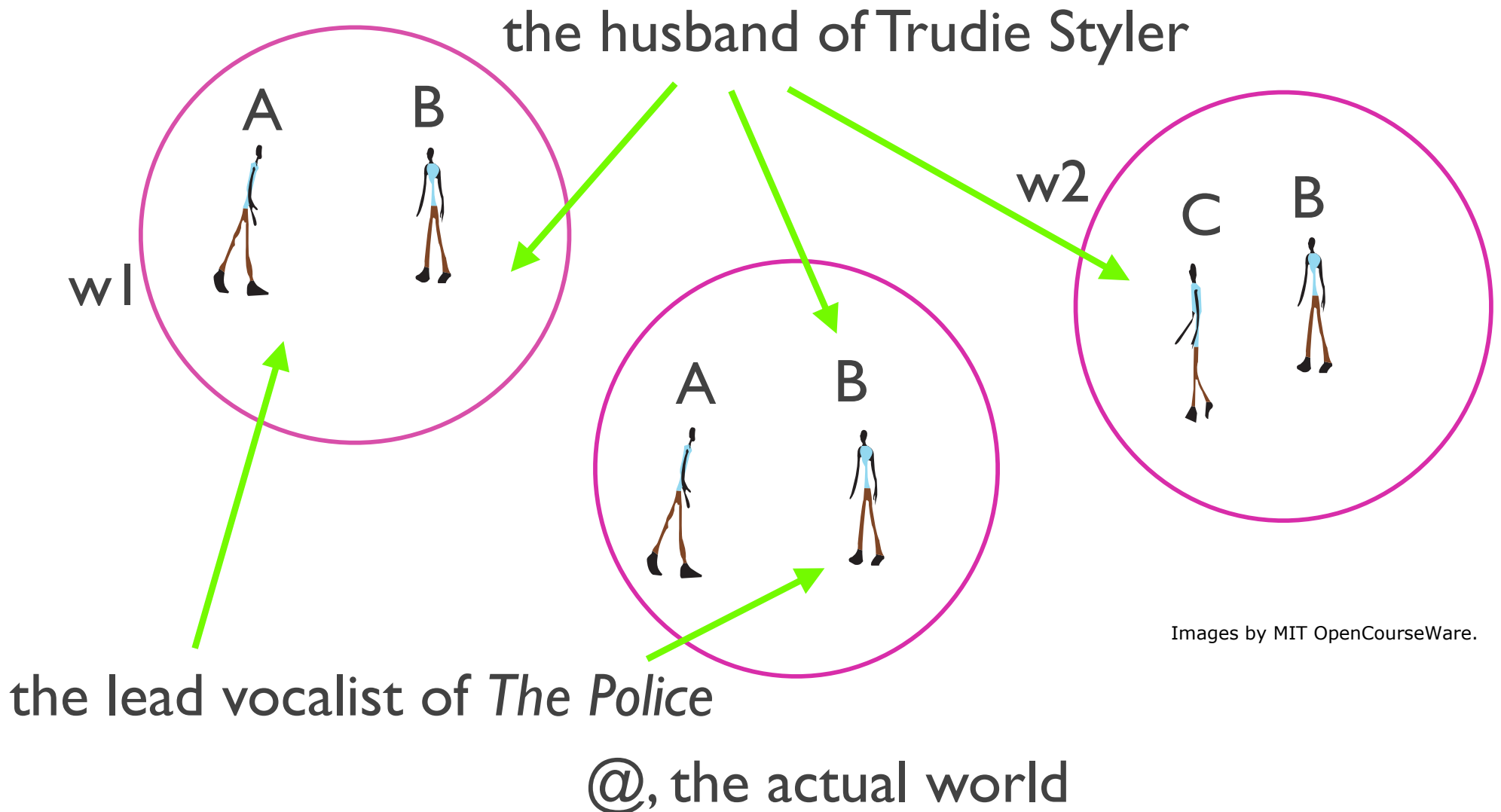
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the lead vocalist of *The Police*

@, the actual world

who is Trudie's husband in w1?

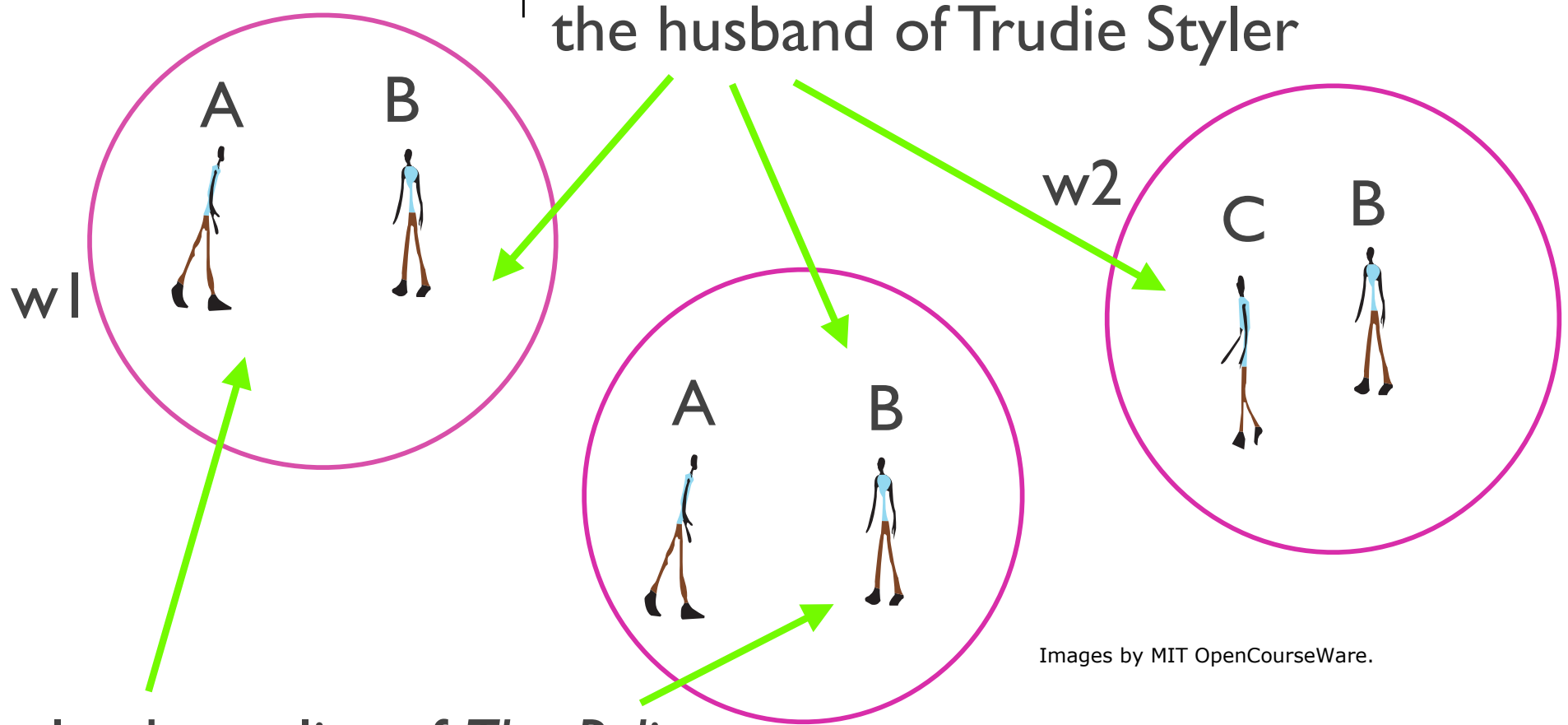
answer: B



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who is Trudie's husband (the husband of Trudie) in w2?

answer: C (a person other than B)

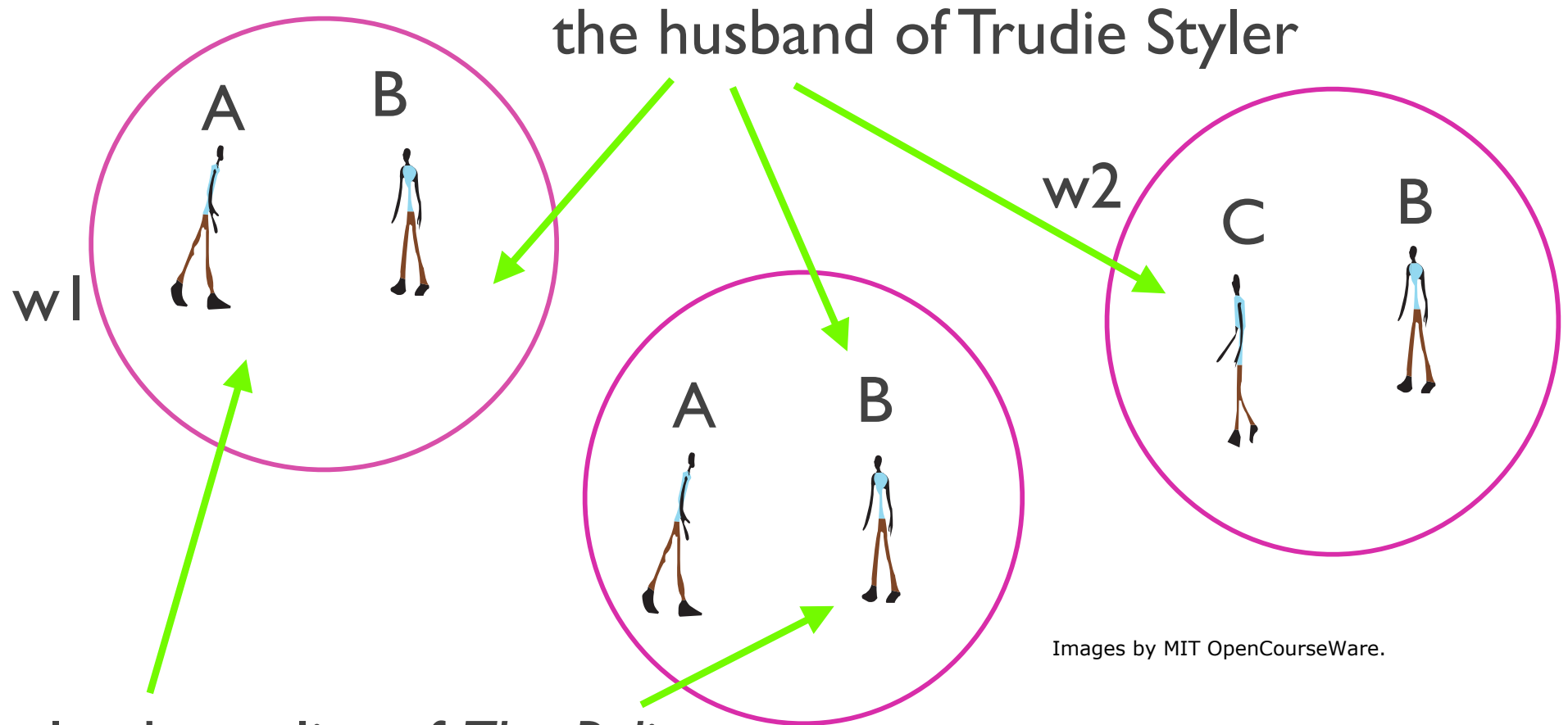


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the lead vocalist of *The Police*

@, the actual world

so 'the husband of Trudie Styler' is not rigid



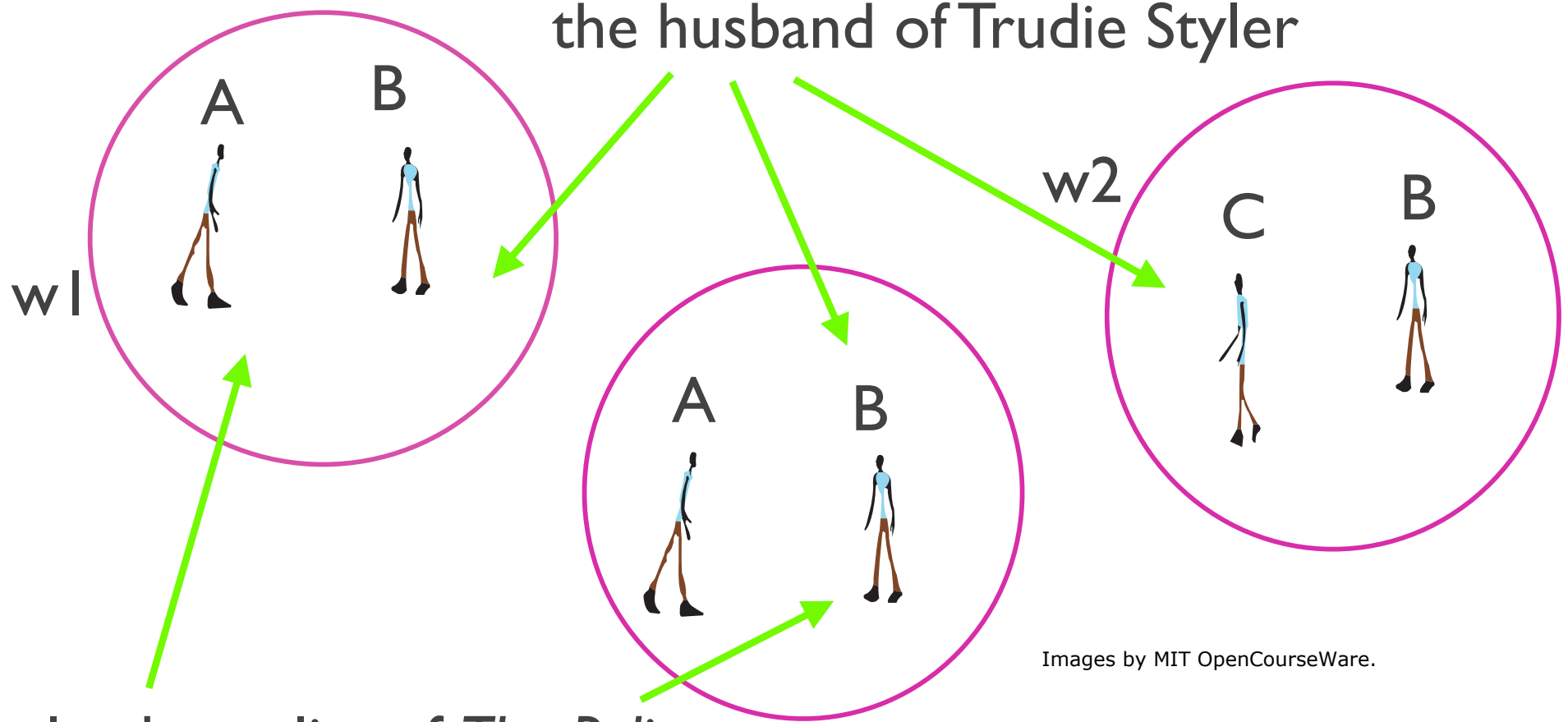
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the lead vocalist of *The Police*

@, the actual world

who is Gordon Sumner in @ (w_1, w_2, \dots)?

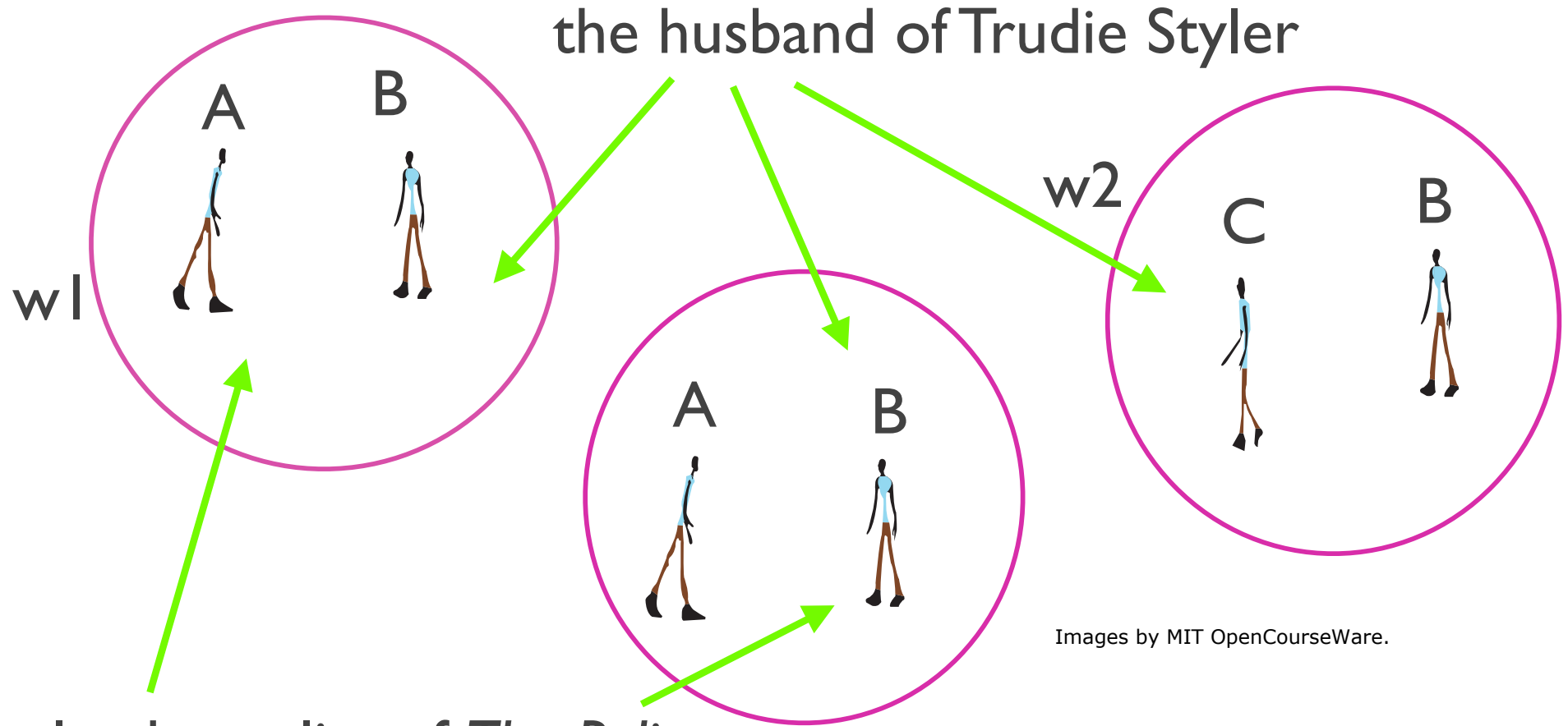
answer: B (ditto
 w_1, w_2, \dots)



the lead vocalist of *The Police*

@, the actual world

so 'Gordon Sumner' is rigid



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the lead vocalist of *The Police*

@, the actual world

rigidity and necessity

‘the husband of Trudie Styler = the lead vocalist of *The Police*’ is contingent

that is, expresses a contingent proposition

‘the husband of Trudie Styler = Sting’ is contingent

‘Sting = Gordon Sumner’ is necessary

if ‘A’ and ‘B’ are rigid, then ‘A = B’ is, if true, necessarily true

according to Kripke, these expressions are rigid

proper names like 'Benjamin Franklin', 'Boston',
'Lady Gaga'

nouns for 'natural kinds', like 'heat', 'tiger',
'water', 'H₂O', 'c-fibers' (and 'the firing of c-
fibers')

nouns for sensations like 'pain'

an important consequence

theoretical identities like:

heat=molecular kinetic energy

water= H_2O

and:

pain=c-fibers firing

are, if true, necessarily true

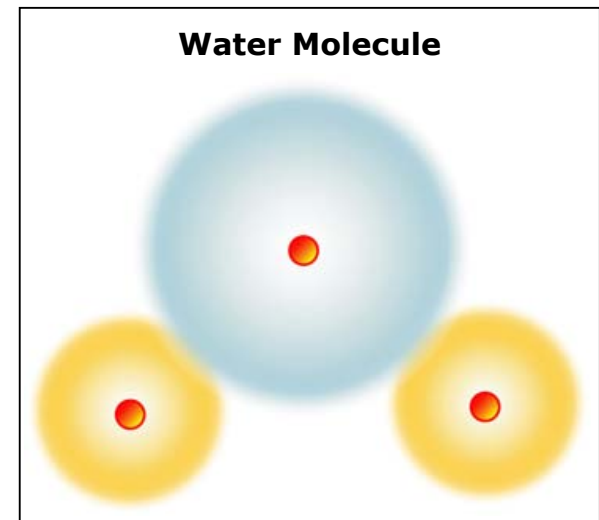



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argument D revisited


1. if I can clearly and distinctly conceive a proposition p to be true, then p is possible. ('[E]verything which I clearly and distinctly understand is capable of being created by God so as to correspond exactly with my understanding of it' (p. 16))
 2. I can clearly and distinctly conceive that the proposition that I am not identical to my body is true, therefore:
 3. it is possible that I am not my body (there is a 'possible world' in which I am is not my body), therefore:
- C. I am not my body

remember we left
this step unexplained



1. if I can clearly and distinctly conceive a proposition p to be true, then p is possible. ('[E]verything which I clearly and distinctly understand is capable of being created by God so as to correspond exactly with my understanding of it' (p. 16))
 2. I can clearly and distinctly conceive that the proposition that I am not identical to B (where ' B ' is a rigid designator of my body) is true, therefore:
 3. it is possible that I am not B (there is a 'possible world' in which I am is not B), therefore:
- C. I am not B

goes through because
' B ' (and ' I ') are rigid



heat is not mke?

1. if I can clearly and distinctly conceive a proposition p to be true, then p is possible.
 2. I can clearly and distinctly conceive that the proposition that there is heat without mke (or vice versa) is true, therefore:
 3. it is possible that heat is not mke (there is a 'possible world' in which heat is not mke)
 4. if it is true that heat = mke, it is necessarily true, hence:
- C. heat \neq mke

(2) is false

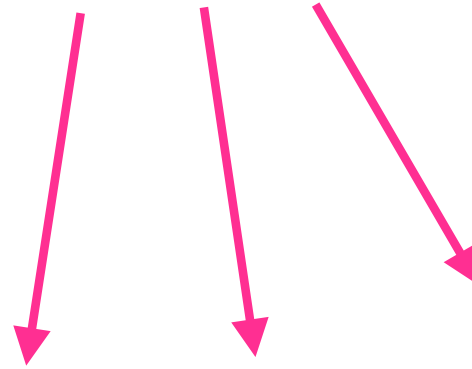
what you are really imagining clearly and distinctly is a situation in which someone senses a phenomenon in the same way we sense heat, that is, feels it by means of its production of the sensation we call 'the sensation of heat', even though that phenomenon was not molecular motion...and that the person does not get the sensation of heat when in the presence of molecular motion (see Kripke, 331)

'heat without mke'



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absence of mke,
felt as heat



this situation is possible

but: it's not a situation in which there's heat but
no mke

it's a situation in which there's the sensation of
heat but no mke

'mke without heat'

mke, not felt as
heat

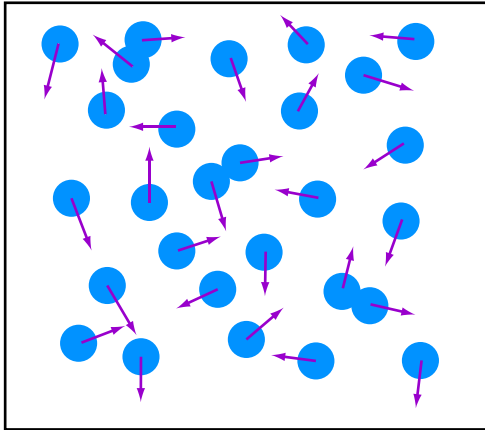


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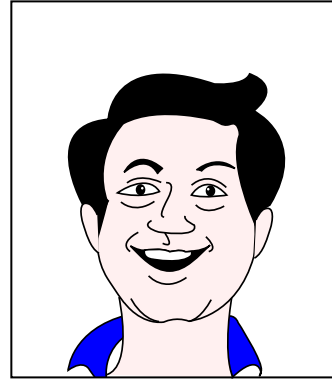


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this situation is possible

but: it's not a situation in which there's mke
with no heat

it's a situation in which there's mke but no
sensation of heat

1. if I can clearly and distinctly conceive a proposition p to be true, then p is possible.
 2. I can clearly and distinctly conceive that the proposition that there is pain without c-fibers firing (or vice versa) is true, therefore:
 3. it is possible that pain is not c-fibers firing (there is a 'possible world' in which pain is not c-fibers firing)
 4. if it is true that pain = c-fibers firing, it is necessarily true, hence:
- C. pain \neq c-fibers firing

a similar reply to the heat argument?

I do not see that such a reply is possible in the case of the apparent possibility that molecular motion might have existed in the absence of heat, what seemed really possible is that molecular motion should have existed without being felt as heat

but, a situation in which c-fiber firing exists without being felt as pain is a situation in which it exists without there being any pain

(see Kripke, 331)

the disanalogy with heat

A



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absence of
c-fibers
firing, felt as
pain

i.e. pain!

c-fibers firing,
but not felt as
pain

B

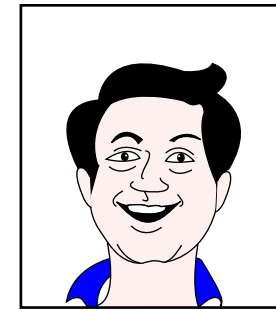


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i.e. no pain!

situations A and B are possible (apparently)

B is a situation in which there's c-fiber firing but no sensation of pain

but: this is a situation in which there's c-fiber firing without pain

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