

Personality theory of personal identity

Physicalist Personality view

The key to personal identity is the same personality (beliefs, memories, desires)

If every time you get a new memory your personality changes, then do you get a new personal identity each time you get a new memory?

Personality theorist

We don't mean exactly the same set of memories and desires. We mean: a slowly evolving personality

Personality theorist explains

Even if I have few or no memories identical to the ones that I had when I was 10 years old it's OK: we can still say it's the same evolving personality, so long as there is a pattern of continuity: some beliefs are lost, some beliefs are added, but as long as there is an overlap and continuity it's the same personality.

Body theory of personal identity

Early Christian case, Judgement Day resurrection

A deity perfectly re-assembles all molecules of a dead person together, thus resurrecting the person.

Peter van Inwagen

Suppose that your son builds a tower out of wooden blocks. he then says "Please show it to mom when she is back!" and goes to sleep. Accidentally you knock over the tower! You take the blocks and put them back in exactly the same position as they were (each block faces the right way!). The mother comes back and you say 'That's the tower our son built!'. Ehh. That's not the tower your son built! It's a duplicate of the tower your son built. Conclusion: if you have an object and you take it apart and put it back together, it's not the very same object that you started out with!

Metaphysicist's objection

Admittedly, it's the same pieces and it's the same order, but it's not the same person!

A wristwatch example

But what if the same happened to a wristwatch? It has been disassembled and re-assembled. Surely it's exactly the same watch?

Body View - Brain theory of personal identity

Physicalist Brain view

The key to personal identify is the same brain