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The Wooden Idol

Plain English Edition

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CF CONSISTENT not PASS · Art Until Proven Otherwise · Liminal is never a pass

This document is the plain English companion to SFVFS™ Doc 14. It explains the ideas without the formal mathematics. The full technical document is available at Zenodo DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.19426960.

What Is the Wooden Idol?

The Wooden Idol is an open challenge. It asks a simple question in an extremely difficult way: **can something exist that holds itself together, never ends, but can never be fully described?**

Not hard to describe. Impossible to describe — even in principle, even with unlimited mathematics. Something that is real and working but permanently beyond the reach of any formal account of it.

The challenge sets out twelve conditions such a thing would have to satisfy. Then it asks: do these conditions contradict each other? Can they all be true at once? No contradiction has been found. No proof of existence has been found either. That in-between position — not broken, not solved — is the permanent address of the Wooden Idol.

The Twelve Conditions — In Plain English

Each condition places a specific restriction on what this structure is allowed to be or do. Here they are without the mathematics.

B1 — No Final Answer

There is a question the structure asks of itself that can never be fully answered — not because we haven't found the answer yet, but because no formal system can even properly frame it. You can get closer to it. You can never arrive.

B2 — Never Settles

At least one part of the structure keeps moving. It doesn't fly off to infinity, it doesn't freeze, it doesn't repeat. It just keeps going — oscillating, drifting, wandering — indefinitely.

B3 — Something Holds It, But We Can't Say What

There is a region where things stabilise. Something acts there to keep orbits from falling apart. But the form of that something is not assumed to exist analytically. It stabilises. We cannot name what does the stabilising. This is the most important and strangest condition. See the red section below.

B4 — Only What You Can Observe Counts

No rules are imposed from outside. The only structure that exists is what emerges from watching what actually happens, over and over again. No symmetry is assumed in advance. Only recurrence is real.

B5 — No Proofs Allowed Inside

The structure cannot contain formal proofs. It can contain consistent relationships — things that don't contradict each other — but not derivations. No logical machinery sits inside it.

B6 — Change Without Moving

Something can transform without going anywhere. In normal geometry, if two things are identical, they're in the same place. Here, two states can be inseparable by distance while still being distinct. Change happens without displacement.

B7 — Refers to Itself Without Getting Stuck

There is a function that refers to its own output. Normally this causes a fixed point — a place where the function just points at itself and stops. Here, there is no fixed point. The self-reference never lands.

B8 — Coherence Travels But Doesn't Start

Coherence — the quality of things fitting together — can spread from one part of the structure to another. But it cannot be created from nothing. It can only be carried, not originated.

B9 — Patterns Are Stable, Not Things

No individual element has to stay the same. What persists is the relationship between elements — the pattern — not any particular piece. The map survives; the territory shifts.

B10 — Time Shows, Doesn't Solve

Running the structure forward in time reveals new things. But it doesn't simplify them. There is no shortcut. You cannot compress what time reveals into something shorter than time itself. You have to run it to find out.

B11 — Something Real That Has No Name

There is at least one genuine constraint holding the structure together that cannot be written down symbolically. You can detect its effects. You cannot represent it directly. It exists without being expressible.

B12 — Never Finishes

There is no end state. No completion. No maximum description. Every moment of the structure can always be extended further. It does not close.

B3 — The Strange One

The Problem of Naming B3

B3 says there is a stabilising region whose mechanism cannot be named. But this document just named it B3. It gave it a number, a section, a place in a list. That act — the labelling — is already doing something B3 says cannot be done.

The document is aware of this. Awareness is not escape. Calling it "the constraint whose mechanism cannot be named" is still naming it. All references to B3 in this document point to the location of the gap, not the gap itself. That distinction cannot be resolved. It is stated here as a condition of reading.

B3 is the condition that sits below mathematics. Every other condition has a mathematical outside view — a framework that can handle it, even if with difficulty. B3's outside view is not a mathematical theory. It is older than that.

Eudoxus of Cnidus (c. 408–355 BC) was already working near this idea. His method of exhaustion proved that certain limits existed and acted without specifying the mechanism of arrival. The limit stabilised things. He confirmed it indirectly — by showing that contradictions arise if it does not hold. Its form was never named. B3 is the formalisation of that ancient gap.

Where B3 Might Appear in Nature

The SFVFS™ programme has studied 216 Atlantic hurricanes from 1997 to 2019 using radar data. The Corner Theorem — a proved mathematical result about incompressible fluids — predicts that hurricane tilt angles should lock at 60° intervals.

They lock at 44°. Not 60°. The gap is **7.99 degrees**.

That gap is stable across all 216 storms. It is not noise. It is not in the Navier-Stokes equations that govern hurricane physics. No known physical mechanism fully accounts for it.

The B3 interpretation: The 7.99° gap is where the Atlantic hurricane is a "this" before it is a "such" — where the abstract geometry meets this specific fluid, in this basin, at this scale, and leaves a mark that no equation predicts. That mark may be B3 acting in the physical world. This is a hypothesis. Standard physical explanations have not been ruled out.

The Universe Simulator

A computer simulation was built to explore these ideas visually. It runs a three-dimensional grid of cells, each of which is either **something** (a value between 0 and 1) or **nothing** (zero). Eight rules govern how cells decay, survive, spread, and emerge. The physics can be adjusted with sliders.

Fifteen universes were run in a structured experiment — five different physics settings, three runs each, starting from different compositions ranging from 1% something to 80% something.

What the simulator found:

A stable attractor appeared — and could not be predicted.

With balanced physics, every universe settled at approximately 66.6% something, regardless of where it started. Starting at 1%, 20%, 33%, or 80% — same destination. But that destination cannot be calculated from the eight rules. You have to run the simulation to find it. That is B10: time reveals, does not solve.

Different physics, different attractor.

More generous physics produced a different stable point: approximately 79.6%. Harsh physics produced no stable point at all — the universe always collapsed. The stabilising interval either exists under these laws or it does not. You cannot tell which from the rules alone. That is the echo of B3.

The phase transition was never found.

Somewhere between the physics that allows survival and the physics that causes collapse, there is a threshold. Fifteen experiments approached it. None crossed it. The boundary exists. It was not located.

A constant emerged that nobody put there.

In dying universes — where nothing gradually wins — a background energy in the empty cells converged to approximately 0.614 × 10■³ across independent runs. This value is not in any of the eight rules. It appeared. It is called the Craig Constant, named for the investigator who identified it.

The honest conclusion: *The simulator does not prove B3. It has explicit rules — eight of them — so the mechanism of its attractor exists, even if it is too complex to read off the constants directly. That distinguishes it from B3, which refuses to assume any mechanism at all. What the simulator produces is an echo of B3: B3-like behaviour arising from B3-unlike foundations. It shows what it looks like to gesture at B3 without touching it.*

The Position

The Wooden Idol has not been broken. It has not been solved. No contradiction has been found across the twelve conditions. No proof that such a structure exists has been found either. The position is: **CF CONSISTENT not PASS.**

Consistent as far as can be determined. Not passed. The gap between those two things is where the work continues.

The hurricane gives a 7.99° gap that may be B3 in the physical world. The simulator gives an attractor that acts without being derivable. Eudoxus gave a limit that stabilised without a named mechanism. None of these are proofs. All of them are approaches.

The system can only be approached, not arrived at. B1 permits this explicitly: only the approach toward the answer may be structurally analysed. The approach is what is happening here. The analysis is the finding. The gaps that remain open are not failures. They are where the work continues.